



A STEPHEN MINISTRY CHURCH

January 4, 2026

Epiphany Sunday

STREET ADDRESS
104 NEWBERRY ST. NW
AIKEN, SC 29801

MAILING ADDRESS
P.O. BOX 809
AIKEN, SC 29802

803-648-6891
www.stjaiken.org

Staff Announcement

We are delighted to announce that Cara Robinson has accepted the position of Director of Discipleship at St. John's. Cara and her husband, David, have been dedicated members of St. John's since 2023. Some of you may remember Cara during her brief time as our Children's Director in 2023 where she diligently served our children's ministry. Cara brings dedication, faith, and commitment to serving others. We invite the congregation to extend a warm welcome back and keep Cara in your prayers as she steps into this important role.

Thank You from the McClendons

Dr. Tim and Cindy wish to say, "Thank you to everyone who coordinated worship, the refreshments for the reception, the SC Senate Resolution, and the amazing love gift! These 12 years have been wonderful and we praise Jesus and all of you for the fruitful ministry that we have shared."

Succession Plan Starting January 1, 2026

As we enter our senior pastor succession plan following Dr. Tim's retirement on December 31st, we do so prayerfully, trusting God will lead us in unity and wisdom. The Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) wishes to clearly communicate the succession process as dictated by our Book of Discipline:

1. SPRC has named Rev. Butch Blackwell as St. John's Interim Lead Pastor, who has graciously accepted, until a candidate is hired. Rev. Butch will preach church services beginning the first two Sundays in January.
2. SPRC has agreed with Rev. Dr. Jeff Kersey formerly with Mt. Horeb Church (Lexington, SC) to preach the 1st and 4th Sundays of the month until a candidate is hired. Rev. Will and Rev. Butch will split preaching duties the 2nd and 3rd Sundays of the month.
3. Vanderbloemen, the executive search firm hired by SPRC, is currently recruiting and vetting potential senior pastor candidates. The job opening was posted on October 22, 2025. To protect candidates and maintain integrity, some details must remain confidential. We commit, however, to regular updates so you know where we are in the process.
4. As candidates are presented to SPRC and interviews conducted, per St. John's Book of Discipline, SPRC shall present one candidate at a time to the Church Council, where a vote will be taken.
5. Following Church Council vote, the candidate will preach one Sunday service at St. John's, followed by a Question-and-Answer session conducted that same afternoon.
6. A Charge Conference will be required to officially elect a candidate for the Lead Pastor role.

While SPRC expects the search process to take approximately 6-9 months, we are committed to moving at the pace that allows for wisdom, prayer, and unity rather than rushing a decision. Our ministries, worship, and mission will continue during this season. We are grateful for our interim leadership and staff who are faithfully serving during this transition. The "Eleventh Hour Prayer Group" meets on Tuesday mornings in the church's chapel from 11 am to Noon to pray for the church. We ask you to pray regularly for the SPRC, for the candidates God is preparing, and for our church to remain unified and hopeful as we trust the Lord together.

Worship Services: Rev. Butch Blackwell; Rev. Will Altman; Director of Traditional Music - Dr. Matt Caine; Organist - Christopher Nash; 9:02 Band Leader - Jane Timmerman; The 9:02 Band - Chuck Carver, Juli Davis, Earl Melton, Matt Osteen, George Collins, Steve Davis, Alec James, Jeff Krok, Jonathan Cook, Susan Lawson, Marshall Sanders

Crucifer: Madison Zeigler **Acolytes:** Palmer Gregory and Jack Taylor

January 8:30 Ushers: Tom Miniard, Randy Shelley, Greg Lowry

January 11:00 Ushers: Virgil Sauls, Pat Sauls, Donald Leader, Commie Peebles, Newkirk Barnes, Bill Hillan, Sara Carmichael, Doug Carmichael

January Worship Support: Judy Bilyeu, Susan Crosby, Karen Blackwell, Peggy Neill

You may text your gift to St. John's by texting **stjaiken** to 1-888-364-4483 and following the instructions.

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The 11:00 service is broadcast over WKSX 92.7 at 12 p.m., one week delay.

January 4, 2026

Children's Ministries

Children's Event; Nerf War "God and For Gideon"- January 11th from 5pm - 6:30pm Register here: <https://links.stjaiken.org/2026NerfwarSTJ>.

Foundation Student Ministries

(7th-12th Grades)

The Merge will take place on January 11, 2026 at 5pm in the Faith Center.

Youth Ski Retreat Jan. 30 – Feb. 1, 2026 to Winterplace "Are You Ready to Ski?" Registration link: <https://links.stjaiken.org/26STJyouthski> or use the QR code on the graphics page.

Youth Small Groups coming in 2026!

Young Adults Ministry

Young Adults Sunday School Class takes place at 10am in Room 237. Please join us!

St. John's Missions News

Please pray for our 2026 Mission Impact Celebration "Showers of Blessings," using the prayer guide you should have received in the mail within the last few weeks. Our prayers do make a difference. Also, mark your calendar for the kickoff celebration on February 4. More information to come in the mail soon.

For the month of **January**, we are collecting **canned tuna and salmon (pop tops or pouches only)**. Please place any donated items in the box marked "Grace Kitchen" in the Narthex of each worship service and in front of Ward Hall. Please place only the requested donation items in the Grace Kitchen boxes as these are the current items needed

Ushers Needed for 9:02 Service

The 9:02 Worship Service is currently looking for volunteers who might want to serve on an Usher/Greeter Team. This is a great way to meet people and feel a part of the church. Currently there are 6 teams, so they only serve once every 6 weeks. We could easily establish a 7th team if we had the volunteers to fill the positions. If you are interested, please let Susan McDonald know by email: smcdonald@stjaiken.org or call 803-648-6891, ext. 216.

Travel Talk

Primetimers travelers are sponsoring a travel talk Friday, January 16, at 2 pm in Ward Hall. A representative from Kelley Tours will present information about 2026 tours planned especially for St John's. All are welcome. Bring your friends to learn about these travel opportunities.

Ministry Opportunity

Do you have an interest in providing enrichment activities for seniors aged 50 plus? If so, the Senior Adult Council has a opening for you. We plan Sunny Monday, Primetimers travel and other events. New members and new ideas are always welcome. For more information, see Rev. Butch (803-648-6891) or Brenda Meeks (803-979-1900), or attend our January 12th meeting in the Conference Room at 1 pm.

Sunny Monday

St. John's Senior Adult Council will host Sunny Monday on January 12, 2026. The program will begin at 10:30am in the Faith Center featuring Linda Johnson from the Historical Foundation of Aiken speaking about "Women of the Winter Colony." Lunch at \$5 per plate will be baked ziti, salad, roll and brownie with ice cream for dessert. Please call the church office at 803-648-6891 to make your reservation by January 8, 2026.

**The flowers in the Sanctuary are given to the glory of God
by *The Sauls Family* in honor of *Pat Sauls' birthday*.**

Wednesday Night Supper

WNS MENUS LOOKING FORWARD:

Wednesday Night Supper and Ministry Meals will resume on January 14, 2026.

Jan. 14: Chili with beans, salad, cornbread, and peach cobbler

Jan. 21: Spaghetti, green beans, garlic bread, and cheesecake

Jan. 28: Roasted bone in chicken thighs, garlic sliced potatoes, peas & carrots, roll, and cherry pie

Reservations are required by phone/email: jwindham@stjaiken.org by **12pm, Tuesday, January 12, 2026.**

Dinner is served at 5pm in Ward Hall 2/3. Cost for dinner: \$8 per adult (10 yrs. & older) and \$3 per child (ages 3 - 9yrs). Payment options: on-line via our website: www.stjaiken.org and select "GIVE NOW" and then select "WNS" from the drop down menu. You may also pay in person by cash or check. Please make checks payable to St. John's.

News of the Family

Congratulations to:

William Brown Capps, son of ***Zachary & Danielle Capps***, grandson of ***Clay & Erika Smith***, and great-grandson of ***Brenda Smith***, was baptized here at St. John's on Sunday, December 28, 2025.

ACTS Monthly Collection Item

January — **canned vegetables**

Collection bins are located in the Narthex and the Faith Center

Attendance — Christmas Eve 2025

5:00 | 426

7:00 | 547

11:00 | 187

In-Person Total | 1160

Sunday, 12/28/2025

10:00 | 535

Financials

2025 YEAR END FINANCIALS ARE COMING SOON

Missions Budget: Year 2025-2026

Year to date offerings given for what God is asking us

to do in Missions:

\$ 267,423.31

Year to date disbursements:

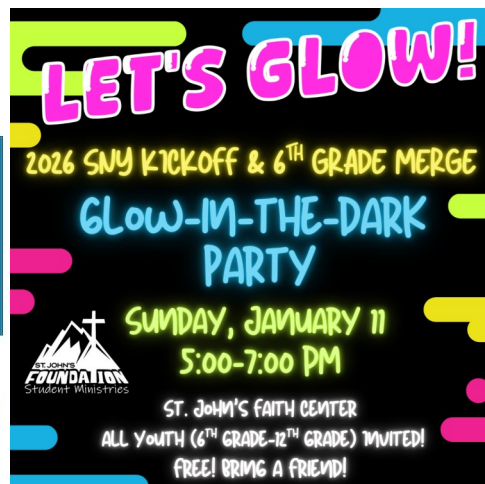
\$ 210,550.00

*We thank you for your generous support of
St. John's Ministries & Missions!*

Please use our new GIVING QR code to give on line:



SCAN ME





Order of Worship - 8:30 A.M.

We welcome you, no matter who you are, where you come from, or why you are here. We are Christ's people, and this is Christ's place with its doors open wide. Thank you for worshipping with us today. Please silence all electronic devices.

PRELUDE

Christopher Nash, organ

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

On This Day Earth Shall Ring

arr. Gustav Holst

Chancel Choir

*OPENING HYMN No. 254,

"We Three Kings"

KINGS OF ORIENT

SCRIPTURE READING

Joshua 1:1-9

Rev. Butch Blackwell

SERMON

"Be Strong and Courageous"

Rev. Butch Blackwell

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom shall have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in the one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

*GLORIA PATRI No. 71,

"Glory Be to the Father"

GREATOREX

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Be Strong in the Lord

Tom Fettke

Chancel Choir

*DEDICATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

LASST UNS ERFRUEN

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below; Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

PASTORAL PRAYER, LORD'S PRAYER & CHORAL RESPONSE

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION, page 12

*HYMN OF DEDICATION No. 670, "Go Forth for God"

GENEVA 124

*BENEDICTION

*CHORAL RESPONSE

The Lord Bless You and Keep You

Peter Christian Lutkin

Chancel Choir

POSTLUDE

Christopher Nash, organ

**Please stand, as able.*



Order of Worship - 9:02

We welcome you, no matter who you are, where you come from, or why you are here. We are Christ's people, and this is Christ's place with its doors open wide. This service will be livestreamed today at 9:02 on our website stjaiken.org, our Facebook Page, and the St. John's App. Thank you for worshipping with us today. Please silence all electronic devices.

PRELUDE

PRAISE SONG

Do Not Be Afraid

JJ Weeks

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAISE SONG

I Believe

Jonathan Cook

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

The Nicene Creed

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PASTORAL PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

OFFERTORY

Promises

Maverick City

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SCRIPTURE READING

Joshua 1:1-9

Rev. Butch Blackwell

SERMON

"Be Strong and Courageous"

Rev. Butch Blackwell

PRAISE SONG

Walk By Faith

Third Day

BENEDICTION

SENDING FORTH SONG



Order of Worship - 11:00 AM

We welcome you, no matter who you are, where you come from, or why you are here. We are Christ's people, and this is Christ's place with its doors open wide. This service will be livestreamed today at 11am on our website stjaiken.org, our Facebook Page, and the St. John's App. Thank you for worshipping with us today. Please silence all electronic devices.

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CHILDREN'S SERMON

Children K4-2nd grade may now follow the Crucifer to Children's Church.

Chancel Choir members who sang at the 8:30 service may now leave.

PASTORAL PRAYER, LORD'S PRAYER & CHORAL RESPONSE

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

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