



**St. John's Monthly Chimes E-Newsletter
April 2026**



Pastor's Notes

Dear Friends:

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Living Lord, Jesus Christ!

As we turn the calendar to April, we find ourselves entering into the most sacred days of our church calendar. Today is Wednesday in Holy Week—a day that in the liturgical readings is often marked by the pending shadows of betrayal and desertion that lies ahead. Yet, even as we prepare to stand together at the foot of the cross, we do so with the confidence of the Easter message—that even death cannot separate us from the love of God.

I invite you to take time in these days to enter fully into the dramatic story of our Christian faith. From the humble washing of feet and breaking bread on Maundy Thursday to the somber silence of Good Friday, we walk with Jesus so that we might truly experience the joy of the empty tomb. Our world yearns for resurrection, and the good news we share is that love is alive and stronger than death.

I look forward to journeying through these holy days with you.

In Christ's Peace,



Holy Week/Easter Sunday Schedule

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Maundy Thursday, April 2

7pm in St. John's Sanctuary-Worship
with footwashing and Holy Communion

Good Friday, April 3

Noon in St. John's Sanctuary
7pm in St. John's Sanctuary



EASTER SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Easter Sunday, April 5, 2026

7am – Sunrise worship at Biggerstaff Retreat Center
(398 Biggerstaff Rd, Seneca) A sausage and pancake breakfast
follows the service.

10am - Youth & Children Sunday School Event

10:30am - Coffee fellowship

11am - Easter celebration worship in Sanctuary

*Worshippers are invited to bring fresh flowers at 11am to decorate the
"flowering cross" that marks the Church Street entrance.*



Family Life Ministries



Friends,

*"...then I will send rain on your land in its season, both autumn and
spring rains, so that you may gather in your grain, new wine and olive
oil." -Deuteronomy 11:14*



Spring has finally arrived, and we can see the flowers blooming, hear
birds singing, and see butterflies everywhere. God's creation is beautiful

and bountiful!

The month of March was full of fun and fellowship. Before going on Spring Break, our children and youth gathered together for a St. Patrick's Day themed lunch and spent time outside, drawing and writing reminders of God's presence with sidewalk chalk. Towards the end of the month, a small group gathered to watch "*The Prince of Egypt*," in preparation for Holy Week. The movie, following the story of Moses and the Exodus, provided themes of persevering faith and reliance on God in the hardest, and best, of times.

This year April means Easter and more fun opportunities to gather together.

On **April 5, Easter Sunday at 10am**, all children and youth are invited to gather in the Education Building to decorate eggs and hear the story of Resurrection. Both the 7am sunrise and 11am Easter services will have a special youth message.

On **Sunday, April 12 at 12pm** following worship, Elementary youth will be gathering for lunch and a Bible lesson. We will read about God's creation and paint garden rocks.

On **Sunday, April 19 at 12pm** following worship, Middle School youth will be gathering for lunch and a Bible lesson. We will read about God's creation, our roles as "stewards of creation," and paint garden rocks.

On **Saturday, April 25** everyone is invited to the South Carolina Botanical Garden in Clemson. We will gather in the parking lot between 10 and 10:15am. We will take in some of the sights and smells of God's creation by walking through the gardens. Parking and admissions are free (and if you are a plant lover, the annual Spring Plant Sale is happening at this time as well)! If you need transportation, a carpool can be arranged. In case of inclement weather, we will reschedule. Please reach out to me with any questions!

On **Sunday, April 26** following worship, High School youth will be gathering for lunch and a Bible lesson. We will read about God's creation, our roles as "stewards of creation," and paint garden rocks.

Go in peace and serve the Lord.

Ms. Adriana

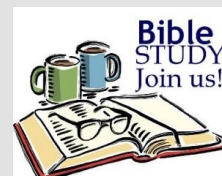


**Monday Evening Bible Study
(Mondays at 6pm)
in the Education Building
Led by Adriana**



Monday evening Bible Study will resume on **Monday, April 13**. We will be learning about the Life of Jesus from infancy to the Resurrection.

**Tuesday Morning Bible Study
(Tuesdays at 11am)
in the Sanctuary
Led by Pastor Rachel**



Tuesday morning Bible Study will resume on **Tuesday, April 14**. More information to follow.

Music Notes



Welcome New Choir Director and Accompanist

John Fallon will begin his position with St. John's on Wednesday, April 15 with his first choir practice at 6pm.

John will be leading and accompanying the Chancel Choir, leading music at the 11am worship, and accompanying the congregation on parts of the worship service.

WELCOME JOHN!

THANK YOU!!

A special thank you to our choir, Deb Blackmore, and Grace Lichtenwald for sharing their talents with us! Deb has served as choir director and Grace as accompanist over the last year.



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!

Note: The 9am worship is now at Biggerstaff until mid October.



Ministry Updates



Biggerstaff Happenings

Biggerstaff's annual workday was a resounding success! The workday checklist was completed and then much needed fellowship and nourishment was enjoyed by all. Thank you to all of the amazing volunteers who gave their time and energy. St John's beautiful Biggerstaff is ready for the 2026 season of worship and outreach

Our first worship service is Easter Sunrise Service, April 5 at 7am. Everyone is welcome! Come worship our risen Lord together and then enjoy fellowship time in the gazebo during the pancake breakfast hosted by the men of St. John's.

Hello Summer event, May 2. An event of welcome to the greater community as well as the St. John's church community. Keep a lookout for further details.

Volunteers are always appreciated and needed! If you are interested in seeing how you can help reach out to Keith Snelgrove-Board Chair, David Blakeney- maintenance, Pilar Riddle- events.

Upcoming Events

Church Office Closed

The Church Office will be closed on **Monday, April 6** for Easter Monday. It will reopen on Tuesday.



Wednesday Lunch

In April the Wednesday lunch will be held on **April 8** and **April 22**.

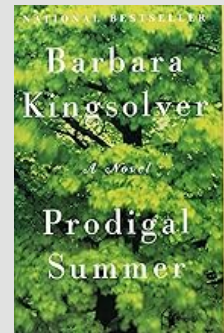
All are welcome to join us at 11:30am for tasty food, fun and fellowship. We ask for a \$5 donation towards the meal (you can't eat anywhere for \$5 anymore). Sign-up in "Information Alley" so we can estimate attendance.



April Book Club News

Next Meeting: **Tuesday, April 21, 2026 at 7pm**
Place: Cathy Plowden's House
316 N. Church Street, Walhalla

This month we are reading Barbara Kingsolver's novel, *Prodigal Summer*. Published in 2000, the novel follows the three interconnected individuals and their lives over a summer in an Appalachian mountains. Although the individuals are not related, they find connections in the flora and fauna and their role in the diverse biology of the land.



Kingsolver is the Pulitzer Prize winning author of the novel, *Demon Copperhead*, and has also won numerous accolades her other works of fiction and essays. She lives in Southwest Virginia with her family.

Anyone is welcome to Join us for Book Club. We have spirited discussions and welcome all opinions of the books we read. We also read a wide variety of books and book club members enjoy choosing the selections we read.

If you have questions, email Cindy Honeycutt at cindychoney@gmail.com, Martha Murtashaw at murtiashawm@bellsouth.net, or Cathy Plowden at ceplowden59@gmail.com

A New Book by Pastor Frank Honeycutt

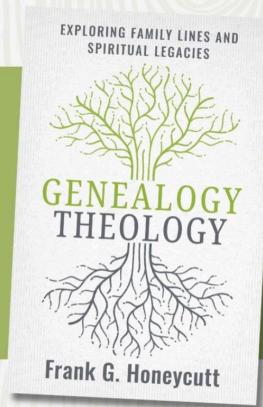
“In this highly **original** and **profound** book, Frank Honeycutt reveals how the biblical genealogies are **must-read** material, how they are bursting with human experience and holy wisdom, how they resound like tuning forks through the stories of our lives. Those who read this **fine book** will never skip over a genealogy again!”

—**Thomas G. Long**

Candler School of Theology

Piquing the curiosity of readers whose families don't fit neatly into simplistic narratives of faith.

**AVAILABLE
NOW!**



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 for the next three months** are on Information Alley or click the button below.



[Click to Sign Up](#)

Issaqueena's Last Ride

St. John's Lutheran Church is hosting Issaqueena's Last Ride cycling event again this year on **Saturday, April 18**.

The ride departs from St. John's at 9:00am. When the more than 200 riders return, St. John's will feed them with soups, pasta salad, sandwiches, cookies and drinks.

Volunteers 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](#)



GOD'S WORK~OUR HANDS DAY
Saturday, May 16, 2026
Save the date!

On **Saturday, May 16**, 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!

We will have high stakes game of Bingo with the residents, visit with the residents, and do some much-needed front and side yard work spreading mulch, trimming some trees, bushes, and power washing the fence that St. John's installed almost 10 years ago. We will have a team of volunteers at the church preparing lunch to feed the residents and staff. 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

Sign-up will be available soon -
contact Joan Lewis at joanlewissc@aol.com or (864) 710-1756 for more information.



2026 LUTHEROAD DAY CAMP

St. John's is hosting Lutheroad Day Camp at Biggerstaff Christian Retreat Center on **June 22-26, 2026**

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 program that includes fun, worship, games, Bible study, fellowship, crafts, sharing and prayer.

- **Deadline for Early Registration is May 1.**
- Camp runs 9am - 4pm Monday - Thursday, 9am - 12 pm on Friday
- For children completing Kindergarten through 5th grade
- Cost is only \$175 (\$150 Early Bird Special) for the week and scholarships are available.
- **Registration deadline is June 1.**
- 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 community!! For more information, contact the church office at 864-638-6363.

[Click for Registration Form](#)

From our Ministry Groups



WELCA News

2026 ISLE OF PALMS RETREAT FRIDAY, MAY 29 - SUNDAY, MAY 31

Retreat Leader: Pastor Mary Finklea
Topic: Fruits of the Spirit
Deadline to register: Tuesday, April 28!

WELCA Meetings for 2026

Saturday, June 6 at 10am in the Fellowship Hall
Saturday, September 26 at 10am location to be determined
Saturday, December 5 at 11am location to be determined (Christmas party with lunch and gift exchange)

2026 WELCA opportunities:

SC WELCA ISLE OF PALMS RETREAT
Fri., May 29 - Sun., May 31, 2026

SC WELCA CONVENTION
June 19-20, 2026 held at the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Newberry

2026 WELCA Triennial held in Des Moines, Iowa July 16-19, 2026





Lucy Klaren Circle

In March, Lucy Klaren circle provided a meal for the participants in The Ripple of One monthly program dinner at Lifepoint Church. The next meeting date hasn't been set.



The Lucy Klaren Circle is still collecting feminine hygiene products for the St. Luke's share box. The collection bin is near the television in the gathering area. A collection box will also be at Biggerstaff for the 9am service.



Gloria Shealy Circle

The Gloria Shealy Circle will be meeting on **Tuesday, April 21** in the Church Fellowship Hall at 12:30. Lunch will be provided. Tina Barrett and Anne Fogel will be hosting the meeting. They ask that you bring a monetary gift or a book to be given to Baby Read as our community donation this month.



Visitors are always welcome. Please consider joining us as our devotions are always inspirational and you will learn more about our outreach in the community.



The Survivors Group



The Survivors group has three events planned for April. On **Friday, April 10**, we will travel to Sapphire, North Carolina to have lunch at Mica's Mountain Kitchen. We will meet at the church at 10:30 to carpool.

Then on **Sunday, April 12** we will have a lunch and learn after late service. Lance Yuda will speak on gardening tips with a question and answering time. All are invited to join us for this event. Lunch will be provided.

On **Wednesday, April 22** we will travel to Clayton, North Carolina to have lunch at Fortify Pizza and Burger Bar. We will meet at the church at 10:30 to carpool.

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



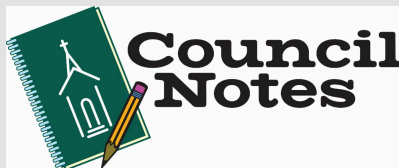
Knitters & Crocheters



Our meetings in April are on **Wednesday, April 8 and April 22**, 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.

The picture shows our donation of dishcloths for the fellowship kitchen.

Council & Committee Updates



St. John's Congregational Council Meeting Minutes

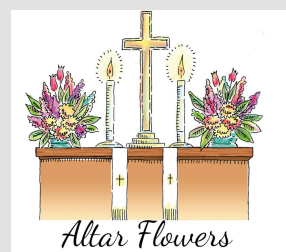
Please click on the link below to read the Council Meeting Minutes from **March 9, 2026**.

[Click to read more](#)

Volunteer Opportunities

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

Through many generous member donations, and the ceaseless efforts of our volunteers, St John's has been fortunate to continue to provide meals to 20 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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[Visit our Website](#)





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