

Amens & Alleluias – October 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 – October 2025

Dear Friends,

Happy fall! I hope that you are enjoying cooler temperatures, football watching, and the beginning of school. From my spot at the rector's desk, fall tends to go very quickly! It will be Christmas before we know it. I hope that you are savoring every moment of this transitionary and renewing season.

There is much going on at St. John's! We have begun new ministries for youth and children, including a children's sermon, new acolytes and lectors, and our first Sunday School class during which our young people got creative (and maybe a little messy). Check out their work on the wall of the nursery room! They will be painting a part the first creation story (Genesis 1) during each Sunday School session this fall. I am also delighted to begin working with our adults on exploring the Nicene Creed during our fall formation series. Bring your questions!

October is traditionally the month during which most of the Episcopal Church focuses on "Stewardship." Stewardship is a general term describing a ministry of giving and stewarding our church for the next generations. It is a time when we give thanks for all that God has blessed us with and challenge ourselves to give of our time, money, and talent to the church for the upcoming year. This year, with the help of our campaign chair Julie Claytor, we have chosen a theme for Stewardship: "For All the Saints." As part of our reflection on giving this year, I hope that we can think about the saints in our lives: those who brought us to faith or showed us how to live in a Christlike way for others. In their honor, please consider how best you can give to St. John's for 2026. Each year, I am astounded and thankful for your generosity – there is a strong Spirit in this place! And, from the bottom of my heart, *thank you* for all that you do and give.

You will receive pledge cards and a thoughtful letter from Julie in your mailboxes over the coming days. You can return your pledge cards to the church via mail or by placing them in the offering plate. We are also delighted to offer an online giving option this year for those who would like to make recurring pledge donations. There are a link and instructions in the newsletter. We will bless the pledges during our All Saints services on November 2.

Thank you for all that you do and for all that you are. I am proud of and grateful for you always. My door is always open!

In Christ,

Katie+

October is designated as Stewardship month at St. John's and is a time when we reflect upon the many gifts we have been given by God. This year our theme is "For all the Saints," and we encourage you to think about all of the saints in your life who have inspired your Godly living. You should have received your stewardship letter and pledge card in the mail. Please prayerfully consider how you wish to express your thanksgiving for the gifts God has bestowed upon you. Fill out the pledge card and return it to church by Sunday, November 2. You may send your pledge card through the mail or put it in the collection plate at church. Extra pledge cards will be available in the narthex. Thank you for your continued support of God's ministries at St. John's through your faithful pledge. We are blessed with a church full of saints just looking for ways to make our church, community, and world a better place. To donate online, go to:



<https://tinyurl.com/stjohnspledge2026> or scan this QR code:

In Christ,

Julie Claytor, Stewardship Chair

ST. JOHN'S OCTOBER CALENDAR AT A GLIMPSE

Wednesday, Oct 1 – Noon Eucharist

Sunday, Oct 5 – Adult Formation #1, 9am (Nicene Creed study)
– Stewardship Campaign Kickoff
– Worship at 10:30am

Monday, Oct 6 – Vestry Meeting at 6:30pm

Wednesday, Oct 8 – Noon Eucharist

Sunday, Oct 12 – Adult Formation #2, 9am (Nicene Creed study)
– Worship at 10:30am

Wednesday, Oct 15 – Noon Eucharist

Saturday, Oct 18 – ECW Craft/Bake Sale 8:30am until at Mr. Bunky's

Sunday, Oct 19 – Adult Formation #3, 9am (Nicene Creed study)
– Worship at 10:30am
– ECW meeting at 11:45am

Wednesday, Oct 22 – Noon Eucharist

Sunday, Oct 26 – Adult Formation #4, 9am (Nicene Creed study)
– Worship at 10:30am
– Covered Dish Luncheon at 11:45am
– Sunday School from 12:00-1:30pm

Wednesday, Oct 29 – Noon Eucharist

SENIOR WARDEN'S THOUGHTS

Mark your calendars! Our Vestry and the Eastover Ruritan Club have set our 2026 Oyster Roast and Shrimp Boil for March 7, 2026. The thinking was that we wanted it to be a little cooler, so we hope this date will fill the bill. Please support this project as you did last year and I am sure it will be a great success! St. Matthews Anglican Church (home of the Ukuloonies) is having their Oyster Roast and Shrimp Boil November 22 if you would like to check it out. Congratulations to Rev. Katie for the training of Church volunteers in the last few weeks. It was enjoyable and less onerous than in years past. Christian Formation for adults and young people will start before this goes out, so please support this important program of the Church with your prayers and attendance. The nominations committee for 2026 has been formed and it is composed of myself, Selman Watson, and Billy Cate. We will be making nominations for Senior Warden, 2 Vestry positions, and approximately 8 delegates to our Diocesan convention. Please speak to any member of the nominating committee if you are interested in serving. Thank you so much for all that each of you do; it makes St. John's, Congaree a very special place! Call me if I can be of assistance. See you in Church!

Jim Hiott. 803-783-4214

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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

Vestry Meeting Highlights

September 15, 2025

- Children's Sunday School begins on September 28 and Adult Formation begins on October 5 at 9:00 am.
- The junior warden will bush-hog around the outside of the cemetery wall in order to keep weeds and other growth contained.
- The Shrimp and Oyster Roast will take place on March 7, 2026.
- Homecoming will be the first Sunday in November and planning has begun.
- The Diocese now requires background checks for clergy, staff, children's ministry volunteers, treasurer, and wardens. The rector will be our administrator with the church paying the fees.
- The annual meeting will be held Advent 1, November 30, and Jim Hiott, Selman Watson, and Billy Cate will be asked to serve on the nominating committee. Senior Warden, two vestry members, and convention delegates will be elected by the congregation.
- The Stewardship Drive, once again chaired by Julie Claytor, will kick-off on October 5. The pledge intake will be blessed at the All Saints' Day worship service.
- The next vestry meeting will be scheduled for Monday, October 6, at 6:30 pm.

HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE



The Hospitality Committee's mission is to provide comfort and nourishment during difficult times and times of joy. If a need arises for you or someone you know, please email me, rdandz@gmail.com or call/text 803-622-2929 or contact the church office. If you would like to be added to the circle of volunteers, also please let me know. Everyone is welcome to serve!

There are no upcoming events scheduled for October but, as you know, that can always change in a moment's notice. If any needs arise in which we can help, please let us know.

Thank you,
Debbie Davis

ALTAR GUILD

Thank you to the Altar Guild members who served in September and helped prepare the church for worship during a very busy month. 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.

October Volunteer Schedule: Oct 5 – Louise Barker; Oct 12 – Fran & Al Burnett; Oct 19 – Lisa Clarkson;
Oct 26 – Julie & Frank Claytor.

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

On August 7, 2025, Scott Tatum proudly earned his Master of Science degree in Fire Executive Leadership – Emergency Services Management from Columbia Southern University. This achievement reflects his dedication to advancing his leadership skills and his commitment to serving both his profession and community.

Rev. Katie and Garrett Ayers joined the Beaver family in Annapolis, MD, to celebrate the wedding of Katie's brother, Michael, on Friday 9/26. Michael and his new wife, Lauryl, hosted a small gathering of family and friends after the wedding for a delicious seafood dinner, cake, and toasts.

If you have news about yourself or your family you wish to share for the November newsletter, please send it to the church office no later than October 22nd at: stjohnscongarree@gmail.com.

NEWS FROM YOUR ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN

The ECW met on Sunday, September 21 at 11:45 am. Here are the highlights of the meeting:

- The ECW's fundraiser brunch, held on September 7, was a huge success. Donations amounted to \$469.75. Thank you to all who cooked and attended the brunch. We appreciate your support!
- Final preparations for the ice cream social were discussed. The ice cream social was held along with the September covered dish lunch to thank everyone at St. John's for supporting the ECW during the past year.
- Plans were made for the ECW Bake Sale, which is scheduled for Saturday, October 18 at Mr. Bunky's.
- Sallie's Garden Clean Up will take place on Saturday, October 25.

Our next ECW meeting will be held on Sunday, October 19 at 11:45 am. Please plan to attend and help us plan for Homecoming, Christmas, and the nomination of new ECW officers.

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

ECW FALL BAKE/CRAFT SALE AT MR. BUNKY'S

Saturday, October 18, 8:30am – 1:00pm

Fall is here! The ECW will hold its annual Bake/Craft Sale on Saturday, October 18 at Mr. Bunky's. A delicious assortment of breads, muffins, cookies, cakes, and pies will be available along with fall and holiday crafts. Let an ECW member know if you would like to contribute something yummy or a craft to the sale. Even more important – come to the bake/craft sale and purchase a sweet treat while supporting the ECW. The bake sale will begin at 8:30am and continue until 1:00 pm or until we sell out (whichever comes first). If you are unable to bring your goodies the morning of, please let us know if we can pick up from you or you can drop off your donations at the church parish hall by Thursday the 16th.

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.

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. 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.



OCTOBER CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS IN OCTOBER

1	Louise Barker	14	Drew Robb
3	Parris Claytor Balazs	17	Tegan Floyd
4	Sara Ash	20	Rusty Davis
6	Lynn Davis	23	Gina Byars
8	Abby Claytor	24	Blanche Holliday
8	Jose Peraza	25	Corrie Blasi
9	Carol Fowles	27	Charlie Blasi
9	Nicklos Tafel	28	Biff Boyer
10	Frank Claytor	29	John Grimbball
10	Alicia Mikell	30	Mattie Anderson

ANNIVERSARIES IN OCTOBER

17	Olivia & Scott Tatum
19	Dorothy & Ed Kendall
21	Holly & Jason Davis

SERVANTS IN OCTOBER

	<u>WORSHIP LEADER</u>	<u>LECTOR</u>	<u>VIDEOGRAPHER</u>	<u>GREETER</u>
October 5	Van Lott	Julie Rose	Jose Peraza	Debbie Davis
October 12	Bud McCaskill	Rita McCaskill	Frank Claytor	Julie & Frank Claytor
October 19	Jim Hiott	Ayden Floyd	Van Lott	Mary Ann Hiott
October 26	Fran Burnett	John Lott	John Davis	Louise Barker

CHURCH DIRECTORY UPDATES

Email address for Garrett Davis: davisgarrett171@gmail.com

Gifts received from August 20 through September 20, 2025

In memory of Miriam Parris Claytor

Given by Judy and Butch Addison

FINANCIAL REPORT through August 31, 2025

Operating Fund Checking Account:

August income: \$11,026.24

August disbursements: \$11,239.06

Difference: **-\$212.82**

1/1/2025 through 8/31/2025:

Income: \$83,802.61

Disbursements: \$106,281.60

Difference: **-\$22,478.99**

Cemetery & Grounds Checking Acct:

August income: \$300.13

August disbursements: \$670.00

Difference: **-\$369.87**

1/1/2025 through 8/31/2025:

Income: \$6333.70

Disbursements: \$6419.99

Difference: **-\$86.29**

Building Fund Checking Account:

August income: \$500.03

August disbursements: \$2723.76

Difference: **-\$2223.73**

1/1/2025 through 8/31/2025:

Income: \$850.69

Disbursements: \$21,880.48

Difference: **-\$21,029.79**

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
Allen Echols	Louise Barker
Dorothy Kendall	Carol Fowles
Julie Peterson	Sandy Yuille
Don Critchfield	Bev Watkins
Lily Publicover	Molly Floyd
Julie McCaskill	Rita & Bud McCaskill
Kaynel Boykin	Rita & Bud McCaskill
Penny Teague	Debbie Davis
The John & Lynn Davis Family	Parish
Jewell Sams	The Floyd Family

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.