November 29, 2026

St. Simons
United Methodist Church



A Letter From The Pastor

REV. DAVID BLACKWOOD
SENIOR PASTOR

The Unexpected Arrival

Advent is a season of anticipation and preparation. Each year, we journey toward Bethlehem, remembering the birth of Jesus and celebrating the incredible gift of God coming to dwell among us. Yet the story of Christmas reminds us that God often arrives in ways we least expect.

This Advent, our sermon series is called "The Unexpected Arrival." Through the words of the prophets, the preaching of John the Baptist, and the faithfulness of Mary, we will explore how God breaks into ordinary lives in extraordinary ways. We will be reminded that the people of Israel waited for a Messiah, but when he came, he did not arrive as many had imagined.

Perhaps that is still true today. We have our own expectations about how God should work, what God should do, and where God might show up. But Advent invites us to open our hearts to the possibility that God is already at work in unexpected places and through unexpected people.

As we enter this holy season, my prayer is that we will do more than simply prepare for Christmas. May we prepare ourselves to recognize Christ's presence in our lives and in our world, even when he comes in ways we never anticipated.

I look forward to sharing this Advent journey with you!

Grace and Peace,
Pastor David

WHERE LOVE IS UNCONDITIONAL,
SERVICE IS CELEBRATED
ENTHUSIASTICALLY, &
THE MISSION OF CHRIST IS ADVANCED
CONSISTENTLY.

Sunday Worship
8:30 & 11:00 Sanctuary
9:45 Chapel

St. Simons UMC
624 Ocean Boulevard
St. Simons Island, GA 31522
912.638.3317 • stsimonsumc.com

Rev. David Blackwood, Senior Pastor
david@stsimonsumc.com
678.787.0331

Rev. Benjy Varnell, Assistant Pastor
benjyv@stsimonsumc.com
912.393.4566

Upcoming Events & Announcements



Director of Family Ministries

St. Simons United Methodist Church is seeking a passionate, organized, and relational Director of Family Ministries to lead and grow our ministries with children, youth, and their families.

This position will collaborate with and support our existing Children's and Youth Ministry Directors, strengthen children's programming, recruit and equip volunteers, and develop opportunities to engage young families in the life of the church.

The ideal candidate will have a strong Christian faith, excellent leadership and organizational skills, and a heart for helping children and youth grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. Previous ministry experience is preferred.

32 Hours per Week, salaried position.

To apply and for more information: Send a résumé and cover letter to david@stsimonsumc.com













Advent Mission: Giving Trees

Hope 1312 | FaithWorks | Salvation Army

The Advent Missions Challenge is brought to you by our SSUMC Missions Committee. This Season we will support 3 Ministries, each by an individual Christmas Giving Tree. Each tree in the Gholson Room will have either gift ornaments or gift tags representing a need. Please feel free to take as many gift ornaments or gift tags as you would like. Visit the Gholson Room Sunday mornings to find out more and select gift ornaments or gift tags. You can bring your gifts back to the appropriate tree or to the church office.

Packing Instructions for each Ministry:

FaithWorks - No packaging needed.

Hope 1312 - A gift bag or wrapping with the tag attached.

Salvation Army - Instructions should be on the tag but if not should be unwrapped but can be put in a gift bag that would show the contents and attach the tag. All Items should be returned by: Sunday, Dec. 13.

Thank you all in advance for your generosity to these local ministries.

Traditional Order of Worship

Sanctuary 8:30 am & 11:00 am

Words of Welcome
Rev. Benjy Varnell, Assistant Pastor

Centering

*** The Opening Hymn #196**
Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

*** Affirmation of Faith**

*** Lighting of the Advent Candle**
The Irby Family (8:30) The Morrison Family (11:00)

*** Fellowship Time**
Emmanuel

Kids Message (11:00am)

Morning Prayer & The Lord's Prayer
Benjy Varnell

*** Hymn #211**
O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Offertory Prayer
Benjy Varnell

Offertory

*** Response**
Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

Message in Music
Chancel Choir
Away In A Manger

Morning Message
Rev. Benjy Varnell, Assistant Pastor

Longing For God
Mark 13:24-37 & Isaiah 64:1-9

*** Invitation #228**
He Is Born
verse 1

*** Benediction**

Postlude

*Stand As Able

The First Sunday of Advent — Hope

Unexpected Arrival: Longing for God
Mark 13:24–37 | Isaiah 64:1–9

Today we begin the sacred season of Advent, a time of waiting, watching, and preparing our hearts for the coming of Christ. Our Advent series, Unexpected Arrival, begins with "Longing for God," reminding us that even in seasons of uncertainty, God is present and His promises remain steadfast. As we light the first candle of Advent, the Candle of Hope, we remember that our hope is not found in the circumstances around us, but in the One who has come, who is with us, and who promises to come again. May this season awaken in us a renewed longing for God's presence and a joyful expectation of His coming.

Worship Spotlight:
"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

As we begin the Advent season, the ancient carol "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" gives voice to the longing of God's people for the promised Savior. Its haunting melody and prayerful words remind us that Advent is a season of waiting, watching, and hoping. The familiar refrain, "Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel," assures us that even in our waiting, God is faithful. As we worship this First Sunday of Advent, may this beloved carol remind us that our greatest hope is found in Emmanuel—God with us.

Guest Information

- First time guests please fill out the yellow, "Welcome Card" located in your pew. Please bring to the Welcome Desk to receive a gift!
- Restrooms are located through the exit doors nearest the altar to your left or right.
- Sunday School for children & adults meets at 9:45am.
- A nursery is available for children 4 years old and under.
- Kid's Clubhouse (5 yrs - 5th grd), leave together after the Kid's Message — for Children's Choir, games, & lesson, and may be picked up on the 2nd floor.

Contemporary Worship

9:45 am in the Chapel

Todays Worship Flow

Centering

O Come All Ye Faithful

CCLI # 7163644
© 2020 KPS

My Soul Magnifies the Lord

CCLI # 5601671
© 2009 Rising Springs Music

Fellowship Time

Advent Candle: The Zettler Family

O Little Town of Bethlehem

CCLI # 27879
© Public Domain

What A Beautiful Name It Is

CCLI # 7068424
©2016 Hillsong Music

Todays Message

Longing For God

Isaiah 64:1-9; Mark 13:24-37
Rev. Tab Miller

Closing Song

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

CCLI # 7096082
© 2017 Curb Songs

The First Sunday of Advent — Hope
Unexpected Arrival: Longing for God
Mark 13:24–37 | Isaiah 64:1–9

Today we begin the sacred season of Advent, a time of waiting, watching, and preparing our hearts for the coming of Christ. Our Advent series, Unexpected Arrival, begins with “Longing for God,” reminding us that even in seasons of uncertainty, God is present and His promises remain steadfast. As we light the first candle of Advent, the Candle of Hope, we remember that our hope is not found in the circumstances around us, but in the One who has come, who is with us, and who promises to come again. May this season awaken in us a renewed longing for God's presence and a joyful expectation of His coming.

Worship Spotlight:
My Soul Magnifies the Lord

As we begin the Advent season, My Soul Magnifies the Lord invites us to join Mary in celebrating God's faithfulness and the promise of a coming Savior. Mary's song of praise reminds us that God often works in unexpected ways, fulfilling His promises in His perfect timing. This Sunday's message, Longing for God, calls us to watch, wait, and trust in the One who brings hope into our world. As we worship, may Mary's joyful anticipation become our own, filling our hearts with hope as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ.

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 door near the stage.
- Sunday School for this service meets at 8:30. Kids small group meets concurently with this service
- A nursery is available for children 4 years old and under.
- Kid’s Clubhouse meets at 11 except for the first Sunday of the month for Children’s music, games, & lesson.

Prayer Requests

Please take time this week and pray for these individuals:

New Prayer Concerns - Church Members: BJ Whitaker

New Prayer Concerns Non– Members: **Rocky Bodree**,Bobby Bray, John Brower, Gene Brown, **Jeff Culwell**, Family & friends of Rev. Tom Dent, **Cayce Duvan**, **Tommy Gaines**, **Tracy Green**, **Brooks Harvey**, **Sara & Jeff Heath**, **George Hesseling**, Karla Hodge, Bob Jarrett, Tim Lake, **Joyce Owsley**, John Porter, **Don Ray**, **Jimmy Waters, Jr.**, Carrie & Scott Wray

Ongoing Prayer Concerns: Lisa Adams, Di Bailey, Dianne Beisel, Jim Bennett III, Sam Bodine, Kai Booth, Cindy Bostick, Carlotta Budd, Trudy Budd, Beth Carey, Vicki Certain, Russell Cohen, Cathy Bailey Crumbley, Pat Daniels, Betsy Draughon, Brenda Fields, Geoff Fields, Sandy Fitzgerald, Butch Frye, Dotsy Fuller, Mary McCreary George, Barbara Golding, Bill Hansen, Sara, Jeff & Juniper Heath, Jennifer & Tom Higdom, Elwanda Hopkins, Tom Humphries, Barbara Jensen, Holly Lamb, Ellie Leroux, Chris Lorence, James McBride, Mike McDonald, Ed McKenzie, Nathan Meadows, Kristen Merrill, Kirk Nowery, Eric Orr, Randy Payne, Mary Rentz, Dawn Roberts, Anne Rogers, Irene Rohan, Jo Ann Segars, Bob Scherer, Bonni Smith, Maxwell Smith, Brion Trainor, Betty Tomlin, Rhonda Van View, Dave Vandersall, Mary & Bo Vice, Holly & Bill Wagner, Judy Whelan, Benjamin Wiggins, Sarah and Hannah Wood, Hollis Youngner, Beverly Zeller, Emmie Zwack, The Methodist Children's Home

Assisted Living Prayer Concerns:
Heritage Oaks: Jackie Brand, Jean Cardin, Marjorie Lawrence, Norma Mock, Mel Rozier
Marsh's Edge: Linda May, Ann Pickard, 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.

Members in Ministry ~ November 29, 2026

Ushers:
8:30 Chip Higginbotham, Martha Dixon, Helene Magee, Bob Swinehart
11:00 Rick Denman, Erik Kaufmann, Clif Pease, Rabun Matthews

Greeters:
8:30 Nancy Pickren, Cathie Wilton
9:45 Judy & JR Wright
11:00 Sherry Pickett, Sydonna & Lou Harden

Projection:
8:30 TBD
9:45 Carol Conner
11:00 Elizabeth Daniel

Acolytes:
9:45 Lia Miller
11:00 Claire Kase

Honorariums & Memorials

A Gift was Given in Memory of Rev. Tom Dent
Barbara & Chuck Milliken

A Gift was Given in Memory of John Goodrich
Barbara & Chuck Milliken

Join the Church

If you would like to join St. Simons United Methodist Church you may do so by one of three ways:
Profession of Faith in Jesus Christ, Transfer from another United Methodist congregation or Transfer from another denomination.
If you are interested in more information about becoming a member contact Rev. David Blackwood at david@stsimonsumc.com | 912.638.3317

Weekly Calendar

Sunday, November 29- FIrst Sunday of Advent
8:30 am The Class- Sunday school, **Room 202**
8:30 am Traditional Worship Service, **Sanctuary**
9:30 am Nursery for Newborn- 4 yrs., 9:30-12:00
9:45 am Clubhouse Jam, **Kid's Clubhouse**
9:45 am Sunday School & Small Group Classes, **Various Locations**
9:45 am Contemporary Worship Service, **Chapel**
11:00 am Traditional Worship Service, **Sanctuary**
11:20 am Children dismissed for Music & Worship, **Kid's Clubhouse**
5:00 pm Youth Group and Dinner, **Thorpe Building**

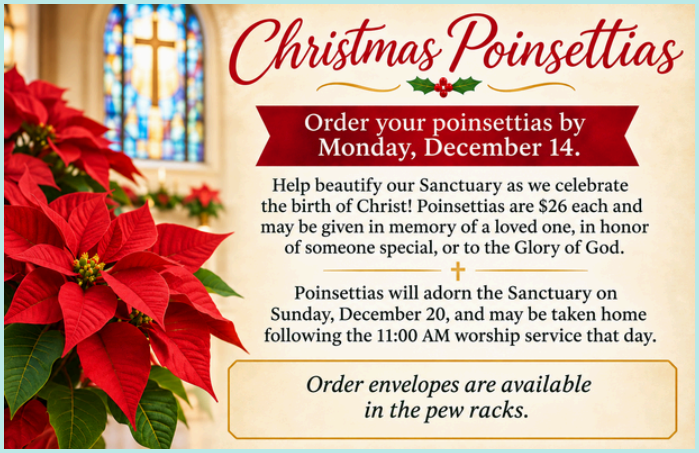
Monday, November 30
9:00 am Prayer Team, **Parlor**
11:00 am Chair Yoga, **Thorpe Building**
5:30 pm Church Council Meeting, **Thorpe Building**

Tuesday, December 1
6:00 am Men's Bible Study, **Thorpe Building**
10:00 am Men's Life, **Room 203**
1:00 pm Women's Life, **Room 203**
6:30 pm Boy Scout Meeting, **Thorpe Building**

Wednesday, December 2
9:30 am Mom's Walking Group, **Thorpe Parking Lot**
11:00 am Chair Yoga, **Thorpe Building**
1:15 pm Al-anon Support Group, **Room 203**
4:00 pm Handbells, **Room 216**
6:00 pm Chancel Choir, **Choir Room**

Thursday, December 3
12:00 pm Esther Circle Luncheon, **Parlor**

Friday, December 4
11:00 am Chair Yoga, **Thorpe Building**



Attendance

November 22, 2026
8:30AM Worship Service: **78**
9:45AM Worship Service: **47**
11:00AM Worship Service: **193**
Total In Person Worship: **318**
Worship Views Online: **368**
Sunday School/Groups: **128**

Financial Report

For your convenience you may give online at www.stsimonsumc.com
November 22, 2026
Tithes & Offerings Received | $15,255.62
Received YTD | $1,128,963.74
Expenses YTD | $1,156,763.79
Difference YTD | -$27,800.05
Budgeted Amount YTD | $1,196,341.81
Trustees Maintenance Fund YTD | $30,595.00

Thank You!