



ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Herald

Volume LII Issue IV

April 2025

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Dating Easter

In February, I wrote about how 2025 marks 1700 years since the Council of Nicea was held. Nicea was incredibly important for several reasons, not the least of which was the composition of the Nicene Creed (it was edited in 381 at the Council of Constantinople). However, questions over the divinity of Jesus were not the only questions addressed by the bishops who gathered. One of the pressing issues surrounded the celebration of Easter.

Early Christian communities were highly localized. Regional churches had variations in ritual and calendar observances. This was especially the case with the celebration of Easter. Local churches had different ways of formulating the date of Easter. As Christianity spread and became more cosmopolitan, this led to confusion. When the bishops gathered at Nicea, they created a common formula for establishing the date of Easter that we still follow today. Easter is celebrated on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the spring equinox.

The change was successful for a period of time, but due to a miscalculation in the number of solar days in the Julian calendar, the date March 21 (assumed to be the day of the equinox) drifted further and

further away from the actual equinox. In 1582, Gregory XIII reformed the calendar to match the solar year more precisely. The “new” calendar was adopted by Christians in the West, but rejected by Christians in the East, resulting in a division between when Western Christians (Roman Catholics and Protestants) and Eastern Christians (Greek, Russian, Serbian Orthodox, etc.) celebrate the feast. In the West, Easter can fall anywhere between March 22 and April 25. In the East, it can fall between April 4 and May 8. The dates of the observance may fall up to a month apart.

The year 2025 is one of those rare years when the calendars happen to sync. It marks a particularly unifying event for the world's Christians to celebrate our greatest and most important feast together. And while there will be other years when the dates converge, this will come to an end in the year 2698.

There has been a renewed call to find a common date for Easter for all Christians. The resurrection of Jesus lies at the very heart of what it means to be a Christian. While there are many other areas where Christians differ, this is one thing that can and should unite us. Leaders in Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant communities have expressed a desire to see this unity come to fruition. May God grant us the will to make it so.

In Resurrection Hope,

Pr. Robb

Church Office Hours

Monday-Thursday 9:30 AM -2:30 PM

843-723-2426 info@stjohnscharleston.org

The church office will be closed on Easter Monday, April 21.



Please scan the QR code
for easy online giving
to St. John's!

St. John's Lutheran Church
5 Clifford Street, Charleston, SC 29401
Church Office: 843-723-2426 info@stjohnscharleston.org

Join Pastor Robb on Facebook Live

each Wednesday at 8:30 AM for a short devotion.

You can access St. John's Facebook page via the app or any web browser at <https://www.facebook.com/StJohnsLutheran>

2025 Bible Challenge

Lent is the perfect time to add a dose of scripture to your day. Join our 2025 Bible Challenge. Reading schedules may be found in the back of the church or in your weekly email update.



"Front Porch Day" Sunday, April 13th, 2025 1-2 PM

Please join us for our "Front Porch Day" that coincides with Second Sunday on King. We are opening our doors to visitors for music, tours, and to learn more about who we are at St. John's.

We would like to have members present to welcome guests. Please reach out to Mike Lagonera if you are able to help on this day.

mclags@hotmail.com

443-934-2662



Altar Flowers/Greens

Please contact Susan at the church office to sponsor flowers or greens in 2025!

843-723-2426 or email: info@stjohnscharleston.org

The cost is \$55 per vase.

Would you like to sponsor a vase on April 6 or May 18?



July Choir Opportunity

Have you ever thought about singing with the choir but only want a short term commitment? Have you ever wondered what singing in the choir would be like with a world class director like Brink Norton? Well, here's your chance! In July, the choir will not rehearse on Wednesdays but will rehearse Sunday mornings at 9 AM. Anyone may come and rehearse with us on Sunday mornings and then sing in the choir at 10 AM. Try it for a month and see if you like it. You can even try it for one Sunday if you prefer.

Organ update

The organ is scheduled to arrive the afternoon of March 31. It will be unveiled for services on Easter Sunday.

Choir on Easter Sunday

This year, we are trying something new on Easter. The brass and choir will be at BOTH services on Easter Sunday. Very exciting! Thank you choir and brass for sharing your time and talents with the 8 AM service.

Children's Choir

The children's choir will be singing for the 11 AM service on Easter Sunday. They are preparing a very special piece by John Rutter. We rehearse every Sunday from 9:30 until 10 AM. If you have any children/grandchildren in your family, please feel welcome to bring them to rehearsals on Sunday mornings. They will be able to sing with us Easter Sunday if they come to rehearsals and learn the music. It would be fun to see a large group up there Easter Sunday!

Piccolo Spoleto Organ Concert at St. John's

Springtime and sunshine bring pollen, but they also bring the arrival of the Spoleto and Piccolo Spoleto festivals! St. John's will host a concert as part of the L'Organo pipe organ concert series.

Visit this link for more information on the L'Organo series.

<https://lorganocharleston.org/events>

Can You Hear Me Now?

If you have been to worship recently, you may have noticed some changes in the way things sound. We received an anonymous gift from some generous members that allowed us to upgrade the sound system in the sanctuary. This new digital system modernizes what we are able to do with sound while utilizing the existing in-pew speakers that have been in place for years. The new sound board is much more expansive, allowing us to use microphones that were not available to us before. We hope these changes improve the experience for everyone who attends St.

John's.

- Brink Norton, Director of Digital Ministries

Hymn Sing

The local chapter of the American Guild of Organists is hosting a special hymn festival with famous composer and church musician David Cherwien. The event will be held on **May 4th at 6pm** at St. Luke's Lutheran Church and all are invited to attend!



Tovey Circle

The Tovey Circle will meet on April 3rd, 11:00 AM at the home of Penny McKeever. Penny McKeever will present the program. All ladies are invited to attend.



Calling All Graduates!

Are you graduating this year from High School or College? The Christian Education Committee wants to honor you at our end-of-year graduates celebration! Please send your name to Melissa Spaulding at edistobluellc@gmail.com



Do you like to use your talents to help others? Do you have a small amount of time but would like to help in a BIG way? Do you

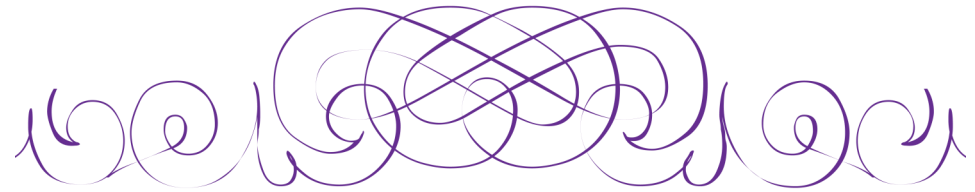
enjoy fellowshiping with our church family? Would you like to get to know your church family better? Social Ministry is looking for YOU to help with future Community Outreach projects.

- ☐ Sign me up for a fun evening helping prepare a meal together with members of our church for Veterans or children undergoing cancer treatments. (Fisher House or Hope Lodge)
- ☐ I love to bake! Sign me up to make a breakfast casserole at home for cancer patients.
- ☐ I'd be happy to prepare a large bowl of fruit for an evening meal.
- ☐ I'd be happy to pick up a couple of gallons of tea, lemonade, or orange juice.
- ☐ I'd be happy to buy a couple of containers of muffins or bake them myself!
- ☐ I'm really good at making grits! I'd be happy to make a pot of them for others.
- ☐ I would love to _____

Return form to the Office/Social Ministry mailbox or fill out online.

Questions? Contact Brenda Carr, Social Ministry Chair

Thank you in advance for YOUR help!



Midweek services at St. John's Lenten Worship

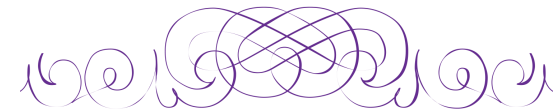
Light Supper at 6:15PM
Evening services at 7:00PM

Wednesday, April 2

Theme: Purification

Wednesday, April 9

Theme: Salvation



Wednesday Noon Community Worship Services

**Theme: The Seven Wounds of Jesus:
From Wounded to Risen**

Wednesday, April 2

12:00 PM at First Baptist

Preacher: The Rev. Dr. Holton Siegling

Senior Pastor, First Scots

Wednesday, April 9

12:00 PM at St. Michael's Chapel

Healing Service

All 12:00 PM Community Services
are followed by a luncheon served by the host church, through 4/2.



Social Ministry - Groceries needed

The Social Ministry committee will be distributing grocery bags on Sunday, April 13, with attached lists of most needed canned and dry goods for the East Cooper Community Outreach (ECCO). Members should take one bag and list for each family and return it with needed groceries from the list, to the fellowship hall, by May 4. Feel free to use additional bags/boxes of your own if needed. The need is greater now than ever and your donations are much appreciated.

“How can I serve my church?”

We are in need of additional people to assist with worship. You will be guaranteed a seat near the altar and you gain the joy of serving in a very specific way in communion with others. Never served before? No worries! We will train you. Helpers are needed for Communion set-up before the 8:30 AM service, Communion clean-up after 11:00 AM service, filling candles, acolyte, crucifer, worship assistants, and lectors. Contact someone you see serving, or contact the church office: info@stjohnscharleston.org



Lenten Suppers

Thank you to everyone who has been providing and serving food, as well as setting up and cleaning up each Wednesday evening! We all appreciate you.



ORDER FORM

It's time to order your Easter Lily!! Each lily is **\$20.00**. Please make your checks payable to St. John's and mark them for the Altar Fund. We must receive this form **and** your payment no later than **Monday, April 7th**. Thank you!

PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY.

Continue on reverse, if needed.

**Indicate: H = in honor of; M = in memory of;
C = in celebration of**

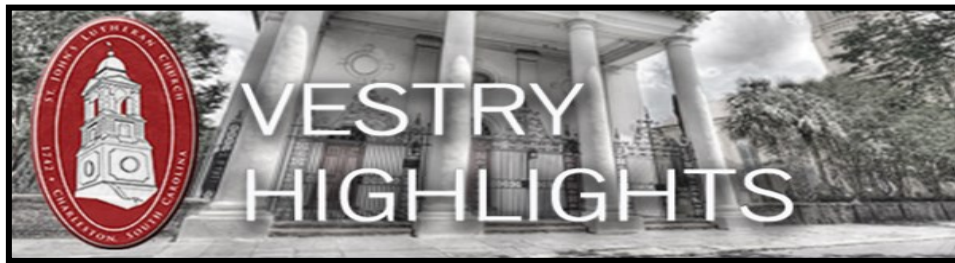
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Given by _____

E-mail address _____

Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Lilies may be picked up following the 11:00 Easter service or at the church office no later than **Sunday, April 27th.**



The Vestry meeting was called to order on Thursday, March 20th by Vestry President William Dowd. The following represents the highlights of our Vestry meeting:

1. Noted in attendance were all members. Excused was Mike Lagonera.
2. Pastor Robb Harrell began the meeting with a Prayer.
3. The February 2025 Vestry Minutes were approved.
4. Pastor Harrell gave his report during which the Vestry approved the requests for one wedding in April 2026. Pastor Harrell requested three (3) members of the congregation to attend the upcoming Synod Assembly to be held North Charleston in June.
5. Vestry approved the use of donated funds specifically for the purchase of a new streaming box for the livestream.
6. Vestry approved the updated policy for the rental of parking lot spaces.
7. The various Committee Chairpersons provided an update on the activities and action occurring within their areas, mostly via written reports that were distributed to the Vestry in advance of the meeting. Of specific note were the highly successful Mardi Gras event and the most recent Front Porch Day.
8. The next regularly scheduled Vestry meeting will be Thursday, April 24th at 6:30pm. There being no further business, the Vestry meeting was adjourned.



Weekly Sundays

Children's Choir coincides with Sunday School at 9:30 AM, children grades 1 -8!

Wednesdays through 4/9

8:30 AM Facebook Live with Pastor Robb
5:30 PM Handbell Choir
6:15 PM Lenten Supper and 7:00 PM Lenten Service
7:50 PM St. John's Chorale

April

Tuesday, April 1

1 PM Barbara Siegling funeral

Wednesday, April 2

12 PM Ecumenical Community Lenten service @ First Baptist (Rev. Siegling)
7 PM Lenten service @ St. John's (6:15 supper)

Thursday, April 3

11 AM Tovey Circle

Tuesday, April 8

9:30 AM Worship & Music Meeting

Wednesday, April 9

12 PM Ecumenical Lenten service @ St. Michael's Chapel (healing service)
7 PM Lenten service @ St. John's (6:15 supper)

Sunday, April 13

Palm Sunday services at 8:30 and 11 AM
1-2 PM Front Porch Day

Thursday, April 17

7 PM Maundy Thursday service

Friday, April 18

12 PM Stations of the Cross, White Point Garden
7 PM Good Friday Tenebrae service

Saturday, April 19

10 AM Easter Egg Hunt

Sunday, April 20

6:30 AM Sunrise Ecumenical service at the Gazebo at White Point Garden
8 AM and 11 AM Easter services at St. John's with Holy Communion
9 AM Easter breakfast

Monday, April 21 - Easter Monday—church office closed

Thursday, April 24 - Vestry meeting 5:45/6:30 PM

Monday, April 28 - Deadline for Herald Newsletter content

Coming in June

Brewery Meet-up, on a Thursday, 5-7 PM, date TBD—Stay tuned for details!



4/4 Christy Smith
 4/5 Kenneth Nelson
 4/6 Denny McKeever
 4/6 Rick Fisher
 4/6 Brooks Harken
 4/7 Ryan Tolley
 4/9 Alexander Edwards
 4/9 Jim Martin
 4/10 Peg McDowell
 4/10 Capers Poulnot
 4/11 Wally Wieters
 4/12 Mary Muller
 4/12 Marshall Wilson
 4/15 Tiffany Hoffman
 4/15 Harrison Tuggle
 4/16 Genevieve Lagonera
 4/19 Sheila Trayte
 4/23 Ellis Moore
 4/25 Josh Littlejohn
 4/25 Sheila SinesThomasson
 4/26 Sally Harvey
 4/29 Tom Lackland

Birthdays

Congregational Concerns & Prayers

We remember in our prayers:

Cathy Blalock
 Rosene Brubaker
 Deborah Bussey
 Terry and Sandra Butler
 Ted DeHart
 Peggy Flood
 John Foltz
 Jason Hilton
 Dan Marchant
 Denny McKeever
 Michele Meisten
 Linda & Larry Mohr
 Steve Phykitt
 Peter Pickard
 Paul Morris
 Michael Rossetter
 Betty Wieters
 Allison Williams

and our members who have experienced the loss of loved ones, including Melissa Spaulding (her stepfather), Matt Carr (his father) and the family of Barbara Siegling.

Our Loved Ones Away From Home

We remember members and friends who are serving in our military:
 Charles T. Clark
 Grant Hoel
 Thomas McCarthy



St. John's Lutheran Church 2025 Staff, Officers, Vestry & Committee Chairs

Staff at the Office: 843-723-2426

Senior Pastor	Rev. Dr. Robb Harrell pastor@stjohnscharleston.org
Office Manager/ Church Administrator	Susan Messersmith info@stjohnscharleston.org
Director of Music	Allison Williams music@stjohnscharleston.org
Financial Administrator	Carole Jordan financialadmin@stjohnscharleston.org
Director of St. John's Chorale and Director of Digital Ministries	Brink Norton media@stjohnscharleston.org

Vestry Officers

President	William Dowd	Secretary	Barbara Allen
V- President	Genevieve Lagonera	Treasurer	Martha Harken

Vestry Members

Brenda Carr, Michael Lagonera, Elizabeth Marchant,
 Chris McDonough, Lewis Moore, Melissa Spaulding,
 Sheila Sines Thomasson, Marshall Wilson

Committee Appointments

Christian Education	Melissa Spaulding
Communication	Sheila Sines Thomasson
Endowment	Frickie Martschink
Evangelism	Michael Lagonera
Finance	Dan Prickett
Archivist and History	Sallie Springer
Lutheran Men	open
Nursery	Christian Education Committee
Property	Lewis Moore
Social Ministry	Brenda Carr
Special Projects	Elizabeth Marchant
Stewardship	Chris McDonough
Women of the ELCA	Anita Mitchum