



**St. Andrew,**

**In the last two days, I had the distinct pleasure of leading two very different, yet surprisingly similar gatherings: our Officer Training for Elders and a New Member class. While it may seem as if these experiences would be rather different, but they were both centered around a common theme: deepening our understanding of what it means to be a part of the body of Christ and our shared call to ministry.**

**For our Elders, the training was a time of reflection and renewal, focusing on their unique roles and responsibilities within our church community. While we spent much time considering Presbyterian polity, the system by which the church is organized and governed. It is a shared understanding of how the church will live together, make decisions, be accountable to one another, and act collectively to do God's work. We also discussed the importance of servant leadership, spiritual guidance, and fostering a sense of unity within the congregation.**

**Meanwhile, our potential new members considered the history, traditions, and beliefs of our denomination and this specific congregation. We explored the meaning of baptism, the significance of communion, and the transformative power of God's grace. We also discussed the various ways members can actively participate in the life of the church, using their unique gifts and talents to serve others and further God's kingdom.**

**As I reflected on these two experiences, I was struck by the common thread that binds us together as a community of faith. Whether we are seasoned elders or newly welcomed members, we are all called to be disciples of Christ, to love and serve one another, and to share the good news of the Gospel with the world.**

**In both gatherings, I witnessed a deep desire to grow in faith and to live out our calling as followers of Jesus. I saw a willingness to learn, to ask questions, and to be challenged. And I sensed a genuine love for this church and its mission.**

**As we move forward together, let us remember the lessons learned from these two gatherings. Let us be inspired by the dedication of our elders and the enthusiasm of our new members. And let us continue to seek ways to deepen our faith, strengthen our community, and share God's love with the world.**

**Grace and peace,**

**Tripp**

<b>St. Andrew Elders &amp; Ministry Leaders 2025.....</b>	<b>Chairperson</b>
Clerk of Session.....	Stuart Strong
Building/Grounds.....	
Communications & Outreach.....	
Education & Spiritual Formation.....	B. J. Breeding
Finance & Administration.....	Don Koza
Member Care .....	D. Ann Norris & Jackie Naumann
Mission .....	Barbara Mouton & John Jordan
Treasurer .....	Philip Gilbert
Nominating .....	Shelly Shull
Worship .....	Linda Grissom



<b>W.C. Sweeley</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Shelly Shull</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Philip Gilbert</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Abby Stephens</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Harold Culbert</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Anne Campbell</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Peggy McMahan</b>	<b>24</b>

<b>Tom &amp; Bobbie Meier</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>John &amp; Rita Abbott</b>	<b>19</b>

## CCC FOOD PANTRY

### Collection the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month.



- Items Needed Most**
- |                         |                      |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Grits/Oatmeal</b>    | <b>Soup</b>          |
| <b>Hamburger Helper</b> | <b>Crackers</b>      |
| <b>Peanut Butter</b>    | <b>Canned Greens</b> |
| <b>Canned Fruit</b>     | <b>Pasta</b>         |
| <b>Canned Veggies</b>   | <b>Pasta Sauce</b>   |
| <b>Dried Beans</b>      | <b>Rice</b>          |

**Please leave items in shopping cart.**

Clothing, sheets, blankets, sleeping bags, tents, tarps, coats, gloves, socks, bikes, etc. are all welcome.



**HOMELESS**  
*Ministry*

Canned Food  
Toiletries  
Men's clothing  
Women's Clothing  
Underwear  
Socks  
Antiseptic ointment  
Insect Repellent  
Travel size shampoo  
Bar Soap / Deodorant  
Tissues  
Aspirin

More items listed in the donation area.



### Hands Across Decatur Soup Kitchen

Monday, February 10th

Please sign up on the bulletin board to bring rolls, cornbread, dessert, or serve.

# CHOIR *Practice*

Wednesday

February  
12<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>  
4:30 PM



### Bible Study Drop Box

Is there a topic you've always wanted to know more about? Is there a question you've always been hesitant or scared to ask in church? It can be anything! You can now ask it anonymously through a drop box located on the table right outside the office. Each month during our Wednesday CONNECT Bible Studies in 2025, Tripp will choose one of your questions as the topic, so ask away!

The following items are highlights from the Jan. 15, 2025, Stated Session Meeting:

1. The January Stated Session Meeting was held on Wednesday, January 15, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.
2. The meeting was opened with a devotional led by Tripp Brogdon on Jonah's response to God's call.
3. B. J. Breeding was selected to be our Commissioner to a Called Meeting of North Alabama Presbytery (NAP) for the purpose of voting on a recommendation by the Executive Presbyter search committee.
4. D. Ann Norris was selected to be our Commissioner to the Winter Meeting of North Alabama Presbytery to be held at Copeland Presbyterian Church on February 22, 2025.
5. The Session set the date of January 19, for the ordination and installation of the new Class of 2027 Ruling Elders, which will be a part of the Worship Service that morning.
6. The Session elected Stu Strong to be Clerk of Session and Philip Gilbert to be Treasurer for St. Andrew for calendar year 2025.
7. The minutes of the Stated Session Meeting of November 20, 2024, and the Congregational Meeting of December 8, 2024, were approved.
8. The Session confirmed the email vote taken on December 1, 2024, to approve an expenditure of \$6,500 over and above the Building and Grounds budget for 2024, to repair and update the annunciator panel of our fire protection system.
9. December year to date income was \$14,037 more than budgeted and expenses were \$491 more than budgeted. Our checking and saving accounts increased by \$35,259 since the first of the year.
10. The Session approved the 2025 Budget of Expected Income of \$255,520 and Operating Expenses of \$243,485, which results in undesignated income funds of \$12,035.
11. Bob Naumann reported that the work on the annunciator panel of our fire protection system will be finished on January 16, 2025. He also stated that a new chimney cap has been installed on the furnace and that new soap dispensers have been installed in the south bathrooms.
12. B. J. Breeding reminded us that Tripp will be leading a Chat and Chew Lenten Study on four consecutive Monday mornings starting on March 17, 2025. Each session will last from 11:30 to 12:30. We will continue to have Wednesday night Connect twice a month, February through April.
13. Faye Anderson reported on the two new activities that had been added in 2024. First was Café Connect in Sunday mornings before Sunday School and between Sunday School and Worship. The second was a Soup Supper held on December 4 prior to the Hanging of the Greens Service. Shepherd Groups continued to meet with very positive response.
14. Barb Mouton and John Jordan updated us on Mission work. The Christmas Joy offering collected \$820. 50 Thanksgiving meals were provided with 10-12 lb. turkeys. Excess money given for turkeys will be used for Easter dinners. The committee is working on new ideas for 2025 and the budget for next year.
15. Linda Grissom informed us that the blue paraments and choir stoles were a big success and many of the congregation expressed their compliments. Our average attendance for Sunday worship in 2024 was 57, which is very good for our membership which now numbers 78.
16. Rev. Brogdon led us in another installment of the Session Visioning and Discernment process that we are working on. This time we focused on feedback from elders regarding our journaling during the use of our structured Advent Prayer Guide. We will continue to drive toward finding concrete things we can do to implement God's will for St. Andrew in Decatur.

The next Stated meeting will be on Wednesday, March 19, 2025, at 2:00 pm.

Stu Strong, Clerk of Session

If you have not yet received your end-of-year statement, please contact Philip Gilbert.

# CONNECT

## FEBRUARY SCHEDULE

**FEB. 12**

**5:30 PM  
Bible Study  
w/Rev. Tripp**

**FEB. 26**

**5:30 PM  
w/Jerry & Carolyn  
Murray  
Sleep in Heavenly  
Peace**



**NO KID SLEEPS  
ON THE FLOOR  
IN OUR TOWN!.**

Sleep in Heavenly Peace had its start like many other charities, in a garage. It was Christmas time, a time of joy and happiness, a time of giving and love, but also a time of bitter, cold weather and snowstorms. A project, that was started with the build of one bed for a single family, developed into something a whole lot more. With the wood left over from the first bunk, another idea was created, “Who else could benefit from this bunk?”

Join us on Wednesday, February 26 at 5:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall to hear about what started as a local mission to help neighbors has become an international movement with 350 chapters.



Jerry Murray



Carolyn Murray

Chapter Co-President Chapter Co-President



## MEET THE CHOIR

Linda Grissom

I was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and have also lived in New Jersey and Russellville, Alabama before making Decatur my home in 1970. My father, his parents, and older sister emigrated from Germany through Ellis Island. They were very proud to become naturalized American citizens. My mother was born in the U.S. to immigrant parents, also from Germany. I was christened as an infant in the Lutheran church.

During the summer before I started 5<sup>th</sup> grade, my father was transferred to north Alabama for work. We lived in Russellville, where I graduated from high school. My elementary music teacher, Mrs. Thomas, taught every student to read music and love singing. Her students sang in concerts and put on musicals every year. (Mrs. Thomas's son, Joab Thomas, later became President of the University of Alabama and then, Penn State University.) All through junior high, high school and college I took choir classes and sang in my church choir.

I met my future husband, Carl, when we were in the same class in 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Not many years later, I learned that he was part of a very musical family. He and his three brothers sang together at church revivals and on the local radio station. They all played instruments in our high school band and three of them went to college on music scholarships. Carl grew up in a missionary Baptist church and I had joined the little Presbyterian church. When the Presbyterian church decided to hire a paid choir director, I encouraged him to apply – and “converted” him. We married shortly after I graduated from the University of North Alabama and moved to Oxford, MS for his final year of college.

Teaching opportunities brought us to Decatur. Carl became the band director for the brand new Brookhaven Middle School and I was hired to teach 6<sup>th</sup> grade and did so for thirty years. We became members of Covenant Presbyterian Church and joined the choir. Carl was the choir director at St. Andrew for several years and I was his “music librarian” and sang in the choir. Carl passed away suddenly in January, 2012.

An interesting fact about my life is...while living in Oxford I worked in the Pharmacognosy Department at Ole Miss. They had just received a federal grant to grow marijuana and find out if anything, good or bad, could come from cannabis. I was hired to type graduate students' research papers. Soon afterward, I had to have federal security clearance to work there, helping with harvesting the marijuana plants, drying and crushing the leaves, and rolling the cigarettes. They were placed in smoking machines and laboratory mice were exposed to the smoke. One day Mike Wallace and his TV crew from “60 Minutes” walked into my office to interview my boss!

(This column is an introduction to the members of St. Andrew's choir. We hope you have enjoyed getting to know a little more about us! If you enjoy music and love to sing, we invite you to come to one of our practices for a visit. Our normal practices are held on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month at 4:30 in the sanctuary. A Bible study or a program usually follows choir practice at 5:30 in the fellowship hall.)

## Member Care

As 2024 ends, it is time to look back and forward. First, thanks to everyone who helped with various Member Care activities. Volunteers provided food to members in times of need, helped with events such as the Cook Out, Soup Dinner, Cafe Connect, and decorated for advent. Assistance was provided willingly and joyfully.

The committee will now begin planning for 2025. Anyone interested in working with the committee is welcome. Just watch for the dates of meetings and join in.



**Presbyterian Women's Meeting**  
**Tuesday, February 4, 2025**  
**at 10:00 AM in the Fellowship Hall**  
**Lesson: "Climate Change"**  
**Leader: B.J. Breeding**  
**All Ladies Welcome!**



## CARING HANDS MINISTRY

Meets the 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month.  
**ALL ARE WELCOME!**

We make cards that will be used to send out hope filled messages to those needing some encouragement or just a little extra "hug" to let them know how much we care about them. The only skills needed will be the ones you learned in kindergarten: cutting and pasting! We have several paper artists in our group who will provide patterns and supplies from their overflowing stashes! No need to buy anything. We also knit or crochet shawls for Hospice and the Cancer Institute. No skills needed; we will teach you.



## Café Connect

8:00 AM to 9:50 AM

Fellowship Hall

Join us every Sunday morning for coffee, light refreshments and fellowship.



Volunteers are needed to assist with the refreshments. A sign-up sheet with details is posted on the bulletin board. If you have any questions contact any member of the Member Care Committee.



Rev. Tripp Brogdon, Pastor  
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 Email: [Tripp@standrewdecatur.org](mailto:Tripp@standrewdecatur.org)  
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## FEBRUARY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4 10A PW 6P Civic Chorus (FH)	5	6 1P Caring Hands 3P-4P DAR (FH)	7	8
9	10 HAD Lunch	11 6P Civic Chorus (FH)	12 4:30P Choir 5:30P CONNECT w/Rev. Tripp	13	14	15
16	17	18 6P Civic Chorus (FH)	19	20 1P Caring Hands	21	22 8A-12P Jr. Piano Festival (FH, room w/pianos,
23	24	25 6P Civic Chorus (FH)	26 4:30P Choir 5:30P CONNECT w/Carolyn & Jerry Murray Sleep in Heavenly Peace	27 6P CC Dinner Show (FH)	28 6P CC Dinner Show (FH)	

### February Worship Leaders

Feb.	2	9	16	23
Liturgists	D. Ann Norris	Ceil Hydrick	Don Koza	Cerese Sweeley
Ushers	Betty Matthews & John Shull	Bob & Jackie Naumann	Barb Mouton & Stu Strong	Doug Coshow & Dave Ellerbe
Nursery	Carol Strong	Betty Matthews	Joan Jordan	Shelly Shull
	Communion Servers	D. Ann Norris, B.J. Breeding, Don Koza, Barb Mouton, and Linda Grissom		