

Amens & Alleluias – April 2026

St. John's Episcopal Church, Congaree

1151 Elm Savannah Road, Hopkins, SC 29061

Sundays, 10:30 am - Holy Eucharist Rite II; **Wednesdays**, 12:00 pm - Holy Eucharist Rite II and healing prayers

Phone: 803.776.9292 - Website: www.stjohnscongarree.net – Office email: stjohnscongarree@gmail.com

MISSION STATEMENT

We, as members of St. John's Episcopal Church, Congaree, are an open, caring, nurturing community, committed to living the Word of God by witnessing through Christ and growing in grace through prayer, fellowship, education and service.

Letter From the Rector – April 2026

Dear friends,

Alleluia! He is Risen! As our journey through the wilderness with Jesus comes to an end with the empty tomb, I hope we all find ourselves refreshed and strengthened by our practices of repentance and self-denial. Easter is a celebratory time, a time to glory and revel in God's abundant goodness. We gather together to proclaim the Resurrection not only on Easter Sunday, but for several weeks during the Easter season until Pentecost.

Easter is not a one-time event. There are so many ways that we can live out the truth and grace of the resurrection in the days that follow. What do I mean by this? Well, just as we allowed Lent to direct the movement of our lives, so should we allow the resurrection. How does the Risen Christ prompt us to discover new ways of being? What *practices* can we take on that lead us to places of gratitude for our savior, to abundance of mercy, or to the freedom of love?

Each year during Holy Week, I revisit one of my favorite pieces of writing, *When Breath Becomes Air* by Dr. Paul Kalanithi. It is part memoir, part self-eulogy, part metaphysical lecture written by Dr. Kalanithi in the year before his untimely death from cancer. He wrote the book in part to try and understand the meaning of death, and found that death only means as much as our lives. When our lives have rich meaning, we can walk more companionably with suffering. He writes that the "Truth" about the meaning of life is probably impossible to find in full, ultimately, but that we can get pretty close if we allow ourselves to understand that the truth usually resides somewhere in the middle of different perspectives and experiences. We each bring one of those perspectives to the puzzle – our lives and what they have meant. Gathered together, perhaps we can get close to the truth of God's abundance and goodness. He makes our lives rich, and when we can hold our lives up to the light next to someone else's, we get a sense of near transcendental peace.

This transcendental peace is where I pray we live during Easter. Practicing gratitude and gaining other perspectives by meeting, asking questions, and really listening to the stories of other people. The more layers that get added to the tapestry, the closer to the meaning of life we can get. Each person reflects a portion of God's goodness, like a prism. The visual that forms is breathtaking.

This Easter, begin a practice of gratitude. Meet someone new, listen to their story, tell your own story to others. Share yourselves and allow others to do the same.

I have no further updates for you regarding my transition, but I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the kindness and support you have shown Garrett and me. Every encouraging word, every hug, every shared moment has meant more to me than you know. I am very blessed to be among such generous people who, even in the middle of disappointment, still have found the ability to be unselfishly loving. Thank you.

God is good! In Christ, Katie+

FROM YOUR JUNIOR WARDEN

If you are aware of or see any issues or have any concerns regarding the property, please don't hesitate to bring it to my attention. Rusty 803-422-2882

ANNUAL OYSTER ROAST/SHRIMP BOIL FUND-RAISER

We have two oyster roasts and shrimp boils under our belts. I hope it is becoming a St Johns tradition. My thanks to everyone who helped in any way with the roast. Whether you bought tickets, sold tickets, set up, tore down, cleaned up, provided desserts, secured or donated door prizes, or worked cooking or serving, your effort is greatly appreciated. I hope you liked the change we made to the menu by adding sausage and corn on the cob. We thought that would make it a little nicer. We showed another good profit this year with the Church clearing \$3,181 and the Eastover Ruritan making the same amount. We are both non-profit organizations and this money will be used in our community. If you have any concerns or ways in which we could do better, I want your feedback! Email me at Hiott416@gmail.com or call me at (803)783-4214. God willing, we will do it again next year! Jim Hiott

ST. JOHN'S APRIL CALENDAR AT A GLIMPSE

- Wednesday, Apr 1 -Noon Eucharist
- Thursday, Apr 2 -Maundy Thursday Service at 6:30pm
- Friday, Apr 3 -Good Friday Service at noon
- Sunday, Apr 5 -Continental Breakfast, Easter Egg Hunt, and Flowering the Cross beginning 9:15am
-Worship at 10:30am, Holy Eucharist Rite II
- Wednesday, Apr 8 -Noon Eucharist
- Sunday, Apr 12 -Worship at 10:30am, Holy Eucharist Rite II
- Wednesday, Apr 15 -NO Noon Eucharist
- Sunday, Apr 19 -ECW Meeting at 9:30am
-Katie away, Morning Prayer at 10:30am
- Wednesday, Apr 22 -Noon Eucharist
- Sunday, Apr 26 -Worship at 10:30am, Holy Eucharist Rite II
-Covered dish luncheon at 11:45am
- Wednesday, Apr 29 -Noon Eucharist

SCHEDULE FOR HOLY WEEK

- April 1 – Wednesday – Noon Eucharist
- April 2 – Maundy Thursday – service at 6:30pm
- April 3 – Good Friday – service at noon
- April 5 – Easter Sunday – Continental Breakfast & Easter egg hunt & flowering the Cross – 9:15am
Worship Service at 10:30am – He Is Risen!!!

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE BAPTIZED?

If you are not baptized but would like to be, please let Katie know! We will be offering a Baptism on May 3rd.



ADULT LENTEN FORMATION SERIES & YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL

During Lent, from February 22 through March 22, adult formation and youth Sunday school were held and led by Rev. Katie (adults) and Julie Claytor (youth). The sessions were very well attended and the lessons were very meaningful as part of our journey with Jesus to the cross and resurrection. Please continue this journey with us through Holy Week and Easter Sunday!

VESTRY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

March 2, 2026

- The rector appreciated all that our people did to make the reception after Terry Catoe's funeral special for the family.
- Plans for the Oyster Roast on March 7 are on schedule.
- Volunteers for the Shrove Tuesday pancake supper were thanked.
- The rector discussed the first meeting she attended regarding the community vacation Bible school and found that the organizers are still in the very early planning stages. There may be opportunities for us to help with lunches.
- Holy Week schedule:
 - Palm Sunday begins with a procession from Zion Hall to the church.
 - Wednesday's noon eucharist will be held.
 - Maundy Thursday Service will be at 6:30 pm.
 - Good Friday Service will be at noon.
 - The ECW will have a continental breakfast and egg hunt on Easter morning before the service.
- The vestry agreed that we would help with spring testing incentives at Gadsden Elementary if we were asked.
- The next vestry meeting will be Monday, March 30, at 6:30 pm.
- Highlights from the March 30th meeting will be in the May newsletter.

HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE

"As the earth renews in April, may our hearts be renewed in Christ"

Spring is officially here, and with it comes a renewed sense of energy, connection and community. As we embrace renewal and gratitude this time of year, I want to thank all our committee members for your ongoing dedication! Each and everyone who graciously helps makes St. John's even more special.



As always, if you becomes aware of any needs that Hospitality can assist with, please do not hesitate to reach out—email me at rdandz@gmail.com, call or text **803-622-2929**, or contact the church office.

Have a blessed month ~ Debbie

ALTAR GUILD

Thank you to the Altar Guild members who served in March. We observed the season of Lent and Palm Sunday, the beginning of Holy Week. The volunteer work you undertake each week, including the Wednesday noon service, to

prepare for worship and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, is appreciated. During March, there were no flowers on the altar until palms on Palm Sunday. Easter lilies will be used to decorate the sanctuary for Easter Sunday. If you would like to help prepare the sanctuary for Easter Sunday, please join us on Saturday, April 4th at 10:00am.

April Volunteer Schedule: Apr 5 – Lisa Clarkson & altar guild; Apr 12 – Fran & Al Burnett; Apr 19 – Julie & Frank Claytor; Apr 26 – Corrie Blasi.

Please prayerfully consider joining this important ministry and call Lisa at 803.237.2892 to volunteer. Training will be available. Lisa Clarkson, Altar Guild Director

NEWS FROM YOUR EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN

The ECW met on Sunday, March 15 at 11:45 am. Here are the highlights of our meeting:

- ECW members will meet with Bill Mears on Friday, March 20 to begin the clean up of Sallie's Garden.
- Plans were made for Easter Sunday's continental breakfast and egg hunt being held on April 5 at 9:15 am.
- The menu was set for the ECW's fundraiser brunch to be held on Sunday, May 17 at 9:15 am.
- The Pounding for Garrett Davis and Chelsea Knotts was scheduled for Saturday, April 18 at 11:00 am.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Sunday, April 19 at 9:30 am.

As you can see, we are a busy group. Please join the ECW and be a part of our fun and very worthwhile projects. Peace and Love - Julie Claytor, Rita McCaskill, Fran Burnett, and Corrie Blasi

EASTER CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST AND EGG HUNT

SUNDAY, APRIL 5 – 9:15 am

The ECW is sponsoring a continental breakfast and egg hunt at 9:15 am on Easter Sunday. We are asking everyone to bring an easy to pick up breakfast item (biscuits, muffins, pastry) to share with each other. Please celebrate Easter with us, enjoy fun and fellowship, and watch our children find lots of candy-filled eggs. The egg hunt will immediately follow breakfast. Children should bring an Easter basket! We will also be flowering the cross in the front yard! Bring something from your yard and watch the cross come alive!

POUNDING FOR CHELSEA AND GARRETT

SATURDAY, APRIL 18 – 11:00 am

Garrett Davis and Chelsea Knotts are getting married! The ECW is hosting a pounding for the couple on Saturday, April 18 at 11:00 am in the parish hall. Help to stock their kitchen by bringing a pound (or so) of an important kitchen staple along with some of the cooking tools necessary for preparing a great meal. Join us on the 18th to help celebrate this special occasion with Garrett and Chelsea.

ECW FUNDRAISER BRUNCH

SUNDAY, MAY 17 - 9:15 am

The ECW will hold a fundraiser brunch on Sunday, May 17 at 9:15 am. We will serve a variety of breakfast casseroles, hot grits, and fruit. Help us raise money for our many outreach projects and enjoy a delicious breakfast and great fellowship. See you on May 17!

FOOD COLLECTION FOR SENIOR RESOURCES

The ECW continues to collect non-perishable food items to help stock the pantry at Senior Resources. This food will be shared with people who are on a waiting list to begin Meals-on-Wheels. The food you donate should be single serving and easy to open or pop-top items. Senior Resources is also accepting donations of pet food for cats and dogs. Please bring your donations to our monthly covered dish lunches. There will be a basket in the parish hall for the food

collection. Thank you for your help with this project! P.S. Senior Resources also desperately needs drivers to deliver Meals-on-Wheels! If you are willing and able to help, please call 803.252.7734.

GADSDEN MINISTRIES
Gadsden Backpack Ministry

Students are on Spring Break April 6-10. That leaves us with six more weeks to provide weekend meals for our students. What can you put in your buggy for them? How about the red-topped Chef Boyardee spaghetti and meatballs? Or the ABC's and 123's? Anything that you would put in a child's lunchbox would be perfect. Thank you for your help and support through the school year.

Suggestions can be found on our website at <https://www.stjohnscongarree.net/volunteer-opportunities>. Your support is important and greatly appreciated, and we are truly grateful for all you do. There is also a hard copy list of suggestions on the Narthex table for your convenience.

Gadsden Elementary Little Free Library

The Little Free Library at Gadsden Elementary continues to be stocked with new books for the children. The students are using the Little Free Library bins in their classroom and are enjoying the books. Our goal is to provide a variety of reading material that will spark the love of reading in the students. Thanks to contributions from the church and community we are in good shape with books. We will always accept donations of new or gently used books appropriate for children between the ages of 3 and 11. Thank you for your support!



APRIL CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS IN APRIL

4	Edward Holliday
6	Carolyn Grimball
7	Julian Adams
18	Sarah Kendall
21	Rebeka Tafel Alden
25	Thomas Tafel

ANNIVERSARIES IN APRIL

12	Debby & Selman Watson
16	Mary Ann & Jim Hiott

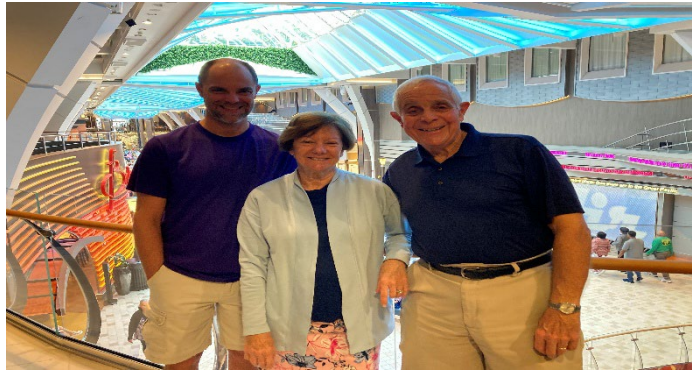
WORSHIP TEAM SCHEDULE FOR APRIL

	<u>WORSHIP LEADER</u>	<u>LECTOR</u>	<u>VIDEOGRAPHER</u>	<u>GREETER</u>
April 2 (Maundy Thur)	Van Lott	Anne Lott	Frank Claytor	Louise Barker
April 3 (Good Fri)	Jim Hiott	Louise Barker	John Davis	Louise Barker
April 5 (Easter)	Lisa Clarkson	John Lott	Jose Peraza	Mary Ann Hiott
April 12	Fran Burnett	Rita McCaskill	Van Lott	John Davis
April 19	Jim Hiott	Ayden Floyd	Frank Claytor	Debbie Davis
April 26	Van Lott	Julie Claytor	Selman Watson	The Claytors
April 2026 Newsletter				

THE GOOD NEWS GRAPEVINE

Anne, Van, and Van were cruising again, traveling from Galveston, Texas, to Nassau, then across the Atlantic for eight days to Spain on Royal Caribbean's Harmony of the Seas. They visited the ports of Cadiz, Malaga, Cartagena, and Alicante where they walked around the cities seeing churches, interesting architecture, and people. They were in Malaga on Palm Sunday where there was a parade in the streets which attracted the locals and tourists. The cruise

ended in Barcelona but no sightseeing that day as it was a quick trip to the airport to catch the flight home. That will be for the next trip!



If you have news about yourself or your family you wish to share for the May newsletter, please send it to the church office no later than April 23rd at: stjohnscongaree@gmail.com.

A BLESSING

*Life is short, and we do not have much time to gladden the hearts
of those who travel the way with us.
So, be swift to love; make haste to be kind.
And may the blessing of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
be with you today and remain with always.*

-Henri-Frederic Amiel

DIRECTORY CHANGE OF ADDRESS

The Rev. Jeffrey W. Meadowcroft
8811 Cypress Lakes Drive, Villa 507
Raleigh, NC 27615
jmeadowcroft1@gmail.com
864.982.0573

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Gifts received from March 1 through April 19, 2026

In memory of Terry Wayne Catoe

Given by Anne and Van Lott

In honor of Anne and Van Lott

Given by Sallie Hook Boggs

Jill and Chet Wingate

FINANCIAL REPORT through February 28, 2026

Operating Fund Checking Account:

February income: \$21,100.88
February disbursements: \$14,057.50
Difference: \$7043.38

1/1/2026 through 2/28/2026:

Income: \$144,009.78
Disbursements: \$156,063.66
Difference: **-\$12,053.66**

Cemetery & Grounds Checking Acct:

February income: \$3150.13
February disbursements: \$670.00
Difference: \$2480.13

1/1/2026 through 2/28/2026:

Income: \$10,890.87
Disbursements: \$9099.99
Difference: \$1790.88

Building Fund Checking Account:

February income: \$0.07
February disbursements: \$6374.51
Difference: **-\$6374.44**

1/1/2026 through 2/28/2026:

Income: \$6775.83
Disbursements: \$28,434.99
Difference: **-\$21,659.16**

FROM YOUR STEWARDSHIP CHAIR

Thank you for your continued support of God's ministries at St. John's through your faithful giving. If you would like to donate online, go to: <https://tinyurl.com/stjohnspledge2026> or scan this QR code:



In Christ,
Julie Claytor, Stewardship Chair

ST. JOHN'S PRAYER LIST

<u>Please Pray For:</u>	<u>Requested by:</u>
Brenda Manning	Ed Manning
Mary Clarkson	Parish
Debby Watson	Parish
Judy Addison	Parish
Michelle	Jane Rye

Holly Davis	Parish
Maria Brady	Debbie Davis
John Train	Selman Watson
Don Burton	Selman Watson
Tom Moore	Carol Fowles
Austin Mintz	John & Lynn Davis
Lesley Antley Marshall	Annie Antley
Roy Brazzell	Tammy Brazzell
Heather Tsahalis	Corrie Blasi
Joseph Brazitis	Holly Brazitis
Betty Thompson	Parish
Nancy Vosbaugh	Sarah Murphy
Jimmy & Brandy Hughes	Rita McCaskill
Penny Teague	Debbie Davis
Jewell Sams	The Floyd Family
Karen Niehaus	Debbie Davis
Laura Timmons	Lisa Clarkson
Charlie & Phyllis King	Julie Claytor
Jacob & Angela Pendleton	Lisa Clarkson
The Owens Family	Bev Watkins
Wendi Davis	Holly & Jason Davis
Bertha Fox	Nora & Tommy Claytor
John Grimball	Parish
Mitzee Teague	Katie Ayers
Bill Death	Van Lott
Liz Crice	Sheryl Moureaux
Susan Crice	Sheryl Moureaux
Janet McKinney	Bev Watkins
Viv, Karen, Jimmy, Brady,	Liz & John Vogt
Jonathan, David, and Adam	Liz & John Vogt
Our Military	Parish
Corrie Blasi	Parish
Nick Brady	Debbie Davis
Morris Tajman	Van Lott
Andrew Knight	Bev Watkins
Tammy Sneesberger	Rita McCaskill

Please let us know if you have someone to add to the Prayer List, and if there are folks who have recovered, please let us know that important news as well.

Easter Lily Giving



EASTER LILY IN HONOR OF:

Given for:

Trey Addison & family
Amanda Nichols & family

Given by:

Judy & Butch Addison
Judy & Butch Addison

