

# THE CHIMES — NOVEMBER 2023

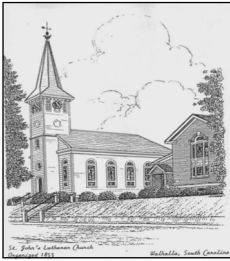
St. John's Lutheran Church, ELCA

*Mission: Embracing a changing world in Christ's love and service.*

PLEASE NOTE: Office Hours: Monday—Friday 8:30am-1:00pm

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"And I am praying that you will put into action the generosity that comes from your faith as you understand and experience all the good things we have in Christ." Philemon 1:6 (NLT)

Dear Friends:

Have you ever found yourself caught up in a whirlwind of events and activities that keep you moving at such a frenzied pace that you feel like you are floating along and cannot keep your feet on the ground? Well that is how I have felt on our shared ministry journey the last month.

Youth gatherings, Community events, Hospital and Hospice visits, Praying, Memorial and Funeral services, Home visits, Choir rehearsal, Synod Leaders' Convocation, Strategic Planning, Praying, Studying Scripture, Council meeting, Preaching, Stewardship, Budget meetings, Praying for the world, Intern Supervising, Newcomer visits, Worship, WELCA groups, and Confirmation have been some of the items listed on my monthly council report. I see this ministry as a part of the calling we all share in at St. John's as we live more fully into our mission: *to embrace a changing world in Christ's love and service.*

Last Sunday we celebrated the Rite of Confirmation with four young women and their families. In my reflections on this faith milestone for them and for our congregation, I kept coming back to the covenant the girls affirmed which is a part of our baptismal covenant:

Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in Holy Baptism:  
to live among God's faithful people,  
to hear his Word and share in his supper,  
to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,  
to serve all people, following the example of our Lord Jesus,  
and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?

The question is one for us all to ponder as we are renewed and reformed in faith. It is also appropriate as we come to All Saints Sunday and our *Generous Giving, Faithful Living* Appeal Sunday. For me, I keep hearing my old Seminary professor, Dr. Harold Park's voice, as he stood before our class and shared this statement: Stewardship is everything I do and say after I have said "I believe . . ."

Of course with that also goes the prayer that was said at the laying on of hands at the end of the confirmation rite on Sunday: *Father in heaven, for Jesus' sake, stir up in **Charlotte/Campbell/Ava/Sage—(and in your people)** the gift of your Holy Spirit; confirm her/his faith, guide her/his life, empower her/his serving, give her/his patience in suffering, and bring all of us to everlasting life. Amen.*

Praying, Loving, and Serving in Christ,

*Pastor Rachel Connelly*

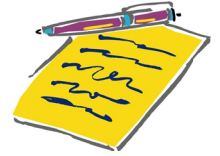


**DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME CHANGES — NOVEMBER 5TH**  
Remember to turn your clocks back one hour on Saturday night.  
Blessed with an extra hour of sleep,  
we then can come refreshed to worship our Lord!

Dear St. John's Family;

I've had a lot of conversations with folks in and around our congregation lately, and heard reflections on how bad the news is these days. And there is a lot of heavy, upsetting news, for sure. The headlines and TV news programs shout at us day and night, showing images of ethnic cleansing and gun violence, and we are right to be concerned and distressed. I wonder, though, if we can allow the bad news to motivate us to action, rather than getting overwhelmed and numb, or depressed. Maybe we can put the bad news in context of a fuller picture of reality, and the good news of God's love for us, poured out in Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

From the  
Vicar



The good news is often so much quieter than the bad news. As Pastor Rachel preached on Reformation Sunday, Psalm 46 reassures us that God is in the midst of every circumstance, whether natural disaster or civil unrest. We find peace in the knowledge of God's presence. The God of Jacob is our stronghold!

Grace and peace,

*Vicar Olga-Maria Cruz*

### **SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5—All Saints Sunday and Generous Giving, Faithful Living Appeal Day**

ALL SAINTS SUNDAY



All Saints celebrates the baptized people of God, living and death, who are the body of Christ. At St John's we have the practice of closing our All Saints worship with a processional to the cemetery where we remember those who have died in the last year with the tolling of the bell. In the midst of the graves of the faithful, we declare that death is not the end. God has won the victory through the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. In both of our worship service, members are invited at the beginning of the service to light a candle of remembrance of loved ones. On this Sunday, we also receive commitment cards for our Stewardship Appeal.

### **SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12—Congregational Meeting**



CONGREGATIONAL  
MEETING

St. John's Annual Congregational Meeting is set for **10am on Sunday, November 12**, in the Fellowship Hall (following the 9am Worship). *As we gather the Survivors Group will provide a continental breakfast in honor of our St John's Veterans and Veterans Day.*

The agenda for this meeting is as follows:

- ◆ Approval of minutes from the 2022 Annual Meeting.
- ◆ Elect new Congregation Council members. (4 seats available, 3-year terms)
- ◆ Vote on the 2024 Operating Budgets (Church, Biggerstaff)
- ◆ Update from Strategic Planning Teams

A quorum of 60 members is required. Please plan on attending this important meeting.

### **SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19—Combined Worship at 10:30am**

**Celebrating St. John's 170th Anniversary.** St. John's members will gather to celebrate 170 years of being the church together in Walhalla. The actual organization date of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church was on November 20, 1853.



**Please join us for a Potluck Lunch at Noon—immediately following worship at 10:30am.**

Bring a dish to share- gluten free options are welcome. Sign-up at the Spiritual Ops table or online at: [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/12zhhWm-f8Zc\\_aj8KYWSlr6wl8HfltwMZ/edit#gid=1426455092](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/12zhhWm-f8Zc_aj8KYWSlr6wl8HfltwMZ/edit#gid=1426455092)



### **SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26—Christ the King /Thanksgiving Sunday**

This is the final Sunday of the church year. We gather this day to celebrate the reign of Christ and his victory over death, yet we await the consummation of all things yet to come. We also give thanks to God for the bountiful blessings we enjoy as we prepare for the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday.



## WELCA REPORT

All women are invited to attend WELCA meeting on Saturday, November 11, 9:15 am. We will meet in the fellowship hall for the election of 2024-25 officers and making a craft ornament. Invite a friend to join our bold women for Christian fellowship and stewardship.

### KNITTERS & CROCHETERS



Would you like to learn how to knit or crochet? Do you need help to revive your skills? One-on-one teaching is available. The group meets on **Wednesday November 8** at 10am in the Fellowship Hall. Come join us! Dishcloths and scrubbies, baby booties and blankets, and miscellaneous items may be purchased then. Questions? Call or text Barbara at (864) 723-3376.

Gloria Shealy Circle



### THE GLORIA SHEALY CIRCLE

The Gloria Shealy Circle will be meeting in the Fellowship Hall on **Tuesday, November 14** at 5:00pm. Jan Long, our host, will provide us with meal of Thanksgiving. We are sponsoring two children through the DSS for Christmas and will be discussing our donations at this meeting.

### LUCY KLAREN CIRCLE



The next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, November 16 @ 6PM** at the home of Chelsea Lawrence (803 W Main Street). Come join in the shared fellowship. Plans for February Jubilee will also be discussed.

### THE SURVIVORS GROUP



Survivors Group

The Survivors group will be going to the Village Bakery in Pendleton on **Friday, November 3** for lunch. Then on **Sunday, November 12** we will honor our Veterans with a small continental breakfast after the 9:00am worship service. Then on **Friday, November 17** we will go to Dillard, Georgia to have lunch at the Cupboard. All widows and widowers are invited to join us for any of our events. Contact Shonda Mahler for more information.

### SALVATION ARMY RED KETTLE BELL RINGING

St. John's is assembling a team of volunteers to ring the Red Kettle Bell at Ingles in West Union on **Monday, December 4** in 2-hour shifts between 9am and 7pm at either entrance. Our invitation to serve came from Dr. Michael Thorsland, the superintendent of the school district and a member of the Walhalla Rotary Club. He reminds us:



- The Salvation Army is a Christian organization that plays an important role in helping meet physical needs for the poor and needy in our community.
- This is The Salvation Army of Oconee County's only fundraiser for the year. All money collected at Oconee kettle locations stays in our county.

Sign-up sheet is at the Spiritual Ops table or online at: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1KWG2MnOafyTPUETcqBZzgNOu4G7Tc5Zw/edit#gid=1779475306>

### WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

Calling all Veterans . . . Wreaths Across America will be held at St. John's on **Saturday, December 16**. Any veteran who would like to participate in this special ceremony can contact Jane Harris, [harrisjaner@gmail.com](mailto:harrisjaner@gmail.com) or 864-882-3043.



Dear St. John's Family and Friends,

Thank you for your love and support following my recent surgery. Your cards, calls, visits and delicious meals made these last few weeks much easier. We are so grateful to be a part of such a loving church family.

Blessings, Andrea Carlson



## St. John's Council October 2023 Meeting— Abbreviated Minutes

**Members Present:** Pastor Rachel Connelly, Vicar Olga-Maria Cruz, Jan Long, Greg Harris, John Hewell, Stephanie Champion, Sandra Pruitt, Jeremy Chapman, Grace Schmeelcke, Cathy Plowden, Scot Williams, Bill Pickard and Lynn Pode



**Meeting called to order** by President Greg Harris at 6:00pm.

**Devotion/Dwelling in the Word** by Jan, using the scripture from Matthew 5:38-48.

**Prayer Requests** taken and Pastor Rachel led members in prayer.

**September Meeting Minutes:** Minutes approved.

### Strategic Plan Update:

**Accessibility:** Greg reported that the committee approved a topographical and boundary survey of the church and grounds. This is the first step in moving forward in reviewing how we can meet our accessibility goals.

**Biggerstaff:** The committee reviewed the written proposal from the architect firm and voted to accept it. Stage 2 will include an on site visit to help determine the various options for using the space.

**Eldercare:** Greg stated this committee has had a slower start but have met and much is tied to the Accessibility review. The Outreach committee is looking into ways to meet our senior's needs as well.

**Families with Youth and Children:** Jeremy reported that the October 1 joint event with St. Luke's Methodist youth went very well with about 25 youth and 12 adults in attendance at Biggerstaff. Those attending gave positive feedback on the gathering. Jeremy noted that it did highlight the need for a staff person in this role. The events take time to plan and it requires adults to provide programming and supervision. There is a "Date night" planned for October 28th after the Walhalloween/Trunk or Treat event at the church.

**Stewardship for all Seasons:** Jan discussed the committee (Pastor Rachel, Jan Long and Mark McLean) have been working on a brochure explaining our "Generous Giving - Faithful Living" 2024 stewardship appeal. Flyers for the 3 major emphases and temple talks are planned during the month-long program.

**Pastor's Report:** October has been all about the Stewardship Program, 2024 Budget, Funerals, and pastoral care. Nov. 19th we will celebrate St. John's 170th anniversary, planning is underway

**Vicar's Report:** Vicar Olga-Maria reported she was settling in and building relationships. She was excited to report she assisted in her first baptism.

**Treasurer's Report:** During the month of September expenses exceeded income by \$7,314. For the first 9 months of 2023 income is under budget by **\$22,539**. Expenses YTD are under budget by \$22,466. General Fund checking account balance is \$34,878.

**New Business:** Council members reviewed and discussed the proposed 2024 Budget submitted by the Finance Committee. **The Council unanimously voted to approve the 2024 Budget.**

The Nominating Committee of Pastor Rachel, Dean Fogel, Stephanie Champion and Scot Williams has been appointed and they will be working to identify candidates to replace the 4 current members whose term end this year. The slate of nominees will be voted on during our Congregational Meeting.

**November 12, 2023 Congregational Meeting 10:00 (between services).**

**November 19, 2023 Reminder that there will be one worship service at 10:30am with a lunch to follow, celebrating our 170th anniversary.**

**Next Council Meeting is November 20, 2023 at 6:00pm. Adjourned at 7:40 pm**



### MERCHANT MARKET DAY/WALHALLA HISTORY DAY 2023-RECAP

On Saturday, October 14, St. John's participated in the Merchant Market Day event held on Main Street. Approximately \$1200 was raised for the Oconee County Backpack Program (food delivered to county schools and given to children in need of additional weekend nutrition) and Rise Against Hunger (mobilizing a global network to end hunger by packaging nutritious meals that are distributed around the world). St. John's showcased our heritage by having a booth on Main Street serving traditional German brats, kraut, chips, and water. We had 40 volunteers setting up, cooking, working and taking down our booth. Thanks again to all who volunteered to make this another successful St. John's outreach ministry! Thanks also to Thrivent for recognizing us as a community action team and providing \$250 towards our expenses.