



## *Candle of Peace*

South Aiken Presbyterian Church  
1711 Whiskey Rd.  
Aiken, SC 29803

# Welcome!

Welcome to God-Encountered worship at South Aiken Presbyterian Church! We are thankful that you have been called to worship with us this morning. We believe all people are children of God. We believe that the redeeming grace of God can transform our lives by the power of the Holy Spirit. We believe all people are loved with a love that has no end in Jesus Christ.

Today, may you encounter Jesus Christ through Spirit-inspired worship including dynamic preaching, specific prayers, and beautiful music. May the blessings of the triune God give you joy and hope that can only come from God with us. Let us worship God!

**Staff Announcement:** Scott Chappell, Pianist/Accompanist of South Aiken Presbyterian Church is stepping down after 13.5 years. We are sad to see him go, but we celebrate his playing and service to God. He has inspired us to see God through the music heard from the piano, organ, and his singing. Let's show Scott our gratitude after the Cantata in the reception on December 17<sup>th</sup> in the gym. We are grateful for Scott and his musical talents!



**Cantata Recognition:** We will also be celebrating the gift of music.

*We ask for church members to bring heavy hors d'oeuvres. Drinks will be provided.*

**SAPC is offering a "Blue Christmas" Service on December 21st at 7pm.**

*(for those whom this season is not so merry and bright)*

***A Blue Christmas Service Makes Space for Healing & Hope during this Season.***



Dear SAPC family,

I hope this note finds you well during this season of peace, hope and love. As we have done in the past, we will be collecting a Love Offering to honor our wonderful church staff. If you would like to make a contribution to this offering, please do so by Sunday December 17 so we can distribute the gifts prior to the Christmas holidays.

There are several ways to do this: you may leave an envelope marked "Love Offering" in my box in the church office; you may place your gift in the offering plate clearly marked "Love Offering." If you want to write a check, please make it out to SAPC and put "Love Offering" in the For/Memo line.

Many thanks for your gift in honor of our dedicated staff who make sure our children, our buildings, our services, and our community are well taken care of throughout the year.

In Christ,  
Anita Self  
Clerk of Session

(Please stand, if able, when indicated by an \*)

**Prelude**

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Sandy Haines (Pulpit Assistant, PA)**

**The Chiming** (*Handbell is rung three times, for God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.*)

**Introit**

***“He Came Down”***

**Bell**

**GATHERING AROUND THE WORD**

**\*Call to Worship** (*Psalm 85: 1-2, 8-13*) (*Responsively*):

PA: LORD, you were favorable to your land; you restored the fortunes of Jacob.

ALL: **You forgave the iniquity of your people; you pardoned all their sin. Let us hear what God the LORD will speak, for the Lord will speak peace to the Lord’s people, to God’s faithful, to those who turn to God in their hearts.**

PA: Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our land.

ALL: **Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other.**

PA: Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky.

ALL: **The LORD will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase.**

**Lighting of the Second Advent Candle (PEACE)**

**Lyn VanDervort**

One: Isaiah 2:4 says, ...they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war anymore.” This scripture give us *HOPE* for now and the future that war will not be forever. We light the second Advent Candle representing *PEACE* and remember Isaiah 11:6, “The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.”

*(Light the purple candle)*

ALL: **Let us walk in the peace of Christ.**

**\*Hymn #143**

***“Angels, From the Realms of Glory”***

**Prayer of Confession (*Together*):** Gracious God, we confess that we want to prepare for Jesus this season, but we sometimes do not know how. We are impatient and our excitement gets the best of us. We want to be patient, but our feelings overwhelm us. Help us prepare to meet Jesus in a new way this season through your Holy Spirit.

*(Pause and confess your personal sin in silence to God)*

PA: Amen

### **Assurance of Forgiveness**

PA: As you hear the water being poured into the font, remember Jesus Christ, is the hope and Peace of the World

**The Font** *(pouring of the water)*

### **\*Responsive Hymn #581**

***“Glory Be to the Father”***

**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.**

### **\*Passing the Peace (*Responsively*):**

PA: Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another. The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**ALL: And also with you.** *(share fist bumps, high fives, hugs, and other signs of forgiveness and peace to each other.)*

## **PROCLAIMING THE WORD OF GOD**

### **Children’s Moment**

**Kim Goetter**

*(Children are invited to come to the stage steps for a small lesson, then walk together to Sunday School in the Fellowship Hall.)*

### **Anthem**

***“Come, Emanuel”***

**Paris**

### **Prayer for Illumination**

**Scripture Lessons** *(New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition, NRSVUE):*

**Old Testament Reading:** **Isaiah 40: 1-11** *(page 667 of the Old Testament in the Pew Bible)*

**Gospel Reading:** **Mark 1: 1-8** *(page 50 of the New Testament in the Pew Bible)*  
*(fill-in the blanks on pages 7)*

One: Hear what the Spirit of God says to the Church!

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

**“Preparing in the Waiting for Christ”**

Rev. Jason Hammersley

\*Hymn #93

***“Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates”***

## **RESPONDING TO GOD’S WORD**

\*Affirmation of Faith (*Together*): The Brief Statement of Faith *excerpt*

We trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel, whom alone we worship and serve.

We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel. Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain and giving his life for the sins of the world. God raised this Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life, breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal.

We trust in God the Holy Spirit, everywhere the giver and renewer of life. The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor, and binds us together with all believers in the one body of Christ, the church. In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace. Amen.

Prayer of Intercession (*prayers for the Church, the world, the nation, the community and our loved ones*)

Offering of Gifts (*Usher come and receive the offering*)

\*Doxology: Hymn #606 ***“Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow”***

**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**

\*Prayer of Thanksgiving (*with the 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors;**

**And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen**

## **SENDING INTO THE WORLD TO PRACTICE FAITH AND SHARE GOOD NEWS**

**\*Hymn #745**

***“Now Go in Joy”***

**Now go in joy to spread the Word till all people have  
heard: God embraces all! Follow, then, the  
Disciples’ call: tend your neighbors with loving care  
in daily work and prayer. God’s own  
grace empower your spirit. Amen!**

**\*Blessing and Benediction**

**\*Postlude:**

***“Will You Let Me Be Your Servant”***

**Will you let me be your servant, let me be as Christ to you?  
Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant too.  
I will hold the Christ-light for you in the nighttime of your fear.  
I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear.  
I will weep when you are weeping; when you laugh, I’ll laugh with you.  
I will share your joy and sorrow till we’ve seen this journey through.**

## Sermon Scripture Activity (NRSVUE):

*As the Scripture is read (Mark 1: 1-8) fill in the blank with the word(s) you hear.*

### The Proclamation of John the Baptist

**1** The beginning of the \_\_\_\_\_ <sup>[a]</sup> of Jesus Christ. <sup>[b]</sup>

**2** As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, <sup>[c]</sup>

"See, I am sending my \_\_\_\_\_ ahead of you, <sup>[d]</sup>

who will prepare your way,

**3** the voice of one \_\_\_\_\_ out in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the \_\_\_\_\_;

make his \_\_\_\_\_ straight,' "

**4** so John the baptizer appeared <sup>[e]</sup> in the wilderness, proclaiming a \_\_\_\_\_ of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. **5** And the whole Judean region and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him and were baptized by him in the River \_\_\_\_\_, confessing their sins. **6** Now John was clothed with \_\_\_\_\_ hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate \_\_\_\_\_ and wild honey. **7** He proclaimed, "The one who is more \_\_\_\_\_ than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the \_\_\_\_\_ of his sandals. **8** I have baptized you with <sup>[f]</sup> water, but he will baptize you with <sup>[g]</sup> the \_\_\_\_\_."

## Calling all

### Knitters and Crocheters!

Our prayer shawl ministry meets every second and fourth Thursday in the library at 1:30 pm. Besides shawls, we also make lap afghans, hats, baby blankets, etc.

If you don't know how to knit or crochet but want to learn, we would love to teach you. We have both knitting needles and crochet hooks donated to us as well as yarn and patterns, so just come! If you have questions, please contact Mary Bunch at [marybunch1953@gmail.com](mailto:marybunch1953@gmail.com)



## Sound Operator's Needed

We are in need of additional volunteers to serve as Sound Operators. Each new operator will be provided with training, and will serve with support until they are completely comfortable with the system. Once trained, each operator serves approximately once every 4 to 6 weeks and on special occasions.

Anyone who is interested in serving in this capacity should contact **Larry Hinson** at [shbc50@gmail.com](mailto:shbc50@gmail.com) for more info.



## Living in Faith Together (LIFT) (Women's Small Group)



Our monthly meeting time has been changed to the 3rd Monday at 6 pm.

We will be having a Christmas party on Dec. 18th at 142 Mallard Lake Dr. Bring your favorite appetizer or sweet to share. Beverages will be provided.

Now for the fun stuff, we will have a gift exchange. Be creative but stay under \$10. You can do a re-gift, shop at a second hand store or create it yourself!

To join our group on Facebook, scan this QR Code.



## Online Donations

available on  
our website, or  
by scanning  
this QR code  
with camera.



**Please Note:** *We can no longer determine who has donated stocks to the church, due to a recent change in laws. However we want to take this opportunity to thank each and everyone who has made this type of contribution to SAPC. We are extremely grateful for your donation. If you would like a letter for your taxes, please notify us of your donation and we will be glad to provide it to you.*



## December Collection (Canned Vegetables)

ACTS collection baskets are located in the narthex by the church entrance and across from the church office. Monetary donations may be made by placing a check made out to SAPC in the offering plate and noting 'ACTS' on the memo line. Thanks for sharing with others!

**Has your Address Changed?** If so, we kindly ask that you provide us with your updated address and/or phone number so that we can update our Church records. Thank you



## Secret Santa of SAPC

Please stay after today's church service to assist in moving the Secret Santa gifts from the Fellowship Hall to the Sanctuary.

*Thank you!!*



**Sanctuary flowers for this Sunday's Service were given by Hank and Bonnie Hayes, in honor of their grandchildren, Lillie and Lowery Hagen; Chase and Hayes Cliett .**

Reserve your date by visiting the new "Sanctuary Flowers" web page found under the Worship menu tab, or call the Secretary's office at 803-648-9574

## Jesus & Music (JaM)

*Coming soon to our neighborhood!*

**What is JaM?** Children's Choir for South Aiken Presbyterian Church

**Who is this for?** 4K and Older Youth

**Where will this be held?** South Aiken Presbyterian Church's Fellowship Hall

**When?** Sunday Mornings, 9 – 9:20 AM. After dismissal the children will go to the nursery until church. Practice will follow closely to the Aiken County Public School District Calendar.

**Why?** To share the love of music with our young people and celebrate our love of Jesus. They be learning songs, but they will also discuss what the words mean. Children will be able to share the songs with others and with the congregation. The real heart of this choir is in the week-to-week community-building and skill development that will occur.



***Want to get the digital newsletter of announcements each week?***

Email [secretary@southaiken.org](mailto:secretary@southaiken.org) to join the Spirit Express emailing list!

## ***Join us in this learning opportunity....***

### **Presby Café**

Life of Joseph through the lens of Family Systems Theory (Genius 37)



Where?: Pastor Conference Room (PRC) in the Family Life Center

When? Each Sunday at 9:00am

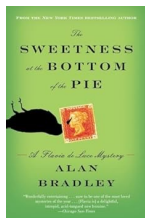
### **Pickle Ball**

SPCA now has Pickle Ball courts. To sign up for games, please use the sign-up sheets on the bulletin board in the hallway behind the Sanctuary.



Any questions, please contact Linda Blake at [mrhankey@gforcecable.com](mailto:mrhankey@gforcecable.com)

### **The Chapter Chat Book Club**



#### **“The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie”**

**By Alan Bradley**

**Thursday, January 4<sup>th</sup>,  
at 2 pm.**

**Meet in the Church Library**

*Call Maureen Dunn at (803) 443-8681 for more info.*

### **PRIVACY OF CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you wish for your phone number and/or address to be withheld from any printed publication which may be seen by the public, please contact Monica at [secretary@southaiken.org](mailto:secretary@southaiken.org) or (803-648-9574) to let your wishes be known.

### **Prayer Requests**

**Emily L.** for recovery.

**Phil L.** for comfort and strength .

**Leona F.** for comfort.

**Edmund J.** for cardiac rehab.

**Ethel** (mother to Steve H.) for comfort & healing.

**Anthony B.** (Linda B's grandson) for health concerns

**Jeff B.** (family friend to Sarah S.) for health concerns and in season of grief

**Pethick Family** in season of grief.

**Lewis Family** in season of grief.

**Edwards Family** in season of grief.

**Samuel M** (Becky H's Uncle) for health concerns.

**Mike D.** (Linda B's daughter's husband) for health concerns.

**Pat M.** (Linda B's sister) for health concerns.

**Mike G.** (brother in-law to Steve K.) - for health concerns.

**Kari M .** for health concerns.

**Mary Louise S.** (Mary S.'s granddaughter) for health concerns.

**Leslie C.** for health concerns.

**Doug M.** (Linda B.'s nephew) for healing and comfort.

**Ray P.** (cousin of Sarah Scott) for healing and strength

**Lynn S.** - for comfort

**Scott Family** - in season of grief.

**Dot M.** - for comfort

**Gail** (friend of Kitt M.) for healing as her treatments have changed.

**Steve & Linda H.** for comfort.

**Bob A.,** for comfort and strength

**Lois V.,** sister of Lyn V., for continuing improvement.

**Peg P.** for comfort.

**Jim and Shirley S.** for comfort.

**Jayne B.** for comfort.

**Anita & Bob P.** for comfort.

### **Homebound Members**

*Email [secretary@southaiken.org](mailto:secretary@southaiken.org) to change information or removal of name.*

## **Volunteers Today**

**Pulpit Assistant:** - Sandy Haines

**Ushers:** Linda Blake, Amy Loftus,  
Martin McCrum, Julie McCrum

**Sound:** Robert Glance

**Video:** Haley Culp

## **Volunteers Next Week**

**Pulpit Assistant:** Shirley Colburn

**Ushers:** Scott Martin, Debbi Reboul,  
Kelli Williams, Sue Kelly

**Sound:** Larry Hinson

**Video:** 'Sam Jacobs

## **Upcoming Christmas Musical Events**



### **Carols By Candlelight - Aiken Choral Society**

- \* **December 10, 2023 @ 3pm**
- \* Aiken's First Baptist Church

### **On With The Snow - Aiken Singers**

- \* December 14 @ 7pm
- \* St. John's United Methodist Church

### **Cantata - SAPC Choir and Orchestra**

- \* December 17, 2023 @ 10am
- \* South Aiken Presbyterian Church

### **Christmas - The South Boundary Singers**

- \* December 17, 2023 @ 4pm
- \* First Presbyterian Church

## ***SAPC THIS WEEK***

### **Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>**

9:00a - Apocrypha Sunday School (Library)  
9:00a - Presbyterian Cafe (FLC PCR)  
9:00a - JaM (Fellowship Hall)  
10:00a - Worship Service (Sanctuary)  
11:00a - Bethel Study (Library)  
11:00a - Secret Santa Inventory  
12:00p - Confirmation Trip to Adas Yeshurun  
Synagogue in Augusta  
2:00p - Pickleball (Gym)  
6:00p - Youth Group (FLC, Rm 202)

### **Monday, December 11<sup>th</sup>**

9:00a - Beginner Ukulele Fellowship (Music Rm)  
10:00a - Interm. Ukulele Fellowship (Music Rm)  
12:00p - Bible Friends (Gym)  
2:00p - Set Up for 2K Kindergarten Christmas  
(Fellowship Hall)  
4:30p - Tall Pines Basketball (Gym)  
5:00p - SAPK Board Meeting (Fellowship Hall)  
6:00p - Christian Education (High School Room)

### **Tuesday, December 12<sup>th</sup>**

8:00a - Secret Santa Last Minute Shopping  
10:00a - 2K Christmas Program (Fellowship Hall)  
12:00p - Bible Friends (Gym)  
2:00p - Set Up for 3K Kindergarten Christmas (Gym)  
4:30p - Belles Canto (Music Room)  
6:00p - Worship & Music Team Meeting (Library)  
7:00p - Scouts Meeting (Upstairs Scouts CR)

### **Wednesday, December 13<sup>th</sup>**

8:30a - Secret Santa Last Minute Shopping  
10:00a - 3K Christmas Program (Gym)  
11:00a - Admin & Stewardship Meeting (F101)  
12:00p - Bible Friends (Gym)  
7:00p - Choir Rehearsal (Music Room)

### **Thursday, December 14<sup>th</sup>**

8:50a - SAPK Chapel (Sanctuary)  
9:00a - 4K & 5K Christmas Program (Gym)  
12:00p - Bible Friends (Gym)  
12:00p Telephone Pioneers (Gym)  
1:30p - Prayer Shawl (Library)  
4:00p - Aiken Kinderchoir (Fellowship Hall)  
5:30p - Tall Pines (Gym)

### **Friday, December 15<sup>th</sup>**

12:00p - Bible Friends (Gym)  
5:30p - Mighty Warriors of God (Gym)

### **Saturday, December 16<sup>th</sup>**

7:30a - ACTS Senior Food Distribution (340 Park  
Ave SW)  
8:00a - Secret Santa Distribution Day (Sanctuary)  
8:30a - Pancakes with Santa (Gym)

### **Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup>**

9:00a - Apocrypha Sunday School (Library)  
9:00a - Presbyterian Cafe (FLC PCR)  
9:00a - JaM (Fellowship Hall)  
10:00a - Worship Service (Sanctuary)  
11:00a - Celebration - Scott Chappell/Cantata Singers  
(Gym)  
6:00p - Youth Group (FLC, Rm 202)

\* FLC - Family Life Center \*\* PCR - Pastor's Conf. Rm

## **CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Church Office:** 803-648-9574

**Rev. Jason Hammersley**, Pastor/Head of Staff: 648-9574: ext. 112

[pastor@southaiken.org](mailto:pastor@southaiken.org)

**SAPK:** 803-648-9895

**Fax:** 803-648-7972

**Web Site:** [www.southaiken.org](http://www.southaiken.org)

**Email:** [secretary@southaiken.org](mailto:secretary@southaiken.org)

Find our SAPC page on Facebook at **@SouthAikenPresChurch!**

Also with Instagram at: **southaikenpc**

## **SAPC STAFF**

### Office Staff

**Monica Grindle**, Secretary: ext. 100, [secretary@southaiken.org](mailto:secretary@southaiken.org)

**Barbara Bono**, Bookkeeper: ext. 103, [treasurer@southaiken.org](mailto:treasurer@southaiken.org)

### Music Staff

**Phillip Hare**, Director of Music, [philliphare@hotmail.com](mailto:philliphare@hotmail.com)

**Scott Chappell**, Pianist/Accompanist, [scottchappell57@icloud.com](mailto:scottchappell57@icloud.com)

### Communication Staff

**Carina McGee**, Communications Specialist, [media@southaiken.org](mailto:media@southaiken.org).

### Family and Children Staff

**Kim Goetter**, Interim Children and Family Ministry Coordinator, [families@southaiken.org](mailto:families@southaiken.org)

### Youth Staff

**Anthony Williamson**, Youth Programs Coordinator. [youth@southaiken.org](mailto:youth@southaiken.org)

### Facility Staff

**Kirk Callan**, Sexton (Custodian): [kirkcallan@gmail.com](mailto:kirkcallan@gmail.com)

### Church & School Staff

**Jennifer Huntley**, Interim Kindergarten Director:

648-9895: ext. 107. [sapkdirector@southaiken.org](mailto:sapkdirector@southaiken.org)

**Cissy Kelley**, Assistant Kindergarten Director/ Childcare Coordinator:

648-9895 ext.110, cell (803) 270-5808. [sapkasst\\_director@southaiken.org](mailto:sapkasst_director@southaiken.org)