

# Amens & Alleluias – July 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](http://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 – July 2026

Dear friends,

I wish I had some brilliant morsel of advice or wisdom to include in my last Rector's note, but I am finding it hard to easily sum up our time together. There is no Hallmark greeting card sentiment that feels sufficient to acknowledge the sorrow of parting after such a rich and holy season.

So, let's keep it simple! Here are some things I want to say:

First, **thank you** for being such a kind community. Thank you for all of the times you have stepped up to help me or others, for the work you've done on the property, for cooking incredible food, for participating in worship, for serving God, for stretching your minds and hearts to accommodate new ideas.

Second, **I'll miss you!** I have so enjoyed being your pastor and I will miss worshipping and chatting and studying and joking with all of you. I've said this before, but I remain a tiny bit jealous of the next clergyperson who gets to love you next.

Third, **you have such a bright future.** We have undergone a season of growth together, which has happened because of the dedication of the community and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Both of those things – community and Spirit – will remain after I am gone. They will remain during all future transitions, all periods of growth, and all periods of struggle. The love of God is not something that can be extinguished, and there is so much love here.

Finally, **I will keep praying for you.** You will remain in my prayers, and in my thoughts. St. John's will forever be a bright spot, full of hope, in my priestly vocation. Thank you for that gift.

For a variety of good reasons, EDUSC's policy on limited clergy contact will apply after I leave on the 26<sup>th</sup>. Healthy departures require boundaries around communication between parishioners and departing rectors. While I will never be a stranger to you, you should not expect me to come to church at St. John's or schedule lunch reunions during visits to Columbia – at first! I want your new priest to have a fresh start without pastoral influence of the previous rector. Please trust that this is for the health of the parish and is a kind thing to do for your next priest. Also, please trust in my continual love for you even if we are not in regular contact.

That said, I have received special permission from Bishop Richards to return to St. John's in December to officiate John Lott and Holly Brazitis' wedding. We can pause the "limited contact" rule during that time, and I'm looking forward to it!

I'm coming to the end of my "simple" goodbye letter, and I realize it wasn't all that simple. Transition never is. So, I'll borrow from St. Paul: *Our Lord, come! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love be with all of you in Christ Jesus.* (1 Cor. 16:23-24)

Katie+

### **FROM YOUR SENIOR WARDEN**

Sitting and looking out at the ocean (while I am at the beach with the family) I am reminded of the vastness of God's creation. There are feelings of power and calm at the same time. It is not a new thought, but it is always good to take time to contemplate the power of God in our lives in both large and small ways. I am also reminded of the power of family and connection as I marvel at the new life in our family, Steven Patterson Tafel. The fact that God gave us others to nurture and care for is so important as we begin the next part of our life as a family at St. John's.

I hope to see everyone at our parish dinner for Katie and Garrett on Thursday, July 9th at 6:00 pm in Zion Hall. In other parish news I have been able to secure supply priests for the month of August and am working on filling the dates for September and October. As always, I ask for your prayers for the vestry during our time of transition.

Lisa Clarkson

### **FROM YOUR JUNIOR WARDEN**

Please see the vestry highlights for news. My thanks to everyone who willingly offers their help in day-to-day duties. 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

### **VESTRY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**

June 3, 2026

- The junior warden will work on the following projects: the sink and faucet in the sacristy will be repaired, two trees in the cemetery need attention, the carpet in Zion Hall needs cleaning, and the playground equipment needs to be replaced.
- Pentecost and Youth Sunday and the parish picnic with softball game were all a great success especially with all the children participating in church. Food was great.
- The senior warden has been unsuccessful in securing supply priests for August and going forward, but she will continue to contact priests from the list provided by the diocese. In August a search committee will be formed and will begin working on the process to call our next rector.
- The rector continues to work on a transition document with information and passwords that will be needed upon her departure.
- There will be a catered dinner on July 9 for the congregation to honor the rector.
- The next vestry meeting will be Monday, July 6, at 6:30 pm.

### **HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE**



*"Let us live like flowers – wild and beautiful and drenched in the sun"*

...Ellen Everett

Happy 250<sup>th</sup> birthday to the USA!

I hope everyone is enjoying their summer so far - vacations, fresh fruits & veggies, and the sweet smell of blooming flowers. May your hearts and souls be relaxed and restored.

There have been no needs requested from the Hospitality Committee this past month.

If any needs arise, please email me, [rdandz@gmail.com](mailto:rdandz@gmail.com) or call/text 803-622-2929 or contact the church office for assistance.

Happy July! Debbie Davis

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Wednesday, Jul 1 -Noon Eucharist  
 Sunday, Jul 5 -Worship at 10:30am, Holy Eucharist Rite II  
 -Lemonade Under the Tree following worship  
 Monday, Jul 6 -Vestry Meeting at 6:30pm  
 Wednesday, Jul 8 -Noon Eucharist  
 Thursday, Jul 9 -Dinner Celebrating Katie & Garrett at 6:00pm  
 Sunday, Jul 12 -Worship at 10:30am, Holy Eucharist Rite II  
 -Lemonade Under the Tree following worship  
 Wednesday, Jul 15 -Noon Eucharist  
 Sunday, Jul 19 -Worship at 10:30am, Holy Eucharist Rite II  
 -Lemonade Under the Tree following worship  
 Wednesday, Jul 22 -Noon Eucharist  
 Sunday, Jul 26 -Worship at 10:30am, Holy Eucharist Rite II  
 -Covered dish luncheon at 11:45am  
**-Katie's last Sunday with us**  
 Wednesday, Jul 29 -NO Noon Eucharist

### **NEWS FROM YOUR EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN**

The ECW will not meet in July. Our next meeting is scheduled for Sunday, August 16 at 9:30 am. We are, however, staying busy during the summer months. Please join us for the following activities during July and August:

#### **Lemonade Under the Tree**

The ECW is serving lemonade and cookies under our beautiful oak after church every Sunday through August 23 (except for the last Sunday of each month – covered dish). If you would like to provide lemonade one Sunday, please sign up in the parish hall. There are still a couple of Sundays available in July.

#### **Pounding for Holly Brazitis**

Holly and John are getting married! Holly's "pounding" is scheduled for Saturday, August 15 at 11:00 am. Join us to celebrate Holly's and John's upcoming wedding, and help Holly stock her kitchen.

#### **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.

#### **ALTAR GUILD**

Thank you to the Altar Guild members who served in June. We are in the season of Pentecost, which ends with Advent. Flowers were given on June 21 by Anne & Van Lott and on June 28 by Carol Fowles. Remember, you can sign up to give flowers for the altar at the bulletin board in Zion Hall. Sundays in the month of July available for giving are the 12<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup>. As always, thank you to all the volunteers who work each week, including the Wednesday noon service, to prepare for worship and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

#### **JULY VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE**

July 5 – Julie & Frank Claytor; July 12 – Lisa Clarkson; July 19 – Corrie Blasi; July 26 – Rita McCaskill & Betsy Cate

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

### Gadsden Backpack Ministry

The vestry reminds you that we are collecting non-perishable foods during the summer for this important ministry and would like to suggest some “focus foods” for the rest of the summer. For the next few weeks, try putting these on your grocery list:

- pre-packaged fruit (apple sauce or mixed fruit cups)
- snacks (salty and sweet)
- breakfast items (cold/hot cereals, Nutri-grain bars, grits)
- 100% fruit drinks (Capri Sun, Juicy Juice, Sunny D)
- lunch/dinner items (Chef Boyardee with a red top, Beanee Weenees with a yellow top)

Items should be individually packaged and easy for elementary students to prepare and handle. Please don't feel that you are limited to these items only, especially if there is a good sale on something else. Put your items in the red wagon and watch to see who pulls it up the aisle. Thanks so much.

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 School Supplies

St. John's will, once again, sponsor a school supply drive for the students and teachers at Gadsden Elementary. Here is a short list of some of the items that would be most useful in the classroom.

1. Pencils – Ticonderoga brand is preferred. They are the best quality pencils and do not get “eaten” by the pencil sharpener.
2. Glue sticks
3. Big, pink erasers
4. Composition books, black and white – wide-ruled with permanent pages, no spiral bound books.
5. Multi-colored markers
6. Colored pencils
7. Loose leaf notebook paper – wide-ruled
8. Hand sanitizer
9. Sanitizing wipes
10. Boxes of tissue

Please bring your school supplies to church by Sunday, August 2 and place them in the wagon or put them on the table in Zion Hall. We will get the supplies to Gadsden for the beginning of school. Thank you for your support of this project and Gadsden Elementary. The school staff is very thankful for all of our donations.

### WORSHIP TEAM SCHEDULE FOR JULY

	<u>WORSHIP LEADER</u>	<u>LECTOR</u>	<u>VIDEOGRAPHER</u>	<u>GREETER</u>
July 5	Louise Barker	John Lott	Van Lott	Julie & Frank Claytor
July 12	Jim Hiott	Louise Barker	John Davis	Mary Ann Hiott
July 19	Van Lott	Aaron Floyd	Frank Claytor	Louise Barker
July 26	Fran Burnett	Julie Claytor	Selman Watson	John Davis



**BIRTHDAYS IN JULY**

3	Trey Addison	16	Brittany Mullins
13	Mary Alice Anderson	16	Sarah Williams
15	Gray Thompson	22	Taylor Byars Williams

**ANNIVERSARIES IN JULY**

15	Debbie & Rusty Davis
17	Gina & Treye Byars
25	Amanda & Matthew Nichols
29	Sara & Lloyd Ash

**THE GOOD NEWS GRAPEVINE**

Congratulations to Danielle Floyd. She has been elected to the Five Points Association Board.

Ayden Floyd has had an exciting and successful year. He began participating in cross country this summer and excelled academically, finishing as the top student in his electricity class. He also earned his OSHA and NCCER certifications in Electrical Technology, marking an important milestone as he continues to develop valuable career skills.

Tegan Floyd has graduated from preschool and is excited to begin kindergarten this fall at Irmo Elementary. She also completed her first season on the Murraywood Swim Team and participated in her first Little Girls Cheer Camp at Chapin High School. We are so proud of all she has accomplished and look forward to watching her continue to grow and thrive.

Cooper Edens is on his second session of Gravatt, with one more at the end of July after heading to Oregon for a fishing trip! Happy fishing, Cooper....

If you have news about yourself or your family you wish to share for the August newsletter, please send it to the church office no later than July 21<sup>st</sup> at: [stjohnscongaree@gmail.com](mailto: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

**FINANCIAL REPORTS**

**Gifts received from May 25 through June 21, 2026**

***In memory of Dorcas Anderson Ligon***

Given by Judy and Butch Addison  
Louise Barker  
Anne and Van Lott

**FINANCIAL REPORT through May 31, 2026**

**Operating Fund Checking Account:**

May income: \$6508.31  
May disbursements: \$12,585.99  
Difference: **-\$6077.68**

1/1/2026 through 5/31/2026:

Income: \$59,605.44  
Disbursements: \$77,058.24  
Difference: **-\$17,452.80**

**Cemetery & Grounds Checking Acct:**

May income: \$200.18  
May disbursements: \$870.00  
Difference: **-\$669.82**

1/1/2026 through 5/31/2026:

Income: \$7316.91  
Disbursements: \$3950.00  
Difference: \$3366.91

**Building Fund Checking Account:**

May income: \$0.16  
May disbursements: \$.00  
Difference: \$0.16

1/1/2026 through 5/31/2026:

Income: \$0.64  
Disbursements: \$505.00  
Difference: **-\$504.36**

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**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:



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In Christ, Julie Claytor, Stewardship Chair

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**ST. JOHN'S PRAYER LIST**

**Please Pray For: \_\_\_\_\_ Requested by: \_\_\_\_\_**

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
Betty Thompson	Parish
Nancy Vosbaugh	Sarah Murphy
Penny Teague	Debbie Davis
Jewell Sams	The Floyd Family
Laura Timmons	Lisa Clarkson
Charlie & Phyllis King	Julie Claytor
Jacob & Angela Pendleton	Lisa Clarkson
The Owens Family	Bev Watkins
Wendi Davis	Holly & Jason Davis
John Grimball	Parish
Mitzee Teague	Katie Ayers
Bill Death	Van Lott
Liz Grice	Sheryl Moureaux
Susan Grice	Sheryl Moureaux
Janet McKinney	Bev Watkins
Our Military	Parish
Nick Brady	Debbie Davis
Morris Tajman	Van Lott
Andrew Knight	Bev Watkins
Paul	Rita McCaskill
Stephen	John Lott
Deacon Ann Pilat	Parish
Ally Lambert	Nikita Floyd/Parish
Jim Parker	Van Lott
Susan Voelker & family	Marion Crane
Trish & Bill Eccles & family	Parish

**Please let us know if you have someone to add to the Prayer List. If there are folks who have recovered, please let us know that important and happy news as well, and we will take them off the list. Thanks so much for your help in keeping our Prayer List updated.**