



St. John's Monthly Chimes E-Newsletter

September 2025



Pastoral News



TO BE YOUR PRESENCE

"To be Your presence is our mission here,
to show compassion's face and list'ning ear,
to be Your heart of mercy ever near . . .

We are Your heart, O Christ, Your hands and voice,

Dear Friends:

Delores Dufner, a nun of the Order of Saint Benedict at Saint Benedict's Monastery in Saint Joseph, Minnesota and a faculty member at Saint Benedict's College and Saint John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota wrote this powerful hymn which we will sing at worship this Sunday. I find the words of this hymn refreshing as we move toward the end of summer and turn the calendar to September.

The autumn season continues the latter part of our Pentecost season (called "ordinary time") in the cycle of the church year. Our Sunday worship gospel texts from Luke narrate the ministry of Jesus as He teaches and tells parables. Readings from Philemon and Paul's letters to Timothy encourage faithful living in Jesus Christ. Autumn also invites a renewal within the congregation. We resume faith formation activities after summer break and a sense of busy-ness returns to the parish. As the year turns, we have a rush of energy and excitement for all the possibilities.

With this hustle and bustle of the fall with all its competing activities, we are called to remain focused on the presence of Christ in daily lives. Our mission is literally "to be Christ's presence" in our communities, families, workplace, schools, and world. As Paul urges in his second letter to Timothy, we are to "proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching" (2 Tim. 4:2)

Our September schedule at St. John's brings forth worship, fellowship, faith formation, group, and service opportunities. It is a great time to share encouragement of one another and learning together. We also will hear more about our *IMAGINE* campaign building projects at a special Congregation Informational meeting on Wednesday, September 17 at 6pm.

During this season, I pray that we all will seek our opportunities to live out God's grace and compassion as we also learn more about God's ongoing presence in our world.

In Christ's Peace and Love,

Pastor Rachel Connelly

SUNDAYS in SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

Sunday, September 7

God's Work Our Hands emphasis
New Member Welcome

Sunday, September 14

Holy Cross Day and Rally Day
Sunday School and Faith Formation studies kick-off for fall

Sunday, September 21

Lunch and Learn – Hosted by Survivors. Potluck and program: "Get Your Ducks in a Row" - led by David Plowden, information on Wills and Living Wills, POA, DNR, etc. will be shared.

Sunday, September 28

WELCA Sunday
Blessing and Send-off of Mission Trip Servants to Lutheridge



"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it." -Psalm 24:1 (NIV)

In August, St. John's children and youth were introduced to concepts of creation care! We had a Parents' Night Out/Movie Night, where the kids watched "The Wild Robot," which overflows with themes such as community and caring for animals and the environment.



On Sunday, August 24, our middle school youth gathered after worship. We learned about God's creation in Genesis and how we are made in the "image of God," and how part of that means that we need to take care of God's creation in positive, healthy ways (such as keeping waterways clean, feeding the hungry, etc.).

Building upon our new Creation Care series, church youth of all ages will be learning about *Fresh Waters* in September. Lunch will be provided for each group.

Our Elementary crew will meet **Sunday, September 7** from 12-2pm, Middle Schoolers will meet **Sunday, September 14** from 12-2pm, and High Schoolers will meet **Sunday, September 21** from 12-2pm. Join us and invite your friends for an afternoon of food, fun learning, crafts, and more!

We also have several exciting congregational & family events coming up in the fall: On **Saturday, September 13** from **4-7pm**, we'll be having a Low Country Boil out at Biggerstaff. Buy your tickets now and join us for food, fun, and fellowship (rain or shine!).

Finally, in October, we'll be having a special Blessing of the Animals service... stay tuned for details!

Peace,
Ms. Adriana



Bible Study/Faith Formation

Monday Evening Bible Study
(Mondays at 6pm)
Starting September 8 at 6pm in the Fellowship Hall
Led by Adriana



Adriana will be starting an **Evening Bible Study** starting Monday, September 8, from 6-7pm (with light refreshments provided). Our series will be ***The Bible 101***. We'll look at how our holy scriptures came to be, different literary and narrative styles, historical contexts, and more! More than just a book on your hotel nightstand. Come learn to see and experience the Bible in a new, deeper way.

TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY
(Tuesdays at 11am)
1 and 2 KINGS
Starting September 9 at 11am in the sanctuary
Led by Pastor Rachel

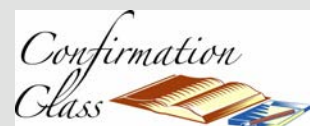


1 and 2 KINGS - the book of Kings recounts the rule of Israel's kings from David's son Solomon up until the time of Israel's exile. The narrative begins at the height of the Israelite monarchy, as Solomon inherits the kingdom of his father, David, and goes on to acquire his own vast wealth and fame. The story ends in utter devastation, as the remaining people of the dwindling southern kingdom of Judah are carried off to Babylon in exile. There are a few bright spots along the way—the prophetic ministry of Elijah/Elisha.

The question at the center of this book is: Will God's promised Messiah come to rescue Israel in spite of their failures?

Come out and learn more about this important time in Israel's history!

Confirmation Ministries at St John's
Sunday, starting September 14 at 10am



Confirmation classes will begin/resume for Middle Schoolers on **Sunday, September 14** in the Confirmation classroom above Pastor's office from 10:00-10:50 am. Taught by Mark McLean, the

main goal is "for our youth to gain a better understanding of the Christian faith and their relationship with Jesus.

In their study time on Sunday mornings, time will be spent on some of the wonderful stories in the Old Testament, a detailed look into one of the Gospels, the Sacraments, the Apostles' Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer. Luther's Small Catechism will be thoroughly discussed. The life and times of Martin Luther, the Reformation, and what it means to be a Lutheran! Confirmation at St. John's is a three-year program.

Additionally, youth are asked to participate in a week-long Confirmation Camp for a week in the summer with Pastor Rachel at Lutheridge Camp in Arden, North Carolina.

For more information, please contact Mark McLean at:

alden_mclean@yahoo.com or Pastor Rachel at stjohnspastorrachel@gmail.com.

Music Notes

Organist/Choir Update

St. John's Chancel Choir is practicing on
Wednesdays at 6pm.

Music Staff Search Team continues to research and work on filling our music position.



A special thank you to our choir, Deb Blackmore, and Grace Lichtenwald for sharing their talents with us.

St. John's Praise Ringers

St. John's Praise Ringers are looking for new members. If you've ever wanted to learn how to play Handbells, this is your opportunity. No prior music experience is necessary and you don't have to be able to read music; we will train you. Contact Deb Blackmore for more information at blackmoredm@icloud.com



Praise Band

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!



Ministry Updates



Biggerstaff Happenings

It's Low Country Boil Time! So, grab your family, neighbors, and friends of all ages and come have a good time! There will be yummy shrimp boil prepared by a group of volunteers from our church. (Thank you guys!) Hotdog plates, dessert, and beverages will also be available. There will be yard games and activities. This is a rain or shine event so we will have to-go containers available.

Buy your tickets early using the QR code on the flyers around the church or click on the ticket button below in this email. (Tickets may also be purchased at church with cash or check made out to "Biggerstaff"). We can't wait to see you there!

Volunteers are always appreciated out at Biggerstaff. The opportunities to volunteer are flexible, needed, varied, and always rewarding! Please ask how you can get involved.

More Upcoming Events

Church Office Closed

The church office will be closed on **Monday, September 1** for observance of Labor Day. The office will reopen on Tuesday.



Wednesday Lunch

Wednesday Lunch for September will be on **September 10 and September 24**. We know that means DELICIOUS!

All are welcome to join us at 11:30am on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month 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 in "Information Alley" so we can estimate attendance.



BAKED GOODS NEEDED FOR LOW COUNTRY BOIL

St. John's has the best bakers on earth-here is your chance to

prepare your special **brownies, cookies or pound cake slices** for the Biggerstaff Low Country Boil on September 13.

Please individually bag-wrap 1 **DOZEN** of your favorite and bring to the church by **Friday, September 12 at Noon**. These will be your dessert choices at the "Boil"!

Sign-up by clicking the button below or on Information Alley at church.



**Click to sign
up**



Low Country Boil at St. John's Biggerstaff

September 13 from 4pm-7pm

Bring your family, friends, and neighbors to enjoy some
Delicious Food, Games, and Fellowship.

Tickets are \$20 and Hot Dog Plates are \$10

**Tickets may be purchased at both worship services or at the church
with cash (exact amount requested) or by check made out to "Biggerstaff"**

Click the button below to purchase tickets online.

**Click for
Tickets**



Rally Day Sunday, September 14, 2025

Like, what is it? Simply put, Rally Day is often celebrated in churches in September as a new school year has started and the summer season comes to a close. It's a way to kick-start the fall and the return from summer. Throughout our summer, many of our members and friends have been away on vacation, some of our ministries have been on pause or only with limited gatherings, and so Rally Day is a great way to get us excited for everything starting back up again!

Sunday School programming will begin again with new opportunities for Adult and Youth/Children Studies. Confirmation Classes will start up. WELCA groups are back in full-swing. New members will be joining the church. Other studies and ministry gatherings for spiritual nourishment will be offered. In October we will also kick-off a new Stewardship program.

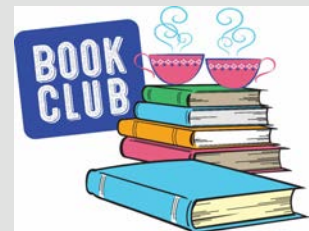
"Rally" literally means "a renewal of energy in joint action", and that's what we'll be doing on **Sunday, September 14th!** We will begin in the Fellowship Hall that morning at **10am** with some refreshments and opening prayer before dispersing to classrooms. As we renew ourselves for this next program year, we can start getting excited for all that is to come!

St. John's Book Club Welcomes You!

St. John's Book Club will meet Tuesday, September 16 at 7:00pm for our yearly organizational meeting. All members are invited to this important gathering—both old and new!

At this time we will be revisiting our schedule for the coming year, (We meet the third Tuesday of each month.) share books we would like to read with the group, and sign up for leadership roles discussion for the coming year.

We enjoyed some lively discussion about a variety of books in 2024-25 and look forward to more of the same in 2025-26. If you have any questions about the book club, please contact Cindy Honeycutt at cindychoney@gmail.com, Cathy Plowden, or Martha Murtishaw for more information.



our St. John's team!

Purchase a St. John's insulated cooler bag for \$10 each. We still have 15 available!

You can donate one or more "staple" items to help with the food/supply needs for our mission team. Take an item tag from the black-board and return your donation to the church or Biggerstaff no later than 9/21

Make an appointment to be a blood donor at our drive on 9/25 between 3pm and 7pm. St. John's receives a \$10 donation for each donor and you receive a \$30 e-gift card.



St. John's Lutheran Church is partnering with The Blood Connection to host a community blood drive on **Thursday, September 25, from 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm**

As a token of appreciation for your time and support, each donor will receive a \$30 eGift card from TBC. **St. John's also receives \$10 for each donor, which will help support our upcoming Lutheridge mission trip. It's a WIN-WIN for all of us!**

Location: St. John's Lutheran Church, 301 West Main Street Walhalla, SC. The Bloodmobile Bus will be located on Short Street across from the cemetery.

Click the button below to sign up and reserve your spot to donate. Thank you for considering joining us in this life-saving initiative. Every pint of blood collected can save up to three lives.

St. John's Lutheran Church **Sponsor Code:** 7ABG

We look forward to seeing you there! Invite a friend (or 2)...**BUT DON'T FORGET TO SIGN-UP.** Our goal is 30 donors so please spread the word.

**Click to Sign
Up**

SUPPORT our LUTHERIDGE MISSION TRIP

Purchase your **red insulated and zippered "St. John's" Tote bags** while supplies last

\$10 each (exact cash or check)

Available at both Sunday worship services

or e-mail Joan (joanlewiscc@aol.com) to reserve yours today



Lutheridge Mission Trip

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO JOIN ST. JOHN'S LUTHERIDGE MISSION TRIP TEAM...even though it's too late to cancel your existing reservation, it's not too late to join us! We can add you to our team- a few beds are

still available at the Bacot lodging location. The cost is \$157.51 per person/per week Sunday-Friday. Food is provided by our amazing food team (I saw the menu- it's going to be GOOD food)

The dates are **Sunday, 9/28 (we leave the church at 1pm-3pm check-in) through Friday 10/3 (11am check-out)**. Bacot with 9 bedrooms/20 available beds on 2 levels with 4 bathrooms. Overflow lodging would be in Thornburg. At Bacot we will have dining and cooking facilities available so we will be able to prepare/serve our own meals. There are common/meeting areas and outside porches for gathering. If necessary, St. John's can provide financial assistance on a case by case basis.



Work projects will include clearing trails of debris, replacing split rail fencing, some construction and cabin cleaning. All the work will be on the Lutheridge campus. As we get closer to the date we will have a more accurate idea of the jobs needed.

Payment is required at time of registration. **Please make checks payable to "St. John's".**

Feel free to contact Joan if you would like to attend or with any questions. An information meeting will be held soon. (864-710-1756 OR joanlewissc@aol.com).

From our Ministry Groups



WELCA News

Women of the ELCA

St. John's 2024 WELCA meeting dates:

Saturday, September 20 at 10am in the Fellowship Hall, hosted by Knitters and Crocheters.

Saturday, December 13 at Cathy Plowden's Home 316 N Church St – bring an ornament to exchange and a dish to share.

Our SC WELCA Convention was held on August 15-16 at St Paul Lutheran Church in Aiken. The annual convention was an exciting gathering of Women of the ELCA. The convention offered many chances to meet, share and worship with other women from across South Carolina. A number of great workshops were offered as well as the business meetings, key note speakers and guests.

Our own Risse Snelgrove completed her long run as the SC WELCA president. We were represented by two delegates, Fredi Hallman and Cathy Plowden.



Wilma Cobb attended as a First Timer Guest. Frieda Cobb and Jan Long attended as visitors. Please consider being part of this wonderful convention next year. On June 19-20, 2026, at Redeemer in Newberry.



Lucy Klaren Circle

LKC had a relaxing afternoon at Whitewater Lake on August 16, where the weather was perfect and the companionship and food was even better. We look to start our monthly meetings again, tentatively on **Thursday, the 18 of September**. More details to follow.



We are collecting feminine hygiene products for the "Share Box" at St. Luke's Methodist. If you would like to donate, a box is located in the Gathering Area. Unopened packages only, please.



Gloria Shealy Circle

Gloria Shealy Circle will be meeting on **Wednesday, September 17** at 9am at Sister's Restaurant in Salem. Hosted by Frieda and Wilma Cobb. Everyone is welcome to attend. Please contact Frieda if interested, 864-903-1021.





The Survivors Group



In September we will travel to Pickens on **Tuesday September 16** to the Full Plate Creperie.

Have you got all your final ducks in a row? Your Will, POA, DNR, Living Will, etc? Come join us to learn how to get it done. On **Sunday September 21**, the Survivors will host a lunch and learn following the 11am service in the Fellowship Hall. David Plowden will be speaking. This lunch is free and for anyone who is interested. Please sign up on the sheet in information alley.

There are plans to go to Gatlinburg to visit Ridley's Aquarium on **Tuesday September 23**. Contact Shonda Mahler for more information.

The picture above is from our trip to Table Rock Tea Company, which was very informative.



Knitters & Crocheters



This month our meetings are on **Wednesday, September 10 and September 24, at 10 am**. Anyone who would like to learn now to knit/crochet or to expand his/her skills are welcomed to meet with us. For more information text or call Barbara at 864-723-3376.

Thank you

Sandy Yuda, Lois Sharpe and Jeff Sharpe would like to thank the congregation of St. John's for the prayers, cards and phone calls after Larry's death. It has meant the world to them.



Council & Committee Updates



St. John's Congregational Council Meeting Minutes

St. John's Congregation Council met on August 9 for a half-day retreat. Time was spent in group building, bible study, discussions on next steps for *Imagine* Campaign building projects, and then time was giving for monthly business meeting.

The Council invites the congregation to an **Information Congregation Meeting on Wednesday, September 17 at 6pm.**

Topics to be discussed:

- Main Street Project Update with a timeline and cost
- Biggerstaff Project Update with a timeline and cost
- Additional Funding possibilities
- Imagine Campaign numbers

[Click to read more](#)

Volunteer Opportunities

Cemetery Care Team Volunteers Needed

We're looking for volunteers to help us maintain our historical cemetery. Work at your own pace and times. Here are the jobs we need help with:

- gravestone cleaning
- grave maintenance
- weeding & pruning
- fire ant control
- path edging



If you'd like to join the team, please email Greg Harris at rimrodt.farm@gmail.com

Help Wanted

Do you have experience with grant writing? Would you be interested in helping secure grants for St. Johns? If so, please contact Cathy Plowden at 864-723-5454 or ceplowden59@gmail.com.



Oconee County Backpack Lunch Program

Backpack lunches have begun for the 2025-26 school year. Each month a group of St. John's volunteers deliver boxed lunches to students in need at Keowee Elementary School and Tamassee-Salem Elementary School. This is a much-needed outreach that our congregation has supported for more than 10 years. Many thanks to our deliverers this year- Dean and Anne Fogel and Marcia Tice for their dedication to this ministry.



We need one more volunteer to share the Tamassee-Salem Elementary school route. You will need to pick up lunches from South Cove SDOC on the first Tuesday every other month at 3pm (September, November, January, March and May) and deliver to Tamassee Elementary. A few hours of your day can make a huge difference in the lives of many students who need weekend nourishment. Talk to Joan Lewis (864-710-1756 or joanlewissc@aol.com) if you can help.

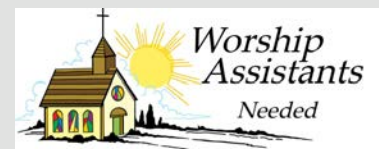
Altar Flowers

Reminder that there is a sign-up chart for Sunday altar flowers at the side entrance of the sanctuary. 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.



Worship Assistants Needed

We are in need of Ushers and Lay Assistants at both Biggerstaff and Sanctuary service. 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. Those involved in this ministry find gratification in knowing they have reached out in such a meaningful way.

If you have considered becoming part of this ministry ***NOW IS THE TIME!*** We need additional volunteers. Please contact Joan Lewis at (864) 710-1756 or joanlewissc@aol.com if you can help in any way.



Upcoming Events

Blessing of the Animals

Please join us on **Sunday, October 12 at 4pm** at Biggerstaff for a "Blessing of the Animals". More details to follow.



Last Worship Service at Biggerstaff for the Season

Our last 9am worship service at Biggerstaff for the season will be on **Sunday, October 19.**



Reformation Sunday - One Worship Service

On **Sunday, October 26** we will be having one worship service at **10:30am** in the sanctuary, which will include the Rite of Confirmation.



Christ the King Sunday - One Worship Service

On **Sunday, November 23** we will be having one worship service at **10:30am** in the sanctuary in observance of "Christ the King" Sunday and St. John's Anniversary. A potluck will follow in the Fellowship Hall.



"MARK" YOUR CALENDARS FOR DECEMBER 1, 2025!

St. John's will be Red Kettle ringing once again at both entrances of Ingles in West Union. Further information and sign-up requests to come in the fall.





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](#)



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