



*December 17, 2023*  
*Third Sunday of Advent*  
*Gaudete Sunday*

104 NEWBERRY ST. NW  
AIKEN, SC 29801

P.O. BOX 809  
AIKEN, SC 29802

803-648-6891

[stjaiken.org](http://stjaiken.org)

## A Hallelujah Christmas

Music by Leonard Cohen

[Verse 1]

I've heard about this baby boy  
Who's come to earth to bring us joy  
And I just want to sing this song to you  
It goes like this, the fourth, the fifth  
The minor fall, the major lift  
With every breath, I'm singing Hallelujah

[Chorus]

Hallelujah, Hallelujah  
Hallelujah, Hallelujah

[Verse 2]

A couple came to Bethlehem  
Expecting child, they searched the inn  
To find a place, for You were coming soon  
There was no room for them to stay  
So in a manger filled with hay  
God's only Son was born, oh, Hallelujah

[Chorus]

Hallelujah, Hallelujah  
Hallelujah, Hallelujah

[Verse 3]

The shepherds left their flocks by night  
To see this baby wrapped in light  
A host of angels led them all to You  
It was just as the angels said  
"You'll find Him in a manger bed"  
Immanuel and Savior, Hallelujah

[Verse 4]

A star shone bright, up in the east  
to Bethlehem, the wise-men three  
came many miles and journeyed long for You  
And to the place at which You were  
Their frankincense and gold and myrrh  
They gave to You and cried out Hallelujah

[Chorus]

Hallelujah, Hallelujah  
Hallelujah, Hallelujah

[Verse 5]

I know You came to rescue me  
This baby boy would grow to be  
A man and one day die for me and you  
My sins would drive the nails in You  
That rugged cross was my cross too  
Still every breath You drew was Hallelujah

[Chorus]

Hallelujah, Hallelujah  
Hallelujah, Hallelujah  
Hallelujah, Hallelujah  
Hallelujah, Hallelujah

## UMCOR Coffee Sales



Last minute Christmas gift needed? Stop by and check out the coffee, tea and chocolate selections we have. Perfect for hostess gifts, stocking stuffers, or just to keep on hand for the holidays! The shop is open today, between 9:15am and 12:30pm.

## Church Staff Thank You & Reminder

On behalf of all of the church staff, thank you, for all of the cards, treats and gifts that have been shared this Christmas season. We wish you all a very Merry Christmas! Also, a reminder that the church office will be closed from December 25 through January 1, 2024. We will reopen for regular business on Tuesday, January 2, 2024.

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### SERVING THIS WEEK

**Worship Services:** Rev. Dr. Tim McClendon; 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, Johnathan Cook, Susan Lawson, & Marshall Sanders

**Crucifer:** Witt Wilkins

**Acolytes:** Emily Poole and Loren Wilkins

**December 11:00 Ushers:** Champ & Jeannette Bowden, Donald Leader, Alison & Roger Carpenter, Penny Rue, Jean Geiger, Al Hartgraves, Art & Susie Smith, Commie Peebles, Leah & Joe Lewis, Mick & Connie Pisko, Eric Randall, Dave Felak, Larry Burdette, Allen & Nola Radcliffe, Kent Falb, Jerry Miller, Mitch Rivers & Mary Ann Findley

**December Worship Support:** Jean Geiger, Sandra Jameson and Millie Winston

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.*

# December 17, 2023

## Children's Ministries

Celebrate Advent at home! Parents, please pick up an Advent coloring book for your child in the Narthex or lobby of the Faith Center. The booklet, entitled *Come! Lord Jesus*, contains daily family devotionals for the season and coloring pages for children.

Thank you to everyone who joined us for the Gingerbread Nativity! We had a great time together celebrating the birth of Christ in a special, sweet way. Thank you to all the wonderful volunteers who helped make this event a success. We love and appreciate you!

**Birthday Party for Jesus:** December 24 at 10am

The children will gather and celebrate the birth of our Savior during Sunday School. Gifts of new men's socks for the homeless are appreciated. Drop off your children at the Sunday School classrooms as usual; teachers will walk their classes to Ward Hall for the party.

**Children's Nativity Skit:** December 24 during the 5pm Christmas Eve Service

The children will walk through the story of Jesus birth, as told in Luke 2. \*\*Please note: There will be practice on Dec. 20 at 5:30pm.

Please let Cara Robinson know if your child would like to participate in any of these events: [crobinson@stjohns-umc.org](mailto:crobinson@stjohns-umc.org).

## Foundation Student Ministries

(7th-12th Grades)

Join us tonight for our Sunday Night Youth **Christmas Party!** Drop off in the Faith Center loop starting at 5:00pm. We will have free time in the gym, dinner, and our annual gift exchange! Bring \$2 and a wrapped gift spending no more than \$5. Be sure to invite a friend! Pick up is at 7:00pm in the Faith Center loop.

Revolution is January 26-28, 2024! Registration is open on Realm. Early bird deadline is today.

**\*No Bible Studies this Wednesday.**

Realm has a new texting update that requires an "opt-in" from you! Parents, counselors, and students, make sure you stay up-to-date on all things Foundation, **text START to (843)305-4638.**

## St. John's Missions News

Your prayers and faithful support are moving mountains in Thailand! Pray for Thailand Now Blessing Home Isan. These youth are not only strong disciples of Christ in the church, but they have a vision of reaching the lost for Christ. They have been active in leading Bible camps in several counties. May the joy of Christmas grow them closer to one another and to God.

For the month of November, we are collecting **blankets and sleeping bags.** Please place any donated items in the box marked "**Grace Kitchen**" in the Narthex of each worship service. Please place only the requested donation items in the Grace Kitchen boxes as these are the current items needed.

## Dr. Tim's Bible Studies

Please make note that both Dr. Tim's morning and evening Bible studies will be on break through the Christmas and New Year's. Both Bible studies will resume on Wednesday, January 10, 2024.

## St. John's Grief Group

Our St. John's Grief Group is a caring group of people who will walk alongside you through one of the life's most difficult experiences, losing a loved one. Please know that you do not have to go through the grieving process alone. If you are grieving the loss of a loved one, we invite you to become a part of our St. John's Grief Group. We will meet on Tuesdays from 3:45pm - 5pm, beginning January 9, 2024, upstairs the Faith Center. If you have questions or plan to attend, please call Reverend Butch in the church office.

## Discipleship Groups are Now Forming

Today, December 17, at 10am, come to the Faith Center to learn how being part of a life-changing discipleship group can draw you closer to God. Contact Denny Norman 773-329-5341 or Francis Osteen 803-617-9771 for more information.

**Poinsettias will be on display from December 17 - December 24.  
9:02's can be picked up following the that service and all others  
can be taken following the 11pm Christmas Eve service.**

### Wednesday Night Supper

**Menu:** Ham, mac and cheese, baked beans and pie

**Kids Menu:** Chicken nuggets and mac & cheese

Reservations are required and should be made by Monday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, at 5pm by calling the church office at (803)648-6891 or contacting Juli Davis at: [jdavis@stjohns-umc.org](mailto:jdavis@stjohns-umc.org). Cost is \$8.00 for ages 10 yrs. - adult and \$3.00 for children over 3 years. You can pay online at [stjaiken.org](http://stjaiken.org), select "GIVE NOW" and then from the drop down menu, select "WNS." You may also pay in person - checks are preferred. Please make checks payable to St. John's.

### Primetime Travelers Announce First 2024 Trip

St. John's Primetime Travelers will be going to NarroWay Theater, Fort Mill, SC, on March 16, 2024, to attend the Easter production of The Fourth Cross. These Christian plays and lunches have always been popular with the Primetimers. Travel details and registration forms are available in the lobby, outside the church office. Do not delay. Invite a friend. The registration deadline is January 15, 2024.

Also, mark your calendars for Thursday, February 1, 2024, at 2pm in Ward Hall, for the ever-popular Travel Talk announcing the remaining 2024 St. John's travel dates!

### Videos Regarding Separation

The church website has updated the Discernment page with some insightful videos from Pastors of several churches around South Carolina that have chosen to separate and the effect that separation has had on their church. If your Sunday School class has a smart tv and is interested in viewing these videos together, please stop by Jennifer Windham's desk in the church office to borrow the thumb drive. They can also be accessed on your personal computer or handheld device at [www.stjaiken.org/discernment](http://www.stjaiken.org/discernment)

### News of the Family

#### *Sympathies to:*

**Bobby & Phyllis Coker** on the death of Bobby's brother, **Danny Coker**, who died on December 9, 2023, in Florence, SC.

### ACTS Monthly Collection Item

December — **peanut butter**

Collection bins are located in the Narthex and the Faith Center

### Attendance — 12/10/2023

8:30 | 188    9:02 | 210    11:00 | 493

In-Person Total | 891

9:02 Online Live | 375    11:00 Online Live | 739

### Financials

#### Operations Budget as of 12/06/2023

Year to date offerings given for what God  
is asking us to do:

\$ 2,080,898.52

Year to date ministry expenditure:

\$ 2,033,355.84

\$ 47,542.68

#### Missions Budget: Year 2023-2024

Year to date offerings given for what God is asking us  
to do in Missions:

\$ 212,892.89

Year to date Missions Disbursements:

\$ 220,002.74

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



TODAY IS THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT



*Joy*

## NEW GRIEF GROUP SESSION

Beginning January 9,  
Tuesdays at 3:45pm  
Faith Center

*All are invited  
to join.*

Please contact Rev. Butch  
if you plan to attend:  
803-648-6891, ext. 214  
gblackwell@stjohns-umc.org



## REVOLUTION JANUARY 26-28 RETREAT



## 2023 Christmas Eve Services

SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES AS NORMAL

5:00 PM FAMILY SERVICE

7:00PM CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

11:00 PM CANDLELIGHT SERVICE WITH COMMUNION

*All services held in the Sanctuary*

## Mission Impact Celebration 2024

Mark Your Calendars  
**February 7 -11**



Focus:

*Local Mission*



## SKI TRIP 2024 FEBRUARY 9-11



## 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

#### **Christmas Lullaby**

Chancel Bells

Chip Davis; trans. Paul McKlveen

#### **The Holly and the Ivy**

Chancel Bells

arr. Chip Davis; trans. Paul McKlveen

### WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### CALL TO WORSHIP

#### **Angels We Have Heard on High**

Youth Choir

arr. Sam Cardon and Garrett Breeze

#### \*OPENING HYMN No. 211,

#### **"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"** (v. 1, 5, 6, 7)

VENI EMMANUEL

### LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLE

Carol Godfrey and Margaret Brown

#### SCRIPTURE READING

1 Thessalonians 5:12-28

Rev. Dr. Tim McClendon

#### SERMON

#### **"Jingle Bells at a Funeral"**

Rev. Dr. Tim McClendon

#### \*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

#### **The Apostles' Creed**

*I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord: who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; the third day He rose from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.*

#### \*GLORIA PATRI No. 71

#### **"Glory Be to the Father"**

MEINEKE

*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. Amen.*

#### OFFERTORY ANTHEM

#### **Silent Night**

Chancel Bells

arr. Chip Davis; trans. Paul McKlveen

#### \*DEDICATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS No. 95,

OLD 100TH

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

#### ANTHEM

#### **The First Noel**

Youth Choir

arr. Russell Robinson

### 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.*

#### \*HYMN OF DEDICATION

#### **"A Hallelujah Christmas"**

Leonard Cohen

#### \*BENEDICTION

### POSTLUDE

*\*Please stand, as able.*

*This is a time of great need, and our missions and church operations require our continued generous giving. Please consider giving online, through text, through the mail, or over the phone to help us ensure that our ministries here and around the world are not adversely affected. More details can be found at [stjaiken.org](http://stjaiken.org).*



## Order of Worship

### Third Sunday of Advent - Joy

*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](http://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**                      **Oh, What A Glorious Night**                      *Sidewalk Prophets*

**WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**                      **Rev. Will Altman**

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE**                      **John and Frances Osteen**

**PRAISE SONG**                      **Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee**                      *Dyke/Casting Crowns*

**AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**                      **We Believe**

*We believe in God the Father. We believe in Jesus Christ. We believe in the Holy Spirit and He's given us new life. We believe in the crucifixion. We believe that He conquered death. We believe in the resurrection and He's comin' back again. We believe.*

**PASTORAL PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER**                      **Rev. Will Altman**

*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**                      **"Noel"**                      *Daigle*

#### CHILDREN'S SERMON

**SCRIPTURE READING**                      **1 Thessalonians 5:12-28**                      **Rev. Dr. Tim McClendon**

**SERMON**                      **"Jingle Bells at a Funeral"**                      **Rev. Dr. Tim McClendon**

**PRAISE SONG**                      **A Hallelujah Christmas**                      *Cohen/Cloverton*

#### BENEDICTION

#### SENDING FORTH SONG

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## CHILDREN'S SERMON

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

*Chancel Bells may exit at this time due to their participation in the 8:30am worship service.*

## 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.*

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