

# THE CHIMES

St. John's Lutheran Church, ELCA

**Mission:** EMPOWERED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, WE JOYFULLY INVITE ALL TO LOVE, SERVE, AND GROW IN CHRIST WHILE EMBRACING A CHANGING WORLD.

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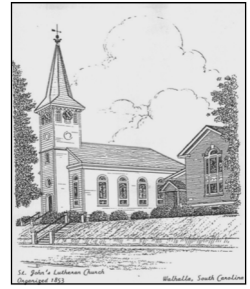
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## A CALL TO DEEP WATER FISHING

I recently met a couple who are Disaster Response volunteers. They were preparing to leave home and family and head to Haiti to serve for three months in response to the devastating earthquake that hit Haiti in August 2021. I thought to myself what a great mission opportunity and how I would love to be able to leave everything for a time and go serve in such a way. As I thought about this, Mother Teresa came to mind. Now *there* was a person who walked away from everything and spent her life serving the poor. It sounds downright romantic, in a way, and many of us have dreamed of leaving it all behind so we can go off to a foreign land and spend our lives doing good. But I also remembered the words of Mother Teresa where she said that Americans are always saying that they want to leave their lives here and go to India (*or Haiti*) to work with her. And her response was: **"Stay right where you are and love the people God has given you to love. Care for people right where you are."**

This Sunday, following the Epiphany theme of witness, we hear in Luke's gospel the call of the disciples. In this story, Peter and others have just returned from a bad night fishing when Jesus arrives on the scene and tells them to: "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch." Now you probably know the rest of the story, following the command of Jesus the disciples go into the deep water and catch more fish than their boat can handle. Next, we hear the disciples leave everything and follow Jesus.

Reflecting on both the story of the disciples and the former words of Mother Teresa, I hear the call of Jesus in a new light. If we truly want to follow Jesus, we don't have to leave our homes and family, and live on the streets or in a faraway place like Calcutta. The water is plenty deep right here, right where we are in Oconee County. There's plenty of challenge, plenty of possibility, and a very clear call to serve right where we are. Or as the quote goes there is opportunity to "bloom where you're planted."

The Epiphany season of revelation and witness is also time of evangelism and stewardship, as we review our previous year ministries, install new council members and leaderships, and look at where God is calling us to engage with the world around us. Deep water fishing for Christians is not about convincing others of our truth or getting them to accept our beliefs, but instead it is the practice of sharing and living the word that has transformed our lives with such grace and power that we cannot help but *tell the story*.

While the Omicron variant of the Covid19 virus caused us to gather more carefully at the beginning of the year, St. John's staff and leaders are eagerly moving forward with the plan of a Ministry Fair in March and opportunities to discern where God is calling us to use our gifts. We want to live more fully into the mission we have been called to in Walhalla and the surrounding community. We are called to trust God is leading us to love the people in our midst and to accompany us as we strike out into the deep water.

May God be with us in our fishing!

*Pastor Rachel Connelly*

From the  
Vicar



It may only be February, but for me it already is beginning to feel like spring. Part of this is surely the warmer weather here than where I am used to, but there also feels like a lot of wonderful new things beginning at St. John's. As the year continues there are so many new opportunities which will call upon our attention and resources. It can seem like the list of things to be done is never ending! Perhaps that is part of the fun. With all that will be started, continued, ended, or explored in the next year, I trust there is little which cannot be accomplished with a bit of planning, some welcoming, and by using the talents and skills which we all have together, all led together by the Holy Spirit to find what needs finding.

As we all know the last few years have been full of changes; some welcome and some not. I hope as we keep looking toward the future there are new adventures and new ministries which can be found, or current ministries revived and renewed.

I think the sense of call to find these new paths is strongest as we march toward spring. As the world begins to wake and grow and put out new life, it seems natural to want to do the same. If you have been looking to begin something new in your own life, perhaps this is the perfect time. We are still in the season of Epiphany. Where can you see your own light entering in? How can this congregation help you to act on this?

Looking for spring,

*Vicar Laura Beall*



## SOUPER BOWL OF CARING



On Sunday February 13, over 100 million Americans will tune into the Super Bowl LVI football game watching the Los Angeles Rams and Cincinnati Bengals battle it out for the championship title. People will gather for parties with abundant food, friendships, and fellowship. At the same time in our own community and around the world, there will be people worrying about staying warm, finding shelter and wondering where they will find their next meal.

Also, on Sunday February 13, St. John's will share in the Souper Bowl of Caring Outreach. We will join churches across the country to collect money for those who are hungry and hurting. For over 30 years, the Souper Bowl of Caring movement has been inspiring people across the nation to tackle hunger in their local communities.

Our youth will hold soup pots at our church doors following both services for the Souper Bowl of Caring. All of the money collected will support Lutheran World Hunger. Since 1990, churches, schools civic groups and individuals have share over 170 million worth of support for those in need. Show your support in this effort to "love our neighbors" by dropping your dollars in the soup pot on February 13.

**WELCA** — St. John's will be hosting the WELCA Spring Foothills Conference on Saturday, March 5th. Registration begins at 9:30am. Our theme is: **Help us to "CHANGE" the world by "BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE"**. Our program speaker will be Jon Goyert of Oconee County Habitat for Humanity. A lunch will follow the speaker presentation, followed by a SC WELCA business meeting.



For those of you unfamiliar with this event it is held twice a year and alternates between the 14 churches in the SC WELCA Foothills Conference. St. John's was scheduled to host this conference in March of 2020 — it was canceled due to COVID.

Please note that the RSVP date is by February 27th. There will be a sign-up sheet at the Spiritual Opportunities desk or you can sign-up online at this link: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1aRlxcOq1h6ly75FkGG3BnqroNrOOo5o15NK-8ImipzI/edit#gid=0>

We are hoping to see you on Saturday, March 5.



Knitters & Crocheters

**Knitters & Crocheters**--Would you like to learn how to knit/crochet? Or just need help to revive your skills? Consider meeting with the group on February 9 and 23 (second and fourth Wednesdays) at 10am in the fellowship hall. We make our own items, but our main goal is to reach out to our congregation, community and nationally for those in need for caps, scarves, afghans, etc. Contact Barbara Wilson for more information.

**Congregation Council Meeting—January 24, 2022**  
—Abbreviated Minutes



**Members Present:** All members including Vicar Laura except Marjorie Conaway. Meeting called to order at 6:04pm. Dwelling in the Word led by Tom Ward.

**December Meeting Minutes:** Motion to approve as presented, Greg Harris, second by Scot Williams. Minutes approved.

**Pastor's Report:** The services for Christmas Eve worship were well attended. The “Christmas in the Barn” at Biggerstaff was the most well attended with 108 attending the inaugural event. January has started with some challenges with Covid numbers, Covid closure of the preschool and winter weather issues.

**Vicar's Report:** Wellness calls have been made to members, especially after the ice storm and power outages. She continues to teach Children's Sunday School classes in Tiffany's absence.

**Treasurer's Report:** Total income for December was slightly under budget for the month, but over budget for the year overall. Total expenses for December were over budget by the month but was still under budget for the year by \$25,218. Total income for the year 2021 exceeded total expenses by \$35,845. The General Fund checking account balance is \$63,611. A full annual report will be available soon.

**Operating Safely Update:** Masks will be required in building at all times. Review at the next meeting (or sooner) will be done based on the Covid numbers.

**Worship and Music:** Several bell ringer practices have been canceled. Planning for Lent underway.

**Preschool:** Due to Covid and contact tracing, the preschool was closed from January 11th to January 18th. Currently interviewing for one new teacher.

**Congregational Care:** Chef's routes for Thursdays are all going well. Knitters and Crocheters have made donations to multiple deserving groups.

**Faith Formation:** The youth were able to meet and removed the 200 some batteries from all the Christmas Eve candles. Gary Cabbage's Zoom class has gained 4 new members. Scott Sprouse's class is going strong. 2022 Council Ministry assignments were made based on member input.

**Council Retreat:** A one day event on either March 12th or 19th was decided.

**Next Council Meeting** is February 21st at 6:00pm. Meeting adjourned at 7:42pm with praying the Lord's Prayer.

**Respectfully Submitted:** Lynn Pode, Congregational Council Secretary

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The high school girls will be starting a monthly gathering and bible study with the middle school “tweens” later this month or in early March.  
More details to follow as we have concrete times.



**The Survivors** group is planning a Valentines lunch for Friday February 11 at the Lighthouse. Those going will meet at 11:30am. All widows/widowers are invited. This is a special event always enjoyed by those attending. If you would like to attend, please let Jeri Klaren (864-638-6445 or klarenh@bellsouth.net) know prior to Wednesday, February 9.

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**Memory Café for February** will be held on *February 15, 2022*. The group will meet at 2:00pm in the office building of Saint Luke United Methodist Church. The address is 607 E Main Street in Walhalla. The special event for the day is Chocolate Bingo. It is a game of bingo. When you win, you get chocolate in commemoration of Valentine's Day. Come join us and make Memory Café a place where you and your loved one with memory loss can get together in a safe, supportive, and engaging environment. It is a place where you can interact, laugh, cry, find support, share concerns, celebrate, and encourage friendship and acceptance. There is no cost. All meetings are free. Call Bonnie Holmes at (864-539-6069) for more information.



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**SAVE THE DATE — ISSAQUEENA BIKE RIDE- SATURDAY APRIL 30TH**

St. John's will be hosting the annual bike ride by providing lunch to the 200+ riders. Volunteers will be asked to work a 3 hour shift and donate soups/salads/sandwiches. MORE INFO COMING SOON!

## St. John's Staff

The Reverend Dr. Rachel Connelly, Pastor  
Laura Beall, Vicar

Alicia Rannou, Administrative Assistant

Joan Lewis, Spiritual Gifts Coordinator

Ray Burroughs, Sexton/Technology Support

Judi Matalik, SJ Preschool Director

Patty Shepard, Youth Director

Tiffany Chapman, Children's Ministry Coordinator

Jan Long, Congregational President

Chuck Rawlins, Congregational Treasurer

Mark McLean, Financial Secretary

Greg Harris, Cemetery Coordinator

Check out St. John's Website for more information on ministries at: [stjohnswalhalla.org](http://stjohnswalhalla.org)

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SUNDAYS



St. John's Lutheran Church, Walhalla

# FEBRUARY 2022

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**Vicar Laura's contact information:**  
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Cell # (605) 464-5941



SOUPER BOWL OF CARING  
Collection on February 13. (see inside)

TIME DATED MATERIAL  
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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