



*December 7, 2025*  
*Second Sunday of Advent*  
*Christmas at St. John's*

STREET ADDRESS  
104 NEWBERRY ST. NW  
AIKEN, SC 29801

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

803-648-6891  
[www.stjaiken.org](http://www.stjaiken.org)

## One Service on December 28

We will hold one service on December 28, 2025, at 10am in the Sanctuary. A reception for Dr. Tim and Cindy McClendon will follow in the gymnasium.

## Applefest Numbers are Final

Thanks to everyone at St. John's who played a part in this year's Applefest event – whether as a booth worker/leader, contributor, or shopper – St. John's Methodist Women are pleased to announce that this was our absolute best year yet! We earned \$60,000 in proceeds and on December 21st, at the 11 AM service, each of our recipients will be presented with a check in the amount of \$20,000! What a testament to the hard work of this church. As promised, after expenses, all funds earned at Applefest are distributed to the recipients. None is held back at St. John's.

The recipients are Epworth, Life Choices Pregnancy Center, and The Aiken Center - Jake Miniard Recovery Fund. Thanks to everyone from our Methodist Women.

We are also pleased to announce that because of the dedication of our Methodist Women's Circle Members and their monetary pledges this year, we are awarding \$1,000 each to Aiken Senior Life Center for home delivered meals; Walking Tall Ministries for ministry meals; Tri-Development Center for Christmas supplies for residents; Community Medical Clinic of Aiken for supplies and medications; and ACTS for the food pantry. What an amazing year it has been in support of community missions.

## Love Gift for Dr. Tim

"Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching." – 1 Timothy 5:17

This Scripture reminds us that those who faithfully serve in pastoral ministry are not only to be respected, but to be given "double honor." In context, Paul was teaching that spiritual leaders who devote themselves to shepherding, teaching, and caring for the flock are worthy of both respect and gifts of gratitude. As Dr. Tim prepares to retire from fifty years of ministry, twelve of which have been at St. John's, we are grateful for how we have been blessed by his devotion to serving God, the church and all of us in many special ways. A love gift is Biblical as well as serving as a way for us to share our gratitude and appreciation for Dr. Tim and his incredible ministry. You may participate in providing a love gift by mailing it directly to **Bradley L. Boni, PO Box 652, Aiken, SC 29802**. (**Corrected from last week**). All contributions should be received no later than December 19, 2025. You may also drop your gifts off with Nancy Fairgrieve who will make sure they get to Brad Boni. Please remember to designate your gift to the "Dr. Tim Love Gift Fund" in the memo field.

## Gaudete Sunday Is Next Week – Be Gaudy!

The Third Sunday of Advent is always one that focuses on joy and features the pink candle on the Advent Wreath. **Get in the mood by wearing your brightest and most gaudy apparel next week!**

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**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:** Audrey Dietzel      **Acolytes:** Amelia Orr and EG Reynolds

**December 8:30 Ushers:** Tom Miniard, Randy Shelley, Greg Lowry

**December 11:00 Ushers:** Paula Blackmore, Donald Leader, Sally Alexander, Rod Alexander, Jeff Wallace, Jean Geiger, Penny Rue, Gerry Hansen, Bruce Carrera, Rea Maynard, Kevin Maynard, Katherine Sturm, Connie Pisko, Mick Pisko, Susie Graven-Smith, Art Smith, Karen Travis, Larry Travis, John Lindsay, Maxine Falb and Kent Falb

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

You may text your gift to St. John's by texting **stjaiken** to 1-888-364-4483 and following the instructions. Images and texts used with this service have permission granted under CCLI #2220845.

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

# December 7, 2025

## Children's Ministry

Gingerbread Nativity has been moved to – December 10th at 6pm! Sign up here:

<https://links.stjaiken.org/2025Gingerbread>

Confirmation Sunday will be next Sunday, December 14.

### **SAVE THE DATE:**

**Dec. 14:** Children's Christmas Caroling, 3pm – 5pm, meet in the SEED parking lot.

**Dec. 21:** Children's Christmas Party during Sunday School

The 5pm Christmas Eve Nativity practice: Date and time to be determined soon.

## Foundation Student Ministries

(7th-12th Grades)

Sunday Night Youth will not meet tonight. We hope to see you at the Gingerbread Nativity event on Dec. 10. Our last gathering for 2025 will be on Dec. 14 for our Christmas Party. Hope to see you there!

### **SAVE THE DATES:**

**Dec. 10:** Gingerbread Nativity, 6pm in the gym.

**Dec. 14:** Youth Christmas Party from 5pm – 7pm at the church. Get your ugly Christmas Sweater ready!

## Young Adults Ministry

Sunday School meets in room 237 at 10am.

### **SAVE THE DATE:**

**Dec. 18:** Christmas Lights at Hopeland Gardens, 6pm

## St. John's Missions News

St. John's 4<sup>th</sup> quarter day of service will be Saturday, Dec. 13, from 10am – 12pm at the Salvation Army's Christmas Cheer Center at 240 University Pkwy, Aiken SC 29801. We will be bagging, packing gifts and sorting. Children must always be accompanied by a supervising adult. Sign up after one of the services today in the narthex or email Don Hayes at [hayesdonj@gmail.com](mailto:hayesdonj@gmail.com). Afternoon time slots may be available. Additionally, if you want to volunteer outside of that Saturday, you can register here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0C48ACA72BA0FE3-60213292-aiken>

For the month of December, we are collecting gloves and hats. 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.

## Java for Jesus

This Christmas season, share the joy of thoughtful gift giving. Treat your loved ones to heavenly hot cocoa, warming teas and coffee, and delicious chocolates. Every gift of Equal Exchange helps support small-scale farmers. Great gifts, stocking stuffers, hostess gifts, etc. are selling today and Sunday, December 21.

## Men's Night Out

Men's Night Out on Tuesday at 6pm, will be viewing "Secondhand Lions." Secondhand Lions is about a shy boy who spends the summer with his two eccentric great-uncles in the 1960s, learns about their mysterious past through colorful stories, and discovers the meaning of family and believing in something.

## Dementia Support Group

We are looking forward to beginning a new 8-week session for our Dementia Support Group on Tuesday, January 13, 2026, at 4:00 pm in the Faith Center. This group is open to all caregivers of those struggling with Dementia. For the past year and a half, this group has been instrumental as a resource and support for those caring for a loved one with Dementia. Please contact Rev. Butch if you have questions or if you wish to attend.

**The flowers in the Sanctuary are given to the glory of God  
by *Bobby & Phyllis Coker* in loving memory of  
*Charles William Lawrence.***

**Christmas Cards for Veterans**

Warm the hearts of veterans now living in Aiken area care facilities. Express your gratitude and help spread our Christian love at this joyous time of year. Write the same message on 10 cards (or more), sign your name, do not seal the envelopes, then deposit the bundled cards in the boxes located in the Narthex, the Faith Center lobby and Ward Hall corridor. Detailed writing instructions are available on/near the drop off boxes. Thank you for your time and kindness.

**Final Poinsettia Sales Today**

Today is the final day of poinsettia sales in the main lobby or the Faith Center lobby. Orders will be limited as only 60 plants have been ordered. The cost per plant will be \$25.

**Home Communion Training**

We will be holding a training session for new Home Communion Servers on Tuesday, December 9, at 3:30pm in the Conference Room. There is still time for those who have yet to volunteer to do so. If you wish to know more please contact Rev. Butch Blackwell in the church office.

**Grief Group Announcement**

When we lose someone we love, we embark on a journey not of our choosing. And yet, it is a vital and sacred journey we must make. That, of course, is a journey of grief. St. John's offers a Grief Care Group that serves as a means of self-care and shared community for those in grief. It is designed to be a series of twelve sessions – where you will listen, share, and gain important tools to use in navigating your unique grief experience. We will be beginning a new 12-week session on January 14, 2026, at 3:45 in the Faith Center. If you are on a journey of grief and would like to attend or know more about our group, please call Reverend Butch at the church office.

**News of the Family**

***Congratulations to:***

***Wren Mae Brinson***, daughter of ***Dylan & Olivia Brinson*** and great-granddaughter to ***Jerry & Kay Buckner***, was baptized on November 29, 2025.

***Sympathies to:***

***Tom & Heather, Hailey and Ashley Young*** on the death of ***Carl H. "Wink" Winkles, Jr.*** who in Murrells Inlet, SC on died December 2, 2025. "Wink" was Heather's father and grandfather to the girls.

**ACTS Monthly Collection Item**

**December – peanut butter and jelly**

*Collection bins are located in both the Narthex and the Faith Center*

**Attendance—11/30/2025**

8:30 | 91    9:02 | 211    11:00 | 268

In-person Total | 570

9:02 On-line Live | 130    11:00 On-line Live | 144

**Financials**

**Operation Budget as of 12/3/2025**

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

\$2,344,443.08

Year-to-date ministry expenditures:

\$1,976,546.78

\$ 368,896.30

**Missions Budget: Year 2025–2026**

Year-to-date offering given for what God is

asking us to do in Missions:

\$ 303,143.63

Year-to-date disbursements:

\$ 259,250.00

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

Please use our new GIVING QR code to give online.



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## FINANCE COMMITTEE BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENT

As we approach the end of the calendar year, the Finance Committee wants to review two "gifting" options for our church members.

- 1.) Gifting highly appreciated securities (i.e., stocks, bonds, etc.) - please contact Nancy Fairgrieve and/or speak to Mary Ann Barrett, Janney, Montgomery Scott LLC, Aiken office (803-649-6304) per the church's local brokerage account. We ask that transfer instructions be in process on or before 12/20/2025.
- 2.) Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs) - for charitable gifts from IRAs. Please have check made payable to and as beneficiary "St. John's Methodist Church," PO Box 809, Aiken, SC 29802. Nancy Fairgrieve can provide further assistance if needed.

Both of these options can provide advantageous tax benefits to individuals and couples. Please consult your own personal tax advisor if appropriate.



## 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.*

<b>PRELUDE</b>	<i>The Holly and The Ivy</i>	arr. Chip Davis
<b>WELCOME &amp; ANNOUNCEMENTS</b>		<b>Rev. Butch Blackwell</b>
<b>BIDDING PRAYER &amp; THE LORD'S PRAYER</b>		<b>Dr. Matt Caine, Congregation</b>
<b>CALL TO WORSHIP</b>	<i>Christmas Eve/Sarajevo 12/24</i>	Paul O'Neill, arr. Bob Phillips
<b>*OPENING CAROL No. 245, "The First Noel"</b>		THE FIRST NOEL, arr. Sir David Willcocks
<b>LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLE</b>		<b>Michael &amp; Margaret Rollins</b>
<b>CAROL</b>	<i>Veni, Veni</i>	arr. Chip Davis
<b>THE APOSTLES' CREED</b>		
<b>GLORIA PATRI</b>		
<b>SCRIPTURE READING</b>	Isaiah 60:1-20	<b>Rev. Butch Blackwell</b>
<b>ANTHEM</b>	Christmas Canon	Paul O'Neill, arr. Bob Phillips
<b>TITHES AND OFFERING</b>		
<b>OFFERTORY CAROL</b>	Greensleeves	arr. Chip Davis
<b>*CAROL</b>	<i>God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen</i>	GOD REST YE MERRY, arr. Sir David Willcocks
<b>CAROL</b>	Stille Nacht	arr. Chip Davis
<b>*GOSPEL READING</b>	Luke 1:26-38	<b>Rev. Butch Blackwell</b>
<b>CAROL</b>	<i>The Many Moods of Christmas, Suite 3</i>	Robert Shaw and Robert Russell Bennett
<b>*CLOSING CAROL No. 246, "Joy to the World" (Choir only on v.3)</b>		ANTIOCH, arr. John Rutter
<b>*BENEDICTION</b>		<b>Rev. Butch Blackwell</b>
<b>POSTLUDE</b>		

\*Please stand, as able.



## Order of Worship – 9:02 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

**PRAISE SONG**                      **I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas**                      *Berlin*

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE**                      **Vikki Woody**

**PRAISE SONG**                      **We Need Emmanuel**                      *Heath- Longing & prophecy*

**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.*

(please remain standing for "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear")

**PRAISE SONG**      **It Came Upon a Midnight Clear**                      *Sears- Angelic announcement*

### 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**      **The Beautiful Star of Bethlehem**                      *Boyce- The journey to Christ*

**PRAISE SONG**                      **Silent Night**                      *Mohr & Gruber- The birth of Christ*

**PRAISE SONG**                      **What Child Is This**                      *Nix- Wonder and worship*

**PRAISE SONG**                      **How Many Kings**                      *Downunder- The humility and love of God*

**PRAISE SONG**                      **Make Room**                      *Casting Crowns- Our response to Christ's coming*

### BENEDICTION



## 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 [stjohns.org](http://stjohns.org), our Facebook Page, and the St. John's App. Thank you for worshipping with us today. Please silence all electronic devices.*

**PRELUDE** *The Holly and The Ivy* arr. Chip Davis

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

**BIDDING PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER** **Dr. Matt Caine, Congregation**

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**CAROL** *Veni, Veni* arr. Chip Davis

**THE APOSTLES' CREED**

**GLORIA PATRI**

**SCRIPTURE READING** **Isaiah 60:1-20** **Rev. Will Altman**

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**POSTLUDE**

*\*Please stand, as able.*