

Amens & Alleluias – November 2025

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.

From the Rector's Desk – November 2025

Dear Friends,

There is much to be grateful for as we head into the last months of 2025!

I have particularly been enjoying the programs we have been introducing for kids. We had a great group for the first Children's Sermon back in September, and you may have noticed the beautifully painted mural that is in progress by the Sunday School kids. It has been a joy to teach them about the seven days of Creation, reflecting on what it means that God made the whole world very good. A big thank you to Danielle Floyd, Molly Floyd, and Julie Claytor for helping to make it happen!

November is full of exciting events for the folks of St. John's. We kick off the month with Homecoming Weekend, gathering together again for the Saturday night chicken bog and once more for All Saint's Day Eucharist on Sunday 11/2. This has become one of my favorite traditions that we offer, and I hope that you invite your friends and neighbors to come find a home at St. John's! Mid-month, a delegation from our congregation will be joining churches across the diocese at The Church of the Advent in Spartanburg for our Diocesan Convention. The Convention is where the Diocese gathers to discuss and vote on items of business, such as the budget, and reports from various ministries. Please pray for our delegates: Jim Hiott, Mary Ann Hiott, Lisa Clarkson, and Fran Burnett as they represent our parish. Finally, 11/30 will be our Annual Meeting after church during which we will elect new vestry members and convention delegates. Please make every effort to attend.

As the days get shorter and nights get longer, and as we approach the holidays, let us all be very mindful of those carrying grief and struggle. Grief tends to surge during the holidays, no matter how long it has been since a loss. The long nights give ample time for lying awake with a restless mind and heart. My guidance for those times begins with not criticizing yourself or believing that you "should" feel a certain way – feelings don't work like that! After that, I urge you to lift up your worries to God, who knows what grieving feels like. You can say a prayer or read scripture, or you can just silently ask God to take whatever it is you are offering up so that you can rest. The fact that our God became Incarnate for our sake is truly a miracle, because it means that he can accompany us on our long nights. I hope you can reflect on this miracle during times of both pain and health this season.

St. John's is a safe place for anybody who is grieving, even during this most wonderful time of year. It is also a place of immense joy! Everything belongs. If you have any pastoral concerns or issues, please let me know – we can have a cup of tea and talk.

I am, as always, very grateful for you.

In Christ, Katie+

THANK YOU FROM YOUR STEWARDSHIP CHAIR

I would like to thank everyone who has turned in their 2026 pledge cards. Your faithful attention to pledging helps the finance committee and vestry plan for the coming year. All the pledges will be blessed at our Homecoming service on Sunday, November 2. If you are still considering your contribution to St. John's, you may get your pledge card to the church office through the mail or by putting it in the collection plate at church. Extra pledge cards can be found in the narthex. Thank you for your continued support of God's ministries at St. John's through your faithful pledge. To donate online, go to: <https://tinyurl.com/stjohnspledge2026> or scan this QR code:



In Christ,
Julie Claytor, Stewardship Chair

ST. JOHN'S NOVEMBER CALENDAR AT A GLIMPSE

- Saturday, Nov 1 – Preparing to cook for Homecoming & Drew's Chicken Bog at 6pm
- Sunday, Nov 2 – Worship service at the pit at 8:30am
 - Stewardship Ingathering
 - All Saints and Homecoming Worship at 10:30am
 - Homecoming Barbecue meal following worship
- Monday, Nov 3 – Vestry Meeting at 6:30pm
- Wednesday, Nov 5 – Noon Eucharist
- Sunday, Nov 9 – Adult Formation #5, 9am (Nicene Creed study)
 - Worship at 10:30am
- Wednesday, Nov 12 – Noon Eucharist
- Friday, Nov 14 – Convention in Spartanburg
- Saturday, Nov 15 – Convention in Spartanburg
- Sunday, Nov 16 – Adult Formation #6, 9am (Nicene Creed study)
 - Worship at 10:30am
 - ECW meeting at 11:45am
- Wednesday, Nov 19 – Noon Eucharist
- Thursday, Nov 20 – ANNUAL REPORTS DUE
- Sunday, Nov 23 – Adult Formation #7, 9am (Nicene Creed study)
 - Worship at 10:30am
 - Children/Youth Sunday School, 12:00-1:30pm
- Wednesday, Nov 26 – Noon Eucharist
- Sunday, Nov 30 – Worship at 10:30
 - Annual Congregational Meeting following worship
 - Vestry meeting following annual meeting
 - Covered Dish Luncheon following annual/vestry meeting

JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

Everything seems to be working and running smoothly. If you are aware of any issues or concerns around the property, please let me know. Rusty Davis, 803-422-2882

ANNUAL REPORTS

Attention church leaders and committee chairs: Please begin thinking about what you plan to submit for your annual report. Your report will be due by November 20 so that the information can be compiled for distribution to the congregation at the Annual Congregational Meeting scheduled for November 30th. Please send your report via email to the church office at stjohnscongaree@gmail.com

Vestry Meeting Highlights

October 6, 2025

- The rector was pleased with the first Sunday School for our young people and stressed that having a program for young people is important to long-term growth of our church. She asked that members invite young people they know to join us.
- The junior warden pointed out that the tree in the near corner of the new cemetery is creating damage to the wall surrounding the old cemetery. The opinion is that the tree should come down.
- Our rector is the commissioner of Small Church Ministries in the Diocese whose mission is to create and repair relationships of small churches and foster a sense of cooperation. A retreat will be held at Camp Gravatt on October 10-11 with our senior warden and his wife in attendance.
- John Davis will assemble a crew to prepare the Homecoming BBQ. Drew Robb will prepare the chicken bog for 30-50 guests on Saturday night around 6pm.
- The Stewardship Drive is off to a good start. Online giving is now possible.
- The next vestry meeting will be on Monday, November 3, at 6:30 pm.

HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE

"November is tied together with the heartstrings of gratitude" ...J.A. McIntosh



As the crisp air settles in and autumn leaves blanket the ground, November invites us to pause and reflect on the blessings in our lives. It's a wonderful time to express gratitude to those who support us, and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone at St. John's who has supported me this year. While I've received many kind "thank yous" for what I do, the truth is that the thanks belong to all who support the Hospitality Committee. I couldn't do it without your help!

There are no scheduled events for November, but as you know, that can change at a moment's notice. If any needs arise that we can assist with, please don't hesitate to reach out—email me at rdandz@gmail.com, call or text **803-622-2929**, or contact the church office.

Have a blessed Thanksgiving,

Debbie

ALTAR GUILD

Thank you to the Altar Guild members who served in October and helped prepare the church for worship. We continue to be in the season of Pentecost which ends on November 23. The behind-the-scenes work you perform each week, including the Wednesday noon service, to prepare for worship and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, is a rewarding act of love.

November Volunteer Schedule: Nov 2 – Lisa Clarkson; Nov 9 – Fran & Al Burnett; Nov 16 – Corrie Blasi; Nov 23 – Rita McCaskill & Betsy Cate; Nov 30 – Lisa Clarkson.

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

THE GOOD NEWS GRAPEVINE

If you have news about yourself or your family you wish to share for the December newsletter, please send it to the church office no later than November 20th at: stjohscongaree@gmail.com.

NEWS FROM YOUR ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN

The ECW met on Sunday, October 19 at 11:45 am. Here are the highlights of the meeting:

- The ECW's Bake/Craft sale, held on October 18, was a huge success. We made a profit of a little over \$1000 which will go towards funding our outreach projects. A big "THANK YOU" to everyone who contributed items for the sale and also to those who did some shopping. We truly appreciate your support!
- A clean up of Sallie's Garden was scheduled for Wednesday, October 22 at 9:00 am.
- Plans were made to set up and decorate the parish hall for Homecoming.
- The ECW will provide desserts for the Women's Shelter's Thanksgiving dinner.
- We will contact Gadsden Elementary to coordinate adopting 2 families at Christmas.

Our next ECW meeting will be held on Sunday, November 16 at 11:45 am. Please plan to attend and be a part of our busy group.

Peace and Love - Julie Claytor, Rita McCaskill, Fran Burnett and Mary Ann Hiott

CAMP GRAVATT SCHOLARSHIPS

Gravatt Camp and Conference Center, located in Aiken, SC, is home to the Episcopal summer youth camp. Registration for the 2026 summer camp sessions will open in November. If you have a child who is interested in attending Gravatt's summer camp you should complete the online registration as soon as it opens. Camp slots fill up quickly. You can go to www.campgravatt.org to learn more about camp registration, cost, and the 2026 session dates. You can also google Camp Gravatt 2026 summer camp registration. The 2026 camp registration application will probably be available by the end of October.

The ECW will be offering scholarships to help cover some of the cost of a summer camp session at Camp Gravatt. Please let Julie Claytor or any ECW member know by the end of October if you would like your child to be considered for one of our camp scholarships.

PARISH DIRECTORY UPDATES

Sandy Yuille – new phone: 839.329.7625 & new email: sandyyuille74@gmail.com

Brittany Claytor Mullins, 275 Bickley View Ct., Chapin, SC 29036

Sarah Claytor Williams - 105 Morning Shore Ct., Lexington, SC 29072

Dr. Abby Claytor - 36 Hawkhorn Ct., Savannah, GA 31407; alc0088@auburn.edu

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

Our Backpack program at Gadsden Elementary has its origins in "Feeding America" which is the largest charity working to end hunger in the United States. All of us at St. John's support the program with our yearly pledges through the "Mission and Outreach" budget item. A big thank you to those who support this program additionally by bringing items for the bags or by donating monetarily. Your donations are important and appreciated. It is also helpful if you would check to see if assistance is needed to pack the bags on Sunday. The pantry is organized to make this task easy. Thank you all.

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

Gadsden Elementary Little Free Library

The Gadsden Little Free Library is back in operation. Deliveries of books for each classroom are made once a month and the students really seem to be enjoying the reading material. There is now a student in attendance who is legally blind and learning to read Braille. I have been able to add some books in Braille to the Little Free Library that this student will be able to enjoy. We have a good supply of books for now, but we will always accept donations of new or gently used books appropriate for children between the ages of 3 and 11. Please let me know if you would like to know more about this project. Thank you for all of your support!

Julie Claytor



NOVEMBER CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS IN NOVEMBER

1	Jason Davis	11	Debby Watson
2	Betty Thompson	22	Debbie Davis
3	Eva O'Brian	24	Molly Floyd
4	Cooper Edens	25	Libby Byars
6	Scott Anderson	30	Natalie Hazen
9	Amanda Nichols	30	Gray Thompson, Sr
9	Debbie Morris		

ANNIVERSARIES IN NOVEMBER

7	Blanche & Jed Holliday
30	Wendy & Gray Thompson

WORSHIP TEAM SCHEDULE FOR NOVEMBER

	<u>WORSHIP LEADER</u>	<u>LECTOR</u>	<u>VIDEOGRAPHER</u>	<u>GREETER</u>
November 2	Jim Hiott	Julie Claytor	Frank Claytor	Julie & Frank Claytor
November 9	Van Lott	Aaron Floyd	Selman Watson	John Davis
November 16	Bud McCaskill	Rita McCaskill	John Davis	Debbie Davis
November 23	Fran Burnett	Bev Watkins	Jose Peraza	Mary Ann Hiott
November 30	Lisa Clarkson	Louise Barker	Jose Peraza	Louise Barker

Gifts received from September 20 through October 26, 2025

In memory of Margaret Sue Martin

Given by Anne and Van Lott

In honor of Lynn Davis

Given by Louise Barker

FINANCIAL REPORT through September 30, 2025

Operating Fund Checking Account:

September income: \$12,514.21

September disbursements: \$12,100.12

Difference: \$414.09

1/1/2025 through 9/30/2025:

Income: \$96,316.82

Disbursements: \$118,235.46

Difference: **-\$21,918.64**

Cemetery & Grounds Checking Acct:

September income: \$400.13

September disbursements: \$670.00

Difference: **-\$269.87**

1/1/2025 through 9/30/2025:

Income: \$6733.83

Disbursements: \$7089.99

Difference: **-\$356.16**

Building Fund Checking Account:

September income: \$0.02

September disbursements: \$0

Difference: **-\$0.02**

1/1/2025 through 9/30/2025:

Income: \$850.71

Disbursements: \$21,880.48

Difference: **-\$21,029.77**

ST. JOHN'S PRAYER LIST

<u>Please Pray For:</u>	<u>Requested by:</u>
Brenda Manning	Ed Manning
Chris McVey	Debbie Morris
Jo Curtis	Parish
Mary Clarkson	Parish
Debby Watson	Parish
Judy Addison	Parish
Stan Ingram	Debbie Morris
Michelle	Jane Rye
Holly Davis	Parish
Chris	Lloyd & Sara Ash
Maria Brady	Debbie Davis
John Train	Selman Watson
Sylvan Plaia aka Lucky	Butch & Judy Addison
Don Burton	Selman Watson
Susan Azukas	Corrie Blasi
Tom Moore	Carol Fowles
Austin Mintz	John & Lynn Davis
Lesley Antley Marshall	Annie Antley
Roy Brazzell	Tammy Brazzell
Heather Tsahalís	Corrie Blasi
Joseph Brazitis	Holly Brazitis
Jane Rye	Parish
Bill Spoonhoward	Lisa Clarkson
Betty Thompson	Parish
Nellie Taylor	Parish
Nancy Vosbaugh	Sarah Murphy
Jimmy & Brandy Hughes	Rita McCaskill
The McGovern Family	Corrie Blasi
Dorothy Kendall	Carol Fowles
Julie Peterson	Sandy Yuille
Don Critchfield	Bev Watkins
Kaynel Boykin	Rita & Bud McCaskill
Penny Teague	Debbie Davis
Jewell Sams	The Floyd Family
Annie Antley	Parish
Karen Niehaus	Debbie Davis
Laura Timmons	Lisa Clarkson
Jean Leitner	Drew Robb
Jay Philips	John Lott
Charlie & Phyllis King	Julie Claytor

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.