



ST. JOHN'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH

St. John's Monthly Chimes E-Newsletter
March 2025



Pastoral News



*Come to the mountain to see the light.
Come to the mountain to hear God's Word.*

*Go to the valley, it is your home.
Go to the valley to serve the Lord.*

(Refrain of Song "Come to the Mountain" by Cathy and Scott Tunseth)

Dear Friends:

This Sunday we come to the pinnacle and last Sunday of our Epiphany season, and we are invited to go to the mountaintop with Jesus. It has been a lengthy season of light and revelation that began with Jesus' baptism and first miracles and moved through his calling of the first disciples. We have been encouraged and provoked by the gospel messages of Jesus to see more clearly his identity and mission as the Son of God sent to bring forth the kingdom of God for the sake of the world.

These messages that we have heard included the words of "Blessings and Woes" from Luke's gospel that have challenged us to look in the eyes of our neighbors, our enemies, the oppressed, the poor, the foreigner, and the forgotten with compassion and care. Jesus has called us to go into the deep waters of chaos and turmoil that is part of our world today and to know that the Holy Spirit accompanies us as we grow into deeper discipleship that reflects God's love for all. And with admonitions from St. Paul, we are bid "do not grow weary of doing good".

Now on the Mountain of Transfiguration, we again see the light of God shining brightly on Jesus, calling us to behold his glory, to worship, to listen to the Word, and then to return home to the valley of service. This certainly affirms our mission at St. John's of "embracing a changing world in Christ's love and service" and positions us well for our upcoming Lenten season.

In Christ's peace and love,

Pastor Rachel

Prayer for Transfiguration

God of mountaintops and valleys and everywhere in between, we thank you for meeting us where we are. We thank you also for leading us to this place of prayer and renewal. Enlighten our minds, radiate our hearts, and ready us for Your alive Word of Love. Let it shine in and through us, lighting a path of grace, hope, and joy. May the same transfiguring power, shown forth in Jesus Christ, also shine in us for the good of the world. Amen.

FEBRUARY BIBLE STUDY
The Book of Ruth
Last session March 4



Family Life Ministries



Peace and Blessings!

March is going to be full of churchwide activities as we kick off a new liturgical season. On Saturday March 1st, during the Winter Jubilee, St. John's will be providing games, crafts, and various other activities for children and youth.

Right after that, we will celebrate Mardi Gras (Shrove Tuesday) on March 4th with a pancake supper. We will use this time to transition into the meaning and significance of Ash Wednesday (March 5th) and what the season of Lent is all about!

Let's get our purple ready and prepare our hearts to walk with Christ through the Lenten season.

Ms. Adriana



Music Notes

Organist/Choir Update

Update on Organist/Choir Director and Choir Practice
We are blessed at St. John's to have members of our congregation with musical gifts. In consultation with the Congregation Council, we have made agreements with Deb Blackmore and Grace Lichtenwald to help us out over the next few months while we assess our Musical Leadership needs, begin a search process, and hire new staff.

Deb Blackmore - Guest Choir Director

Deb has been a member at St. John's for around 17 years. In addition to having a career as a School Psychologist in the public schools, Deb served as an Organist and Choir Director in several Lutheran churches in South Carolina. She holds a music degree from Newberry College. In her earlier years at St. John's, Deb was a member of the Adult Chancel Choir, and was supply organist. In more recent years, Deb has been a member of the Bell Choir and currently is a part of the Survivors group. Additionally, she served many years on the



council, served as an office volunteer, and as a member and chair of the Preschool Board.

Grace Lichtenwald - Supply Organist

Grace joined St John's in 2018. In the fall of 2020 and our Covid lockdown, she began playing the flute at Biggerstaff worship with our Praise band. When we returned to the sanctuary, Grace became our interim organist for twenty months--prior to that it had been more than 40 years since she had served as an organist and she felt blessed to have returned to this musical calling. In her earlier life in New York, Grace studied at the Guilmant Organ School and served as Organist and Choir director in several Lutheran churches before going to work for the phone company for 30 years. She served St. Matthias in Easley as an interim organist/choir director. In other areas of the church, Grace is involved with our Chefs program and Survivors group.

Choir Practice

Adult Chancel Choir will have practice on Tuesdays at 6:30pm (Shrove Tuesday, March 4th practice will be after the dinner). In the past years, we have changed to Tuesdays during the Lenten season because of the Wednesday Lent Schedule.

Please keep St. John's congregation and your council in your prayers as we begin this time of discernment for our next musical staff. If you know of any possible candidates, please talk to Pastor Rachel or Stan Gartner (Council VP).



St. John's Praise Ringers

The Praise Ringers attended the Lutheridge Handbell Choir Retreat on February 21-23. It was a wonderful experience for all! Our clinician was Steve Berryman along with Michael Glasgow. We learned/practiced six new pieces plus learning new techniques of playing our bells. The group also had a little time to associate with other groups. Several attended a reading music session where new music was presented for sighted reading and attended technique workshops. We ordered for a couple of pieces from this session. The group also had time for fellowship!

Side note: Lutheridge was devastated by Helene! Please remember the camp in your prayers as they continue rebuilding for the summer session!



Winter Jubilee



Lucy Klaren Circle Winter Jubilee

The women of LKC would like to welcome everyone to attend our 12th annual LKC Jubilee and Silent Auction on **Saturday, March 1 from 7-10PM** at the Walhalla Depot.

To date, we have provided over \$30,000 in local scholarships! You may purchase tickets in advance for \$20 at the church office, or for \$25 at the door. Amazing food, a large drink selection, lively music and DJ, and of course the opportunity to bid on some unique local events, and specialty items are all included in the price of admission.

If you're not able to attend and would like to support our efforts, we do take sponsorships at various levels:

- Platinum \$1000
- Gold \$500
- Silver \$300
- Bronze \$100

Please contact Stephanie Champion or any member of LKC if you have any questions.

Shrove Tuesday

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper & Mardi Gras Celebration

Tuesday, March 4, 2025 Supper at 6pm
(gluten free available)

Burning of the Palms for Ash Wednesday at 7pm



Schedule for Lent

Ash Wednesday Worship March 5, 2025

Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion

Lent begins with a solemn call to fasting and repentance as we begin our journey to the baptismal waters of Easter.

Day service at **Noon** in the Sanctuary
Evening service at **7pm** in the Sanctuary
4 to 6pm "Drive By Ashes" on Church Street side of church



LENTEN SOUP & STUDY

Lenten Soup and Study will be held on Wednesday evenings beginning on **March 12**. We gather at 5:45pm for soup supper. Lenten study will begin at 6:30 and last approximately 30 minutes.

A \$5 donation (\$10 max per family) will be collected.
5-6 volunteers are asked to provide soup each Wednesday.
Sign-up sheets are located on the clipboards on Information Alley
(next to the office) or you can sign-up by clicking the button
below.



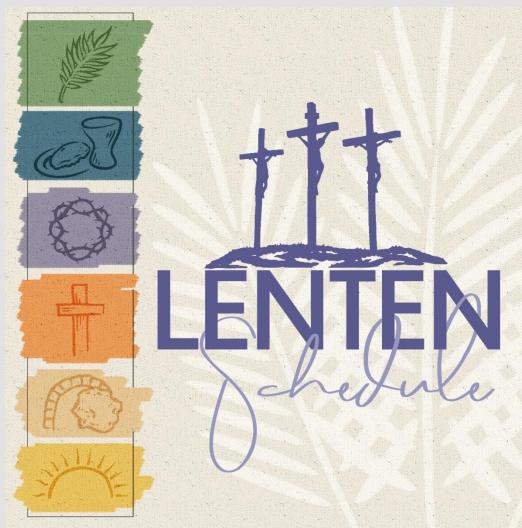
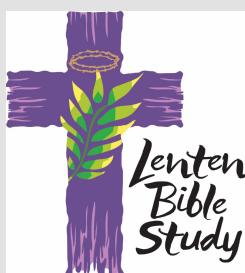
Bread and drinks are provided- no desserts during Lent

Click to Sign Up

Lenten Bible Study

Tuesdays at 11am

Beginning March 11



Tuesday, March 4

6pm
7pm

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper Burning of the Ashes Service

Wednesday, March 5

noon

Ash Wednesday Service

| | | |
|--|--------------|---|
| | 4-6pm 7pm | Drive By Ashes (on Church St. side of church) Ash Wednesday Service |
| Sunday, March 9 1st Sunday in Lent | 9am 11am | Blended Service in Fellowship Hall Traditional Service in Sanctuary |
| Wednesday, March 12 | 5:45pm | Lenten Soup Meal & Program |
| Sunday, March 16 2nd Sunday in Lent | 9am 11am | Blended Service in Fellowship Hall Traditional Service in Sanctuary |
| Wednesday, March 19 | 5:45pm | Lenten Soup Meal & Program |
| Sunday, March 23 3rd Sunday in Lent | 9am 11am | Blended Service in Fellowship Hall Traditional Service in Sanctuary |
| Wednesday, March 26 | 5:45pm | Lenten Soup Meal & Program |
| Sunday, March 30 4th Sunday in Lent | 9am 11am | Blended Service in Fellowship Hall Traditional Service in Sanctuary |
| Wednesday, April 2 | 5:45pm | Lenten Soup Meal & Program |
| Sunday, April 6 5th Sunday in Lent | 9am 11am | Blended Service in Fellowship Hall Traditional Service in Sanctuary |
| Wednesday, April 9 | 6pm | Lenten Soup Meal & Program |
| Sunday, April 13 Palm Sunday | 9am 11am | Palm Sunday Service in Fellowship Hall Palm Sunday Service in Sanctuary |
| Thursday, April 17 | 7pm | Maundy Thursday Service at St. Luke's Methodist |
| Friday, April 18 | noon 7pm | Good Friday Service in Sanctuary Good Friday Service in Sanctuary |
| Sunday, April 20 Easter Sunday | 7am 11am | Easter Sunrise Service at Biggerstaff Easter Sunday Service in Sanctuary |

Ministry Updates

AWESOME NEWS!

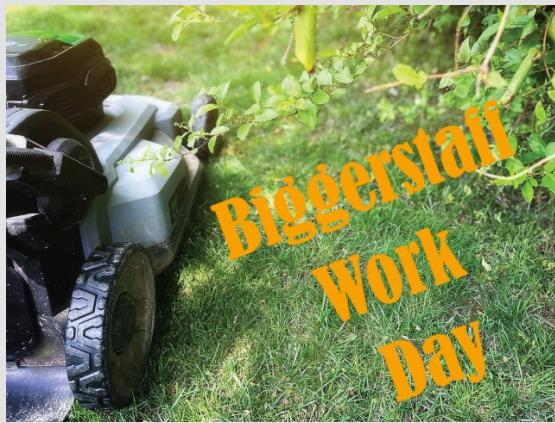
The meals we packaged for Rise Against Hunger on February 1 have shipped.



MEALS WE PACKAGED ARE HEADED TO UKRAINE!

Located in eastern Europe, Ukraine is the second largest country on the continent. The conflict in Ukraine has caused one of the fastest forced population movements since World War II - millions of people have left the country or are internally displaced. As food production and supplies are disrupted by the conflict, many people do not have reliable access to sufficient nutritious food.

Through Rise Against Hunger's Responding to Emergencies pathway, to address threats to food and nutrition security in times of crisis, they collaborate with organizations that are meeting the immediate needs of families and communities in this region. The meals we packaged can help serve internally displaced people, refugees, and communities facing loss of access to resources that support their livelihoods. We are helping to meet the nutritional needs of these people at a critical moment.



ALL HANDS NEEDED AT BIGGERSTAFF WORK DAY

Date: Saturday, March 22

Time: 8:00am

Place: Biggerstaff Retreat Center

Come out and do a few hours of clean-up so we will be ready for the 2025 season. Lunch is provided!

Sign-up on the link below or on Information Alley across from Pastor's office. All tasks listed on the sign-up link/sheet.

Click to sign
up

SAVE THE DATE ISSAQNEENA'S BIKE RIDE SATURDAY March 29th

St. John's Lutheran Church is hosting Issaqueena's Last Ride cycling event again this year on **Saturday, March 29**. The ride departs from St. John's at 9:00 A.M.

When the more than 200 riders return, St. John's will feed them with soups, pasta salad, sandwiches, cookies and drinks.

Volunteers are needed to donate the food and to serve the food. Sign-up soon on the clipboards on Information Alley (next to the office) or click on the button below.



Click to sign
up

More Upcoming Events

Spring Forward

Remember to set your clock forward one hour before you go to bed on **Saturday, March 8**, so you're on time for worship on Sunday.



Youth Group Meetings

St. John's Youth Group (grades 7-12) will be meeting Sunday afternoons, **March 9th and 23rd**, from 4:30-6:00pm at the church. We'll have food, fun, fellowship, and brainstorm for our future! Come on out!



Easter Lily Orders

This year Easter Lilies will be \$15 each. We only have 25 available, so it's first come, first served. Order forms are in "Information Alley" (next to the office). Please submit completed forms and payment to the office. Deadline to order is **Sunday, April 13**.



Wednesday Lunch

All are welcome to join us at 11:30am on **Wednesday, March 12 and 26**, for tasty food, fun and fellowship. We ask for a \$5 donation towards the meal (you can't eat anywhere for \$5 anymore).

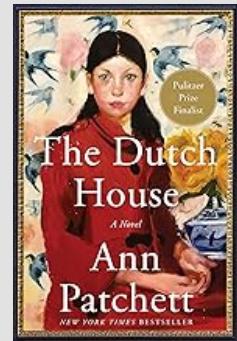
The sign up sheet is hanging in "Information Alley" (outside the office). Please sign up so we can estimate attendance.



Join Us for the St. John's Book Club

The Dutch House by Ann Patchett is our next book. Martha Murtiashaw will lead us on **Tuesday, March 18** at 7pm at church.

One note: our meeting room may change, so look for a book club member at the Church Street entrance and he/she will direct you to our meeting space. As always, if you'd like to join us via zoom, let us know, and we will set up a link.



God's work. Our hands.



GOD'S WORK~OUR HANDS DAY
Saturday, May 3

The 2025 Spring God's Work~Our Hands Day is scheduled for **Saturday, May 3**. St. John's members will meet at the church at 9am for a brief prayer send-off. They will then travel to Lakeview Assisted Living, 320 Camp Road, Walhalla to spend the morning doing God's work!

There will be games and activities for the residents, lunch for staff and residents and TBD yard work. Once again. It promises to be a busy morning, which will be filled with lots of God moments. We will be collecting some essential and much needed items for Lakeview including:

- laundry detergent
- bleach
- all-purpose cleaners
- adult diapers - men & women/size XL

As plans develop you will receive more information and the ability to sign-up for the activity of your choice.



2025 LUTHERROAD DAY CAMP

St. John's is hosting Lutherroad Day Camp at Biggerstaff Christian Retreat Center on **June 23-27, 2025**

WHAT IS DAY CAMP? It is a five-day program where many of the benefits of Camp Lutheridge come right to the local church. Trained counselors come for the week and share in a a program that includes fun, worship, games, Bible study, fellowship, crafts, sharing and prayer.

- Deadline for Early Registration is May 1st.
- Camp runs 9am - 4pm Monday - Thursday, 9am - 12 pm on Friday
- For children completing Kindergarten through 5th grade
- Cost is only \$160 (\$135 Early Bird Special) for the week and scholarships are available.
- Registration deadline is June 10.
- Same family multiple child discounts available.
- *Registration forms are available in the church office or click on the button below.*

Join us for a great week of fun for children of our church, grandkids, friends, and kids from the

Day Camp Registration Form

From our Ministry Groups



WELCA News

2025 Officers: Jan Long, President, Frieda Cobb Treasurer, Cathy Plowden
Secretary - we are looking for a Vice President, please contact Jan Long
(864)247-6255 if you are willing to serve



2025 St John's WELCA meetings

March 15 at 10am at Fellowship Hall, Gloria Shealy Circle Hosts
June 21 at 10am at Biggerstaff, Lucy Klaren Circle Hosts
September 13 at Fellowship Hall, Knitters and Crocheters hosts
December 13 11 am at Cathy Plowden's Home 316 N Church St - ornament exchange bring a dish to share

April 5 Foothills Conference at Emanuel Lutheran Church in Greenwood please contact Jan Long if you plan to attend.

May 16-May 18 Isle of Palms Retreat. Deadline to register April 5. Please Contact Cathy Plowden if you are interested 864-723-5454.

August 15-16 SCWELCA Convention at St Paul Lutheran Church in Aiken please let Jan Long know if you are interested in attending.



Lucy Klaren Circle

Our next meeting is scheduled for, **Thursday, March 20 at 6pm** at St. John's.



Gloria Shealy Circle

Our next meeting will be on **Tuesday, March 18** in the fellowship hall at 5pm.



If you are not a member of the Gloria Shealy Circle, but would like to know who we are and what we do, please know you are welcome to join us at any of our monthly meetings. We meet on the third Tuesday of every month at 5pm. Details will be provided in the monthly Chimes and weekly emails.



The Survivors Group

The Survivor plans for March include a trip to Helen Ga and going to Lakeview assisted Living. On **Monday, March 10**, we will travel to Helen Ga to have lunch at Hofer's Bakery and Cafe. We will meet at the church at 10am to carpool.



Then on **Tuesday, March 25** we will go to Lakeview Assisted Living to play bingo with the residents. We will meet at the church at 10:30am. All widows and widowers are invited to attend any event.



Knitters & Crocheters

Would you like to learn how to knit or crochet? Are you experienced and want to refresh your skills? If you want to learn one of these crafts or improve your skills, please join us for sharing patterns, helping each other, and participating in our outreach projects. We meet on the second and fourth Wednesdays each month.



We will meet on **Wednesday, March 12 and March 26** at 10am in the Fellowship Hall.

Questions? Call or text Barbara at (864) 723-3376.

Council & Committee Updates

St. John's Congregational Council Meeting Minutes

Congregational Council Meeting Minutes from February 17, 2025.

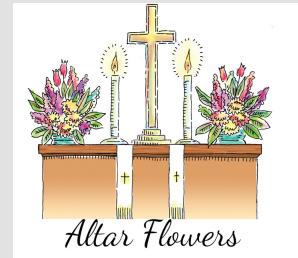


Click to read
more

Other News

Altar Flowers

Reminder that there is a sign-up chart for Sunday altar flowers. 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.



Thursday Meal Delivery

Through many generous member donations, St John's has been fortunate to continue to provide meals to 15 of our members who are elderly, live alone or need a few extra meals per month.

St. John's volunteers prepare and deliver over 1000 meals per year - this has become an amazing outreach. Many thanks to the 30 volunteer drivers who deliver each week- without them we could not do our work. On the 1st , 2nd and 3rd Thursdays, our established Chefs ministry prepares and delivers meals . On the 4th, and 5th Thursdays, we have partnered with the culinary arts students at the Hamilton Career Center. The students, under the direction of Rodney Quick, have been preparing the meals. This is a win-win ministry- we are supporting the students and they are helping us. In the words of Mr. Quick "the teaching tool of learning to give back is priceless".



I speak for myself, our volunteers, and our recipients when I say thank you to all involved for your continuing support of this ministry. As with all our ministries and outreach opportunities there is a turn-over of volunteers.

We are always in need of men and ladies to prepare and/or deliver meals. We will work with your schedule and with your gifts. 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.

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