



ST. SIMONS UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH
MUSIC MINISTRY PRESENTS

*Hope Has Dawned,
Noel*

A Musical Celebration

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14 • 10:30 AM

Hope Has Dawned

Kevin Lamb, Director of Music Ministries

In this season of light, we gather to remember the night when heaven touched earth and hope was born in Bethlehem. Through Scripture, carols, and choral music, we journey again to the manger, where Christ—our Light, our Peace, our Savior—enters the world with redeeming love.

Today's music invites us to wonder, to worship, and to rejoice. May these words and melodies open our hearts to the truth of Christmas: **Hope has dawned, and the hope of the world is Jesus.**

As we prepare our hearts for this sacred season, I also want to share an important update with our church family. Our **Christmas Eve services will be held at 4:00 PM and 11:00 PM.** However, our annual **Carols & Keyboards** program has been cancelled this year. My sweet wife, Holly—our Contemporary Worship Leader—will be undergoing surgery on the 19th. I humbly ask for your prayers for her as she continues her cancer journey with the same strength, courage, and grace she has carried faithfully for the past six years.

Thank you for your love, your support, and your commitment to worship. May Christ's peace surround you, and may His light guide us all as we celebrate the miracle of His birth.

Merry Christmas,
Kevin



Order of Worship

Third Sunday of Advent ● December 14, 2025

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Tom Jones
Senior Pastor

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Third Sunday of Advent

The Tate Family

CALL TO WORSHIP

Merry Christmas, Merry Christmas

*HYMN OF PRAISE

Joy to the World

Verse 1 Congregation

Verse 2 Choir Only

Verse 3 Congregation

OFFERING

Offertory Prayer

Rev. Benjy Varnell
Assistant Pastor

WORSHIP IN SONG

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

Narrator: Nancy Rozier
Soloist: Jim Fryer

Hope is Dawning

Come, Jesus, Heavenly Light

Narrator: Nancy Rozier

My Soul Sings

Soloist: Holly Lamb

I Wonder as I Wander

Our Lord, Emmanuel

Narrator: Nancy Rozier

How Great Our Joy!

Narrator: Hope Giedl

In Bethlehem

Sing We Noel

Narrator: Chandler Giedl

Silent Night, Child of Light

Narrator: Stiles Robinson

Sleep Little Lion, Sleep Little Lamb

Soloist: Pam Taylor

**Worship Christ, The Newborn King*

Hark the Herald Angels Sing
Angels from the Realms of Glory
O Come, All Ye Faithful

**Hope Is Dawning*

***BENEDICTION**

Rev. Tom Jones

**Worshippers, please stand as able*

Merry Christmas, Merry Christmas

Bursting with energy and celebration, Merry Christmas, Merry Christmas opens our worship with joyful proclamation. Blending John Williams' familiar themes from Home Alone with vibrant choral writing, the piece invites us to lift our voices in praise for the wondrous gift of Christ's birth. The text—enhanced with personalized lyrics such as “Go tell it on the highest mountaintop that Jesus Christ is born”—calls us to announce the good news with confidence and delight. As the choir sings of hope, joy, and the miracle of the Savior's coming, this anthem sets a spirit of welcome and wonder, ushering us into a service filled with gratitude for the Light who has entered our world.

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

This dramatic opening invites the congregation into holy awe as we gather at the edge of the Christmas story. With ancient words from the Liturgy of St. James, the choir contemplates the mystery of Christ descending to earth, bringing blessing and hope in His hands. Mary McDonald's arrangement heightens the sense of expectation, calling us to pause, reflect, and prepare for the unfolding of God's redemptive plan.

Hope Is Dawning

Joyful and energetic, Hope Is Dawning announces the good news proclaimed to the shepherds on the night of Christ's birth. Drawing from Luke 2:11–12, Mary McDonald's music bursts with the excitement of Emmanuel—God with us—entering the world. The rhythmic drive, bright harmonies, and repeated call of “Noel!” echo the heavenly song of the angels, celebrating Christ the Lord, the Word made flesh. As the choir sings “Glory to the Lord most high,” the anthem becomes a vibrant declaration that the Savior has come, and with Him arrives light, peace, and unshakable hope for all people.

Come, Jesus, Heavenly Light

Rooted in the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah, Come, Jesus, Heavenly Light is a prayerful invitation for Christ—the promised Light—to break into a weary and shadowed world. The anthem begins with a reflective narration recalling the ancient promises of a Savior who would bring justice, peace, and righteousness. As the music opens, flowing lines and gentle lyricism express the longing of God's people: “Come to set Thy people free.” The piece gradually blossoms into a radiant declaration of hope. Jesus is hailed as the heavenly Light, the Son of love, and the One who brings freedom, comfort, and joy to every longing heart. With a soaring melodic sweep and luminous harmonies, the anthem celebrates the fulfillment of God's promise—Christ our Savior has come, and His light transforms all who receive Him.

My Soul Sings

Inspired by the gospel narratives of Mary and the angelic announcement of Jesus' birth, My Soul Sings is a tender and expressive anthem that echoes the heart of the Magnificat. The opening narration recalls God's surprising work in the lives of Zechariah and Elizabeth, setting the stage for Mary's own encounter with divine promise. As the soloist begins, the music gently unfolds Mary's astonishment and trust: “Be it to me according to Your Word.” The piece rises into a joyful declaration as Mary proclaims, “My soul sings of the greatness of my God!” Rich harmonies and flowing lines paint her overflowing praise, rejoicing in God's faithfulness, mercy, and strength. The anthem also foretells the child to come—Emmanuel, “God with us”—whose light will break into darkness and bring hope to all people.

I Wonder as I Wander

This luminous setting of the Appalachian carol invites us to ponder the mystery of Christ's birth with fresh wonder. Pederson's arrangement weaves the familiar melody through shimmering piano lines and gentle choral textures, painting the night sky beneath which the Savior entered our world. New text added by the composer deepens the message, reminding us that the “light of the heavens is born in this child” and that Christ offers His own heart so that “others may live.” Both haunting and hopeful, the piece calls us to gaze into the manger with awe and gratitude—marveling that the Prince of Peace came for all, especially “the poor and the small.”

Our Lord, Emmanuel

Set to the beloved melody O Little Town of Bethlehem, Our Lord, Emmanuel reflects with wonder on the quiet miracle of Christ's birth. The narration opens with Joseph and Mary's journey to Bethlehem and the fulfillment of prophecy, leading into tender phrases that describe the stillness and mystery of that holy night. As the choir sings of the "everlasting Light" shining in the world's darkness, the anthem weaves familiar imagery with rich new harmonies that deepen the sense of awe. The music expands into a declaration of who this child is—Prince of Peace, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Wonderful Counselor—before returning to a heartfelt refrain: "Our Lord, Emmanuel!"

How Great Our Joy

Drawing inspiration from the traditional German carol, How Great Our Joy retells the shepherds' story with vivid energy and jubilant praise. The narration recounts the angel's startling appearance in the fields and the heavenly proclamation: "Fear not! I bring you good news of great joy." As the choir enters, bright rhythms and buoyant melodies echo the shepherds' excitement as they travel to Bethlehem to see the Christ Child. The anthem unfolds into a celebration of the Savior's mission—born to redeem all people—and the choir proclaims the gift of God dwelling among us. Refrains of "How great our joy!" capture the wonder and delight of that holy night.

In Bethlehem

In Bethlehem is a beautifully reflective and deeply expressive anthem painting the Nativity with both intimacy and awe. The piece opens with a gentle, flowing accompaniment as the text describes the long journey toward the little town where "Heaven's King on earth would soon appear." Rather than a royal welcome, the Savior enters the world quietly—no bed prepared, no crown awaiting—only a humble stable. The anthem grows into a radiant proclamation: "See our Mighty God has done great things!" before turning to a tender prayer of adoration for Jesus, the Child who brings peace, hope, and salvation.

Sing We Noel

Sing We Noel bursts with the joy and wonder of Christmas, blending a lively French carol spirit with vibrant choral writing. The opening narration recalls the shepherds bowing before the Christ Child, inviting us to join their worship. The choir enters with a bright refrain—"Sing now of Christmas, Noel!"—lifting grateful praise for the Savior's birth. Energetic rhythms and expressive lines proclaim, "The King is born, Noel!" culminating in a triumphant declaration of Christmas joy.

Silent Night, Child of Light

Silent Night, Child of Light brings together the beloved carol Silent Night with expressive new text, illuminating Christ as the Light of the World. The narration recalls Jesus' promise: "I am the Light of the world," leading into gentle carol phrases that reflect the stillness of Bethlehem. New refrains proclaim Jesus as Child of God, Prince of Peace, Emmanuel, and Child of Light. The anthem closes with a radiant affirmation: "Christ the Savior is born."

Sleep Little Lion, Sleep Little Lamb

Sleep Little Lion, Sleep Little Lamb is a tender and evocative lullaby contemplating the mystery of the newborn Christ—the mighty Lion of Judah and the gentle Lamb of God. With expressive writing and the incorporation of ABERYSTWYTH, the music cradles imagery of innocence, strength, and divine purpose. Repeated refrains—"Sleep little Lion, sleep little Lamb"—foreshadow the mission He will one day fulfill while honoring the sacred stillness of His birth night.

Worship Christ, the Newborn King

Worship Christ, the Newborn King is a vibrant and festive conclusion that invites both choir and congregation to sing together. Mary McDonald weaves beloved carols—Hark! the Herald Angels Sing, Angels from the Realms of Glory, and O Come, All Ye Faithful—into a triumphant tapestry of praise. Building to the great refrain, "Come and worship, Christ the newborn King!" the anthem becomes a joyous celebration shared by all gathered in worship.

Weekly Bible Reading Highlights

What did you highlight in your Bible December 7-13? These are a few verses that stood out to Tom:

Ephesians 4:2-4 - Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love. Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace. For there is one body and one Spirit, just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future.

Colossians 2:7 - Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.

Philippians 4:6-7 - Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

James 2:14 - What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don't show it by your actions?

1 Timothy 2:1 - I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them.

Poinsettias

Order by Monday, December 15!

Help place poinsettias in the Sanctuary to Celebrate the Birth of Christ. They will be placed in the church on Sunday, December 21 and go home after the 11:00 AM worship service that day! The cost of each poinsettia is \$26. You may designate them in memory of, in honor of a loved one or to the Glory of God. Look for envelopes in the pew racks or contact the Church Office. anne@stsimonsumc.com | 912.638.3317



Honorariums & Memorials

A GIFT WAS GIVEN IN MEMORY OF BOBBE WOOLDRIDGE

Pam Lewis

A GIFT WAS GIVEN IN MEMORY OF JIM FULLER

Elizabeth & John Bird Daniel

Edith Payne

June Smith

A GIFT WAS GIVEN IN MEMORY OF BJ BOYD

June Smith

A GIFT WAS GIVEN IN MEMORY OF LYNN NEIL MULLIS

Linda Page

Nancy & George Slappey

Pope Construction Company

Dudley Wesleyan Church

Timothy R. Veal

Aubrey Corbitt

Financial Report

For your convenience you may give online at www.stsimonsumc.com
December 7, 2025

Tithes & Offerings Received | \$20,502.00

Received YTD | \$1,126,922.32

Expenses YTD | \$1,181,900.47

Difference YTD | -\$54,978.15

Budgeted Amount YTD | \$1,249,793.92

Trustees Maintenance Fund YTD | \$21,448.00

thank you

Attendance~ December 7, 2025

8:30 AM Worship Service: **81**

Online Worship Views: **457**

9:45 AM Worship Service: **63**

Sunday School/Small Group: **117**

11:00 AM Worship Service: **182**

Total In Person Attendance: **326**

Members in Ministry~ December 14, 2025

Ushers:

10:30 Mike Fitzgerald, PJ Hamilton, Cindy Simpson, Jordan Graffis,
Nancy Jenkins

Greeters:

10:30 Nancy Krabill, Sharon Blount, Kari Cooper, Christiana Weisberg

Projection:

10:30 Elizabeth Daniel

New Hearing Impaired System

We have new hearing assist devices available in the sanctuary. Please see an usher to assist you if needed.



Prayer Requests

Please take time this week and pray for these individuals:

New Prayer Concerns - Church Members: Cindy Bostick, Family & friends of Neil Mullis, **Anne Rogers**, Family & friends of Bobbé Wooldridge

New Prayer Concerns Non-Members: Trudy Budd, Darlene Cramer, **Hope Hall**, **Martine Haynes**, **Sara Heath**, Bob & Sandra Hochwald, **Steve Hoover**, Peyton Thompson, Kathy Urquhart, **Sarah & Hannah Wood**

Ongoing Prayer Concerns: Di Bailey, Ron Bateman, Jim Bennett III, Ranny Blount, Sam Bodine, Kai Booth, Cindy Bostick, Carlotta Budd, Trudy Budd, Beth Carey, Vicki Certain, Russell Cohen, Trent Cohen, Cathy Bailey Crumbley, Betty Daher, Pat Daniels, Larry Daugherty, Mark Daugherty, Betsy Draughon, Geoff Fields, Sandy Fitzgerald, Karen Flagella, Dotsy Fuller, Jim Fuller, Barbara & Bob Golding, Mary McCreary George, Joe Gonzalez, Ken Graffis, Julie Haney, Eloise Harvey, Jennifer & Tom Higdom, Elwanda Hopkins, Tom Humphries, Pete Irby, Barbara Jensen, Kevin Josey, Mitchell Kent, Holly Lamb, Gary Leggett, Ellie Leroux, Chris Lorence, Mike Martin, James McBride, Mike McDonald, Ed McKenzie, Mike McMillan, Nathan Meadows, Kristen Merrill, Megan & Blake Moore, Spence Mullis, Kirk Nowery, Randy Payne, Ann Pickard, Dick Pipe, Mable Proctor, Mary Rentz, Dawn Roberts, Anne Rogers, Jimmy Rogers, Irene Rohan, Jo Ann Segars, Bob Scherer, Bonni Smith, Brion Trainor, Rhonda Van View, Dave Vandersall, Mary Vice, Bo Vice, Holly & Bill Wagner, Judy Whelan, Chuck Wilson, Hollis Youngner, Beverly Zeller, Emmie Zwack,

Assisted Living Prayer Concerns:

Heritage Oaks: Jackie Brand, Marjorie Lawrence, Barbara Meadows, Norma Mock

Marsh's Edge: Nancy Reynolds, Ellen Thrift

Sears Manor: Joan Harris

Vitality: Judy Clifton

When a name is added to the New Prayer Concerns they will remain for TWO weeks unless the office is notified of an ongoing prayer concern. Names that are BOLD indicate a new addition or current concern.

Jacksonville Symphony

Join us Friday, January 9, on a trip to the Jacksonville Symphony for a thrilling tribute to America's 250th Anniversary, featuring the legendary music of John Williams. From the stirring *Olympic Fanfare and Theme* to the powerful score of *Saving Private Ryan* and the adventurous spirit of *Indiana Jones*, these iconic works capture the courage, determination and spirit of a nation. Through the unforgettable music of John Williams—whose scores have defined generations— we celebrate the story of America.

Start your day with a coffee in the lobby and prepare for a stunning matinee performance, and afterward enjoy a Dutch treat lunch. We will depart from the church at 9:00 AM and return around 3:30 PM. Cost is \$35 and there are only 27 spots available. Register and pay to reserve your spot on Realm or by calling the church office.



Welcome New Staff Member!

Welcome to Bill Culpepper as our new Director of Youth Ministry starting January 1, 2026. Bill is an ordained deacon in the United Methodist Church. He grew up on St. Simons and returned 8 years ago when he was appointed to Brunswick First UMC. Prior to that, he served at Mulberry Street UMC in Macon, GA as their associate pastor and youth minister. He is currently appointed to the Glynn County School system where he serves as a 6th grade ELA teacher. He, his wife Lindsey, and their two daughters - Arden (11) and Magnolia (9) - are excited to be a part of the SSUMC family. You can contact him at

bill.culpepper@georgiaumc.net

Help The Salvation Army

Join SSUMC in supporting this fundraising mission by "Ringing the BELL" on **December 18** at the St. Simons Post Office. St. Simons UMC has partnered with the Salvation Army to sponsor 3 days this year. The Seekers & The Beacon Classes, along with several from UWF Circles took the challenge. However, all the slots are **not** full, so we need your help.

Sign up at the link below or by calling the church office for assistance. Thank you for your support of this vital mission opportunity in our community!

<https://www.registertoring.com/shifts-select-group.aspx>

Our group name is: **SSUMC**



**STEPHEN
MINISTRY**



Does this describe YOU:

You are gifted by God.

Your sense of empathy for others is strong.

Yes?

Consider joining our team and walk with someone who needs your caring spirit. A Stephen Minister makes a difference for someone going through a "tough time".

A new training class begins in February 2026. Interested?

Call or text to 912-617-1101 (Judy Smith)

Love Offering & Celebration for Rev. Tom Jones

Rev. Tom Jones has announced that he will be retiring at the end of 2025 as our Senior Pastor. His final Sunday preaching in this role will be **Sunday, January 4, 2026**. As that time approaches, we invite you to join us in honoring Tom as he concludes his meaningful ministry here. We have been blessed in countless ways by his dedicated and faithful leadership over the past seven and a half years. Tom has served the South and North Georgia Conferences of the United Methodist Church for more than 30 years. He will be deeply missed by all.

We will honor the Jones family on **Sunday, January 4**, with a reception in the Thorpe Building, immediately following the service. Everyone is invited to attend, enjoy fellowship, and bid farewell to Tom, Anne, and Croft. During the worship services on Sunday, January 4, we will also present Tom with a love offering. If you would like to contribute, you may mail or bring your donation to the church office. You may also place it in the offering plate during any of our worship services. Please designate your gift as "Rev. Tom Jones Gift" on your check or envelope. Checks should be made payable to St. Simons United Methodist Church.

Thank you in advance for being a part of this meaningful event to honor Tom and the Jones family.

Christmas Lunch

Join us for our Annual Christmas Lunch! This meal will be held on Christmas day, Thursday, December 25, at noon in the Thorpe Building. The church will provide turkey, ham, dressing, gravy and tea. We ask those who are attending to bring your favorite side dish or dessert to share. **Please RSVP on Realm or to the church office by Thursday, December 18!**



Guest Information

- **First time guests** please fill out the yellow, "Welcome Card" located in your pew. Please drop in the offering plate or bring to the Welcome Desk to receive a gift!
- Restrooms are located through the exit doors nearest the altar to your right or left.
- Sunday School for children & adults meets at 8:30 (adult only) & 9:45am.
- A nursery is available for children **4 years old and under**, located through the exit door to the right of the altar, 1st floor.
- Kid's Clubhouse (**5 years old - 5th grade**), leave together after the Kid's Message (except on the 1st Sunday of the month—Communion Sundays) for lessons, crafts, and games, and may be picked up on the 2nd floor.

Join the Church

If you would like to join St. Simons United Methodist Church you may do so by one of three ways:

- (1) Profession of Faith in Jesus Christ
- (2) Transfer from another United Methodist congregation
- (3) Transfer from another denomination

If you are interested in more information about becoming a member contact Rev. Tom Jones. **678.343.3767 | tom@stsimonsumc.com**

Join Our Email List or Update Your Contact Info:

info@stsimonsumc.com | 912.638.3317



@stsimonsumc



stsimonsumc.com

Weekly Calendar

Sunday, December 14

9:45 AM Sunday School and Small Groups, **Various Locations**
10:30 AM Nursery for Newborn- 4 yrs., **Nursery**
10:30 AM Traditional Worship Service, **Sanctuary**
4:00 PM Youth Christmas Party, **Thorpe Building**

Monday, December 15

9:00 AM Prayer Team, **Parlor**
11:00 AM Chair Yoga, **Thorpe Building**
4:00 PM Stephen Ministry Meeting, **Parlor**

Tuesday, December 16

10:00 AM Men's Life, **Room 203**
10:30 AM Al-Anon Group, **Room 201**
1:00 PM Women's Life Group, **Room 203**
5:30 PM UWF "SIS" Circle, **Parlor**

Wednesday, December 17

9:30 AM MOMS- Walking Group, **Church parking lot**
11:00 AM Chair Yoga, **Thorpe Building**
1:15 PM Lightkeepers Al-Anon, **Room 203**

Thursday, December 18

12:00 PM Sunshine UWF Circle, **Tramici Restaurant**
5:30 PM Men's Group Planning Session, **Room 203**

Friday, December 19

11:00 AM Chair Yoga, **Thorpe Building**

Church Staff



REV. TOM JONES, Senior Pastor

tom@stsimonsumc.com | 678.343.3767

REV. BENJY VARNELL, Assistant Pastor

benjyv@stsimonsumc.com | 912.393.4566

REV. TAB MILLER, Assistant Pastor

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JUSTIS KUYKENDALL, Director of Youth Ministry

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*Where Love is Unconditional,
Service is Celebrated Enthusiastically,*



The Mission of Christ is Advanced Consistently.

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