



Ministry Spotlight: Annual Meeting

We held our annual congregational meeting in worship on Sunday, January 28th. The purpose of the meeting was to present the 2024 budget, vote on the terms of the pastor's call, and elect new officers. [Click here](#) for the 2023 annual report. [Click this link](#) for the meeting handout with the overview of the 2024 budget and Pastor's Terms of Call.

The congregation elected the following members to serve as Elders in the Class of 2025:

- Mike Bearden, Education Ministry
- Kim Rometo, Management Ministry
- Debbie Brilling, Worship Ministry

and

- Basil Papotto, for the unexpired Class of 2024 term on Management Ministry.

The congregation elected the following members to serve as Deacons in the Class of 2025:

- Pat Zrolka
- Mary O'Brien
- Annette Hildreth
- Sarah Slusher

and

- Carol Gordon the the unexpired Class of 2024

The congregation also unanimously approved the Pastor's Terms of Call as presented by J. Thomas, Treasurer.

The video below was shown in worship and contains highlights from 2023 at St. Andrews.



From the Pastor

This year Lent starts on Valentine's Day, February 14th. Though Valentine's Day isn't a religious holiday, the convergence is significant. Lent is a time of dedication to

God. What does it mean to anchor yourself in love and in God this Lent? Later in this newsletter, you will read more about our theme for the Lenten season and different spiritual practices you can engage in between Ash Wednesday and Easter. As we think of Lenten discipline, we might naturally associate it with shadows, emptiness, and suffering. Yes, these are elements of the Lenten journey, to be sure, but so is love.



As you walk past the store displays with shiny mylar heart balloons, over-priced flowers, and boxes of candy, perhaps you get caught up in the secular version of Valentine's Day. Perhaps the greeting cards express your deepest feelings for those you love. Or perhaps it all rings a little hollow or stirs up grief for love lost. I wonder if this year, on Valentine's Day, which happens to fall on Ash Wednesday, you might take on a Lenten practice that is rooted in love? Here are three ideas for you to try, instead of or in addition to the flowers and chocolates.

1. Lovingkindness Meditation - You can do a simple search to find many scripts for this, but the basic idea is to think warmly first toward yourself, then toward someone you love, and finally toward an enemy.
2. Practicing Self-Compassion - Say to yourself, "I am God's beloved child. God loves me unconditionally." — Sounds simple, but how often do we neglect to extend love and hospitality to ourselves?
3. Scripture Memorization - Many of us know the beautiful and familiar words of 1 Corinthians 13 that begin with "Love is patient. Love is kind." This love is not referring, specifically, to romantic love, but rather God's perfect love. Perhaps you'll want to memorize the whole chapter this Lent or read it throughout the day?^[1]

Blessed lent to all.
-Camille

[1] Special thanks to pastor Traci Smith for the ideas for ways to observe February 14, 2024. www.tracismith.com



Wandering Heart: Figuring Out Faith with Peter

*Come, thou Fount of every blessing;
tune my heart to sing thy grace;
streams of mercy, never ceasing,
call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet,
sung by flaming tongues above;
praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it,
mount of God's unchanging love!*

These are the words to the first stanza of one of our most familiar and beloved hymns. The words, phrases, and melodies often linger in our ears and minds long after we've left the sanctuary.

As the folks behind Sanctified Art were studying the faith journey of one of Jesus' most famous disciples, Peter, this hymn came to mind, as though Peter could have written the song. When we follow his journey, we see his wandering heart. In Peter, we see a person who is both steadfast and unsteady, a dear friend and a betrayer, a follower and a wanderer. But, he is always tethered to the love of God. In Peter, we often see ourselves. By following Peter's journey, we watch the story of Jesus unfold through the eyes of a very normal human trying to figure it all out—just like us.

The collaborators behind Sanctified Art have developed thematic material that we'll be using again this year. This is what they say about the theme:

"In this series, we want to affirm that faith is a constant journey of steadfast pursuit, one that ebbs and flows. We want to affirm the ways Peter keeps going: he drops his nets, he walks on water, he runs to the empty tomb, he swims to the shore to meet the risen Christ. He keeps searching and yearning and loving, even after missteps or mistakes. Ultimately, in Peter's story, we are reminded that God loves imperfect people—in fact, time and again, that's precisely who God claims and calls."

We will have personal devotional booklets and daily devotional cards available in the narthex and outside the church office beginning February 10th. We'll also be posting daily on the church's social media accounts (Instagram @st.andrewspresbyteriantucker and Facebook @sapctucker).

We hope you will join us this Lenten season as we look for ourselves in the stepping stones of Peter's story, reflecting on the stages of our own faith journeys, as well as who and what has shaped us along the way. As we wander, let us tune our hearts to sing God's grace. May we rest in streams of mercy, never ceasing.

Wandering Heart

February 14 Ash Wednesday	<i>Tune My Heart</i>	Psalms 51:1-17
February 18	<i>Jesus Sought Me</i>	Luke 5:1-11
February 25	<i>Rescue Me From Danger</i>	Matt. 14:22-33
March 3	<i>Praise the Mount</i>	Matt. 16:13-20
March 10	<i>I'm Fixed Upon It</i>	Matt. 16:21-23
March 17	<i>Teach Me</i>	Matt. 18:15-22
March 24 Palm/Passion	<i>Songs of Loudest Praise</i>	John 12:12-16
March 28 Maundy Thursday	<i>Streams of Mercy</i>	John 13:1-20
March 29 Good Friday	<i>Prone to Leave the God I Love</i>	John 13:31-38
March 31 Easter	<i>And I Hope</i>	Luke 24:1-12
April 7	<i>Here's My Heart</i>	John 21:1-10

Why You, Christian, Should Make 2024 Your Year of Service

LaVerne Byas-Smith

Last month we suggested WAYS you might serve here at St. Andrews. Should we consider for a moment Why you would serve? Yes, the church's ministries need laborers. Sunday school needs teachers, the

Choir needs singers, mission needs hands to make lunches. In order for the church to do the work of God in the world it needs laborers willing to serve God. It's not a small ask. "Serving God is not a job for the casually interested. It's costly service. He asks for your life. He asks for service to Him to become a priority, not a pastime." [1] We often choose not to serve because we don't want to spend the time or the energy.

Too often we shirk serving because it's not glamorous. Serving is as commonplace as the practical needs it seeks to meet. Washing dishes after a luncheon, setting up tables beforehand. Checking up on the homebound or running errands for the sick. Serving is work -- it's most often tedious and hard. We find lots of reasons not to serve. But there are really good reasons Christians should serve.

More than the church needing you, you need to serve to grow in Christ. The most important reason for you to make 2024 your year of service is so that you may grow in grace and in the likeness of Jesus Christ.

As followers of Jesus, his disciples, we want to emulate our savior. Jesus was always a servant, the servant of all. He said, "I am among you as the one who serves" (Luke 22:27). And, "the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28). If we are to be like Christ, we must discipline ourselves and choose to serve as Jesus served.

Service is a spiritual discipline.

As Dallas Willard says in "The Spirit of the Disciplines," those who want to train themselves for Christlike spirituality will find service one of the surest and most practical means of growth in grace."

Not all service ensures spiritual growth. It is possible to serve in a spirit of self-aggrandizement or self-indulgence. But that won't help you grow in Christlikeness. To pursue service as a spiritual discipline, a practice that will help you become more like Jesus, we must serve in the spirit of Christ – in humility (Philippians 2:3), in obedience to God (note his submission in Gethsemane), and for the sake of God's glory. If your goal is to be more like Jesus, service in the Spirit of Christ is a means to get there.

Every Christian is expected to serve.

According to the book of Hebrews, in our salvation Christ's blood cleanses our conscience so that we might "serve the living God." (Hebrews 9:14, NIV) Every Christian's commission, according to the Psalmist is to "serve the Lord with gladness!" (Psalm 100:2) We are saved that we might serve God, willingly and gladly.

Every Christian is gifted to serve.

The New Testament emphasizes that God's Spirit prepares and equips us to serve. At the moment of our salvation, when the Holy Spirit comes to live within us, we are given spiritual gifts. (1 Corinthians 12:4,11) Peter stated explicitly that each Christian is specially gifted for the purpose of serving others. (1 Peter 4:10)

We are expected to serve and we are gifted to serve. But the question remains, "Are you willing to serve?" Too often we're like the Israelites who knew God expected them to serve Him, but had to be challenged by Joshua on their willingness to serve. "If serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve..." (Joshua 24:15). Despite Christ's sacrifice that we might serve, and the Spirit's gifting to enable us to serve, we too are given free will to choose to serve.

We pray that in 2024 you choose to serve God, knowing that in doing so you might grow more and more to be like Jesus. We hope you

choose to serve here at St. Andrews, in any of all the opportunities we previously listed, or in other less obvious but no less holy forms of service.

[1] Donald S. Whitney "Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life," (Colorado Spring, CO: NavPress, 1991) p. 116.

Treasurer's Report

Jane Thomas, Treasurer

In December, our income was \$71,739.33 and our expenses totaled \$53,659.65. Year to date, our income was \$521,237.24 and our expenses were \$436,700.52. So, we are in the black for 2023 by \$84,536.72.

Currently we have a mortgage balance of \$59,922.42. We have \$24,259.98 in our mortgage fund, and a monthly payment of \$4,111. Thus, we have funds on hand to cover 5.9 months of payments.



Ash Wednesday

6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary Wednesday, February 14th, we will have a reflective service and imposition of ashes.

Items from our Kitchen

If you have borrowed items from our kitchen, or taken dish towels home to wash, (thank you!) please bring them back the next time you are at church.

OACM Day Trip

by Pat Baker

We have a day trip planned for Thursday, February 22nd to the Georgia Tech Campus to visit the Center for Inclusive Design and Innovation, Tools for Life Program.

Tools for Life is Georgia's Assistive Technology Act program on the GA Tech Campus. "We serve the entire state ensuring that all Georgians, no matter their age or disability, can live, learn, work, and play independently in the communities of their choice. We provide scheduled presentations and group tours of our AT labs to share solutions for all areas of life with the help of technology."

We'll plan to leave the church at 9:30am. After our time at the center, we'll experience a bit of the ATL food culture by going to The Varsity for lunch. Between now and then you can decide "What'll Ya Have?"

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[Visit our website](#)

The only cost for the day will be your lunch. The deadline to sign up is February 16th. Please email or call Pat Baker if you will be attending: pat@sapctucker.org, 770-938-2833, ext. 111

A Valentine's Love Offering for St. Andrews School

En-Core Volunteers invite everyone to join them in spreading LOVE this Valentine's Day towards the teachers and students of St. Andrews School (SAS). The preschool on our campus provides affordable, quality care for babies, toddlers, preschoolers, and kindergarteners. Last fall we asked the teachers of SAS for a "Wish List" of items that would enhance their care and instruction. En-Core hopes to grant teachers' wishes by gifting these items for their classrooms. Help us help the SAS teachers by contributing to our Love Offering.

We have created an Amazon wish list which you may [access here](#). Please have your purchased items sent to: En-Core, St. Andrews Church, 4882 Lavista Road, Tucker Georgia 30084. En-Core volunteers will giftwrap all items and deliver them to the school on Valentine's Day. Alternatively, you may make a cash donation of any amount towards the cost of the items – in whole or in part, notating on your check "EnCore/SAS Love Offering." Thank you for helping En-Core spread the Love!

Are There Burning Bushes in our Midst?

Are we paying attention to the holy ground beneath our feet? Where do we see burning bushes in our world today, and what are they calling us to do? Do spiritual encounters in our lives have holy consequences in the world around us?

These are the kinds of questions we'll be asking ourselves in Sunday Morning Together (SMT) Sunday school class during Lent, as we study "Hard and Holy Work: A Lenten Journey Through the Book of Exodus." Lent is traditionally a time of self-reflection and action that prepares followers of Christ to walk more intentionally in the way of God. SMT is preparing to embark on this six week journey from February 18th - March 24th.

God still speaks into the world around us. Do we have eyes to see the "burning bushes" in our midst? We hope through our study of "Hard and Holy Work," to be more attentive and more responsive to God's presence and calling in the Scriptures and in the world around us. After together viewing the study's weekly video introductions we'll reflect on the readings and the discussion questions, and then in response explore the study's suggestions of concrete ways we might engage the community around us. We hope real ACTION emanates from this study.

Please join us on this Lenten journey through Exodus, and our exploration of the hard and holy work God might be highlighting for St. Andrews. SMT meets Sunday mornings at 8:45 in the Meeting Room. 12 copies are available for purchase in SMT for \$12.00 each. Or, you may order your copy of the study [here](#).

Congratulations

Congratulations go out to Pat Baker for receiving an award from The Caring Years Academy as an Advocate for her years dedicated to making a difference in the lives of family caregivers. Congratulations, Pat! [Click here](#) to see the article.

Giving

Online giving applies to your pledge just the same as a paper check. Secure online contributions can be made by clicking [this link](#), or checks can be mailed to: SAPC, 4882



GIVE NOW

through the Presbyterian Mission Exchange

Staff Party

To celebrate surviving the joyful and busy Advent and Christmas seasons, the church staff came together for some time without any work to do. We gathered at the home of Pat and Arch Baker for a party on Saturday, January 13th. We enjoyed dinner from Foggy Bottom BBQ in Lawrenceville, plenty of chocolate, Arch's homemade Egg Nog, and a white elephant gift exchange. It is always a delight to spend time with these gifted colleagues in ministry!

Inclement Weather

It's the season for ice, sleet, and maybe even snow. FYI- St. Andrews closes when DeKalb County Schools are closed for inclement weather. On the weekends, please check [our Facebook page](#) for updates, if there is inclement weather.

Clifton Sanctuary Ministries

There are spots available for upcoming dates to bring food to Clifton. For more information or to sign up, [click here](#). This ministry is a very easy thing to do while maintaining your social distancing since meals are dropped off on Clifton's front porch after calling ahead to let them know when you are coming.

A group is gathering on the 4th Sunday of the month after worship to make lunches for Clifton. If you are interested in helping, [contact Phyllis Bearden](#).

Our congregation feeds the men at Clifton Sanctuary Ministries on the fourth Sunday of every month.

Notes from the Session

The Session met in-person on January 21st in the meeting room, with Rev. Arch Baker serving as moderator. After reciting an ordination question as a reminder of the purpose of the session, a quorum was established and the consent agenda was approved with corrections.

The Session approved several motions. The Worship Ministry motion to serve Communion by intinction on every Sunday during Lent was approved, and a sign-up genius will be set up to enable online sign-up to allow electronic scheduling. We also approved motions to move the

February Birthdays

- 5 Benjamin Ashby
- 7 Emily Bunce
- 9 John Artley
- 11 Rosemary Broom, Jeff Davis, Linda Fuller, Andrew Todd
- 16 Walter McDuffie
- 17 Maria Mackas
- 18 Stephanie Allen, Shellie Bunce
- 19 Pat Creasman, Jack Jennings, Mary O'Brien
- 22 Bret Moore, Jacob Nelson
- 23 Sarah Phillips
- 25 Charles Jackson, Jeff Nelson
- 27 William Ashby

February Anniversaries

- 28 Julie & Louis Todd
-

Presbyterian Women - Collection Project

The PW is continuing to collect adult diapers, poise pads, maxi pads, and tampons at meetings and in the Narthex which will go to NETWorks.

February meeting to February 25th and to allow an exception for the Clerk to join the in-person by Zoom during her recovery from surgery.

Items discussed included preparation for the Congregational Meeting as elders provided information of activities during 2023 that had been meaningful and provided joy. The Clerk reported that the updating of the Personnel Manual policy of Children and Youth Protection has not been completed, so approval of the Personnel Manual will be presented for approval at a future meeting.

PDA: Disaster Relief and More

Did you know that Presbyterian Disaster Assistance responds to more than just tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, fires and floods? They also aid refugees and asylum seekers, as well as respond to incidents of public violence, like mass shootings.

When you are not sure what to do besides offering thoughts and prayers, supporting PDA is a way to do more. [Click here](#) to contribute directly to their efforts. To send a check, please designate where you want your gift to go on the memo line and mail to:
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
P.O. Box 643700
Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700

The code to designate gifts to the humanitarian response in Ukraine is DR000165.

The code to donate to hurricane relief, including Hurricane Ian is DR000194

To Donate:

Call 800-872-3283

[Click here](#) to donate online

Text 'PDA' to 20222 to donate \$10

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