

Amens & Alleluias – January 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.stjohnscongaree.net – Office email: stjohnscongaree@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 – January 2026

Dear St. John's,

Happy New Year! I hope you had some rest and some joy over Christmas and feel refreshed for a new year at St. John's. Christmas Eve service here was magical – thank you for everyone who helped decorate the altar, served the people, and helped welcome visitors. Each year, I remain so proud of what our community shows to the world: the same kindness and welcome that we would show the Holy Family were they to wind up on our doorstep.

There are many exciting things to look forward to this year! Lent comes around a little earlier, beginning with Ash Wednesday on February 18th. Easter Sunday is on April 5th. As much as I enjoy the contemplative nature of Lent, I always strive to immerse myself into the beauty of the season after Epiphany and not skip over it. What does it mean that we open our new year with the story of the magi traveling to bring gifts to the Christ child? Perhaps it is setting us up for a journey, asking us to trust God to direct our lives. Perhaps we are being called to give more to someone in need. Perhaps it is a sign for us to use incense in church! (Just kidding...)

In our tradition, we affirm Baptism as the primary entry point for a life in Christ. I am so excited to be celebrating baptisms this spring for some of our members. If you are not baptized and wish to learn more about the process of becoming baptized, please reach out to me any time. When we seek closer relationship to Christ, we will find him.

I am thrilled to welcome Lisa Clarkson into her new role as Senior Warden, and to have Drew Robb and Tammy Brazzell on the vestry. Please pray for your new vestry as we set our goals and intentions for St. John's this month. We are returning to the post-holiday "business as usual" part of the year, and I hope you will join me in faithful optimism for what lies ahead at our small but mighty church.

God's blessings,

Katie+



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 JANUARY CALENDAR AT A GLIMPSE

Thursday, Jan 1	- Happy New Year
Sunday, Jan 4	- Worship at 10:30am
Monday, Jan 5	-Vestry Meeting 6:30pm
Wednesday, Jan 7	-Noon Eucharist
Sunday, Jan 11	-Worship at 10:30am with Holy Baptism and reception to follow
Wednesday, Jan 14	-Noon Eucharist
Sunday, Jan 18	-Worship at 10:30am
	-ECW Meeting at 11:30am
Wednesday, Jan 21	-Noon Eucharist
Sunday, Jan 25	-Morning Prayer (Katie away)
	-Covered Dish Luncheon
Wednesday, Jan 28	-NO Noon Eucharist

CELEBRATION OF HOLY BAPTISM ON JANUARY 11

Julian (Bubba) and Julie Rose will be baptized on Sunday, January 11 during our 10:30am service. Please join us in praying with them as they prepare to commit themselves to Christ and your presence on Sunday the 11th will be especially appreciated. A reception will follow in Zion Hall.

Would you like to be baptized?

If you are not baptized but would like to be, let Katie know! We will be offering baptisms during the Easter Season and on Sunday, May 24th.



A new year and a new role for me as the Senior Warden at St. Johns. I am honored to assume this role in the life of our church following the many others before me who have given of their time and their commitment to the mission of St. John's. According to the website of Episcopal Church... *the Senior Warden is the primary lay leader working closely with the Rector. The duties include partnering with the Rector to shape and implement the church's mission, vision, and goals; act as a liaison by serving as a key communicator and trusted advisor to the Rector, offering counsel and feedback; and to support the Rector in overseeing the congregation's spiritual and practical needs, acting as a sounding board and representing congregational interests.* With your prayers and support and the guidance of the Holy Spirit I will do my best to fulfill those duties. I know in the upcoming year we will continue the amazing work we have been given to do in spreading God's love in our community.

Thank you for your trust and faith in me and our shared mission for St. John's. Lisa Clarkson, 803-237-2892

JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

Happy new Year!! The project to remove rotted wood and the placement of bronze metal caps on the church's parapet walls has been completed. This update not only looks nice but will serve as a long-term solution to the wood rot on the top of the church. Please know that I am actively working the bug/wasp issue by setting off bombs and trying to find their entry points. Everything else seems to be working and running smoothly on the church property and at the rectory. 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

December 4, 2025

- No formation classes will be held during Advent.
- Central Roofing and Contracting will be replacing rotten wood on the church and adding bronze caps to the church roof.
- The vestry elected Anne Lott as treasurer for another one-year term.
- The next vestry meeting will be Monday, January 5, at 6:30 pm.

HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE



In anticipation of another year filled with opportunities to serve the people of St. John's and our surrounding community, I want to thank everyone who serves on the Hospitality Committee. Your willingness to step up to fill any need to show our care at St. John's is very much appreciated. Watch for the possible first opportunity to serve this year by way of Baptisms. When a need arises, I will reach out to the circle of volunteers as soon as information is available. Again, thank you for your continued support and Happy New Year!

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any needs or to join the Hospitality Committee – email at rdandz@gmail.com, call/text 803-622-2929, or call the church office.

Debbie Davis

January 2026 Newsletter

Page 4

ALTAR GUILD

Thank you to the Altar Guild members who served in December. It was a busy month for volunteers with Advent and Christmas services. 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 and does not go unnoticed. The list of those giving poinsettias for the Christmas Eve service is on the last page of the newsletter. Many thanks! Beginning in January, the cost to donate flowers for the altar is \$50. There is a sign-up sheet in Zion Hall. Currently, available dates are January 4th and 18th. Flowers are being given on the 11th and on the 25th.

January Volunteer Schedule: Jan 4 – Louise Barker; Jan 11 – Fran & Al Burnett; Jan 18 – Lisa Clarkson; Jan 25 – 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, Altar Guild Director

NEWS FROM YOUR ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN

During December, the ECW organized three very worthwhile Christmas outreach projects. We were able to provide Christmas gifts to 8 children at Gadsden Elementary, gifts for 10 children of the residents at the Women's Shelter, and also put together 12 Christmas shoe boxes for Senior Resources full of toiletries, snacks, and other personal items. These projects were successful because of your generosity and willingness to spend a portion of your time shopping for some very special people. Thank you for helping to make this Christmas merry for so many.

Our next ECW meeting will be held on Sunday, January 18 at 9:30 am. Please join us as we plan for 2026!
Peace and Love - Julie Claytor, Rita McCaskill, Fran Burnett, and Corrie Blasi

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

How much did you eat during the holidays? Did you ever feel hungry? It is hard to imagine being hungry and not finding enough to satisfy the feeling. This is why we continue to support the Backpack program at Gadsden Elementary School where we furnish supplemental weekend meals for 20 students each week. We hope to promote healthy eating habits as we pack the bags each week. Items donated should be nonperishable, single servings, and easy to prepare as oftentimes the children do this themselves.

Suggestions can be found on our website at <https://www.stjohnscongaree.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 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

January 2026 Newsletter

Page 5

THE GOOD NEWS GRAPEVINE

THANK YOU: A note from your Admin. Asst. – Thank you so much for your support and encouragement throughout the years I have been here with you in this capacity. It is my great honor and pleasure to serve you in this holy place. Your

Christmas monetary gift was well received with my thanks. Thank you also to the Christmas Angel who left a "Jesus ❤️ You" doll on my desk! God bless you all and may 2026 be a very good year for you and yours. Louise

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



JANUARY CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS IN JANUARY

3	Holly Brazitis	11	Garrett Davis
4	Jo Ann Curtis	13	Treye Byars
4	Sheryl Moureaux	21	Jennifer Tafel
6	Ashlee Thompson	27	John McCaskill
7	Bob Harding	28	Tina Rose
7	Bud McCaskill	31	Annie Antley

ANNIVERSARIES IN JANUARY

1	Alicia & Jenks Mikell
18	Carolyn & John Grimbball
31	Katie & Garrett Ayers

WORSHIP TEAM SCHEDULE FOR JANUARY

	<u>WORSHIP LEADER</u>	<u>LECTOR</u>	<u>VIDEOGRAPHER</u>	<u>GREETER</u>
January 4	Louise Barker	Alex Peraza	Jose Peraza	John Davis
January 11	Lisa Clarkson	Garrett Davis	John Davis	Debbie Davis
January 18	Bud McCaskill	Rita McCaskill	Frank Claytor	Frank & Julie Claytor
January 25	Fran Burnett	Aaron Floyd	Selman Watson	Mary Ann Hiott

Gifts received from November 19 through December 28, 2025

In memory of Sarah Clarkson Moore

Given by Charles W. and Frances Taylor Meissner

In memory of Frances Wallace Taylor

Given by Charles W. and Frances Taylor Meissner

In memory of John Taylor

Given by Charles W. and Frances Taylor Meissner

In memory of the C. T. Weston Family

Given by Mary P. Weston to the St. John's Foundation

In honor of Charles Smith

Given by Mackie and Pat O'Keefe

FINANCIAL REPORT through November 30, 2025

Operating Fund Checking Account:

November income: \$19,533.87

November disbursements: \$10,918.78

Difference: \$8615.09

1/1/2025 through 11/30/2025:

Income: \$122,908.90

Disbursements: \$142,005.89

Difference: **-\$19,096.99**

Cemetery & Grounds Checking Acct:

November income: \$1106.79

November disbursements: \$670.00

Difference: \$436.79

1/1/2025 through 11/30/2025:

Income: \$7740.74

Disbursements: \$8429.99

Difference: **-\$689.25**

Building Fund Checking Account:

November income: \$6000.03

(\$6000 transfer from savings)

November disbursements: \$180.00

Difference: \$5,820.03

1/1/2025 through 11/30/2025:

Income: \$6775.76

Disbursements: \$22,060.48

Difference: **-\$15,284.72**

ST. JOHN'S PRAYER LIST

<u>Please Pray For:</u>	<u>Requested by:</u>
Brenda Manning	Ed Manning
Chris McVey	Debbie Morris
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
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 Tsahalis	Corrie Blasi
Joseph Brazitis	Holly Brazitis
Bill Spoonhoward	Lisa Clarkson
Betty Thompson	Parish
Nancy Vosbaugh	Sarah Murphy
Jimmy & Brandy Hughes	Rita McCaskill
The McGovern Family	Corrie Blasi
Julie Peterson	Sandy Yuille
Don Critchfield	Bev Watkins
Penny Teague	Debbie Davis
Jewell Sams	The Floyd Family
Annie Antley	Parish
Karen Niehaus	Debbie Davis
Laura Timmons	Lisa Clarkson
Jay Philips	John Lott
Charlie & Phyllis King	Julie Claytor
Jacob & Angela Pendleton	Lisa Clarkson
The Owens Family	Bev Watkins
Clay Davis	Holly & Jason Davis
Terry Catoe	The Catoe Family
Bertha Fox	Nora & Tommy Claytor
The Bennett Family	Sheryl Moureaux
John Grimball	Parish
Mike Kelly	Rusty Davis

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.



2025 - POINSETTIAS IN MEMORY OF:

Given for:	Given by:
M.R. & Annie Addison	Judy & Butch Addison
William P. & Julia Raines	Judy & Butch Addison
Margaret Sue Martin	Louise Barker
Mr. & Mrs. Charles J. Cate	Betsy & Billy Cate
Mr. & Mrs. John W. Walker	Betsy & Billy Cate
Thomas & Ann Carros	Lisa Clarkson
John G. Clarkson III	Lisa Clarkson
Mr. & Mrs. W. R. Claytor	Julie & Frank Claytor
Mr. & Mrs. Fred O'Connell	Julie & Frank Claytor
Jay & Sue Marshall	Holly & Jason Davis
Mr. & Mrs. Glass	Ann & Bob Harding
Mr. & Mrs. Goolsby	Ann & Bob Harding
Ed & Avis Hiott	Mary Ann & Jim Hiott
G. Joe & Elizabeth Topshe	Mary Ann & Jim Hiott
John Gorman Clarkson	Anne & Van Lott
Sarah Fellers Clarkson	Anne & Van Lott
Charles Frederick Cooper	Anne & Van Lott
Amelia Pringle Hopkins	Anne & Van Lott
Sally Hopkins Livingston	Anne & Van Lott
Nancy Baggott Lott	Anne & Van Lott
Van Dorn Lott, Jr.	Anne & Van Lott
Sarah Clarkson Moore	Anne & Van Lott
Thomas Thompson Moore	Anne & Van Lott
Kaynell Boykin	Rita & Bud McCaskill
The Rev. Joseph E. & Mary Sturtevant	Sarah & Don Murphy
Tim Watkins	Bev Watkins
Dr. & Mrs. C. Tucker Weston, Jr.	Mary Weston
Paula Hanckel Weston	Mary Weston
John Stuart Weston	Mary Weston
Mr. & Mrs. C. T. Weston	Mary Weston

2025 - POINSETTIAS IN HONOR OF:

Given for:	Given by:
Judy Addison	Butch Addison
Trey Addison & Family	Judy & Butch Addison
Amanda Nichols & Family	Judy & Butch Addison
John & Lynn Davis & Family	Louise Barker
Rusty & Debbie Davis & Family	Louise Barker
William, Eliza & John David Cate	Betsy & Billy Cate
Catie & Perry Hesley	Betsy & Billy Cate
John & Walker Grove	Betsy & Billy Cate
Mary Clarkson	Lisa Clarkson
All Tafel/Clarkson children and grands	Lisa Clarkson
In Thanksgiving for Family & Blessings	Sarah & Don Murphy