



St. John's Monthly Chimes E-Newsletter November 2026



Pastor's Notes

"And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others."— 2 Corinthians 9:8

Dear Friends in Christ,

October marked a significant milestone at St. John's as the congregation supported another vote to move forward with our IMAGINE capital projects: proceeding with our loan application with Mission Investment Fund, the sale of the Ballenger House and Short Street Property, and an exciting groundbreaking celebration that was shared by congregation leaders and members, Senator Thomas Alexander (SC Senate), and Mayor Tim Hall (Walhalla).

As the autumn leaves continue to change and drift across the Blue Ridge foothills, our hearts turn toward gratitude. November is a season of harvest, remembrance, and generosity. This month, our congregation embraces our fall stewardship theme: GROWING TOGETHER

Worship and Stewardship Focus for November

Sunday, November 1— All Saints' Sunday Worship

On this sacred morning, we remember and give thanks for the saints who have gone before us—those lights of faith whose love shaped our lives and our church. As we honor the memory of our saints, we also turn to our first stewardship focus: **Nourishing and Sustaining Ministry**. We seek to feed our congregation's spiritual hunger by strengthening our core ministries, inspiring worship, and educational programs that anchor our hearts in God's grace.

Sunday, November 8 – Cultivating our Roots

This Sunday focuses on Cultivating our Roots, an initiative that strengthens our church's physical and spiritual foundation by investing faithfully in our staff and facilities.
Honoring Our Veterans: Between services, please join us in the gathering area for a continental-style fellowship time hosted by Survivors as we express our deep gratitude and honor our military veterans.

Sunday, November 15 - Reaching Our Neighbors

A key component of our life together is Reaching our Neighbors through Biggerstaff, Community Outreach, and Synod Support. God has blessed us abundantly so that we always

have plenty left over to share with others.

Sunday, November 22 - Commitment Sunday During worship, you will be invited to bring forward your enclosed Commitment Card, offering your financial and spiritual gifts to God's ongoing work.

Month-Long Community Food Drive: Supporting St. Luke's Food Pantry

Our call to be generous extends right outside our doors and into Oconee County. Throughout the month of November, we are hosting a Month-Long Food Drive to support Saint Luke United Methodist Church Food Pantry in Walhalla.

Each week, we invite every household to bring specific food items to the designated donation box in the gathering area: **Week 1 (Nov 1): Boxed pastas and canned soups.** Let us fill the bins week after week, demonstrating Christ's love through practical, hands-on care for our neighbors.

Christ's Peace be with you,

Pastor Rachel L Connelly



Family Life Ministries

On **Sunday, October 4** we had "Blessing of the Animals" out at Biggerstaff. A fun time was had by all, especially Ava and her rooster.

We have finally made it to November, a month of gratitude and generosity! We have several things happening this month:



On **Sunday, November 1 at 4pm**, St. John's families are invited to join University Lutheran at Abundant Blessings Farm in Liberty for hayrides, pumpkins, bonfires, and a cook-out! Cook-out starts at 5:00pm and you are encouraged to bring a side or dessert to share. Meet at the farms or contact Adriana for a carpool. The address is 178 Riggins Bridge Road, Liberty SC, 29657.

Starting at 6:00pm on Monday, November 2 and going through Monday, November 23, Evening Bible Study will be studying the Gospel of John for four weeks. Everyone is welcome to come learn and engage in deep, faith-forming conversations.

On **Sunday, November 15**, middle and high school youth group will meet at noon after worship for fun and fellowship. Lunch will be provided.

Also in November, St. John's will begin our November Food Drive. Each week we will be taking up a different type of food donation for St. Luke's food pantry. For the week of November 1, we will be collecting boxed pastas and canned soups (all kinds).

"So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness."

- Colossians 2:6-7

In Peace,

Adriana

Upcoming Events



Time Change~Fall Back

Don't forget to turn your clocks back one hour on **Saturday, October 31**, so you can arrive refreshed for worship on Sunday.

NOVEMBER FOOD DRIVE

"...for I was hungry and you gave me food..." Matthew 25:35

Each week in November, St. John's will be taking food donations for St. Luke Food Pantry. For the week of **November 1** we need:

- **BOXED PASTAS**
- **SOUP CANS (any kind)**

Please bring your donations to the Gathering Area.



[Click to view the flyer](#)



SAVE THE DATE: ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, November 15, 2026 at 10am

The Annual Congregation meeting is scheduled for **Sunday, November 15, 2026 at 10:00am** in the fellowship hall. Key action items include: adoption of the 2027 Ministry Budget and election of Council Members. At this meeting we will also be voting to accept proposed changes to St. John's Congregation Constitution and Bylaws.

Faith Formation

Sunday Morning Bible Study

Led by Scott Sprouse

Sunday Morning Bible Study is at 10 am in the educational building. On Sunday, November 1 we will complete our study of the **minor prophet Zechariah**. All are welcome.



Monday Evening Bible Study

Led by Adriana



Starting at 6:00pm on Monday, November 2 and going through Monday, November 23, Evening Bible Study will be studying the **Gospel of John** for four weeks. Everyone is welcome to come learn and engage in deep, faith-forming conversations.

Tuesday Morning Bible Study

Led by Pastor Rachel



Tuesday Bible Study for November: A **6 week Study on Luther and the Small Catechism** at 11am in the Sanctuary.

Music Notes

Handbell Choir

St. John's Praise Ringers are practicing Tuesday's at 5:30pm. Anyone interested in joining, please contact Deb Blackmore.



Chancel Choir

St. John's Chancel Choir are practicing Wednesday's at 6pm. Anyone interested in joining, please contact John Fallon.



Thanks to the Praise Band

As we complete another season at Biggerstaff and transition the 9am worship service back to the main campus on **November 1**, we are thankful and blessed to have member-volunteers leading our 9am worship. Special thanks to Ray Burroughs, Dave Devoe, and Tom Ward who continue to share their musical talents! And prayers continue for Tom as he recovers from back surgery!



Ministry Updates

ST. LUKE FOOD PANTRY- Volunteers needed!

Come join your friends at St. John's and St. Luke Methodist on the 4th Wednesday of each month as we help distribute grocery boxes to over 200 people in need in the community.

St. Luke Food Pantry has been distributing meals to those in need in our community since 2011. Since COVID, meals have been distributed outside in the driveway. Clients drive up and volunteers load a box(es) into their vehicle. It is fast and efficient- a well-oiled machine! Distribution takes place from 4:30-5:30, volunteers are asked to be at the St. Luke lower-level parking area by 3:30pm. They will begin distribution earlier if there are cars in line.

This ministry is open to all ages- our younger youth will need a parent with them. **Sign-ups through December** are on Information Alley or click the button below.

Biggerstaff Happenings

We have had a busy 2026 season at St. John's Biggerstaff, and it has now come to a close. The 9:00am service has moved to our historical Main St location.

Exciting changes are on the way to St John's Biggerstaff following the congregation's vote. Our Strategic Plan goal of increasing the utilization of Biggerstaff is moving forward, and the community outreach is continuing to bear spiritual fruit. This forward momentum will only increase once we complete phase one of St John's Capital Campaign. Keep a lookout out for time and date of Biggerstaff's groundbreaking.



Thank you from Wilma

Wilma Cobb would like to say "thank you" to the congregation of St. John's for your thoughts and prayers, your food and cards, visits and best wishes.



MEETUP & CONNECT NEWS

St. John's Meetup and Connect hope you will join us for our upcoming Fall events.

Saturday, November 7 at 9am: Join Jeff and Torrie Landon at Keowee Toxaway State Park to hike Raven Rock Loop Trail. There will be a carpool leaving St. John's at 9am or you can meet at the parking lot of Keowee State Park at 9:40am. This is a 4.4 mile moderate hike.

We are really hoping to schedule more events, so we need YOUR INPUT!! Please reach out to us for further information on our upcoming



popups, or if you have any suggestions:

Angela Veronda, angelaveronda@gmail.com
Torrie Landon, tlan5@proton.me
Adriana McMurphy, stjohnsadriana@gmail.com

THANK YOU and HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

Wednesday Lunch

There will only be one lunch in November. We will be meeting for lunch on **Wednesday, November 11** for tasty food, fun and fellowship. We ask for a \$5 donation towards the meal (you can't eat anywhere for \$5 anymore). Sign-up on Information Alley so we can estimate attendance.

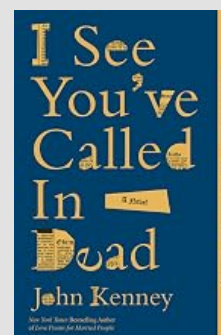


This year we will be looking for "Guest Chefs" to prepare our meals. Please let me know if you would like to volunteer to cook lunch for approx. 20 people on a Wednesday. We will work around your schedule. I know that many of you are excellent chefs- this is a chance for you to show off your gifts! Contact Joan Lewis with questions or if you would like to help.

St. John's Book Club News

Next Meeting: **Tuesday, November 17 at 7:00pm**
Meeting Location: The Home of Jakki Wiseman (227 Jana Dr, Walhalla)

Our book group will be reading the novel, "*I See You've Called in Dead*", by John Kenney. The main character in the novel is Bud Stanley who is an obituary writer about to be fired for writing and publishing his own! Bud's wife has left him, and he is left alone and he's in a funk. What happens to Bud as he awaits his fate at work? Read this "Razor-sharp, darkly comedic, and emotionally piercing" novel (Booklist), and join us for our discussion.



For more information contact:
Cindy Honeycutt cindychoney@gmail.com
Martha Murtiashaw murtiashawm@bellsouth.net
Cathy Plowden ceplowden59@gmail.com

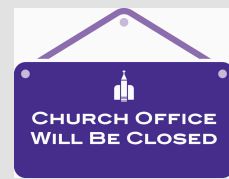
We'd love to have you!



[Click to Sign Up](#)

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

The church office will be closed **Thursday, November 26 and Friday, November 27** for Thanksgiving. The office will reopen on Monday, November 30.



Poinsettia Sale

Poinsettia orders will begin on **Sunday, November 29**. Order forms will be in Information Alley. This year's price is \$15 each. We have ordered 20, so it's first come, first served.



The deadline for ordering is Monday, December 14.

St. John's Lutheran Church Advent Ministry 2026

St. John's Outreach Committee decided that in 2026 you will have the opportunity to choose- two outreach ministries have been chosen that reach both the world and the local community. You can choose to donate to the one ministry that is most important to you –or- you can divide your donation between the two...the choice is yours.



Please take an envelope from the "Giving Tree" (**the tree will be up in the Gathering Area beginning November 29 until January 6, 2027**). Make your choice(s), and indicate the amount you would like to give. Enclose your check- payable to St. John's- for the entire donation. The donations will be divided and sent to the appropriate organizations.

- HOPE VILLAGE STARLIGHT PROGRAM is non-profit serving children and families through residential support, education programs, and community-based services. This program provides a safe and stable home for mothers and elementary-aged children who are overcoming addiction and trauma. Starlight provides care, accountability and hope for the family.
- LUTHERAN WORLD HUNGER offers help to congregations across the United States, Puerto Rico and the U. S. Virgin Islands, Lutheran churches worldwide and trusted partners by funding clinics, microloans, clean water, livestock, meals and advocacy- sustainable solutions that address root causes of hunger.

SALVATION ARMY RED KETTLE BELL RINGING NOVEMBER 30, 2026

St. Johns is assembling a team of volunteers to ring the Red Kettle Bell at Ingles in West Union on **Monday, November 30** – 2-hour shifts between 9am and 7pm at either entrance to Ingles.



- The Salvation Army is a Christian organization that plays an important role in helping meet physical needs for the poor and needy in our community.
- This is The Salvation Army of Oconee County's only fundraiser for the year. All money collected at Oconee kettle locations stays in our county.
- Churches and other groups can partner with the Salvation Army to show love to the community through sharing a smile and ringing to collect money for the needy.
- One day of ringing can help keep the power/heat on for up to 3 families for a month.

Please sign-up with a friend, family member, child, or another church member to ring the bell for a 2 hour shift at the Pharmacy or Starbucks entrance. In 2026, St. John's will sponsor both entrances- meaning we have given an additional donation. Sign-up sheet on the wall in Information Alley or click the button below.

[Click to Sign Up](#)

CHRISMON TREE DECORATING

Help neededAll ages welcome

Date: Friday, December 4

Time: 9:30am

Place: St. John's Sanctuary

Please sign up on information alley or click the button below.



[Click to Sign Up](#)

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS EVE MEAL

For the past 35+ years St. John's has prepared and delivered a meal on Christmas Eve to those shut-in and in need in Oconee County. In 2026 we will deliver to approximately 350-400 people.



Delivery this year will take place on **Thursday, December 24.**

Volunteers will be needed to help with the food prep on Wednesday, December 23, to help with packaging the meals, and delivering them to the community on Thursday.

You will be receiving e-mails over the next few weeks with many volunteer opportunities. We will be asking members of the congregation to prepare a double batch (2 boxes=20 brownies) of brownies.

Sign-up sheets will be available on Information Alley. Delivery routes will be established and available for sign-up within the next few weeks.

CHRISTMAS EVE MEAL HAM DONATIONS

In 2026 St. John's will continue our annual Christmas Eve meal delivery to approximately 400 persons shut-in or in need in Oconee County. These dinners are purchased, prepared, assembled, and delivered by our congregation.



We are asking members to help defray the largest expense of the meal by donating a 10lb ham. **We will need 15 hams** to feed the 400! Last year we had donations of 125 lbs. of ham, which saved St. John's approximately \$800.

There are many "ham sales" during the holiday season- please be on the "look-out" for these sales and consider donating an 8-10lb pre-cooked, spiral cut, bone-in ham. Sign-up on Information Alley or click the button below.

[Click to Sign Up](#)

From our Ministry Groups



WELCA News

Our next meeting will be on **Saturday, December 12** from 12 to 2 pm at Waterside Crossing Club House. (Christmas party with lunch and gift exchange)



Lucy Klaren Circle

Save the date:

14th Annual LKC Jubilee and Silent Auction

Scheduled: February 27, 2027

Location: Walhalla Depot

211 S College St, Walhalla, SC 29691



We continue to collect feminine hygiene products and children's books. A box is available at the church.



Gloria Shealy Circle



On **Tuesday, November 17 at 12:30 PM** the Gloria Shealy Circle will meet in the Fellowship Hall. Debbie Durling, Jan Long and Shonda Mahler will be hosting our meeting with devotions. This will be a lunch meeting. Our donation will be a monetary gift for Rise Against Hunger.

We welcome all visitors to join us to learn more about the activities our circle is involved in. Hope to see you there!



The Survivors Group



In November, the Survivors group has three events planned. On **Sunday, November 8**, the group will honor our Veterans with a small brunch between worship services.

On **Monday, November 16**, the group will gather for a movie at Seneca Premiere Theater. After the movie, the group will go to lunch.

Then on **Friday, November 20**, the group will gather at Paesano's for dinner. All widows/widowers are welcome to any event.

For information on any event, contact Shonda Mahler or Jan Long.



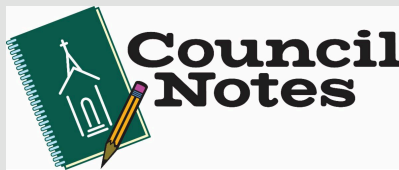
Knitters & Crocheters

In October our ladies made Christmas decorations for the residents of Lakeview Assisted Living.



If you would like to learn how to knit or crochet or just strengthen your skills, come meet with us on **Wednesday, November 11** at 10am. We enjoy devotions and helping each other with patterns or projects. Questions? text Barbara at 864-723-3376.

Council & Committee Updates



St. John's Congregational Council Meeting Minutes

Please click on the button below to read the Council Meeting Minutes from **October 12, 2026**.

[Click to read more](#)

Volunteer Opportunities

Cemetery News

One of the proposals at this year's annual congregational meeting will be to establish a designated board to oversee the operations and maintenance of the cemetery. This change will help ensure more consistent management and attention to our cemetery needs.

In the meantime, please direct any questions, concerns or complaints about the cemetery to Greg Harris, who is currently the cemetery coordinator.

We aim to keep the cemetery in good shape with the funds and resources we have available.



Please note, however, that the maintenance of the grave spaces purchased by families are the responsibility of the families. We will periodically cut the grass and weed-eat around the memorial stones and markers but perhaps not as frequently as all desire.

We're constantly looking for volunteers to help with the cemetery maintenance. If you'd like to volunteer, or offer to serve on the new cemetery board, please raise your hand!

Altar Flowers

Reminder that there is a sign-up chart for Sunday altar flowers in the Gathering area outside the Sanctuary doors. Flower arrangements for the altar are \$40 for both arrangements and can be designated as you choose. Flowers are arranged by a member of our altar flower team and placed on the altar Sunday morning. You can take your arrangements home on Sunday after 11am worship or choose to give them to a shut-in. Sign-up today.



Funeral Ministry

St. John's is grateful for the volunteers who provide and serve refreshments at funeral receptions. Four teams rotate these responsibilities, and we are seeking additional volunteers to support this ministry.

Responsibilities include:

Providing refreshments such as cookies, fruit trays, cheese and crackers, nuts, and candy. Assisting with reception setup, serving, and cleanup

If you would like to be part of this team please contact Joan Lewis at joanlewissc@aol.com or (864) 710-1756



Worship Assistants Needed

We are in need of Ushers and Lay Assistants at both services. These volunteers are needed:

Ushers to greet and to collect offering and to direct people to the communion rail (11am only).

Lay Assistants to help with Communion, the Creed and Prayers.

If interested, please contact Joan Lewis. **Training will be provided.** Worship assistants are an essential part of the worship experience. Please help!



Thursday Meal Delivery Volunteers Needed

St. John's continues its ministry of Thursday Meal Delivery to those in our congregation who are shut-in, undergoing medical treatment and those who just need a weekly visitor.



We are currently in need of people to prepare and/or deliver meals. Delivery routes have 1-2 stops. Delivery is on Thursday morning- leaving from the church at approximately 11am. Each of the 3 groups is responsible for 1 Thursday a month (1st, 2nd or 3rd Thursday). Most of our meal recipients love a short visit.

If you have considered becoming part of this ministry NOW IS THE TIME! Those involved in this ministry find gratification in knowing they have reached out in such a meaningful way. We need additional volunteers.

Please contact Joan Lewis at (864) 710-1756 or joanlewissc@aol.com if you can help in any way.



St. John's Lutheran Church, ELCA
301 West Main St.
Walhalla, SC 29691
864-638-6363
stjohnsluther@gmail.com

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30am - 1pm



Our tithes and offerings are an important part of our faith journey. St. John's encourages its members and friends to be "Generous Givers" in providing consistent ongoing support of St. John's mission and ministry.

[Give Now with Givelify](#)

[Visit our Website](#)



St. John's Lutheran Church | 301 West Main Street | Walhalla, SC 29691 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!