SAINT JOHN’S
Cullman Alabama

December 10, 2023
SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT-PEACE

Liturgical Color: Blue
9:00 (Sanctuary) 11:00 (Christ Hall)
www.sjepc.com
(Live stream available on YOUTUBE)

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

40 Beautiful white poinsettias are available for purchase thru the church office and may be purchased in honor or in memory of loved ones. These will be placed in the Sanctuary and Christ Hall on Dec. 17 and Dec. 24. Please take poinsettias home with you after each service on Dec. 24th.

Price: $15.00

Forms available in the narthex, atrium or church office. Make checks to: SJ’s and in the memo write poinsettia

Dec. 24  CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

10am  SJ Kids-- O Holy Night
Parents with children, this is a great service option for you! Your family can come to early worship and then have the evening for your family so you can get the kido’s tucked in early! All children ages birth thru 6th gr. attending our Christmas Eve 10am service is invited to participate in our telling of the Christmas Story. Join us in the Atrium before the service to receive your costume. No practice needed. Register on line to let us know you plan to participate:
www.sjepc.com look under the event tab.

5:00pm
Candlelight Communion Service-Sanctuary

Dec. 25

6:00am Dawnwatch Service- Sanctuary

Please register online for the Christmas Eve service your family plans to attend to help us in our set up and planning for worship.
www.sjepc.com under events tab

THE SEASON OF ADVENT

Advent is the four-week period before Christmas that celebrates the anticipation and coming of Jesus Christ, the Messiah. The four Sundays of Advent are Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love.

Join us!

Advent Meditation / Communion Services

Wednesday’s --12:00pm
Sanctuary

Dec. 13     Dec. 20
Welcome to St. John’s. If this is your first time with us, know that we are so glad you’re here! Wherever you’re at on your spiritual journey, we hope you are able to leave today having experienced the grace and truth of Jesus. Hopefully you’ve already met some of our welcome team and ushers but know that we are here to help you however we can. Parents, for the kids, our nursery and kid’s leaders will be excited to meet you! Finally, if there’s any way we can pray for you or help you connect to our church family, please drop a welcome card in the offering basket or fill out an online prayer card. Thank you for joining us today either virtually or in person!

As a church of grace and truth, St. John's is...

- Rooted in the doctrines of the Protestant Reformation. We believe we are saved by grace through faith in Jesus, that the Bible is the rule for Christian life and faith, and that the Good News of Jesus should be proclaimed in word and deed.
- Sacrament Celebrating. We believe God ministers to the community of believers in unique and special ways through the gifts of Baptism and Holy Communion.
- Liturgically Oriented. We believe remembering the whole life of Christ is important for spiritual maturity. We follow the church calendar, celebrating seasons like Advent and Lent.
- Ecumenically Minded. In the context of our heritage, we believe all those who call upon Jesus as Lord and affirm the creeds of the church (e.g. the Apostles’ Creed) will share in his eternal blessings and so we welcome all believers who join us to participate in worship and community life.

STAY CONNECTED WITH US!!

- Sign up for notifications from the SJ Facebook page --(turn on notifications for SJ’s)
- Worship Service available on (www.sjepc.com) watch on You Tube
- Fill out a green connect card and drop in the offering plate when you visit us! We would love to meet you!
- Email: make sure we have your current email in the office (256-734-0344)

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NURSERY ---Available for newborns up to 3 yrs. of age at both worship services and during Sunday School. Please see any usher or First Impression Team member with a yellow lanyard this morning and they will direct you to the nursery.

VISITORS---Thanks for visiting with us today! We would love the opportunity to sit down and meet with you! Please give us a call to set up an appointment with our Senior Pastor, Rev. John Richter @ 256-734-0344 if you have questions and would like to schedule an appointment to learn more about SJ’s. You may also check our website www.sjepc.com to learn more about St. John’s.

SYMPATHY’S— Christian love and sympathy is extended to the following families who experienced loss this past week:

- Mrs. Jean Heinl Creasey. Jean is survived by her daughters Gail (Gary) Grant, Debbie (Greg) Campbell, Bertha (Mike) Jones, and son Mike (Debbie) Heinl. A graveside service was held December 5, 2023 at Cullman City Cemetery with Rev. John Richter officiating.
- Mrs. Cathy Burch, mother of Emily (Champ) Crocker, and grandmother of Henry and Charles Crocker. A funeral service was held this week in Memphis Tn.

2024 PROPOSED CHURCH BUDGET

Dec. 10  Open Budget Meeting
Dec. 17  Vote / Proposed 2024 Budget

PROPOSED 2024 BUDGET SUMMARIES

Budget summaries of the 2024 proposed budget are available this morning on your way out of the service. For a detailed copy of the proposed budget, see Regina in the church office.
UP-COMING ADVENT WEDNESDAY EVENING CHURCH EVENTS

• GINGERBREAD BASH - DEC. 13 - Christ Hall
  5:00pm Meal (chicken soup, grilled cheese)
  5:30pm Nativity making and the Christmas Story. Register online at www.sjepec.com under events

• COOKIES, COCOA, and CAROLING - Dec. 20
  5:15pm Cookies and Cocoa (Atrium)
  5:30pm Caroling departs

NEW MEMBER RECOGNITION SUNDAY TODAY

Today we welcome all those who have joined our church family this past year!
9:00 Service is: Herbert and Kim Arnold; Neil and Pam Rainwater; Clark and Dayla Rainwater; Mike and Karen Machen; Allie Piscritta; Ken Schumacher; David and Judy Griswold; Michael, Katie, Kennedy, Frankie Kate, Anna Presley Sterling Kruger.

11:00 Service is Laura Taylor, Matt Wilson, Toni Treadway, Mark, Britney, Stella and Louis McGraw; Ed and Nella McGraw, Clayton and Kim Ingram, Tim, Denise, Libby, Audrey and Ben Phillips; Michael, T’aira, Katherine and Anna Ugarkovich, Cory Smith, Blake Tetro, Justin Weygand; Jesse Stefan, Doran, Nicolle, Violet, Iris and Oliver Smith; Steven, Christina, Heather, Natalie and Damien Bucholtz. Be sure to officially welcome them when you see them!

CHRISTMAS AT THE RICHTER HAUS

Sunday Dec. 17
4:00-7:00pm
Join us for assorted soups and snacks!

Contact the church office for directions.

SJ TWEENS GRINCHMAS PARTY — Sunday 4-6:00 pm Christ Hall. Dinner, games, laser tag and Grinchy fun! Bring a gift for $10 gift exchange. RSVP to Stephanie: 256-962-0211.

Cookies, Carols, Cocoa

GET INTO THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT!

Wednesday Dec. 20 5:15pm
Come along and join us in the Atrium to enjoy a cup of hot cocoa and a cookie snack before departing for a fun time of caroling around the town!!
CHURCH PICTORIAL DIRECTORY

January 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 (2:00pm until 8:30pm)
January 13 (10:00am-4:30pm)
January 29 (2:00pm until 8:30pm)

To Sign Up:
- Visit the church website; look under events and select the directory picture.
- A link is available in the body of the letter on the opening page, you can copy and paste into your internet browser. Or use the QR CODE FOUND HERE or on the Website.
  - When you scan the QR CODE with your phone camera, it will take you directly to the sign in page for photos.
  - To log in:
    - type the church code and the password (found below).
    - The Church code is: AL143 (case sensitive)
    - Password: photos
  - After sign in, a list of time slots will open.
    - Select your time and fill in all the appropriate information

ARE YOU IN THE LOOP? Did you sign up?? Sign up today to receive the up to date last minute messages you might need to know about classes, worship services or events here at SJ’s. The winter weather and secondary severe weather season are fast approaching! To be sure you will not miss any important communication messages for you and your family go ahead and sign up. Here, you can ask questions through this number to the staff, and you will receive the occasional reminder text about SJ Events. This is not a group chat; no one else other than SJ staff will be able to read your messages. What do you have to LOOSE?? You can opt out at any time. Here is how you can join:
1) Text "SJEPCC" to 256-734-0344.
2) After you receive a response from us, text your name so that we know who you are for contact information purposes

SJ’s Legacy Ministry
2023 ornaments are in the church office. You may also continue to pay and order online. Pickup for all ornaments will be in the church office.
A CARING CHURCH? At St. John’s we long to be a caring church. Most churches share this desire, but to actually be a caring church requires all of our participation in member-to-member care. First and foremost, it begins in the friendships and relationships you establish with your brothers and sisters in Christ. A great way—in fact the primary way—to connect to caring, Christ-centered friendships at SJs is to get involved with one of our many groups. Each of our groups are encouraged to nurture biblical member-to-member care for one another. And, secondly, caring churches are intentional churches. Care doesn’t just happen. It takes purposeful effort! Thus, our hope is that our groups will be intentional in listening to, looking out for, and praying with one another. Take time in your groups to develop a process to care for one another.

We also want to offer good pastoral care during the more trying seasons of life. By God’s grace, our church has the privilege of shepherding several hundred people who look to SJs as their church “home.” Even though each of our services may feel relatively small or medium-sized, the sum total of our congregation is quite large. This simply means that we have to think wisely, biblically, and creatively on how to care for the spiritual well-being of a congregation this size. This, too, takes intentionality both on your part and the part of our staff.

We have recognized that we are best at remembering specifics when prayer requests are written down. So, we want to make sure you have easy channels to ask for prayer and care. You’ll find prayer cards in the sanctuary and Christ Hall and, of course, calls, emails, and texts are best to set up appointments. We’d love to see our care and prayer ministry grow and even explore new avenues. If that’s a part of your heartbeat, we’d like to hear how God is prompting you to join in this ministry. —Grace and Truth, Reverend John

WALLACE STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE BIBLE STUDY!—If you are on campus Wednesdays at 2:30pm, join Nathan Williams in the Campus Ministries Room 100 in the Wellness Center. The club—named Ratio Christi—generally focuses on evangelism (sharing the faith) and apologetics (defending the faith). If you are a student, you are welcome to join! Invite friends. Contact Nathan if you have any questions (nathan.williams@sjepc.com, 256-338-9210)
**END OF YEAR FOR 2023 IS COMING!! Have you considered a qualified charitable distribution to SJ’s?**

What is a qualified charitable distribution? This is a direct transfer of assets from your IRA, payable to a qualifying charity, that counts toward annual **required minimum distributions** (RMDs). They are a great way for people age 70 ½ or older to satisfy RMD requirements in a tax-efficient way and make a charitable impact. For the gift to count, it must come from your IRA by December 31, 2023. Check now with your tax preparer and IRA provider to set it up.

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**St. John’s Evangelical**

**2024 GERMAN REFORMATION TOUR**

**May 16-26, 2024**

**Cities on the tour:** Berlin, Wittenberg, Eisleben, Erfurt, Eisenach, Speyer, Heidelberg, Mainz, Worms, Frankweiler, Rothenburg, Munich. Rev. Richter invites you to join an 11-day tour of Germany. As part of the church’s 150th anniversary celebration, there will be a special visit to Frankweiler, Cullman’s sister city.

- Land price only $3,399 / Land and air $4,999

*Price based on a minimum of 20 participants*

To sign up for the trip, and receive a copy of the full itinerary, please email John at: john.richter@sjepc.com

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**THIS WEEK:**

**Tues. Dec. 12** 7:00a  Men’s Bible Study and Breakfast  
9a  P.L.A.R.N  
5p  Lights of Love (CH)  
6p  NARANON (RB)

**Wed. Dec. 13** 10a Chapel  
12:00p Advent / Communion Meditation Service (Sanctuary)  
5:00p Advent Wednesday Meal: chicken noodle soup and grilled cheese  
5:30p GINGERBREAD BASH (CH)

**Thurs. Dec. 14** 9:00am East Elem School and James Span (CH)  
10:00am 55Alive to Freight House Christmas Lunch  
12p Rotary (CH)  
12p Hank’s Group (UR)  
TBA Rotary Christmas Banquet (CH)

**Fri. Dec. 15**  
**Sat. Dec. 16** 2:00p Laney Shower / RB

**Sun. Dec. 17**  
Vote on the 2024 Proposed Budget  
4:00-7:00p Soups and Snacks at the Richter Haus
**SJ’s Adult & Young Adult Sunday School Class**

Information and Locations

Are you looking for a Sunday School class? You are invited to visit these classes and find the class for you!

Ask any greeter (wearing a yellow lanyard) or staff member Sunday morning and they will be happy to help you find a class location.

1- **Eddie McGriff's Class** – "Digging into books of the Bible a chapter at a time. All are welcome!"
   **Location:** Heritage Hall

2- **Wes Warren’s Kingdom Builders** – "Discussion-based studies that draw us into the truth of Scripture. All are welcome!"
   **Location:** Ruehl Building Main Floor (South Side)

3- **Melanie Townson's Reaching Higher** – “Our main objective in studying the Bible is to develop an understanding of how to model our lives after the directions of Christ. We gather together to encourage and foster relationships, and we also like to have fun and fellowship with one another
   **Location:** 2nd Floor Ruehl Building

4- **Reaching Higher Too** – Leaders: Cori Manord, Blake Tetro; "Young Adult class for ages 18 - 25 years with a focus on developing relationships with each other and with God."
   **Location:** Basement of the Ruehl Building

5- **Dennon Compton's Upper Room** – "The Book of 1 Peter"
   **Location:** Upper room, next to elevator and Tween room. Use elevator off the Atrium to get to the classroom

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**Our Faithful Giving**

**Offering:** $28,050.35

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**Mission 150! Memory of Cheri Apel** by Scotty and Pam Blair

**Mission 150! A Legacy of God’s Faithfulness and Generosity.**

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**6 Ways to Give:**

* church website (www.sjepc.com) and click the giving tab
* Mail gifts: St. John’s Church, 512 2nd Ave SE, Cullman Al 35055
* “Text to Give” text 84321---follow the prompt
* complete an authorization form for Visa, MasterCard, Discover or debit card
* call the office before you come and we can come out to your car
* Put in the offering plate during the service

CONTRIBUTIONS

When making contributions to any fund other than the general fund (Burn the Note, Music Fund, or Youth Fund, Women’s Guild / Whit’s Place) please write a separate check made specifically to that fund.

**IRA Qualified Charitable Distribution**

Anyone 70.5 years of age or older can give up to $100,000 as a tax-free gift, in the form of a QCD, from their traditional IRA account. Contact your IRA custodian or tax preparer for more information.

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**Mission 150!**

**A Legacy of God’s Faithfulness and Generosity.**

**Missionary Cheri Apel by Scotty and Pam Blair**

**Mission 150!**

**A Legacy of God’s Faithfulness and Generosity.**

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**Mission 150! Memory of Cheri Apel** by Scotty and Pam Blair

**Mission 150! A Legacy of God’s Faithfulness and Generosity.**
Cullman NAR-ANON Group Meetings--The NAR-ANON family group meetings are a worldwide fellowship for those affected by someone else’s Addiction. We offer Help by sharing our experiences, strength, and hope. We carry the message of Hope by letting others know that they are not alone by practicing the 12 Steps of NAR-ANON and changing our own Attitudes. We Respect Your Anonymity. Our program is not a Religious one, but a Spiritual way of Life. Meetings will be held at The Ruehl Building (family life center of St John’s Church) Tuesday evenings @ 6:00 pm. Contact Don or Nancy McKenzie 256-736-3327 or 256-736-3470 for more information.

Cullman AA Group Meetings –If you or someone you know might need to attend, group meetings are held at: 1519 St. Joseph St. NW, Cullman. Additional meetings are held at Grace Episcopal Church on Monday and Thursday at 7:00pm; and also at Sacred Heart Church on Wednesday at 7:00 pm. Contact: Nancy Clemmons Moore 256-347-8543 or 256-735-1717

SIMPLIFY YOUR GIVING!
Never worry about leaving your check at home or your tithe while you are away on vacation!

Consider a regular recurring gift or automated EFT to St. John’s Church.

EASY SETUP thru our church website:www.sjepc.com

• Look under the “giving” tab on the top right side of the page
• Select “giving” and under the frequency section you have two options: one time gift or regular recurring gift
• Call Regina in the church office(256-734-0344) if you need assistance to set up.
**SJ’s PRAYER LIST**

*All prayer requests are very important to us. To make sure we can give your request proper attention, please be sure to communicate with us in writing requests on prayer request cards. You may also email prayer requests to: karen.hassell@sjepc.com.* Sunday Mornings and Wednesday evenings are busy times for everyone and prayer requests can be accidentally lost in conversations. Thank you for helping us with this important matter.

- Our prayer list is renewed the first of each month.
- Please fill out a new prayer card with your individual requests each month and indicate clearly if you would like it public knowledge—*otherwise it will remain on the Pastor’s Prayer list only.*
- Online prayer cards are available on the church website: [www.sjepc.com](http://www.sjepc.com) or you may email your prayer request in or drop a note in the offering baskets.
- *As your prayer request needs to be removed from the list, please let us know.*
  - Prayer lists are published as space allow

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<th>CHURCH MEMBERS:</th>
<th>EXTENDED FAMILY AND FRIENDS:</th>
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<td>Johnnie Miller; Judy Dean, Rachel Riley; Ray Bolzle; Anna McGirff, Betty Gibbs; Shane Guest; Tamara White, JP White; Gail Wallace; Wilford James</td>
<td>Kristen Hawsey Smith; Betty Walker; Lindsay Hickman; Lisa Sharpton; Susan McClendon Patrick; Julie Blaize; Porter Lynn Phillips; Sterling Bates; Terry Parker; Ann Buster Payne; Michael Johnston; Pam Hagan; Betty Barrett; Michael Clemmons; Brenda Landers;</td>
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**Military Addresses**

If you have friends or family currently serving in the US Military, our card ministry would like the opportunity to send cards to them throughout the year. Please submit (clearly print) complete mailing addresses to Geraldine Hendrix or bring them by the church office during regular business hours. Praying for: Cpt. Chris Hester, Chaplain—Maryland; Nicholas Sargent, US Marines; Staff Sergeant Josh Ryan, USAF, Eglin AFB; Ben Turner, US Navy- Bahrain; Pvt. First Class 3 Caleb Wood, Middle East; Lt. Scott Waitley, US Navy; Lt. John Riley, Ft Benning, Ga; Jase Goolsby, US Navy- USS Gerald Ford, Middle East.

**Assisted Living:**

- **Folsom Center:** Doris Keathley
- **Woodland Village:** Bea Mack
- **Woodland House—Jo Webb**
SJ’s STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION:
Reverend Doctor John Richter, Sr. Pastor
john.richter@sjepc.com

Nate Williams, Associate Minister
Wednesday Night Coord./LLS Outreach
nate.williams@sjepc.com

Trent Dodson, Student Pastor
trent.dodson@sjepc.com

Tiffany Richter, Director of Music Ministries
tiffany.richter@sjepc.com

Stephanie Jowers, Director Children’s Ministries
stephjowers96@gmail.com

Tina White, Director Little Lambs Preschool
tina.white@sjepc.com or
littlelambspreschool@sjepc.com

Jane Brannon, Church Office and LLS Office Assistant
jane.brannon@sjepc.com

Regina Baker, Financial Secretary
regina.baker@sjepc.com

Karen Hassell, Administrative Assistant, Facility Coordinator; 55Alive Sr. Adults
karen.hassell@sjepc.com

St. John’s Evangelical Protestant Church
512 2nd Ave SE
Cullman, Al 35055

Church Office Hours
Monday–Thursday
8am-5pm

Friday
8:00am-12:00pm

Phone: 256-734-0344

www.sjepc.com
look under the event tab to sign up for all up-coming activities and events

CHURCHWIDE EMAILS
email: (karen.hassell@sjepc.com) to sign up for receiving emails from the church so you will not miss out on important information.

2023 CHURCH COUNCIL

Officers:
Stacie Wren, President; Matt Page, VP; Corrie Antler Bradfield, Secretary; Jamie Laney, Treasurer

Members:
Kurt Apel, Champ Crocker, Pam Farmer, Michelle Joiner, Chad Knop, Deanna Little, Stan Sandlin, Kathy Schuman
**PRAYER COLLECTIVE**
Are you receiving *SJ’s Monday Prayer Collective* email? If not, and you would like to be included on the list, please email: karen.hassell@sjepc.com or call the church office (256-734-0344) with your email address.

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**SAFE SANCTUIRIES**

Always keep your eyes open to something that looks unusual to you and report it to an usher or staff member immediately.

- Remember do not leave your valuables in your vehicles.
- Do not leave your purses, wallets, phones, laptops, weapons in plain sight.

*ALL VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF ARE BACKGROUND CHECKED PRIOR TO BEING INVOLVED WITH OUR CHILDREN, YOUTH OR VULNERABLE ADULTS.*

**Safe Sanctuary Steering Committee:**
Stan Sandlin, Tricia Dille, Billy Jackson, Kenny Culpepper, Karen Hassell

We are a safe sanctuary campus. Local crisis line: 256-734-6100 if you need help or 911

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**SJ’s Weekly Sunday Worship Schedule**

- **9:00** – **Traditional Worship in the Sanctuary** without weekly communion
- **10:10-10:50** – **Sunday School** – classes for children, youth and adult
- **11:00** – **Modern Worship in Christ Hall** with the addition of weekly communion

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**Thank you for visiting our church website!**

**Download the Church Center Ap today!**
Registration for events or meals is a breeze with the ap!!