



Ministry Spotlight: Advent and Christmas

We have so many opportunities to gather, worship, and prepare our hearts for the coming of the Lord this Advent season. Please mark your calendars and plan to join us!

Enjoy the pictures below from Brunch Church and the Hanging of the Greens in November.



Gather, Grow, Give, Go
Fidelis Sunday School Class
Joyful Noise Children's Music
Sundays at 9:00 am

ADVENT WORSHIP  SUNDAYS 10 AM

Light of Grace presents
The Christmas Story
December 14, 4 pm

Lessons and Carols
December 21, 6:00 pm

CANDLELIGHT SERVICES  DECEMBER 24 5 PM & 11 PM

Worship services, Light of Grace, and Lessons and Carols will be streamed online: [YouTube.com/@sapctucker](https://www.youtube.com/@sapctucker)

For more information, please see our website, sapctucker.org





From the Pastor

Much of life is about learning to live with tension. I don't mean the kind of tension that happens around the family table at Thanksgiving as cousins try to avoid mentioning politics. I'm thinking more about the type of tension that comes from realizing more than one thing can be true at the same time. For example, you can miss the good old days *and* be excited about what the future holds. You can love your spouse very deeply *and* be angry with them about something they said. A person can possess a healthy sense of self *and* still see ways they can do better. Learning to live in that tension means letting go of the need for everything to fit into a box or be neatly sorted into all-or-nothing categories.

Faith rarely fits neatly into a box. The season of Advent reminds us that we live in a time of tension. Christ has already come, *and* Christ will come again. As the father of the sick child cries out to Jesus, "I believe; help my unbelief!" Both things can be true. This season, we will live in the tension of hope *and* fear. We will tell the truth about what we fear and hold on to hope.

This year, our Advent theme will explore this tension. We will use materials from Sanctified Art with the theme: *What do you fear? Insisting on hope this Advent.* Acknowledging that the Christmas season is often an emotionally charged time when we can feel many things deeply at the same time, the women behind Sanctified Art describe this year's theme:

Luke's Gospel begins the story of Jesus with this opening line: "In the time of Herod..." This detail may seem minor to modern readers; however, it reveals layers of information about the fearful world Jesus entered, one filled with rampant oppression, economic disparity, uncertainty, and instability. A world not so unlike our own. And yet, throughout the stories of Christ's birth, we hear the whispers of angels delivering a surprising message: "Do not fear." In our own time, we might ask: Is it even possible to be fearless in a fearful world? When Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, and the magi are each called into God's redemptive story, they do not deny their fears—they move through them. They ask questions, hold fast to courage, trust in good news, and say, "Here I am, Lord." When we find ourselves in fearful times, can we acknowledge our fears while also insisting on hope?

We've crafted an Advent series that takes seriously the angels' message and trusts that Christ's birth truly is good news of great joy for all people. The series looks closely at the fear and terror looming in the background during the time of King Herod and invites us to consider the fears we hold now. Fear can divide and paralyze us, and even be used as a tool for oppression. But what if we formed a different relationship with fear? ...What if naming our fears helps us see more clearly how God is breaking in and where God is at work? This series gently invites us to identify where fear is present—both in the Advent story and in our lives—while also finding our way toward hope, with the angels' voices in our ears.

This year, you can observe Advent with the following:

- a daily devotional with scripture, poetry, visual art, hymns, written reflections, and journaling prompts
- a colorable calendar for children and families (and anyone else who wants one)
- a daily calendar for adults with scripture and a breath prayer
- daily posts on the church's Instagram and Facebook pages
- A Daily *Gospel of Luke* Countdown to Christmas Challenge

I hope you will join us this Advent and Christmas season as we light candles, sing carols, and pray for Christ's coming. In a world full of plenty to be afraid of and forces that want you to be scared, let's hold onto hope that is not flimsy or fleeting. The hope we have in Christ is gritty, resilient, and can endure—no matter what we fear or face. Let's come together and insist on hope and trust that good news is greater than fear.

Camille

December 7 - Advent 2
We're running out of hope, God is at Work
Matthew 11:1-11 | Isaiah 43:19-21

December 14 - Advent 3
Even in our fear, we are called forward
Luke 1:26-39 | Jeremiah 1:4-10

December 21 - Advent 4
When you're afraid, give me your hand
Matthew 1:18-25 | Isaiah 41:5-10

December 24 - Christmas Eve
Good news is louder than fear
Isaiah 9:2-7 | Luke 2:1-20

December 28
Let fear fuel a fire for justice
Matthew 2:1-12, 19-23

January 4 - Epiphany
Fear doesn't stop us
Matthew 2:1-12, 16-18

What do you fear?
INSISTING ON HOPE THIS ADVENT



Lessons and Carols & Christmas Cookie Reception

Sunday, December 21st at 6:00 pm, we will have Lessons and Carols in the Sanctuary. Lessons and Carols is a candlelight worship service of Scripture and music to celebrate the Lord's birth. This service involves carols for choir singers, instruments, handbells, and the congregation. This service is followed by a Christmas cookie reception in Heffner Hall. So, gather up your best cookie recipes and start saving cookie tins. Any extra cookies from

this evening will go to first responders and charitable organizations in our area.

Light of Grace
presents

The Christmas Story

Sunday, December 14th

4:00 pm

St. Andrews
Presbyterian Church



Light of Grace Presents: The Christmas Story

Join us on Sunday, December 14th at 4:00 pm at Light of Grace's performance of The Christmas Story. The angels will dance the choir will sing and sign – and the Scriptures will be recited by the members of Light of Grace, a ministry for persons with Special Abilities.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee has begun the process of identifying and nominating a slate of elder and deacon candidates to present to the congregation at our annual meeting in January. Members who wish to suggest someone (either self or another member) for these positions should complete the Nominating Committee Suggestion Form [found here](#) and, in the Narthex, and place it in the offering basket on Sunday. You can also nominate someone via email to Camille, the church office, or by reaching out to a member of the committee.

SAPC Staff

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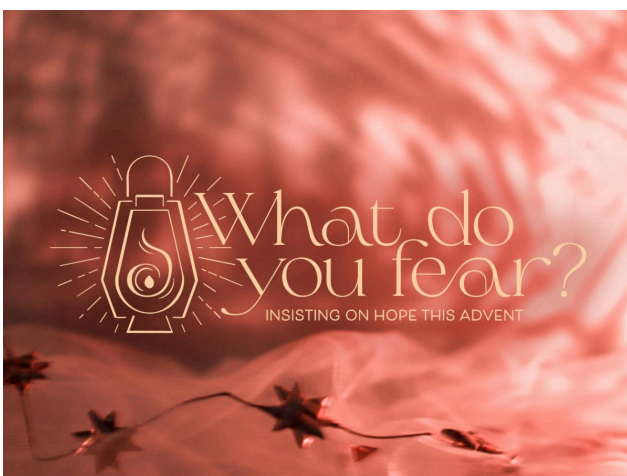
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[Visit our website](#)

Advent Materials

Advent began Sunday, November 30th. Our theme is *What Do You Fear? Insisting on Hope this Advent*. We will use materials from Sanctified Art. Advent devotionals, which include prayers, journal prompts, reflections, and visual art, all inspired by our scripture texts for the season, will be available in the Narthex.

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

Christmas Joy Offering

We will take the annual Christmas Joy Offering Sunday, December 7th in worship. This offering goes to support the past, present, and future leaders of the PC(USA), supporting leadership development for communities of color, and providing support for Presbyterian church workers in their time of need. If donating online, please select Mission and put Christmas Joy in the notes.



Older Adult and Caregiver Ministries

by Pat Baker



Discussion/Support group

December 18th, 10:30 am, Meeting Room

Downsizing with Purpose: A Talk on Decluttering, Donating & Living in Alignment

Join Jenny P. from Living Artistry and Lucy from The Junkluggers for a down-to-earth conversation on decluttering and downsizing with ease. It's less about "getting rid of stuff" and more about clearing the noise so you and your space can live in alignment.

Jenny and Lucy will share real-life strategies to help you let go of what no longer serves you, keep what truly matters, and make space for peace in this next chapter. You'll also learn how to donate and recycle responsibly through local pickup options, giving your items a second life while supporting your community and protecting the environment.

December Day Trip - December 12

Our HOLIDAY day trip this year will be to the NEW location for the Atlanta Christkindl Market, the Lawrenceville Lawn in Downtown Lawrenceville where you will experience the magic of the holiday season enjoying the unique fusion of traditional German festivities and the vibrant spirit of Atlanta. From delicious culinary delights to handcrafted treasures, we'll immerse ourselves in an enchanting world where old-world charm intertwines with the vibrancy of Atlanta culture. We'll meet at the church at 10:45 am on Friday, December 12th and carpool to downtown Lawrenceville. You'll be free to enjoy the market at your own pace where you'll find plenty to eat and plenty to buy! We'll return to Tucker early afternoon. Check out all that will be available at <https://www.christkindlmarket.org/>. There is no cost to attend the market. Please contact Pat Baker- pat@sapctucker.org or 678-438-3673 to let her know you will be going and if you'll be meeting us at the church to carpool.

Spring Retreat UPDATE- DEADLINE EXTENDED TO 12/31/25

Here is the break down on costs for the 2026 Spring Retreat to Montreat:

- The cost per person (sharing) for 3 nights in a room with 2 twin beds. \$224.95 (per person)
- The cost for 3 nights for 1 person with a double bed. \$321 (single/couple)
- The cost for 3 nights for a couple or single person with a queen bed \$353.13 (single/couple)
- The cost for 3 nights for a couple or single person with a king bed. \$449.40 (couple/single)
- The cost for 3 nights for 1 person in a room with 2 twin beds. \$304.95

• In addition to the above housing costs, meals are: 3 dinners, 1 lunch and 3 breakfasts: \$126.27

We're happy to announce that this year, through the generosity of some of our church members, we can offer scholarships to cover the meal cost of \$126.27 for those requesting the help. A \$50.00 deposit, that will be deducted from the entire cost is due by November 30th. If you need to have this deadline extended or want to take advantage of this scholarship, please [contact Pat Baker](#).

Christmas Volunteer Opportunity

Once again St. Andrews School Children and the children of our church will present the Nativity in songs and scriptures at the Christmas Eve Family Service, 5:00 p.m., in our sanctuary. There will be angels, shepherds and lots of animals to welcome the birth of the Christ Child.

You can be a part of this service by volunteering to help with costumes, pizza at our December 22nd rehearsal, and corralling on Christmas Eve, which means helping children find their spots the night of the service.

Every kid and kid at heart can be part of the Nativity by showing up early that night for a costume and directions on where to stand. We will be teaching the songs to be used in this service at our Joyful Noise children's choir, which meets Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. in the choir room.

If you need more information, or want to help in any way, please [email Phyllis Bearden](mailto:Phyllis.Bearden@st-andrews.org).



Gather. Grow. Give. Go. Sundays at 9:00 a.m.

- 9-9:30 Children: Joyful Noise music program (choir room)
- 9-9:30 Adults: Gather for fellowship and discussion time (youth room)
- 9:30-10 Children: Either go to Children's church for a brief Bible story and lesson (nursery) or join the adults for an intergenerational project (youth room).
- 9:30-10 Adults: Either continue the discussion or join the children for an intergenerational project (youth room).



December 7	Gather	Adults: John the Baptist & Hope Children: Signs of Hope
December 14	Grow	Adults: Called to Be Courageous Children: Courageous like Mary
December 21	Give	Adults & Children: We can look to other people for help when we're scared.
December 28	Go	Adults & Children: No Sunday School



Hoodies for Clifton

Socks & Skivvies is transforming into Hooded Sweatshirts for Clifton. This year St. Andrews will contribute hooded sweatshirts to the Christmas packages of the men at Clifton Sanctuary Ministries. Please bring in new, hooded sweatshirts in sizes L, XL, and XXL through December 14th. For more information, [contact Mike Bearden](mailto:Mike.Bearden@st-andrews.org).

Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention: Register Now!

One of the ways you can be kind to yourself in 2026 is by signing up for the Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention Class. Make 2026 a year that you DON'T fall by learning and practicing Tai Chi. This 8-week, twice weekly class will help you to gain control of your balance and help those arthritic joints feel better. These sessions will be co-taught by Pat Baker and Hani Stempler, Tuesdays and Thursdays, January 27th through March 17th, from 1:30-2:30pm in Heffner Hall. The class size is

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. In November we are finishing up the series "Judah, from Isaiah to Exile." [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.

Glasses Collection

Many thanks go out to all who donated to Caring for Creation's glasses collection in October. Deanna Hall will transport the eyeglasses to the Walmart Vision Center in Tucker, which partners with Lions Club International to deliver the glasses to those in need. Here are the results of this year's collection:

Units	Number
Plastic rims w/ case	12
Metal rims w/ case	0
Plastic rims w/o case	24
Metal rims w/o case	9
Sunglasses w/ case	4
Sunglasses w/o case	5
Empty cases	7
Lenses w/o rims	0
Rims w/o lenses	1
TOTAL/ 2025	61
TOTAL/ 2024	71
TOTAL/ 2023	112



limited, so sign up now, if you want a spot in the class. [Click this link](#) for the class flyer.

[Click this link](#) to register.

December Birthdays

- 3 Marsha Ashby, Curtis Morse
- 6 Amelia Pattillo
- 8 David Barnhart
- 10 Claire Meeks
- 11 Edward Forrester
- 12 Francine Elle, Marco Compton
- 13 Peggy Benedict
- 15 Jackson Powell
- 17 Teresa Maloney
- 23 Jane Thomas
- 24 Mary Jentoft
- 26 Judy Cook
- 28 Mary McCowen

December Anniversaries

- 21 Walter & Gwen McDuffie
- 29 Curtis & Heather Morse

Collections for NETWorks

Our collection of food and hygiene items for NETWorks is going well. Thank you for your ongoing generosity to our neighbors. Please keep bringing in shelf-stable food and hygiene items like adult diapers, poise pads, maxi pads and tampons to the collection bins in the Narthex. Or monetary donations to NETWorks may be made directly here.

39ers Lunch Group

The 39ers we will not be meeting in December because of the busy holiday season. We will start afresh on January 27th by going to one of our favorites-Bambinelli's in Tucker. We hope that those of you who have not joined this group in the past will make a new year's resolution to join us in 2026.

Highlights from the November Session Meeting

Jane Thomas, Clerk of Session

- The Session engaged in a discussion about the delay in financial reporting as a result of staffing changes. It was agreed that the September and October financial statements should be sent out electronically to the Session by Friday, November 21.
- The Session heard an update on the St. Andrews School. Things are going well. The library was moved to the end of the building and an infant room was furnished.
- The Session discussed what SAPC does particularly well. Strengths mentioned were pitching in, the music program, and a culture of acceptance. We also discussed what we may need to put down in order to move forward.

Support Our Preschool

Some ways you can help the school include:

- Join En-Core! With the increase in enrollment at St. Andrews Preschool and the addition of a PreK class, Encore Volunteers are needed. We help with different events throughout the year and also read on a regular basis on Fridays. With the increased enrollment our immediate need is for additional readers on Fridays. Please [contact Cindy Weimer](#) with any questions.
- [Click this link](#) to see the school's Amazon wish list.



Out of Chaos, Hope

Flood, Hurricane & Wildfire Response and Relief

by Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) is a ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) which enables congregations and mission partners to witness to the healing love of Christ through caring for communities adversely affected by crises and catastrophic events. PDA has deployed National Response Teams to the Texas Hill Country flooding, Spring tornados, Southern California wildfires, Florida, North Carolina, and Georgia to support the congregations and communities affected by the natural disasters. 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. If you would like to contribute a financial gift to support PDA's immediate and long-term work to rebuild and recover, you can give [using this link](#).

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance



***Out of Chaos,
Hope***

Christmas Eve

CANDLELIGHT
SERVICES



DECEMBER 24
5 PM & 11 PM

St. Andrews
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

St. Andrews Presbyterian Church

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sapctucker.org

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