



### Ministry Spotlight: December Celebrations

December was full of many joyful celebrations as we prepared for Christ's birth. Some high lights include: Light of Grace's *The Christmas Story*, Lessons & Carols, our heritage exhibit, En-Core! readers at the preschool, a day trip to Callanwolde, the Skivvies & More collection for Clifton Sanctuaries, and delivering cookies from the Lessons and Carols reception.

We hope you and your family had a blessed Christmas and wish you peace and joy in the new year. For more pictures, please see our [Facebook Page](#).





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## From the Pastor

It always seems hard to believe when it is time to write for the January *Lampighter* deadline. We're usually in the thick of proofreading multiple bulletins, and someone in a ministry meeting has the nerve to ask about Lent! But here we are—again turning the page on a new year.

There is some excitement ahead for us in the first months of 2024. We will get the results from the congregational survey we took in December. The session will review those results, and we will share them with the congregation. We'll also embark on a survey of our surrounding neighborhoods to better understand our congregational context. I'm excited about where the next phase of the Vital Congregations Initiative will take us. I'm excited about how the Spirit has been moving in and among us. We have received new members in November and December. The new En-Core program has connected volunteers with the St. Andrews School. So many people showed up to celebrate Advent and helped to make the special activities possible.

We often make resolutions for the new year—we join a gym, determined to work out more, or we try to kick a bad habit. As a church, we don't need to make a resolution. But we can pray that we keep listening for God's call to us as individuals and as a community. And so, I want to share this prayer from Howard Thurman. He was a chaplain at Howard University and Boston University. He was also Martin Luther King's mentor and one of our preeminent American religious thinkers. He met with Gandhi and became a force for non-violence in the Civil Rights movement. He wrote 22 books. As we look ahead to the new year and continue a season of discernment, I pray that we will open ourselves to a new phase of courage, strength, and love as a community and in our personal lives.

### Lord, Lord, Open Unto Me by Howard Thurman

Open unto me, light for my darkness  
Open unto me, courage for my fear  
Open unto me, hope for my despair  
Open unto me, peace for my turmoil  
Open unto me, joy for my sorrow  
Open unto me, strength for my weakness  
Open unto me, wisdom for my confusion  
Open unto me, forgiveness for my sins  
Open unto me, tenderness for my toughness  
Open unto me, love for my hates  
Open unto me, Thy Self for myself  
Lord, Lord, open unto me!

-Camille

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## Let 2024 Be Your Year of Service

by LaVerne Byas-Smith

There are lots of ways to engage in Christian service at St. Andrews. While you're making resolutions and getting fresh starts, consider adding one of these worthy service activities to your agenda for 2024.

Join the Engagement Ministry: help support church ministry efforts of outreach by lending a helping hand with receptions and luncheons, the Fall BBQ and Back-to-School Carnival and the Farmer's Market Book Table. This ministry also engages visitors and prospective new members. There are all sorts of ways to serve here and much help is needed: from event set up and clean up, to planning and coordination of events, you can plug in at your own level of comfort. See Jeni Allen at [jmallen@earthlink.net](mailto:jmallen@earthlink.net) to connect with this ministry team.

Become an En-Core Volunteer: give service to our St. Andrews School community by joining En-Core, SAPC's Encouragement Core. En-Core volunteers look for ways to support and encourage the teachers and families at the school. This fall we hosted a reception for the parents at Halloween, hosted as servers for the school's Thanksgiving gathering, and read to the children each Friday at Storytime. Similar activities and weekly storytime will continue through the spring. Consider joining En-Core if you'd like to serve the school families in the name of SAPC. Contact LaVerne Byas-Smith at [laverne@sapctucker.org](mailto:laverne@sapctucker.org).

Work with the Clifton Sanctuary Ministries team as part of the Mission Ministry: join the band of servants who once a month prepare and provide lunches and dinners for the residents of Clifton. The team has helped the Clifton Sanctuaries residents in other ways as well, including clothing and backpack drives. If you feel called to serve the homeless, you'll find your place here. Contact Phyllis Bearden at 404-580-8679 to join this team.

Serve as a Driver or Helper for the Older Adult Ministries: many of our older members appreciate help with transportation to church and other appointments, and for OAM in-town events and field trips. You might also serve by helping seniors with odd jobs and handiwork in their homes. This service can be ongoing, or intermittent as you are available. Contact Pat Baker for more information at [pat@sapctucker.org](mailto:pat@sapctucker.org).

Become an Usher: one way to serve the entire congregation is by ushering. Serving at the door or in the sanctuary, ushers are important to the smooth and seamless flow of the worship service. If you have the gift of hospitality, or of providing direction, ushering might be the right area of service for you. Our Worship committee manages the corps of ushers. See Debbie Brilling for information regarding becoming an

usher.

Help with Buildings and Grounds: in every season, we have things to do around our campus. Occasionally, we have projects around the building to clean up a room or get it ready for a new use. The management ministry coordinates work days to spruce up our exterior spaces (flower bed, memorial prayer garden, courtyard, etc.) to prepare for Easter and keep us with the seasons. If you like minor fix-it jobs, gardening, and working with others to make our campus a welcoming place, this might be the right area of service for you. Our management ministry coordinates this work. Contact the church office about getting on the list to help with these opportunities.

Music Ministry: Can you sing? Do you play an instrument? Can you count to four, and do you know your right hand from your left? Then, the music ministry might be the right place for you. Our chancel choir rehearses on Wednesday evenings and leads us in worship most Sunday mornings. Counting to four and knowing your right from your left qualifies you for the handbell choir, and there's always room for more. We also have occasional small choral groups and special instrumentalists. See David Lukens or Ed Weaver for information about getting involved.

Not interested in making a long-term commitment? You can sign up to be in the rotation to help with all sorts of activities, like Sunday morning childcare, children's Sunday school, worship A/V support, reading scripture, and volunteering in the church office. If you are curious about these, talk to an elder, deacon, or Pastor Camille; they can point you in the right direction.

These are just a few of the ways you can engage in Christian service at St. Andrews. Give prayerful consideration where you might find your place of service in 2024.

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### Vital Congregations Initiative: Neighborhood Exegesis

In January we continue our VCI examination of who St. Andrews is at this present moment and in this place. Our recent Congregational Survey began this process. It continues with a close look at WHERE WE ARE through a Neighborhood Exegesis – that is an analysis of the environs where God has set us. The Session of SAPC will conduct the major part of this assessment, but congregants as well will be invited to make close observations of our surrounding community. Later this month we'll ask members to complete "Who are Our Neighbors Cards" documenting information gathered as they encounter neighbors and friends while out and about in the community. This anecdotal demographic information will supplement the more systematic survey completed by the Session, to give us a more textured portrait of our community.

Please be on the ready to participate in this next important phase of our Vital Congregations Initiative. If you have questions about the Neighborhood Exegesis, please contact LaVerne Byas-Smith at [laverne@sapctucker.org](mailto:laverne@sapctucker.org).



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### Annual Congregational Meeting

- We will hold our Annual Congregational meeting during Worship on January, 28th.

In November, our income was \$36,668.02 and our expenses totaled \$39,343.58. Year to date, our income was \$449,497.91 and our expenses were \$383,040.87. So, we are in the black by \$66,457.04.

Currently we have a mortgage balance of \$63,851.75. We have \$24,225.98 in our mortgage fund, and a monthly payment of \$4,111. Thus, we have funds on hand to cover 5.9 months of payments.

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## New Bible Study Group Forming in January

An extended study of the Bible book of Revelation will be held at St. Andrews, beginning January 7, 2024 at 2:00 p.m. The recorded instruction by Bruce Gore lasts for about an hour with discussion, moderated by Arch Baker, to follow. Bruce Gore is a seminary faculty member with extensive experience in the Reformed Tradition.

Our ultimate goal is to understand the book as it would have been understood by its first readers/hearers. If you want to prepare, you can begin by reading the books of Daniel and Ezekiel in the Bible. See you at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday afternoon, Jan. 7th. If you miss a session or two, that's OK as Bruce always reviews each previous section.

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## Items from our Kitchen

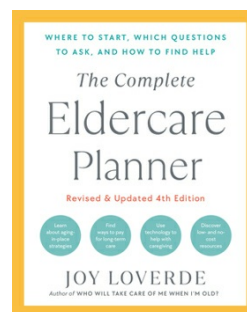
If you have borrowed items from our kitchen, or taken dish towels home to wash, (thank you!) please bring them back the next time you are at church.

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## Older Adult and Caregiver Ministries

by Pat Baker

I have recently discovered a great book that I want to share with you. It is *The Complete Eldercare Planner, 4<sup>th</sup> edition* by Joy Loverde. It is full of great information about aging in place strategies, finding ways to pay for long-term care, technology to help with caregiving and lots of valuable resources. Most chapters have great checklists such as Hiring an In-Home Helpers checklist and Legal Matters Action Checklist and many more. You are welcome to check out my copy of the book or it can be found on Amazon.com in the books section.



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## Montreat Retreat

The annual adult retreat to Montreat is set for Tuesday, April 23 thru Friday, April 26th, 2024. We will again be staying at William Black Lodge. The week will be all about MUSIC...so if you love music, love to sing, love to listen to music and appreciate the history behind church music this week is for you! Ed Weaver will be leading the discussion on Everything You Wanted to Know about Hymns (*But were afraid to ask!*) The cost includes lodging, 3 breakfasts and 3 dinners. A deposit of \$50

### Pastor

Rev. Dr. Camille LeBron Powell  
(ext 106)

[camille@sapctucker.org](mailto:camille@sapctucker.org)

### Coordinator of Congregational Vitality

LaVerne Byas-Smith (ext 109)

[laverne@sapctucker.org](mailto:laverne@sapctucker.org)

### Director of Music

David Lukens (ext 118)

[dlukens@sapctucker.org](mailto:dlukens@sapctucker.org)

### Associate Director of Music/Organist

Edward Weaver (ext 118)

[ejweaver@bellsouth.net](mailto:ejweaver@bellsouth.net)

### Director of Older Adult and Caregiver Ministries

Pat Baker (ext 111)

[pat@sapctucker.org](mailto:pat@sapctucker.org)

### Director of St. Andrews School

Lounette Bruce (ext 120)

[sasdirector@sapctucker.org](mailto:sasdirector@sapctucker.org)

### Office Manager

Gretchen Perkins (ext 102)

[office@sapctucker.org](mailto:office@sapctucker.org)

### Financial Administrator

Helen Hoang (ext 104)

[finance@sapctucker.org](mailto:finance@sapctucker.org)

Visit our  
website

is due by January 15th to hold your spot.

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## New Member Spotlight

Join us in welcoming new members to St. Andrews! Tim and Joan Barnes joined St. Andrews on December 17th.



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## Service Opportunity

Want to be more involved in Sunday worship? SAPC's Worship Ministry is looking to add lay readers. Lay readers participate by reading a prayer for illumination and an assigned scripture passage on a rotating basis. For more information or to join our group of readers, please contact Carol Gordon at [carol.gordon587@gmail.com](mailto:carol.gordon587@gmail.com) or call (770) 564-0900 or text (404) 316-8675. An upcoming training session is being planned for late January, so please do not hesitate if you feel uncertain. You would be so welcome.

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## Thank You

...to all who sang, rang, read, played, supported, and encouraged the making of music to the glory of God in the joyous season of Christmas. Your time, effort, and dedication were an offering to the Lord and a gift to the people at Saint Andrews ...to all who brought cookies for the Christmas Cookie Celebration after Lessons and Carols. Your cookies were delicious and enjoyed by all! The remaining cookies were gathered and sorted into the lovely tins you donated. When all is said and done, we will have delivered almost 46 dozen cookies to several area agencies. You made it possible to share some joy with those in our community

*Soli Deo gloria*

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## Notes from the Session

The Session met twice on December 17th. At a called meeting after worship, the Session accepted Tim and Joan Barnes as members of St. Andrews.

At the stated meeting at 1:00 pm, in addition to times of prayer, the Session approved the following motions:

- Approved a motion to transfer Elinor Bryan to the Church

## 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



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## January Birthdays

- 4 Dave Jentoff
  - 7 Victoria Ashby
  - 8 Gwen McDuffie
  - 12 John Snarey
  - 14 Linda Fouts
  - 17 Erik Lukens
  - 20 Tish Drury
  - 21 Jan Young
  - 23 Klara Smith, Bob Williams, Lisa Wolfgang
  - 25 Gloria Williams
  - 28 Jeff Bunce
  - 29 Margaret Ellingson, Bob Patton, Leslie Bunce, Robby Snarey
  - 30 Basil Papotto
- 

## 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.

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Triumphant.

- Elected J. Allen to serve as Elder Commissioner to the next Presbytery meeting to be held on February 2, 2024.
- Approved a motion from the Worship Ministry identifying the dates on which we will celebrate Communion during worship in 2024.

As a discussion item, the proposed updated draft of the SAPC Personnel Manual was presented. The manual was last updated before the pandemic, and some areas of the Manual are no longer relevant. The updated draft was prepared by M. Noble and reviewed by Rev. Powell and C. Chambers of the Management Ministry. Changes proposed were intended to update some out-of-date information and clarify either new or standing information.

During the discussion, D. Brillig identified several changes that are necessary to conform to a new Georgia law for required information. D. Brillig will work with M. Noble to provide information on these changes, and the updated draft will be presented to the Session in the January 2024 Session Meeting.

A motion from J. Allen, seconded by M. Ellingson, to add the Juneteenth holiday for staff to the manual was discussed and approved.

Items for information included reminders of business that needs to be addressed as we close out 2023. Annual reports are due to the Clerk by January 15th, and Ministry budgets, including line items, are due to the Treasurer by the end of the year. The Nominating Committee continues to work to bring forth a slate of new Elders and Deacons at the Annual Congregational Meeting in January, 2024. Elders who are eligible to serve another term are asked to prayerfully consider making an extended commitment to the Session.

As we continue to celebrate this Advent Season, we look forward to the new energy and purpose that we will discover in 2024.

## 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

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**St. Andrews Presbyterian Church**  
770-938-2833  
[office@sapctucker.org](mailto:office@sapctucker.org)  
[sapctucker.org](http://sapctucker.org)

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