



Ministry Spotlight: Fall BBQ

The annual barbecue was off the chain or in Presbyterian terms - really great. The food was so yummy and we saw some old friends, some St. Andrews School families, our friends from the Cristo congregation, and old friends coming back to visit.

Thank you to all the people who worked so hard to make this year's barbecue so much fun. It starts with dedicated pit masters to pickers, people to put up tables and decorate and people who took down tables and cleaned up. Then thank you to all the people who cooked side dishes and desserts. So much work by so many hands makes for wonderful fellowship.





From the Pastor

Throughout our sermon series on things Jesus never said, I felt I could have just answered all the questions with Jesus's answer to the challenging lawyer in Matthew 22. There, Jesus declares that all the law and the prophets hang on the two greatest commandments: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind..." and "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:34-40, other versions found in Mark 12:28-34 and Luke 10:25-28). To be clear, Jesus could have made those two commandments up from scratch or pulled them out of thin air, but he didn't. Both come from the Hebrew scriptures. Jesus is building on the foundation and promises made to the Jewish people, and he shows people how to live out those commands in a new day and new ways. So, each of those things Jesus may or may not have said (Everything happens for a reason; God never gives us more than we can handle; Love the sinner, hate the sin, etc.) can be judged in light of whether they align with this greater message Jesus spread about the love of God, self, and neighbor. We are all called to live out these two great commandments in our day. At St. Andrews, we are encouraged and empowered to love God and our neighbor by extending generous grace during a divisive election season, offering and receiving grace while building and strengthening connections with St. Andrews School and the larger community, and generously sharing our time, talents, and treasures in support of Christ's mission at St. Andrews.

Jesus used parables to teach just what he meant by this command to love your neighbor as yourself. It may be easier for us to talk about this in terms of the neighbors Jesus talked about, like the Pharisees and tax collectors. It's another thing when we start thinking about *our* family members, classmates, co-workers, and next-door neighbors. Sometimes, they are easy to love. Often, it can be a challenge. That can be especially true when neighbors start planting their flags (or signs) and declaring support and affiliation for one political candidate or another during an election year. Before long, not only are you concerned about that precarious limb hanging over your fence line, but you've noticed how long it takes them to wheel their trash cans back in from the curb after trash day. Judgment and distrust grow; before you know it, the command to love your neighbor seems too big of an ask.

Presidential election years already come with drama and division. Still, this year, it feels like the temperature or intensity has been turned up to once again "unprecedented" levels, making it even harder to love some of our neighbors. It is challenging to navigate the turbulent waters of political discourse while maintaining our commitment to loving our neighbors. Still, as Christians, we are called to be peacemakers and extend grace and understanding to those around us, even when we disagree. To help us all navigate this difficult time, the two worship services before and after election day will equip us to

love our neighbors effectively, thoughtfully, and meaningfully as we, individually, decide how to cast our votes and respond after the votes have all been tallied. Special thanks to Rev. Steven M. Fearing (a classmate & friend of SAPC's former intern, Joseph Taber), pastor of Guilford Park Presbyterian Church, for sharing ideas and resources for this series.

One way that we, as St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, have been loving our neighbors for over 50 years is through the mission and ministry of St. Andrews School (SAS). The church session originally began the school to provide families in our community with a quality, affordable program to foster a safe, nurturing, Christian environment conducive to learning for young children. The relationship between the church and school has had its ups and downs since then, but our hearts have remained committed to the mission, even when our heads have gotten tripped up in logistics. Now, we're entering a new phase of our relationship with a renewed commitment to the school. The En-Core volunteer program, which includes weekly Storytime, music classes, teacher support, and special events, has already begun to strengthen ties. In August, the session adopted a revised school constitution and approved the plan to reconstitute the school board. We've got much work ahead of us, but it is exciting and hopeful.

As another way to love our neighbors through St. Andrews School, the management ministry would like to invest in capital improvements in our education building. That building is used five days a week for almost every week of the year, and it shows. We are grateful to be debt-free after paying off our mortgage earlier this year. I wish to thank the wise leaders of the management ministry who navigated the unexpected expenses that followed soon after celebrating paying off the mortgage, when we replaced the roof, then had to repair the new roof after a tree fell on it and had to replace an air-conditioner unit in the heat of summer! We understand no one wants another capital campaign or new debt, but we need to stay on top of replacements, repairs, and improvements on our campus that make so much of our mission and ministry possible.

In the next few weeks, you will be hearing more about how your gifts to St. Andrews have been spent during the past year and about plans for using your gifts in 2025. You'll also hear more about our plans to support ongoing capital improvements. One of the first projects on our list is new floors in the education building and in Heffner Hall. We will celebrate the generosity of this congregation and how Christ is working in and through us.

The goal of the Annual Generosity campaign is simple—we want to receive pledges of financial gifts to support the salaries and benefits for our pastoral, program, and support staff; support our mission and outreach; provide for worship, Christian education, and nurture for all ages; continue to be good stewards of our physical plant; and invest in Christ's mission and ministry at St. Andrews through ongoing capital improvements.

On October 20th, we will celebrate pledge dedication in worship. We ask you to prayerfully consider what kind of financial commitment you can make to Christ's mission and ministry at St. Andrews in 2025. Your increased commitment is essential to maintaining the current budget *and* flourishing as Christ's body here in Tucker. Your time, talent, and treasure are vital to the work that God has called us to be a part of in Tucker and the world. Thank you for all you do to love God and our neighbors in and through St. Andrews Presbyterian Church!

With a Grateful Heart,

Camille

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR

IN DIVISIVE TIMES

Sermon Series: Loving Your Neighbor in Divisive Times

October 6 World Communion Sunday
Hebrews 1:1-4, 2:5-12 (Psalm 8)

October 13
Hebrews 4:12-16 (Psalm 90:12-17)

October 20 Commitment Sunday
We Love Our Neighbor
Matthew 22:34-40

October 27 Reformation Sunday
Unlike the Others
Hebrews 7:23-28

November 3 All Saints Sunday
We Choose Nonviolence
Mark 6:29-31

November 10
We Repair the Breach
Acts 16:11-15

November 17
We Remember Our Calling
1 Corinthians 13:1-13

November 24
Brunch Church - Hanging of the Greens



Vital Congregations Initiative (VCI) - Year 1

Year 1 Goal: Discernment



VCI was approved by St. Andrews' Session in 2021 and introduced to the congregation with a sermon series on the 7 Marks in 2022.



VCI Neighborhood Survey Summary by LaVerne Byas-Smith

As we continue to move through the "Who We are Now" phase of the Vital Congregations Initiative (VCI) program, we're learning a lot about ourselves and the community in which God has placed us. Many of our members contributed to the Neighborhood Survey – a crucial element of this phase – submitting 80 Community Encounter cards which recorded observations and conversations had while moving through the community. Our session members also engaged with community members, conducting 20 additional in-depth interviews of neighbors and friends. This somewhat unorthodox neighborhood survey rendered an impressionistic and interpersonal picture of the people among whom we live and are called to serve. We were not looking for statistical data, per se, but for patterns and the "feel" of our community. Thank you to all who contributed to the 46 recorded

conversations and 34 detailed observations.

The Session has begun a review of the information from those 80 Encounter Cards, and have already identified six themes emerging from the responses:

1. a prevailing small-town friendly feel valued by respondents
2. the prevalence of senior citizens and their unmet needs
3. concern about Tucker's transportation infrastructure, including traffic and the lack of pedestrian safety
4. issues of emotional well-being, including loneliness and language isolation
5. desire for more community gathering places
6. more recreational activities and venues for families, seniors and teens

Session will continue to process these findings and consider their potential implications for St. Andrews and its mission during its October meeting. Their deliberations will likely inform our Discernment Process – the next phase of our VCI program – where we look to God's leading for our next steps.

You too might contemplate the highlighted findings as you pray and seek God's Word for St. Andrews during our upcoming collective discernment during our Forty Days of Prayer, starting on December 7th.



Treasurer's Report

Jane Thomas, Treasurer

In August our income was \$13,409.00, and our expenses totaled \$38,820.68. Year to date, our income is \$260,979.50 and expenses are \$297,809.58. So, we are in the red by \$36,830.08.

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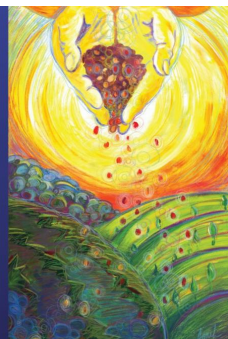
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PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
PEACEMAKING AND RECONCILIATION

**SOWING THE SEEDS
OF PEACE.**

ZECHARIAH 8:12



Special Offering

Join us Sunday, October 6th in worship for World Communion Sunday and the Peace and Global Witness Offering, which enables the church to promote the Peace of Christ by addressing systems of conflict and injustice across the world.

SAPC retains 25% of the offering to support local peacemaking

efforts, another 25% goes to presbyteries & synods for broader ministries of peace and reconciliation, and the remaining 50% is used by the Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate for peace and justice in cultures of violence, including our own.

Financial Administrator

Helen Hoang (ext 104)

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[Visit our website](#)



Eyeglasses Collection- again!

Caring for Creation announced that we would collect used eyeglasses, under a program that is operated by Lions Clubs International in partnership with the Walmart Corporation, in which participating Walmart Vision Centers accept deposits of used eyeglasses. This collection was very successful (129 total units!), as reported in *The Lamplighter*, September 2023. Now, in recognition of World Sight Day on Thursday October 10, 2024, we will collect used eyeglasses during the month of October. Look for the large glass container on the check-in table in the Narthex. All forms of eyeglasses are acceptable:

- Prescription and non-prescription eyeglasses, including sun glasses, with/without frames and with/without cases;
- Frames without lenses;
- Empty cases

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 Lavista Rd, Tucker, GA 30084

[GIVE NOW](#)

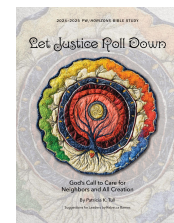
through the Presbyterian Mission Exchange

Flowers for Worship

If you would like to bring flowers for Worship in October or November, [click here](#) to sign up. The flowers can be from your yard or the store.

Presbyterian Women

The PW continue their study *Let Justice Roll Down* by Patricia K. Tull. All of the women of St. Andrews are invited! [Contact Judy Cook](#) with any questions about the Presbyterian Women. The next meeting will be Tuesday, October 15th at 10:00 am, in the Meeting Room. We hope to see you there!



Reformation Sunday

OCTOBER 27

WORSHIP

10:00 A.M.

RECEPTION
FOLLOWING



SAPCTUCKER.ORG

Reformation Sunday

On Sunday, October 27th we will celebrate God's reforming work in the church from October 31, 1517, in Germany, to Scotland a few years later, all the way to Tucker, Georgia, in 1960, and continuing around the world today. Everyone is invited to wear something that represents and celebrates their heritage—whether it be a tartan, kente cloth, or cowboy boots—as we worship the God who continues to work in and through us and look forward to what God has in store for us in the future.

After worship on the 27th, we will have a Shortbread & More reception in the Youth Lounge. You are invited to bring either shortbread or another snack or dessert that represents your cultural heritage.

Montreat Church Retreat April 22-25, 2025

Save the date! All St. Andrews adults are invited to attend our retreat next Spring at the Montreat Retreat Center, located in the mountains of North Carolina.

Our program will be presented by Rev. Dr. Laurie Furr-Vancini. This is what she sent us about the subject matter...

Friends, family, past, present, celebrations, churches and organizations, times of life, transitions of all kinds, celebrations, mournings....All of these (and so much more) make up the bits and pieces of our lives. When you put those bits and pieces next to each other through in mosaic style, you can begin to see the beauty and wholeness which hold both beauty and brokenness. We will explore life as mosaic, mosaic as prayer, nature and community as mosaic as we "play" together. We will learn about and dabble both in traditional and nontraditional mosaic form. No artistic talent required!

We will be staying at the William Black Lodge again, and the rates (room and board) are the same for 2025 as they were for last year.

PLEASE RSVP to Pat Baker by November 1 if you might have an interest in attending, or call if you have any questions: pat@sapctucker.org, 770-938-2833, ext. 111.

Fidelis Sunday School Class

Everyone is welcome to join the Fidelis Sunday School Class, which meets at 9:00 am on Sunday mornings in the Library, and on Zoom (password fidelis).

The class uses *The Present Word* series of books. This Fall, the study theme is "Worship in the Covenant Community," and in October the

Revelation Bible Study

We are going through Revelation verse by verse. Please join us in the youth room Sundays at 2:00 pm, as we delve deeper into the material by Bruce Gore, facilitated by Arch Baker. Everyone is welcome!

focus is **Songs of the Old Testament**. [Contact Deanna Hall](#) for more information.

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 gathers on the 4th Sunday of each 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.

St. Andrews School Halloween Parade

Come out and cheer on the little "goblins!" St. Andrews School and the En-Core volunteers invite the SAPC community to the Halloween Costume Parade and Parent Reception. Wednesday morning October 30th, SAS teachers will lead the children, dressed in their costumes, in a parade around the courtyard. We'll have seating along the route for spectators, and a reception following where church visitors can meet and mingle with school parents. The parade starts at 10:00. It should be a Boo-ti-ful time!

December Day Trip

It's not too early to plan for our Christmas/Holiday Outing! On Wednesday, December 18th we're planning to attend the 10:30 am matinee performance of *Winter Wonderettes* at the Art Station in Stone Mountain. *Winter Wonderettes* puts on an energetic and glittering holiday package of seasonal music and entertainment.

We'll dine after the show in downtown Stone Mountain at the Sweet Potato Café.

If we are going to get tickets to the one matinee (it is a small venue, and some seats are already reserved) then I need to know of your

October Birthdays

- 5 Emma Pattillo
- 7 Jenny Allen, Jacob Ayuk, Marjorie Holler
- 8 Laura Papotto
- 9 Charlton Allen
- 14 Penny Bellinger
- 17 Erin Johnston, Robert Evans
- 21 Annette Hildreth
- 22 Flora Chen, Caroline Johnston
- 29 Mitzi Hoffman
- 30 Paige Kubik

October Anniversaries

- 1 Cheryl Anderson & Pat Creasman
 - 4 Jeff & Rachel Nelson
 - 6 Ed & Linda Weaver
 - 12 Patrick & Bernadette Angelo
 - 14 J.C. & Carrie Edwards
-

SAS Yard Sale

Mark your calendar and start going through your stuff. St. Andrews School will hold a Community Yard Sale fundraiser, Saturday, October 12th in the church's west parking lot. All proceeds to help support SAS. You may donate items to sell or shop for treasures. The school will accept donated items Friday, October 11th at the back door of the education building.



Upcoming Elections

Just in case you haven't heard, it's an election year. [Click this link](#) to go to the My Georgia Voter site where you can register to vote, check your voter registration, polling place location, request a mail-in ballot, and more.

interest in attending by early November. Tickets at \$17.10 each. Please [contact Pat](#) with questions or an interest in attending.

PDA: Disaster Relief and More Hurricane Helene Response

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.

Hurricane Helene Response

Many of us in the Atlanta area felt the effects of Hurricane Helene last week but were back to normal within a few days. Sadly, the impact of this very dangerous category 4 hurricane has been felt across multiple states, and in the light of day, we see that it will be a long time before life resembles “normal.” Helene caused devastating damage in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Tennessee.

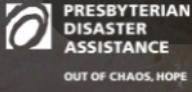
Here are four ways you can give and make a difference:

- [Presbyterian Disaster Assistance](#) has already deployed a National Response Team to Tampa Bay Presbytery, Presbytery of Western North Carolina, and Northeast Georgia Presbytery. We have approved several initial assistance grant requests and are anticipating additional requests from affected presbyteries to help respond to needs in their communities. If you would like to contribute a financial gift to support PDA's immediate and long-term work to help these areas rebuild and recover, you can give [here are the updated ways to give to PDA for Helene] <https://pda.pcusa.org/situation/hurricane-helene/>. The code to donate to hurricane relief, including Hurricane Helene, is DR000169.
- The [Montreat Conference Center](#) and surrounding areas have suffered significant damage. Montreat is a special place to many in our congregation. It's where we've held retreats and sent youth to conferences for years. Your gift to the Montreat Hurricane Relief Fund will directly support relief efforts in this beloved community. [Click here](#) to give.
- [Black Mountain Presbyterian Church](#), located between Cherry Street downtown and the Montreat gate, has power. The congregation is actively serving as a relief station, providing meals, water, power, and respite for those in need. You can contribute directly to help them continue this vital work. [Click here](#) to give. In the memo line of your online gift, insert: Hurricane Relief.
- [Pray](#)- Please pray for all those affected by Hurricane Helene—the families, communities, and relief workers. Pray for healing, strength, and resilience in the days ahead.

God of grace and compassion,

In these overwhelming moments of loss and devastation, we come to you with weary hearts that are both heavy and hopeful. We hold in our prayers and hearts all those impacted by the hurricanes, conflicts, and other disasters, and we implore for your mercy, peace, and healing to embrace our siblings all over the world. By your grace, bring comfort to those who are grieving, give strength to the exhausted, and provide shelter for those who have lost everything.

We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.



-Rev. Edwin González-Castillo, PDA Director

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