

# Amens & Alleluias – June 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 – June 2026**

Dear friends,

I am aggrieved that my last couple of months with you have started already. Back in Lent, it felt far away, but time has been feeling relentless and in just a few weeks, we will be saying goodbye. Until then, we will have much time to spend together to continue serving the Lord and celebrating all of the gifts he has given us.

May was an amazing month at St. John's. We began with six baptisms, welcoming new Christians into this large, amazing, messy, beautiful family of God. We ended the month contemplating the Trinity and sharing a meal. In between, we had a lively youth Sunday, and a sermon delivered by one of our own high schoolers. You know this already, but I am so proud of you, of this community – these are all healthy signs of church vitality. The Spirit is moving here and will abide with you, no matter who stands behind the altar on Sunday.

While it may be tempting to say a long goodbye, my own goal in the next few weeks is to remain focused on the Gospel – worshipping, serving, learning, and being together. When I find myself thinking ahead, pre-grieving my departure, I ask God to help me remain present. And I pray the same for you. Pray for presence of mind and spirit by taking a deep breath and looking around you. Pick out one or two things you see or touch or smell or taste and offer up gratitude for it. The smell after rain, the magnolias blooming, the first sip of coffee, rolling your car windows down, laughing with a friend, the beauty of a hymn or prayer. I believe that when we are mindful of our present moments, we find even more hidden joy.

As Christ asks, “Who, by worrying, can add a single hour to their life?”

Your vestry is already considering the upcoming transition and making necessary adjustments to ensure that services proceed as scheduled, and there is full pastoral coverage. Remember that your wardens, treasurer, and parish administrator will be taking on some extra duties after I leave, and so please thank them and step up to help out when asked. As I've said before, I have no doubt that St. John's is capable of carrying itself through this transition, and I know that there are beautiful things in store for you.

I promise that there will be a time for goodbyes and a chance to say the things that need to be said and to give thanks for our time together. There will be more information coming from the vestry very soon. I hope you will be able to be present at my last Sunday which is July 26<sup>th</sup>.

Until then, my focus remains on you! I am grateful to God for each remaining day.

In Christ,

Katie+

## **PENTECOST & YOUTH SUNDAY**

**SUNDAY, MAY 24th**



What a fabulous Sunday we had last week celebrating Pentecost and our youth. Many young folks jumped in and assisted Rev. Katie with the service. From the acolytes, the cross and torch bearers, the lector, the many small hands at the communion table, to Ayden Floyd who delivered a heartfelt sermon - thank you for making Sunday so joyful! Lest we forget - the picnic lunch and softball game rounded off a glorious day! Thanks to all the behind-the-scenes workers and organizers who made it possible!

### **FROM YOUR SENIOR WARDEN**

Easter has come to an end with Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit. Youth Sunday was an example of how the Spirit is moving through St. Johns. To see all the children, from the youngest to the oldest, participating in the service is a sign of an ever-expanding God within our midst. A special thank you to Ayden for sharing his encounter with the Holy Spirit and how that has brought meaning to his life. It is our job to nurture the Spirit and let it lead us in new and exciting ways.

There will be more information coming about our celebrations with Katie before she and Garrett leave for Princeton. After they leave, we will begin the process of considering our next rector. I am currently working on finding supply priests to cover Sunday worship. Remember to keep St. John's and the vestry in your prayers. 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

### **HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE**

“June is the love song written by nature”

Summer has officially arrived! With school out and vacations beginning, we hope everyone is enjoying a slower pace and taking time to relax.

While things are a bit quieter for the Hospitality team this month, we are always here to help if a need arises. Please do not hesitate to reach out—email me at [rdandz@gmail.com](mailto:rdandz@gmail.com), call or text **803-622-2929**, or contact the church office.

Have a blessed month ~ Debbie



Wednesday, Jun 3 -Vestry Meeting at 6:30pm  
 Sunday, Jun 7 -Worship at 10:30am, Holy Eucharist Rite II  
 -Lemonade Under the Tree following worship  
 Wednesday, Jun 10 -Noon Eucharist  
 Sunday, Jun 14 -Worship at 10:30am, Holy Eucharist Rite II  
 -Lemonade Under the Tree following worship  
 Wednesday, Jun 17 -Noon Eucharist  
 Sunday, Jun 21 -Worship at 10:30am, Holy Eucharist Rite II  
 -Lemonade Under the Tree following worship  
 Wednesday, Jun 24 -Noon Eucharist  
 Sunday, Jun 28 -Worship at 10:30am, Holy Eucharist Rite II, Supply Priest or MP  
 -Covered dish luncheon at 11:45am

**VESTRY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**

May 4, 2026

- Forty Wal-Mart gift cards at \$25 each to be used as spring testing incentives were delivered to Gadsden Elementary. They were greatly appreciated.
- The junior warden will replace the sink and faucet in the sacristy later in the month. The hot water will be turned back on.
- May 24th is Pentecost and Youth Sunday and the parish picnic with softball game. Hamburgers and hot dogs will be provided with members bringing the fixings and desserts.
- The senior warden will meet with the Rev. Canon Janey Wilson to discuss our transition options.
- The rector wants to secure a supply priest for June 28 when she will be away. In addition, the rector is creating a transition document with information and passwords that will be needed upon her departure. She is also getting the parish register up to date.
- It seems that an outside door to Zion Hall was left propped open, a critter got inside, and the alarm went off. Jim and Mary Ann Hiott met a deputy and secured the building, noting that nothing seemed to be out of order. The junior warden suggested that the last person to leave the building will secure all the doors and set the alarm properly.

The next vestry meeting will be Monday, June 1, at 6:30 pm.

**CHURCH DIRECTORY UPDATES**

BARNWELL, Brian & Mary Ellen  
 Ford, Beau  
 1992 Congaree Road  
 Eastover, SC 29044  
 Brian's Cell: (803) 707-0414  
 Mary Ellen's Cell: (404) 234-3526  
[maryellenbarnwell@gmail.com](mailto:maryellenbarnwell@gmail.com)

DAVIS, Garrett & Chelsea  
 Sophia, Ellie, Austyn  
 153 Out Back Circle  
 Lamar, SC 29069  
 Garrett Cell: (803) 414-8310  
 Garrett's email: [davisgarrett171@gmail.com](mailto:davisgarrett171@gmail.com)

MEADOWCROFT, The Rev. Jeffrey  
 8811 Cypress Lakes Drive, Villa 507  
 Raleigh, NC 27615  
 (864) 982.0573  
[Jmeadowcroft1@gmail.com](mailto:Jmeadowcroft1@gmail.com)

If there are any changes in your personal information, please let us know at 803.776.9292 or [stjohnscongarree@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnscongarree@gmail.com).

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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:



In Christ, Julie Claytor, Stewardship Chair

### **ALTAR GUILD**

Thank you to the Altar Guild members who served in May. We observed Easter 5, 6, & 7 Sundays, Pentecost, and Trinity Sunday. We celebrated 6 Baptisms on May 3 and Youth Sunday on May 24. Flowers were given on May 3 in honor of those being Baptized. Remember, you can sign up to give flowers for the altar at the bulletin board in Zion Hall. Sundays in the month of June available for giving are the 7<sup>th</sup>, and 28<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.

#### **JUNE VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE**

June 7 – Louise Barker  
June 14 – Julie & Frank Claytor  
June 21 – Lisa Clarkson  
June 28 – 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

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

The ECW met on Sunday, May 17 at 11:45 pm. Here are the highlights of our meeting:

- The brunch that the ECW hosted on Sunday, May 17 raised \$257.00 that will be used to support our many outreach projects. A big thank you goes to everyone who cooked, set up, cleaned up, and attended this delicious breakfast. The ECW appreciates your support!
- Lemonade Under the Tree will begin on Sunday, June 7.
- The date for the “pounding” to celebrate the marriage of Holly Brazitis and John Lott has been set for Saturday, August 15 at 11:00 am.
- The ECW's next fundraiser brunch is tentatively scheduled for Sunday, September 13.

The ECW will not meet in June or July. Our next meeting is scheduled for Sunday, August 16 at 9:30 am. Please join us! We have an exciting fall planned.

Peace and Love - Julie Claytor, Rita McCaskill, Fran Burnett, and Corrie Blasi

It is summertime, and “Lemonade Under the Tree” is back! The ECW will begin serving lemonade and cookies in the shade of our beautiful oak after church on Sunday, June 7. The cool refreshments will be provided after church every Sunday through August 23 (except for the last Sunday of each month – covered dish). Join us for a summertime snack and fun fellowship!

### **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**

The 2025-26 school year has come to an end. Through the Feeding America Backpack Program, we have supplied weekly supplemental meals to twenty children at Gadsden Elementary. Each child receives 18 items in his/her bag that includes protein, drinks, breakfast, fruit, and snacks. Thanks to all of you who contribute one way or another to the success of the Backpack Ministry. We will continue to collect individual servings of healthy, easy-to-prepare, food for kid-friendly meals during the summer weeks so that we will be ready when school starts in August. Our efforts have been needed, have been important, and have been appreciated.

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.

#### **Donations For Gadsden Elementary Testing Incentive**

This year St. John’s supported the children and teachers at Gadsden Elementary during their state-wide testing by providing \$25 Walmart gift cards to be used as incentives when students met their testing goal. Through many generous donations from our congregation, we raised \$825 to go towards this project. As a result, St. John’s was able to deliver 40 gift cards to Gadsden Elementary. Ms. Washington, the school counselor, said the gift cards were just the boost the children needed in order to stay focused and excited about doing their best during testing. The kindness and compassion of this congregation is truly a blessing. Thank you for your support of Gadsden Elementary!



3	Michelle Thilges Griggs	15	Mary Clarkson	4	Ann Griffin & Thomas Tafel
4	Caroline Watkins Emery	21	Ann Griffin Tafel	22	Anne & Van Lott
5	John Lott	26	Mary Ann Hiott		
12	Al Burnett	27	Christina Thilges Hazen		

**WORSHIP TEAM SCHEDULE FOR JUNE**

	<u>WORSHIP LEADER</u>	<u>LECTOR</u>	<u>VIDEOGRAPHER</u>	<u>GREETER</u>
June 7	Jim Hiott	Julie Claytor	John Davis	Mary Ann Hiott
June 14	Van Lott	Anne Lott	Frank Claytor	Louise Barker
June 21	Fran Burnett	Rita McCaskill	Van Lott	John Davis
June 28	Lisa Clarkson	Ayden Floyd	Selman Watson	Debbie Davis

**THE GOOD NEWS GRAPEVINE**

Drew Webber, oldest grandson of Al and Fran Burnett, along with about two dozen cadets, headed to Kenya this month to participate in The Citadel Medical Camp, the largest free medical camp in Kenya. The camp is under the direction of Dr. Sarah Imam, director of health sciences at the Citadel and founder of the camp. The students will work with a team of Kenyan doctors and nurses. Last year, the camp saw just under 14,000 patients, many of whom had never seen a medical doctor. While Drew and his classmates are not allowed to treat patients, they can take patient histories and do physical exams, which is not allowed in the U. S.

This hands-on experience takes the students into three different slums, no doubt treating a wide variety of disease and injury conditions, and exposing them to a level of poverty they are not likely to experience in the states.

No doubt, Drew will come home with many stories to tell and a different perspective on his life in South Carolina.

Congratulations to Perri Peraza who was named the SCISA Class 4A Region 1 Coach of the Year for softball. Perri teaches PE at Heathwood Hall Episcopal School and coaches their softball team.

Congratulations to Chelsea Knotts and Garrett Davis who were married on Saturday, May 2! Welcome Chelsea, Sophia, Ellie, and Austyn.

Congratulations also to Lisa Clarkson who has a new grandbaby! Steven Patterson Tafel was born on May 20 to Thomas and Ann Griffin Tafel. Welcome Steven!

If you have news about yourself or your family you wish to share for the July newsletter, please send it to the church office no later than June 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

**Gifts received from April 27 through May 24, 2026**

***In memory of Bertha Fox***

Given by Anne and Van Lott

***In honor of Judy Raines Addison on her birthday***

Given by Anne and Van Lott

**FINANCIAL REPORT through April 30, 2026**

**Operating Fund Checking Account:**

April income: \$6854.37

April disbursements: \$13,728.39

Difference: **-\$6874.02**

1/1/2026 through 4/30/2026:

Income: \$53,097.13

Disbursements: \$64,222.72

Difference: **-\$11,125.59**

**Cemetery & Grounds Checking Acct:**

April income: \$234.76

April disbursements: \$670.00

Difference: **-\$435.24**

1/1/2026 through 4/30/2026:

Income: \$7116.73

Disbursements: \$3080.00

Difference: \$4036.73

**Building Fund Checking Account:**

April income: \$0.16

April disbursements: \$.00

Difference: \$0.16

1/1/2026 through 4/30/2026:

Income: \$0.47

Disbursements: \$405.00

Difference: **-\$404.53**

**ST. JOHN'S PRAYER LIST**

**Please Pray For:**  
Brenda Manning

**Requested by:**  
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

**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.**