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November 2019

'Pleasing in God's sight'

United Methodists build ramps for people in need

By Jessica Brodie

LYNCHBURG—When Harry White learned one of his fellow church members could not go home from assisted living because the man couldn't access the house in his wheelchair, his heart was stirred.

Immediately, White and other church members knew what had to be done.

"We need to build a ramp for him if we're ever going to get him back home again," said White, a member of St. John United Methodist Church.

But funding was an obstacle. Among the church and district United Methodist Men, of which White was president, they had willing hands, but no funds to purchase the needed materials to make the ramp a reality.

When White approached his Florence District superintendent, the Rev. Terry Fleming, Fleming had an idea: Why not make this a district-wide day of work and build more than one ramp?

"As the plan came together, it was obvious that we had the hands and resources to do at least two ramps in one morning, so that became the plan," Fleming said.

On July 13 and then again on Aug. 16, their plans became reality as 40 United Methodist men from 20 area UMCs, some women, and helpers from other denominations joined for workdays that ultimately built three ramps for people in need in the Lynchburg community.

"We had laity and clergy, black and white, young and 'not so young,'" Fleming said. "So many men arrived ready to help that we could have built four ramps with ease!"

Not only did White and his team build a ramp for his church member, enabling the man to come home, but they also built a ramp for two other people in their district: a middle-aged woman with cerebral palsy who needed a ramp for her motorized wheelchair, as well as one for an elderly woman, a member of nearby Asbury UMC.

"He broke down and cried," White said of the church member who received the first ramp. "All of them were real grateful. I got so many comments from the families, calling and thanking me for what we did.

See "Ramp Ministry," Page 13



Photo by Kathleen Barry

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'God called, women answered'

United Methodist Women celebrate 150 years of pressing against limits, pushing toward tomorrow

By Jessica Brodie

GREENVILLE—One step, one boundary, one risk at a time. For 150 years, United Methodist Women have been at work, pressing against limits and pushing toward the future.

Now, a century-and-a-half after they began, those small steps have resulted in transformative, significant achievements for women, children and youth across

the world.

"God called, and women answered!"

That was the resounding word from Harriett Jane Olson, general secretary and chief executive officer of National United Methodist Women, who spoke to hundreds who gathered for the South Carolina United Methodist Women's 47th annual meeting Oct. 25-26.

See "United Methodist Women," Page 14

Connect Church reaches the unreached

By Laura Camby McCaskill

TAYLORS—One pastor has a passion to reach the unreached with new options for those who come to worship.

Dr. Clay Faulk and his wife, the Rev. Beth Faulk, have been serving Lee Road United Methodist Church, Taylors, since 2017. Now, with the help of the Greenville District and other community and church support, they and a team of others have raised the funds to convert a gym next door into a new worship space they call "Connect Church."

"I talked to a friend of mine and I said it would really be great if I could help churches that need help in (the) area (of) growing and reaching

people," Clay Faulk said. "I was one of those people. I stayed away from church from the ages of 13-21. I wasn't active; I had a bad experience when I was 13."

Former pastor of Providence Church in Southeast Texas, Faulk is a graduate of North Carolina State, earned his Master of Divinity from Columbia Theological Seminary and a Doctor of Ministry from Austin Theological Seminary. In March 2017, Faulk and his wife, Beth, moved to Lee Road as co-pastors.

See "Connect Church," Page 11

'The Lord uses everything'

S.C. pastor hopeful to continue call after charges dismissed, record cleared

By Jessica Brodie

COLUMBIA—A United Methodist pastor has had his charges dismissed and his record expunged after spending the last four years

fighting to clear his name.

Now, he is hopeful his clean record will help him get reappointed as a pastor.

The Rev. Walter C. Ballenger III was arrested

in July 2015 on three counts of criminal sexual misconduct with a child in Richland County and in August 2015 on an additional charge in

See "Charges Dismissed," Page 11



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Washington Street celebrates Soup Cellar's 40th anniversary

COLUMBIA—Washington Street United Methodist Church recognized the 40th anniversary of its Soup Cellar Oct. 20.

The recognition was held in the fellowship hall of the church immediately following the 11 a.m. service.

The Soup Cellar, located on the Marion Street side of Washington Street UMC, feeds 150-200 individuals each weekday in downtown Columbia at no charge. It is completely funded by donations from area churches, organizations and individual donors. As Washington Street maintains no formal budget line item for the Soup Cellar, this ministry depends solely on its donations. Food is obtained at a minimal cost from Harvest Hope Food Bank, through the USDA Commodities Program and the Donated Foods Program. Additional food is purchased through donations.

In 2017, the Soup Cellar was the recipient of the Servant's Heart Award from the Midlands Area Consortium for Mental Health.



Terrence Chisholm, Washington Street UMC Soup Cellar manager, prepares a large vat of fresh soup for the Soup Cellar.

History of the Soup Cellar

On Oct. 15, 1979, 12 beleaguered souls came through open doors to the new Soup Cellar at Washington Street UMC to have lunch. Their visit launched a tradition of ministry to the homeless and to anyone in need in downtown Columbia. Over the years, the Soup Cellar has provided nearly a million meals. During 2018 alone, the Soup Cellar provided more than 45,000 meals.

Modeled on a successful program at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Atlanta, the Soup Cellar was the dream of Mary Laney Tatum, who had interned at St. Luke's, and Dr. James Barrett, senior minister from 1976 to November 1977. After two years of planning, the dream of the Washington Street Soup Cellar was finally realized.

To assist in the church's outreach to the urban community, two new positions were created and filled: Rev. Toni White came in 1977 as minister of education and outreach, and Mary Tatum was brought on as new ministries coordinator. In addition, Rebecca Calkott, lay member and chair of the work area on Christian Social Concerns, contributed administrative assistance, acquisition of funding and volunteer coordination to this new venture.

When the Soup Cellar opened for business in October 1979, the Rev. C.J. Lupo was senior minister and provided the overall introductory leadership.

During its initial year, the Soup Cellar oper-

ated only on Mondays and Fridays, and only the staff and lay volunteers from Washington Street worked to provide the meals. Those coming for meals increased from a dozen at first to 50 or 60 over a few weeks.

Other churches began to lend financial support, and Wednesday meal service was added.

Fortunately, volunteers came from First Presbyterian, First Baptist and Trinity Episcopal Cathedral to augment the Washington Street Church workers. Over time, two more days were added to the serving schedule. Then five Lutheran churches came together to be responsible for Friday meals.

Nazareth Baptist began a Saturday meal in that congregation's church, and Trinity Cathedral offered breakfast on Sundays.

The Soup Cellar at Washington Street ministry had expanded its influence to substantially assist those in need in downtown Columbia.

Numerous local churches currently provide both volunteers and financial support to the Soup Cellar. Those churches include Windsor UMC, St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Union UMC, Forest Lake Presbyterian, Shandon Presbyterian, Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, Sidney Park CME, Shandon UMC, First Baptist, Trenholm Road UMC, St. Joseph Church, Whaley Street UMC, Eastminster Presbyterian Women, St. Mark UMC, Second Calvary Baptist Church, Salem UMC, Trinity Episcopal, Rehoboth UMC, St. Andrew's Lutheran, St. David Lutheran and The Church of Jesus Christ

of Latter Day Saints.

This level of participation ensures the true ecumenical spirit of this downtown ministry.

Under the direction of its current manager, Terrence Chisholm, the Soup Cellar continues to thrive at Washington Street and is a vital part of the downtown community it serves.

About Washington Street

Washington Street was established in 1803 and was the first Christian house of worship in Columbia.

In January 2016, WSUMC updated its identity statement to reflect the vision of the church and its congregation: "The congregation of WSUMC praises and serves God from the heart of the city in ways which reach our neighbors near and far. We welcome all who seek the love and mercy of Christ regardless of race, creed, age, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or economic status. We honor traditions as rooted in our history, our expression of worship and our respect for theological curiosity. We nonetheless see vital change and ongoing renewal as essential for spiritual growth."

Washington Street invites the community to its services each Sunday at 9 a.m. in the chapel, and 11 a.m. in the sanctuary. Sunday school classes for all ages are at 9:45 every Sunday.

For more information about any upcoming events, call the church office at 803-256-2417 or visit www.wsmethodist.org.

Asbury Hills to begin construction of aquatic complex

CLEVELAND—Asbury Hills Camp & Retreat Center has the nod to proceed with Phase 1 of their multiphase master plan.

The South Carolina United Methodist Camps & Retreat Board of Directors approved at their most recent meeting the camp's go-ahead to continue with Phase 1: moving ahead with a new aquatic complex for the Upstate camp.

The aquatic complex includes a new swimming pool, bathhouse, restrooms and courts for basketball and volleyball, with an estimated cost of approximately \$1.5 million.

They hope the new complex will be ready by Summer 2020.

Their approval of the continuation paves the way for the next step in Phase 1, which is the construction of a multipurpose worship center that will be on the spot where the old swimming pool had been. Construction of the worship center has not yet been approved; that will be addressed after this portion of Phase 1 is farther along.

Camps & Retreat has launched a fundraising campaign to secure the funds for the project. For more information, or to inquire about the construction project, call 864-298-0125 or email info@sccarm.org.

'Restored' UMMen retreat set for February to feature wisdom, car show, more

LEXINGTON—Men from across South Carolina will head to Mount Horeb United Methodist Church Feb. 28-29, 2020 for the South Carolina UMC's annual Men N Ministry event.

This year's event theme is "Restored."

The event kicks off Friday morning, Feb. 28, with a golf tournament at Indian River Golf Course and continues Friday night with a men's oyster roast at Mount Horeb.

On Saturday, Feb. 29, Dr. Eric Mason will serve as keynote speaker. Mason has authored several books including "Manhood Restored: How the Gospel Makes Men Whole," "Woke Church" and "Unleashed."

A restored car show that Saturday will culminate the fun.

The 2029 retreat goals will emphasize small group studies, feed 200,000 people through a partnership with the Society of St. Andrew, fund 25-30 personal energy transportation carts, distribute more than 2,500 Strength for Service devotionals to first responders and military personnel and continue to develop YoungER Men's Ministry efforts in each district.

Individual registrations are \$65 each until Jan. 31, 2020. Pastors are \$45.

2020 sponsor churches are \$600 and include 12 registrations. If you sponsored in 2019 and again in 2020, you will get two additional registrations, for a total of 14.

For more information about the retreat or to register: www.menministry.org.



Organizers hold up the tournament proceeds for AU.



The full group gathers for a smile.



Jim Salley talks about the university and its importance.

Golf tournament raises more than \$22,000 to benefit Africa U.

By William Hamilton

ORANGEBURG—The recent Bishop L. Jonathan Holston Golf Tournament held at the Orangeburg Country Club Sept. 30 raised more than \$22,000, which will benefit Africa University and students throughout the African continent.

Some 88 golfers participated in the five-year-old event, which was played in Orangeburg for the first time after four years in Columbia. The event also included a silent auction and awards luncheon, with prizes going to the top four teams and several individuals showing off their skills.

Taking top team honors in the tournament was the foursome of Marvin Williams, Robbie Thomas, Henry Odom and Bubba Eaves, representing the law firm of Corey Williams of Orangeburg, at 18-under par. Second place went to Frank Hough, James Liton and Elbert Warren (17-under par), while the foursome of Lamont Green, Ed Johnson, Arthur Green and Dan Myers, representing Jo Jo's Home Improvement, was third (15-under par). Finishing fourth was the foursome of Robert Kirtton, Stanley Rivers, Marcus Burgess and Chevron Scott, representing Claflin University (14-under par).

Closest to the Pin honors went to Robby Thomas (Hole #3) of Fairfax, Matt Stewart (Hole #6) of North Augusta and

Henry Odom (Hole #12) of Denmark. Marcus Burgess took Sand Pocket honors.

The tournament, with substantial support from the United Methodist Church community, was warmly embraced by the Orangeburg community, according to Orangeburg native James H. "Jim" Salley, Africa University's chief advancement officer, and tournament director Robert Harper.

"The funds raised are significant and we hope to grow the contributions in future years," Salley said. "We thank all the participants, the sponsors and volunteers for their efforts in supporting Africa University and making a difference in the lives of persons around the world."

"We are pleased to be in Orangeburg and would like to thank the community, the participants, our sponsors and supporters who found it worthwhile to invest in Africa University and young men and women from all over Africa," Bishop Holston said.

Among the local celebrities joining Holston in making remarks at the tournament were Orangeburg Mayor Michael Butler, Vice Mayor L. Zimmerman Keitt and lead sponsor representatives Joe Halwax and Bill Stewart of Westpath Institutional Investments, the pensions agency of the United Methodist Church.



The Sept. 30 tournament raised more than \$22,000, which will benefit AU and students throughout Africa.

"Golf brings people from many disciplines together, fosters camaraderie and fellowship, as well as good times," said Harper, a PGA expert who was in his first year as tournament director.

From 'Fresh Expressions' to 'Ministry Lab' S.C. pastors continue learning new ways to reach unchurched

By Jessica Brodie

GASTON—South Carolina church leaders eager to dig deeper into what church truly is and discover new ways to bring others into the flock will gather again this month to take their ideas to the next level.

The church leaders gathered at Beulah United Methodist Church Oct. 5 for Fresh Expressions, a one-day event designed to help people reimagine how they reach others in Christ, hearing from the Florida Conference's Michael Beck and Garrett Rocha.

Beck and Rocha, along with other presenters, helped them understand the Fresh Expressions movement. Started in England, Fresh Expressions tries to reach the unchurched by going to places people already congregate—bars, coffee shops, restaurants, golf courses, etc.—and helps them become more like a congregation, eventually steering them into the more formal institution that is church.

Now, these church leaders will gather again Nov. 16 at 10 a.m. at Beulah for what organizers are calling Ministry Lab, where they will have the opportunity to talk about how the first stages of introducing Fresh Expressions are going.

"Our goal is to assist with brainstorming new ideas and troubleshooting ongoing ones," said the Rev. Jon Hoin, who organized the Orangeburg District-sponsored event along with the Rev. Jim Arant.

Hoin said anyone is welcome to attend, even if they did not attend the Oct. 5 event, and he is happy to work with newcomers to cover what was discussed at the initial event.

The initial event, which drew roughly 45 people, began with a discussion on Fresh Expressions. In the afternoon, active sessions covered the basics of design thinking. They also got to witness demonstrations, including a dinner church experience led by Rocha, exercise ministries led by Hoin, pop-up churches led by South Carolina's Rev. Wendy Hudson-Jacoby, social justice

ministry and gun buyback with South Carolina's Rev. Hillary Taylor and a general question and answer session with Beck.

"Overall, we have heard nothing but positive feedback, and everyone has seemed very excited by the event," Hoin said. "We are hoping to capture that energy and multiply it to help the Orangeburg District and our South Carolina churches share some love with their neighbors."

Hoin said the Fresh Expressions model seeks to reconnect churches to their contexts by giving ordinary people permission to experiment and try new things, by giving them permission to build teams that include persons of peace (these are people on the edge of church who can help build bridges) and others outside the church, and by encouraging them to see church as something more than 11 a.m. on Sundays.

To learn more about the Nov. 16 event, email Hoin at jahoin@umcsc.org or call 704-839-3953. To learn more about Fresh Expressions, visit <https://freshexpressions.org>.

Common questions about Fresh Expressions

- What is a Fresh Expression? A church established for the benefit of people who are not yet members of any church. It is born through listening, service, contextual mission and making disciples.
- What is new church development vs. Fresh Expressions? Fresh Expressions focuses on people. New Church Development includes a larger broader investment potentially into property or space. One typically melds with the other and they feed off each other.
- What is a "marketplace ministry"? Ministry outside the conventional church sphere.
- What is the Fresh Expressions model? Empathize (listen, love, serve); define (how do we create community for...); ideate (brainstorming the what-if); prototype (encountering and prayer walking); and test (try it and see).



Attendees learn the basics of design thinking by building marshmallow towers.

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Viewpoints



Editorial

by Jessica Brodie

On being grateful

As the mother of preteens, I hear the word “entitled” bandied about a lot. My kids are in Generation Z, which is the first generation to grow up in an entirely digital world, and they are fully accustomed to all things electronic and adapt to new technologies quickly and easily.

Entitled is a funny word. It doesn't really mean spoiled, but is really just a sense that you are somehow able to access or receive something just because you happen to live in a certain community, are a member of a certain household—or because you offered a nice smile and are accustomed to things going your way.

For instance, my daughter thought she was fully entitled to receive a brand new iPhone when she entered middle school simply because most of her other friends had one and she thought that was a normal rite of passage. (Nopel!) I know kids who turn 16 and walk into a restaurant or shop and expect to be hired just because they feel believe they should work there, or they graduate from college and think they are guaranteed a job. It doesn't matter how many times their parents or their teachers tell them otherwise; they somehow still get that message.

It's one of the hardest things to learn, isn't it? The truth that we're not really guaranteed anything at all. We are born, yes, but there's no guarantee we'll make it to adulthood.

We might live our lives in a safe and careful manner, but there's no guarantee we won't find ourselves the victim of a drunk driving accident or a random act of violence. We can work hard, but there's no guarantee we'll get a raise or even survive the next round of corporate layoffs.

And yet the antidote to entitlement is often something unexpected: Gratitude.

The one thing we can rest assured in is that if we believe Jesus is the Son of God and earnestly repent of our sins, then we can share that eternity in heaven with God our Father.

Being grateful for the good and the bad changes our perspective. As we are urged in 1 Thessalonians 5:18, “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus” (NIV). It's tough sometimes to thank God when things are hard, but gratitude isn't about what we receive. It's the peace that comes from understanding we are safe and secure in the hands of our Lord and Savior no matter what—times of trouble and times of plenty.

And 1 Chronicles 16:34 tells us, “Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.” We don't have to do a thing to earn it. He loves us because He is good—not because we are good or did anything to deserve it.

This Thanksgiving, even if life is hard, take a look around you with a new heart at what you do have. And remember: The tangible and earthly are temporary, but Jesus is eternal.

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Bishop's Corner

by Bishop L. Jonathan Holston

Never too late

“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”—Colossians 3:15-17 (NIV)

The first Thanksgiving feast was recorded in 1621 between the Pilgrims, having recently arrived in America, and the Wampanoag, having already been residents here for many centuries.

In those early months, the Pilgrims might not have survived if the native people had not taught them the best local hunting, farming and harvest practices. Even though the relationship between the new settlers and the native people was tension-filled at best, it is said that the first feast was a traditional celebration of the plentiful harvest to which the Wampanoag were invited as an act of gratitude for the ways they had helped the Pilgrims acclimate to their new environment. The two groups joined together for these few days.

Yet we know that this temporary time of friendship and feasting did not last. Now, even as we prepare for traditional celebrations with family and friends, the complexity of our history must be acknowledged. While we are thankful, we need to remember that reconciliation is still needed.

Writer Matthew Rozsa asserts, “We

shouldn't forget things for which we are grateful often come at an ugly price. ...

By contrasting that initial thanksgiving with the ugliness that followed, we can be reminded of why it's important to be mindful of similarly ugly impulses which exist today.”

We still witness remnants of the racism and colonialism that date back more than 400 years, and we are in danger of repeating those wrongs if we do not make an effort to live in the present while also remembering the past.

It has been said, “An apology is the superglue of life. It can repair just about anything.”

Even though it is difficult to swallow your pride and offer an apology when it is due, we can all make the effort to seek reconciliation.

As people of faith, we know that this effort is worthwhile. Paul emphasizes to the Colossians that the peace of Christ should rule in their hearts. In other words, make the effort to choose peace over other perspectives. Make peace and gratitude your priority.

So, even though it might be difficult, take time to be thankful. We cannot escape the past, but we can move toward a future that reflects the kingdom of God. Recognize the blessing that it is to serve God. Find joy in rolling up your sleeves and sacrificing for something greater than yourself. Share in mission that makes the world a better place.

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of Jesus.

Together, we will build tomorrows that are better than our yesterdays.

Letters to the Editor

Poem: I Know a Guy for That

Oh come the poor downtrodden, the downcast and forlorn
Those whose backs are bent and broken, burdens feebly borne
Come the tramp, the refuse, upon the fringes scorned
Come those whose faith lies rent in shreds; ripped and roughly torn
Those grown weary of the fight, lying facedown on the mat
When nowhere's left to turn nor lose
I know a guy for that

I know a friend to walk beside us no more lost alone
I know a guide to lead us through the doubt of right from wrong
A Holy presence grants relief from fear—our sin atoned
The perfect peace to be content midst circumstance bemoaned
Come those who dare to dream and hope with battles to combat
For visions of a better world
I know a guy for that

Down dusty roads with dirty feet, He walks t'ward me and you

See “Letters,” Page 5

Appointment Changes

Bishop Jonathan Holston has announced the following changes of appointment:
Effective Sept 22, 2019
Spartanburg District: Golightly-Taberna-
cle: SY (Gregory Thompson) (1/2)

Effective Oct. 15, 2019
Florence District: Greeleyville Charge:
SY (Rusty Crimm)

Effective Oct. 16, 2019
Columbia District: I. DeQuincey New-
man: Charles White (1/2)

Effective Nov. 1, 2019
Orangeburg District: Eutawville: Larry
Brown (RL) (1/2)
Orangeburg District: New Light: Sammy
Pazi (PE)



How I Got My Call to Ministry

by the Rev. Jane Jenkins

God's claim on my life

The community was small, as was the church—stunningly beautiful in its simplicity and nestled in a tiny cove in Great Smoky Mountains of Western North Carolina.

This little church was home to a membership that was much more like an extended family than a congregation. Here was a unique, small church family representing generations who had grown up together, worked together, served in wars together and who celebrated their Christian faith together in this little Methodist church.

This was my church—the church where I was baptized and confirmed, attended Sunday school, Methodist Youth Fellowship and the church where my faith was nurtured and guided until I became an adult. This was the source of my Christian heritage where my journey of faith and service was born.

Church was always a significant part of my life, and my decision to become an ordained minister was no surprise to anyone who knew me.

My first “church” job was serving as youth director at a nearby larger Methodist church. While there, I began to nurture the urge to follow this youth ministry path. After two years, another door opened, and I had the opportunity to move to Bethel United Methodist Church in Spartanburg as the director of Christian education and youth.

During my five-year tenure at Bethel UMC, I became convinced that these years spent in Christian education had empowered me to support people in their faith and to en-

able them to grow in the spirit of Christ. At the same time, I was also developing a growing understanding of “ministry” in a much broader perspective. I wanted to expand my abilities and to be able to share God's love with the sick and the bereaved, and to be able to perform the many other functions of an ordained minister.

This was not, however, a “Damascus Road” experience, but rather quite simply a realization that God had a claim on my life and that I had a both a calling and a desire to fulfill God's purpose.

With this awareness, I began to feel the need to broaden my formal Christian education. In September 1976, with an enormous amount of encouragement from numerous ministers, I entered Candler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlanta. It was both difficult and extremely challenging. I lived five days each week in Atlanta and returned to my family in Spartanburg each weekend.

After completing seminary, I returned home to Spartanburg and completed a 10-week chaplaincy internship at a local hospital. In 1979, I was appointed to Walnut Grove UMC as the only woman serving in Spartanburg who was an ordained Methodist minister.

In 1981 I became a full elder with appointments after Walnut Grove to Grace-Apalache in 1984; Few's Chapel-Jackson Grove in 1989; Owings-Bramlett in 1990; Northside-Piedmont Park in 1994; Cayce in 1998; St. Paul, Ninety-Six, in 1999; Beaumont-Whitney in 2001; and Landrum UMC in 2004.

LETTERS: Readers share thoughts on giving thanks, Rural Mission

From Page 4

Preacher, prophet, teacher, priest—as
King of Jews accused
Came to earth to walk in our shoes ...
Came to set us free ...
Came to join the here and now with
life eternally

So come the poor, the weak down-trod; the
downcast and forlorn
Those whose backs are bent and broke from
burdens feebly borne
Oh come the outcast, vagrant, refuse;
mocked, rejected, scorned
Whose faith lies crumbled, scattered, tat-
tered, ripped and roughly torn
Come those surrendered to defeat beaten
facedown to the mat
Those with nothing left to lose
I know a guy for that.

David Bryant, member
Bethesda UMC, Easley

Look back with thanksgiving

It is Aug. 29 and I am thinking about Thanksgiving. Perhaps, that is a good sign. Gratefulness is a state of being, not a particular date on the calendar. The psalmist declares, “Oh give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good.”

For me, God is always at the center of Christian thankfulness. I have celebrated Thanksgiving with both a grateful and heavy heart. I remember Thanksgiving 2003; my mother had been diagnosed with cancer in 2002. She was 79 years young and decided not to do chemotherapy or radiation.

I remember her calling me and saying she wanted us to come home for Thanksgiving. She wanted to fix dinner for her sons one last time. My brothers and I gathered with our families in that little senior citizens apartment knowing this would probably be our last family meal together. There was a heaviness and a hopefulness all mingled together. We were heavy because the one who had carried us, nurtured and corrected us was on life's final journey toward eternity. We were hopeful, because being reared in church and nurtured in the Christian faith, we knew that death for the believer was the

doorway to eternal life.

The very next year mother would be gone, but we were thankful for the memories.

We laughed, cried and held closely to each other that Thanksgiving. With mass shootings in El Paso, Texas, and Dayton, Ohio, it reminds me to be grateful for every day. Do not wait until Thanksgiving in November; let us practice an attitude of gratitude for all the Lord has done, is doing and will do for us! For the sun, the moon and the stars I am grateful. For the love of family and friends and a church community, my heart sings with joy. For colleagues in ministry and even for my enemies, I am grateful.

I urge you in this season and every season of your life: Be intentional and find reasons to be grateful.

My mother has been gone 15 Thanksgivings now, yet my heart still sings as I remember the love she showed us that Thanksgiving. Look back with thanksgiving, live fully present in this moment and look ahead with hope.

Blessing and peace to all now and forever.
Dr. Reginald E. Lee, congregational specialist
Florence and Marion districts and pastor,
Mount Zion UMC, Florence

UMW appreciates Rural Mission staff

About 50 years ago, Dr. Willis Goodwin Sr. had a special vision for a serene five-acre waterfront property on Johns Island that was donated to his congregation. He brought about a mission to improve the lives of migrant farm children who had nowhere to go and no one to watch over them while their parents harvested the crops in the fields of Johns Island.

Rural Mission Inc. provided a Head Start program as a safe haven for these nomadic children while their parents labored to provide a living for them. Rural Mission Inc. also coordinated essential repairs to Sea Island homes with the help of mission teams from around the country. United Methodist Women became mission partners with them by providing funding and supplying needs, such as health care kits for the migrant children.

Your call story wanted!

Call stories (how we heard or felt God calling us to ministry) can be powerful testimonies, as well as inspiring. Sometimes they are uplifting, sometimes they are painful, but they are all real ways the Lord speaks to us today. The *Advocate* invites you to share your “call story.” We are also exploring using these stories in an upcoming book. Email your story (500-1,000 words in length) to jbrodie@umcsc.org. If you do not have access to email, mail to Advocate, Attn: Call Story, 4908 Colonial Dr., Columbia, SC 29203. Include name, whether you are clergy, your church and a photograph.

In 2011, I received the Harry Denman Evangelism Award for the South Carolina conference. I retired in 2013 but have continued to serve as a retired supply pastor for Immanuel UMC in Wellford.

I currently serve as chaplain at St. Luke's Hospital, a ministry about which I am most passionate, but I have a feeling God may yet have one or two more special assignments for me.

I would observe that when God calls you to lead, he also calls you into challenges. Women in ministry have faced struggles, as did I. Sometimes women may suppress their calling because of societal norms, but unquestionably, women have a calling to serve as pastors.

Regarding the struggles I encountered in my pastoral career, there were far more blessings and joys that I received from the many Christian families who supported me in my work. I would simply say that no matter how difficult it might have been at times for me to be a pastor, it would have been much more difficult not to be a pastor.

Being able to serve in a role that enabled me to meet the needs of people and help empower them to become whole persons was my mission. That is what Christian faith is all about, and I'm truly blessed to have had the opportunity to serve God as a minister.

Josie Nelson. This Rural Mission Inc. staff committed their life's work to build not only houses, but also lives with faith, hope and love. United Methodist Women is honored to have been in mission with them.
What a blessing they have been for so many people!

Kathy Roys, retired president
Charleston District UMW and member of
SCCUMW Nominations

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www.AdvocateSC.org/donation

Rural Mission: 'Remember what God has done through them'

By Dan O'Mara

JOHNS ISLAND—More than 100 people gathered Sept. 28 to commemorate what God has done through Rural Mission Inc.—and what God is doing and promises to do with the Johns Island property that was home to the United Methodist ministry for nearly five decades.

The celebration at Wesley United Methodist Church also honored eight longtime members of the Rural Mission family.

"Remember the faces of the people who are being honored tonight," said the Rev. Pattie Gordon, chairperson of the Rural Mission board and pastor of the Johns Island Parish on Johns Island.

"Remember how they have touched your lives, but—most of all—remember what God has done through them."

Facing evolving demographics and a shifting mission field on Johns Island, as well as a challenging financial outlook with a daily growing debt, the Rural Mission Board of Directors voted in May to dissolve the ministry and transfer all assets and liabilities to South Carolina United Methodist Camps & Retreat Ministries.

Longtime Rural Mission staff honored at the banquet included: Nancy Butler, administrative assistant; Linda Gadson, executive director; Eartha Goodwin, longtime board member; Anderson Mack Jr., special assistant to the executive director; Viola Moore, purchasing agent; Josie Nelson, day porter; Richard Porter Jr., facilities coordinator; and Christine Williams, director of finance.

Bishop L. Jonathan Holston summed up how many in the South Carolina Conference will remember both Rural Mission and those who worked tirelessly for decades to make sure Sea Islands have a safe and secure place to call home.

"The people who have shared in leadership at Rural Mission have made the people of these islands feel that they matter, that they are important to God, and that what they needed could be helped by those who would come to be a part of this ministry," Holston said. "Tonight, in a small way, we say thank you for the expressions of love that you shared through your actions."

"Thank you for how you have given yourselves in such a significant way."

The Rev. Telley Lynnette Gadson literally grew up at Rural Mission, helping her mother and others throughout her youth and beyond.

She delivered a rousing sermon praising God for keeping Rural Mission vital for five decades and commending the work of the honorees.

"Rural Mission Inc. was birthed in the dust, reared in the soil, stood fast in the storm, matriculated in the wind, matured in the waves, grew up in trials and was tried by tribulations," said Gadson, pastor of St. Mark UMC in Taylors. "But Rural Mission made a difference."

"These honorees have championed the work of human services with character, dignity, integrity, faith, hope and—most of all—love for 50 years. We thank God for them."

Gadson made sure that the Rural Mission pioneers who were not present also would be remembered. Dr. Willis T. Goodwin, Eartha Goodwin's late spouse, and "a circle of sacrificing servants" led the effort to establish Rural Mission when he was Bethlehem-St. James' pastor in 1969.

"With the truth of the Word as a reminder that the poor will always be with us," she said, "they took seats at the table of love to have conversations about a faith that needed work and a work that needed faith, a people who were in need and a need that required a people."

"A mandate to serve. A clarion call from Matthew's gospel to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, give sight to the blind, heal the sick, hug the lonely, liberate the imprisoned and center the marginalized."

Arthur Spriggs, executive director of Camps & Retreat Ministries, shared his reverence for the good work of Rural Mission and expressed gratitude "for allowing us to have the opportunity to seek God's next step in God's plan for this property that has meant so much to the Sea Islands people."

"Imagine how Jesus has shown up over the nearly 50 years of what this staff and volunteers have been able to do at Rural Mission, and allow yourself to be used in a mighty way by God."

The Rev. Lillian Hymes Washington was born and raised on Johns Island. She grew up as Rural Mission was coming into being



Linda Gadson, right, gets a big thank you for her decades of service.

Photos by Matt Brodie



South Carolina Resident Bishop L. Jonathan Holston lifts up what God has done through Rural Mission.

and worked in the ministry's summer reading program. She credited Rev. Goodwin and Linda Gadson for "molding me into the minister that I have been over the past 40 years."

"I recognized and answered my call to ministry while working at Rural Mission," said Washington, who served several churches across the state and as the Hartsville District superintendent before retiring in 2015. "I saw ministry in a way that I had never seen ministry done before."

"At Rural Mission, I saw what real



The Rev. Telley Gadson, commending the work of the honorees, praises God for keeping Rural Mission vital for five decades.

ministry was all about." The honorees expressed their gratitude for all of the support—through donations of money and volunteer time and prayers—they have witnessed over their time with Rural Mission.

"Our gift has been knowing the people we served and the people who served us," Anderson Mack said.

"God is so, so good," Linda Gadson said. "I thank God for all of you. I'm grateful that the property will always be there in God's service for years."

S.C. native Lurma Rackley: A true legacy of the Civil Rights Movement

By Rebecca Wallace

Reprinted with permission of the North Georgia Conference of The United Methodist Church

Growing up in South Carolina, two things were constant in Lurma Rackley's life: activism in the quest for equal rights and an unbreakable connection to the Methodist church. These constants were instilled in her by her mother, Gloria Blackwell (Rackley), who was a noted leader in the Orangeburg Movement for Civil Rights and Economic Justice in the late 1950s through 1964.

The church, Rackley says, was a major influence in her life. Her great-grandfather, the Rev. LeGrand Lee Thomas, was a Methodist minister in the late 1800s in South Carolina. His daughter, Rackley's grandmother Lurline Thomas Blackwell, attended one of the first boarding schools for black high school students founded by Methodists in Greenville in the early 1900s, and attended Claflin College, a Methodist center of learning for black students in Orangeburg. Mrs. Blackwell served as her church pianist and music teacher, and a schoolteacher for more than 40 years in Dillon County. She and her husband were among the early activists helping register black people to vote in South Carolina.

While growing up in Orangeburg, Rackley remembers making sandwiches and picket signs in the basement of Trinity Methodist Church until she and her sister were old enough to join the picket lines, too, in the early 1960s. Her direct ancestors and the ministers who were leaders of the



Lurma Rackley at age 13 or 14 with her mother in front of the elementary school from which her mother was fired for her civil rights work and membership in the NAACP. Photograph by Cecil Williams.

civil rights movement "probably connected to the Methodist church because they were finding people of like minds," she explains, "people who believed in actively working for social justice and equality to improve life for everyone."

"In South Carolina, the black ministers in the Methodist church were able to develop partnerships with some of the white ministers, perhaps more than leaders of other southern denominations were able to do at the time, which led to unification of



Lurma Rackley celebrates her birthday with her first granddaughter, Rallera. In the foreground is a birthday gift—a little statue of Frederick Douglass, one of Lurma's favorite historical figures.

the black and white church conferences."

Later, Rackley applied her childhood lessons to her career. After graduating from Clark College (now Clark Atlanta University), Rackley received a special master's degree in journalism from Columbia University in a program designed to help integrate the nation's newsrooms. She started as a reporter in Washington, D.C., at what was the afternoon daily, The Washington Star, and became an editor before leaving to work in local government in communications,

including as press secretary to D.C.'s Mayor Marion Barry. She left government in 1991 and went on to work for both corporate and nonprofit organizations such as Amnesty International, CARE and, currently, Habitat for Humanity. Even in the corporate world, her work remained focused on social responsibility.

"I was always taught that doing good for others is the basic lesson we want people to learn as Christians; to treat everyone equally and to serve those that have less than we do."

"In my childhood and teenage years, the Methodist Church, especially, was the church of social consciousness. Even as we fought against racial segregation, we were taught to be open and welcoming. Our ministers drilled into us the Christian imperative to love everyone, not hate anyone; to always look at everyone through the eyes of love—even if those people were hating us, jailing us, hurting us."

Today she sees a great deal of work to be done in her beloved church with regard to race, gender and sexual identification.

"The Methodist church, at least partially, was formed by the very people who fought for tolerance," Rackley said. "The Methodist church that I grew up in supported—in fact, led—the civil rights movement."

"I know that United Methodists in Georgia and throughout the nation, including at my own Hopewell UMC, are working to promote and expand equality. That is why I have hope that I can remain in the church and that United Methodists will always take a visible stand against bigotry and prevail."

Lord's Ladle soup kitchen still strong after 13 years

GOOSE CREEK—It's been 13 years, and The Lord's Ladle Café soup kitchen is still going strong.

Located at Goose Creek United Methodist Church, the soup kitchen has been in existence since 2006.

Typically, an average of 120 people are fed at the soup kitchen, which serves anyone regardless of their need. The congregation says that through this ministry people are offered the Bread of Life along with their daily bread.

"We don't question income or need," said one of the leaders. "If you come in, you will get fed."

There have been slight changes and many additions to the ministry over those 13 years, such as a garden to supply fresh produce

A Martha's Breakfast has been offered the past six years and serves an average of 75 every Monday morning. People from the community stop by on their way to work, as do the homeless and others who need a place where they feel welcomed and loved.

There is also a food pantry, clothes closet, blessing box, summer water ministry and Human Needs Network that assists with utility bills on a limited basis.

As a spin-off of the Lord's Ladle, Immaculate Conception Catholic Church has been offering a second day on Friday of each week, both cooking and serving the meal.



Three years ago, a community garden began that provides fresh vegetables to local neighbors and makes the church's soups even better.

Three years ago, a community garden began that provides fresh vegetables to local neighbors and makes the church's soups even better.

"We are known in the community as the church that feeds people," said the Rev. Debra Dowdle. "We are not a rich con-



The church feeds people through a weekly breakfast every Monday the last six years, as well as a soup kitchen, right, the last 13 years.

gregation financially but so very rich in God's blessings. An amazing addition to God's goodness is the fact that one year out of 13 we put our food ministry in the budget and did not spend/need a penny of it. It's one of those God things.

"Everything we need just shows up!"

UMC pastor Ted Morton awarded Order of Palmetto for half-century of service to Greenwood and beyond

South Carolina has awarded its highest civilian honor to a retired United Methodist pastor whose decades of public services have helped the Greenwood community and beyond.

The Rev. Ted Morton Jr. was honored Aug. 13 with the Order of the Palmetto during the August Summer Social of the Cambridge



Morton

Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, of which Morton serves as chaplain.

In a surprise presentation before the crowd, State Sen. Floyd Nicholson presented him with the honor after lifting up Morton's half-century of dedicated service. That half-century began in 1968, when Morton was appointed to begin the work of developing what was then a new Methodist retirement community in Greenwood called Greenwood Methodist Home (now Wesley Commons).

His public service work went on to span decades and

included bringing the Meals on Wheels program to Greenwood. He retired in 1995 but has remained an active volunteer and public servant.

Awarded by South Carolina's governor, the Order of the Palmetto goes to people who do significant public service work that makes the community a better place.

Morton, who received a standing ovation, was joined by his family, including his children and a grandson.

He and his wife, Henrietta, celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary Aug. 20.

'Confronting Hate'

2019 Bishops' Dialogue set for Nov. 21 at State Museum

COLUMBIA—Churches and schools across South Carolina are not immune to the rise of racist theology and rhetoric. How do we, as Christians, confront this hate in our pews and classrooms?

Recognizing the church's role in confronting hate and working toward healing, the Fellowship of South Carolina Bishops is hosting an interactive dialogue, "Confronting Hate," at 6 p.m. Nov. 21 at the South Carolina State Museum, 301 Gervais St., Columbia.

The discussion will be led by two Charleston pastors whose churches—one historically white, one historically black—

have come together for a weekly book study in the four years since a 21-year-old white supremacist murdered nine African Americans during a prayer service at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in downtown Charleston.

The Rev. Callie Walpole, subdean and vicar of Grace Episcopal Church, and Dr. Kylon Middleton, pastor of Mount Zion AME Church, have led the effort to deepen relationships between Grace, Mount Zion and their communities. Their work serves as a model for congregations looking to create space for difficult conversations.

Walpole and Middleton will share how

their Tuesday Book Study model works, facilitate a discussion around a selected text and lead a dialogue on the church's response to hatred and violence.

The 2019 Fellowship of South Carolina Bishops' Dialogue takes place during the 2019 Equity Summit, an event hosted by the South Carolina Collaborative on Race and Reconciliation at the University of South Carolina. The Equity Summit is designed to create a space for those actively engaged in race equity and inclusion efforts across the Southeast to learn from each other.

Registration for the Bishops' Dialogue is

free and is being coordinated through the registration process for the Equity Summit. Seating is limited, so sign up today to ensure your spot. You can choose to register only for the Bishops' Dialogue, or for other events during the Equity Summit.

The Fellowship of South Carolina Bishops is a special ecumenical relationship among churches led by bishops of the African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal-Zion, Christian Methodist Episcopal, Episcopal, Lutheran, Roman Catholic and United Methodist churches.

To register: <https://tinyurl.com/equity-summitsc2019>.

Seminary hopes to provide every S.C. prison with 24 study Bibles

One seminary is hoping to provide 24 Life Application Study Bibles for each of South Carolina's 21 prisons.

The study Bibles are shipped by the case (12 Bibles per case) from Tyndale House Publishers directly to prison chaplains for appropriate distribution. The effort is made possible thanks to a campaign initiated by Myrtle Beach Wesleyan College and Pilgrim Seminary, which has a mission to help people seeking higher education in Christian perspective, particularly helping those incarcerated in federal and state correctional facilities.

"The Life Application Study Bibles are a great blessing to the men here," said the Rev. Edward McKnight, a United Methodist chaplain serving at Lee Correctional Institution in Bishopville. "I think I can speak for all the prison chaplains when I say that we can put to good use every study Bible that we are fortunate enough to receive."

Pilgrim Seminary was able to distribute Bibles to prisoners last year, and this year, with help from United Methodists, they are hoping to do the same. They are hoping every United Methodist church in South Carolina will provide funds to for one Life Application Study Bible. The cost of each Bible is \$35, which includes the cost of shipping. The Bibles are the leather-like cover edition; hardback books are not permitted in many prisons.

Dr. Andrea King, chair of the seminary's Board of Governors, said quality study Bibles are relatively rare in prisons because of their high cost.

"There are many thoughtful and dedicated Christians in prison engaged in the diligent study of God's word," King said. "We hope to continue doing our best to help equip them for greater ministry and service inside the prison community where they live."

Several prisoners who received study Bibles through last year's distribution said they meant a great deal to them.

"The study Bible helped me learn more than a regular Bible. Every new believer needs an easy reading translation study Bible," said Raymond C.

Roosevelt C. said the study Bible he received "is a great book. It gives you more understanding of what the Bible is talking about. I like the way it breaks down the verses and gives you the details of what's going on."

One released prisoner noted, "When I

was in prison it was all that I could do to get money into my account to buy something from the commissary. Sometimes there wasn't even enough money to buy a stamp to send a letter home. So the idea of having \$70 dollars to buy a study Bible was like absolutely impossible. But I was fortunate that some Christian somewhere visited me in prison by a gift—a study Bible. What a difference that study Bible made. I don't know where it came from or who sent it but someday in Heaven I hope to find out."

For more information, email dean-of-the-chapel@pilgrimseminary.org.

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Photo courtesy of Rev. Linda Dunn

Helping Shoes4Water

St. Paul's UMC, Orangeburg, collected 292 pairs of shoes for Shoes4Water drive June 1 to Sept 15. The church hosted Steve Bell, founder of the ministry, for a covered dish lunch Sept. 15 and collected a love offering for ministry expenses in Kenya.

Aldersgate Special Needs Ministry grateful for support on Aldersgate Sunday

COLUMBIA—Aldersgate Special Needs Ministry, the United Methodist agency that helps families prepare for the future of loved ones with developmental disabilities, is grateful to the churches that accepted an offering for the ministry Aug. 11.

The South Carolina Conference designates the third Sunday in August as ASN M Sunday, or churches may select an alternate day.

"We thank the churches and individuals who have given faithfully on Aldersgate Special Needs Sunday and other times during the year," said Executive Director Elaine Mathis. "Their continued support helps us care for our residents and homes, as well as plan for the future."

Mathis was grateful for the invitation to speak about the ministry at Northeast United Methodist Church and Washington Street UMC in August. In addition to collecting an

offering for the ministry, Washington Street held a paper product drive, and the Active Faith Small Group treated ASN M guests to lunch following the worship service.

ASN M is the result of several people, some of whom were parents of special needs children, taking their desire to develop a place for the care of adult children with developmental disabilities to the Conference Council on Ministries. Delegates to the 2003 Annual Conference approved the Council on Ministries' plan to create Aldersgate.

Today, Aldersgate maintains three homes for adults with special needs, giving them the opportunity to live in a Christian environment with a professional staff dedicated to providing a loving home.

For more information, visit aldersgatespecialneedsministry.org, or contact ASN M at 843-754-8936 or asnm-sc@att.net.

Appalachian Christmas at Lake Junaluska

Dec. 12-15, 2019



Book a 2- or 3-night holiday package and let the nostalgic charm of Appalachian hospitality warm you this holiday season!

Thursday, Dec. 12

"Rediscover Christmas" by Acts of Renewal EXCLUSIVE Theatrical Performance for 3-night Package Holders

Friday, Dec. 13

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Saturday, Dec. 14

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Sunday, Dec. 15

Appalachian Christmas Worship Service

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Lynchburg bread ministry blesses many

LYNCHBURG—The United Methodist Men and Women of St. John United Methodist Church are partnering with Panera Bread/Covelli Enterprises to help alleviate hunger in their community.

Started in January, The partnership has helped St. John UMC bring a bread ministry to the church and community. They have also extended an invitation to nearby Asbury UMC to share in the blessing. Immediately following morning service, they give out bread to anyone in need.

On Friday nights, St. John's United Methodist Women pick up the bread from Panera Bread in Florence, and the United Methodist Men do the same on Saturday nights. They bag the bread, which is given out on Sundays.

This ministry has proven to be beneficial to our church families and our community.

The coordinator of the bread ministry is Elouise White, the president of the United



The ministry helps alleviate hunger.

Methodist Women is Albertine Brown and the president United Methodist Men is McSwain Laws.



Photo courtesy of Gwendolyn White

Blessed to be a blessing

The communications team along with the outreach ministry from Mount Zion United Methodist Church, Sumter, sponsored two events to bless the community. On Aug. 3, they held a giveaway of free clothing and other items, and on Sept. 30 they gathered to assemble bags for the backpack ministry to provide food for children over the weekend at a local elementary school. They hope to be God's hands, feet and heart at work.



United Methodist Women

by Janice Cockfield Eaddy

'Our Spirit of Commitment!'

The organized unit of United Methodist Women is a community of women whose purpose is to know God and experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

As officers of this wonderful organization known as the South Carolina Conference United Methodist Women, we are called to be in mission work all around the world! We are all committed to doing God's work in fulfilling the purpose of our organization. In order to do His work, and do it well, we must be trained to lead others to be mission-minded United Methodist Women.

The SCCUMW officers are in the process of gathering written and verbal information to share with the district officers, district historians and district cluster leaders. This information will be beneficial for your district as you plan training workshops for Local unit officers. District presidents are asked to communicate with your elected officers, historians and cluster leaders to gain their commitment to attend our 2019 Officers' Training.

The 2019 Officers' Training will meet at Ashland United Methodist Church, located

at 2600 Ashland Road in Columbia. The theme for this program is "Our Spirit of Commitment!" The meeting will be Saturday, Nov. 9, with registration starting at 8:30 a.m.

This year we have adjusted the schedule to allow time prior to lunch for each district president, along with their mission teams, to plan for local unit officers training.

It is my prayer that each of our 12 districts will have representatives in every workshop being planned. The conference officers are committed to planning a training session that will be informative and beneficial. They will be present and ready with packages for each of their district counterparts. These packets should be picked up and used for training with their local unit counterparts.

Sandra Love, Columbia District president, and Caroline Harrelson, Ashland UMW local unit president, are planning for attendees in a special way. For any questions or concerns, call or text me at 843-373-1203 or email me at jeaddy2@yahoo.com

District presidents must inform me of the number of ladies from your district that will be in attendance. Providing this information promptly will allow the ladies of Ashland UMW to properly plan for our meal and meeting areas.

Eaddy is vice president of the South Carolina Conference United Methodist Women.

Native American Ministries

Methodists invited to Waccamaw Pauwau

South Carolina United Methodists are invited to attend the Waccamaw Indian People's 27th annual Arts and Crafts Festival and Pauwau Nov. 2-3 on their tribal grounds at 591 Bluewater Road, Aynor.

Gates open at 11 a.m. both days. Grand entry is at 1 p.m. Nov. 2 and 2 p.m. Nov. 3.

The grand entry is actually the start of the Pauwau. Just prior to the grand entry, the Grass Dancers are called to "Dance the Grass Down." They use the ancient method to prepare the arena for the actual entry of the visiting dignitaries, veterans, tribal officials and others who hold positions of honor. These honorees are followed by a long line of dancers who practice and represent all of the dance styles from many tribes in the country.

After the procession stops, they honor this country with a Flag Song, honor veterans with a Veterans Dance and offer a word

of thanks to the Creator for giving all this day and each other.

After the grand entry will be the Friendship Dance. The dancers form a long line while holding hands. Lead dancers lead the dance through various movements and tie the line of dancers into various knots and formations inside the dance arena. Everyone is invited to participate.

After the Friendship Dance, the master of ceremonies will call for dancers to dance the various styles of dance, and the dancers will twirl, dip and repeat movements that their ancestors did before them.

There will be more than 20 Native American vendors selling their arts and crafts and several food vendors. Admission is \$7 for adults, \$4 for seniors and children 7-14 and children 6 and under are free.

For more information: leave a message at 843-358-6877 or visit waccamawindians.us.

Aldersgate Special Needs Ministry welcomes volunteers

COLUMBIA—Aldersgate Special Needs Ministry, the United Methodist agency that helps families prepare for the future of loved ones with developmental disabilities, is strengthening the involvement of local churches in its ministries.

United Methodist Women and Men's groups, Sunday school classes and small groups are actively volunteering with the organization.

Aldersgate operates residences in Columbia, Orangeburg and Florence for special needs adults. Local churches and groups coming alongside Aldersgate provide opportunities for residents to remain engaged in community activities and to have the chance to socialize and interact with church members.

"Having local church involvement in the lives of our residents will enhance our efforts to provide a loving Christian environment," said Executive Directive Elaine Mathis. "We hope that local churches will consider such things as cookouts, parties and other activities that will promote interaction."

Aldersgate is the result of several families and interested persons, some of whom were parents of special needs children, taking their desire to develop a place for the care of adult children with developmental disabilities



Washington Street UMC's Active Faith Small Group, a mission team involved in community and social justice issues, provided a meal and gifts for the women at Aldersgate's Columbia Builders Care Home.

to the Conference Council on Ministries. Delegates to the 2003 Annual Conference approved the Council on Ministries' plan to create Aldersgate.

Today, Aldersgate maintains three homes for adults with special needs, giving them the opportunity to live in a Christian environment with a professional staff dedicated to providing a loving home.

For more information, visit aldersgatespecialneedsministry.org, call 843-754-8936 or email asnm-sc@att.net.

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Every Child is a Miracle, but Some miracles need your help.

Lay Servant Ministries

by Garland Crump

I'm blessed to serve: A reflection

It's been over 20 years ago that my pastor, friend and mentor, the Rev. Albert Cox suggested I enroll in the Lay Speaking ministries Program. I followed his advice, and my life has been forever blessed and changed. Being a part of the UMC Lay Servant Ministries has been and continues to be a very rewarding experience.

My instructor in my first class was a childhood friend, Jimmy Smoak shared his passion and enthusiasm for the program, and his enthusiasm was contagious and uplifting to all of us. Rosa Kennerly was the other instructor. Rosa and I were both middle school principals at the time, so we both had life experiences we could share. The bond of love and mutual admiration we all developed with each other has grown stronger over the years. Sadly, our brother in Christ, Jimmy Smoak, died unexpectedly.

The Lay Servant Ministries is a vibrant and powerful ministry. The instructors are unpaid volunteers who are devoted servants of Christ. Their mission is to equip the laity of the church for service. I have taken many courses over the years, and every class I've taken has enriched my spiritual journey. I am proud to be a part of this ministry and I hope to continue for many years to come.

Rev. Jerry Phillips and my current pastor, the Rev. Cooper Stonestreet, have encouraged me to continue to participate in the program. They have given me opportunities to lead, teach and preach on numerous occasions. The lay ministry course equips participants for service. The church needs laity in all areas of ministry, not just leading a Sunday worship service. There is a place for ministry and service for everyone.

Our district is blessed to have leaders who are dedicated to the lay servant ministry training program. I look forward to working with Sister Rosa and the entire Lay Speaking ministry staff. Shelia Shanklin, Kevin Liles and Rosa Kennerly are the "wind beneath the wings" of our Lay Servant training program. Thank you for your commitment and leadership. I look forward to serving with you in the days ahead.

Crump is a member of Holly Hill United Methodist Church, Holly Hill.



ERT quarterly training a success

South Carolina UMWIM's Early Response Team held their quarterly training Sept. 7 at the Rivers Street campus of St. Mark UMC, Greenwood. The training included the ERT Basic Class, a chainsaw class, a muck out/assessment class and a team leader class. Here, one of the women in the chainsaw class puts her skills into action.

Photo by Danny Thompson



Thanks!

Thank you to those who gave so generously to the Aldersgate Special Needs Ministry offering on Aug. 11 and to those who support the ministry year-round.



Wesley Chapel Shoes4Water: Serving God's People

By Shirley Burroughs
LAKE CITY—Wesley Chapel United Methodist Women are always looking for opportunities to serve locally and globally. So when the chance came to prove their commitment to mission by collecting new and slightly worn shoes for the Shoes4Water project, they sprung into action.

Shoes4Water, a Christian mission ministry, helps fund water projects in Kenya, Haiti and South America. The money collected from the sale of the shoes goes directly to providing clean water for the people in these areas.

Thanks to the vision of Patricia McGill, social action coordinator, under the leadership of Betsy Graham, unit president, and

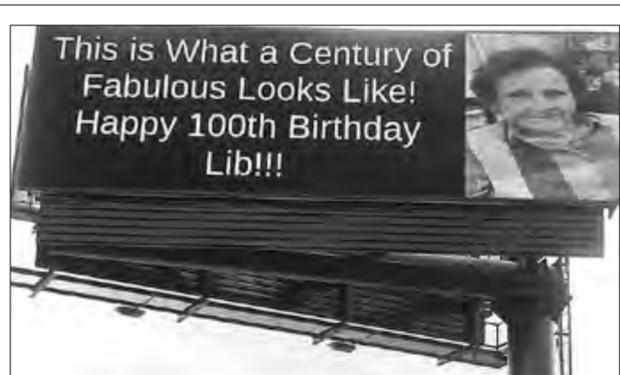
the spiritual guidance of Dr. Sheila Elliott Hodge, Wesley's United Methodist Women were able to collect more than 275 pairs of new and gently worn shoes.

The campaign for the collection of the shoes ran for the entire month of June. Steps were taken, in advance, to educate the public on the importance of donating the shoes through announcements and presentations. At the end of June, the pairs of shoes were counted, boxed and delivered to Gina Bowers in Lexington, who shipped them to Africa.

This project would not have been a success without the generous participation of the public, or without God leading the effort.



Wesley Chapel United Methodist Women say they will continue to take advantage of opportunities to serve God by serving his people.



100 years young

Elizabeth Sims, of St. Paul's UMC, Orangeburg, celebrated her 100th birthday Oct. 6. Sims, known as "Mrs. Lib," is an active member of the E.F. Jones Sunday school class, JOY Club (Just Older Youth) and United Methodist Women. She was recognized with a party for family and friends on Saturday and a corsage Sunday morning.

Sand Hill to celebrate mortgage burning

RIDGEVILLE—Sand Hill United Methodist Church will celebrate the burning of its mortgage during its Nov. 17 morning services. Bishop Jonathan Holston will be the guest speaker.

The Rev. Jeffrey Salley, senior pastor, and the Rev. Jerry Harrison, retired pastor, will also participate in the service. Dinner will be served following.

Those interested in attending are asked to RSVP to the lay leader of the church, Pamela Goodwine-Glover, at pamelagoodwinglover@gmail.com or 843-708-7788.

Around the District

Columbia District

Congratulations to the Rev. Trevor and Jenna Miller on the birth of their daughter. Murrye Elisabeth was born Sept. 27. Rev. Miller is an associate pastor at Mount Horeb UMC, Lexington.

The Faith Coalition on Gun Violence, founded by the Rev. John Evans, held its Sounds of Peace Concert Sept. 29 at Bethlehem Baptist Church, Columbia.

The Soup Cellar at Washington Street UMC, Columbia, celebrated its 40th anniversary Oct. 20 following the morning worship.

Shiloh UMC, Gilbert, celebrated its homecoming and building dedication Oct. 27 during its morning worship. Dr. Cathy Jamieson, district superintendent, was the guest preacher for the morning worship, which celebrated 182 years of service, and the new building dedication. Lunch followed.

Washington Street UMC, Columbia, has hired Dr. Dwight Dockery as the director of music. Dockery recently served as director of children's music at Shandon Presbyterian Church, Columbia.

Greenville District

McBee Chapel UMC, Conestee, will present Christmas in Word and Song Dec 1 at 6:30 p.m.

Marion District

Billy Fallaw, director of music and organist at First UMC, Conway, has been appointed American Guild of Organists District Convener for the State of South Carolina. Fallaw will work with the regional councilor and local chapters across the state to promote goals of the national organization. He is founding dean and immediate past dean



Photo courtesy of Judy Carey

Festival of Nativities

Williston United Methodist Women will host their 10th Annual Nativity Festival Dec. 14-15 from 1-5 p.m. at Williston UMC, 6030 Springfield Road, Williston. More than 100 large to small nativities from church members and friends will be displayed throughout the church. At the end of the tour are crafts, including several handmade nativities, and baked goods for sale. The public is invited to the walking tour of the nativities. There is no admission for the tour, only donations. All proceeds are used for mission work throughout the year. Every year brings something new and different with many blessings. All are welcome. For more information: 803-300-4323.

of the Grand Strand Chapter of American Guild of Organists.

Congratulations to the Rev. Isaac and Kate Dusenbury on the birth of their first child. Charles Franklin Dusenbury II was born Oct. 7. Rev. Dusenbury is an associate pastor at Belin Memorial UMC, Murrells Inlet.

St. Paul UMC, Greenville, held a Fall Block Party Oct. 27. A DJ, costume parade, balloon artist, face painting, pumpkin decorating, photo booth, games and more were part of the festivities.

Orangeburg District

Mount Nebo UMC, Orangeburg, held its 131st church anniversary Oct. 27.

Mount Nebo UMC, Orangeburg, will celebrate its Mass Choir's eighth anniversary Nov. 3 at 2:30 p.m.

Rock Hill District

Philadelphia UMC, Fort Mill, held its annual Fall Festival Oct. 5. Along with BBQ, chicken and homemade baked goods for sale, there was three bounce houses, games, a prayer room and a performance by The

Destination Bluegrass Band.

Congratulations to the Rev. Ryan and Dana Powell on the birth of their son. Lincoln James Powell was born Oct. 11 and welcomed home by Hudson Lee and Peyton Lynn. Rev. Powell is the associate pastor at St. John's UMC, Rock Hill.

Spartanburg District

Dr. David W. Pittman, professor of psychology at Wofford College, Spartanburg, and his students are making Boss' Healthy Buddies available to all South Carolina elementary schools. The free nutrition education resource for grades K-4 teaches students about making healthy eating choices. "The ultimate goal of Boss' Healthy Buddies is teaching youngsters about nutrition," said Samantha Baker, a senior accounting major. "We can educate the children to make healthier choices at school, and we can motivate them to make those healthy decisions at home as well. Boss' Healthy Buddies brings awareness to families as well."

Wofford College, Spartanburg, broke ground Oct. 18 for the Chandler Center for Environmental Studies. The construction site is between the Rosalind Sallenger Richardson Center for the Arts and the Roger Milliken Science Center at the center of campus. The groundbreaking will also honor Harold and Delores Chandler.

Walterboro District

Mount Carmel UMC, Hampton, celebrated 175 years in ministry Oct. 27.

Church of the Palms, Okatie, held its annual Fall Festival Oct. 26. More than 100 items were for sale by silent auction, raising money to support Family Promise, Habitat for Humanity, Mercy Missions Food Pantry and Africa University.



Pastor Jamie McDowell and Gaby King with Kaya and Wolverine.

Hopewell-Zion Charge hosts Blessing of the Animals

Zion United Methodist Church is a church of six members just outside of Walhalla whose service starts at 9 a.m. Hopewell UMC, its sister church, typically has about 24 people present on a Sunday morning, and their service begins at 11 a.m. in Westminster.

The decision was made to incorporate a Blessing of the Animals during the morning worship at both churches on Oct. 6.

Hopewell-Zion pastor the Rev. Jamie McDowell and his wife, Robyn, brought along their 6-month-old Bernese mountain dog, Kaya. At the service at Zion, there were three members and five visitors that morning. Along with Kaya to bless, there was a cat named

Bam and two Doberman pinschers, Gypsy and Izzy. At the completion of the service, Kaya was taken for a visit at Lakeview Assisted Living en route to Hopewell. She enjoyed meeting the residents.

For the service at Hopewell, there were 28 people in attendance. Those to be blessed included Buster the Amazon parrot, who was quite the gentleman; Bear, a sweet Lab mix; Jazzie the Yorkie, who was dressed to the nines; and Wolverine the ball python. Blessed by proxy were Floyd the terrier, July the cat and Sadie the dog.

All of the animals remained quiet and respectful during the service. Everyone enjoyed visiting with them after the service.

CONNECT CHURCH: Former gym now sees 80 people a week

From Page 1

Along with Faulk, the core group and steering committee for the creation of Connect Church included Steve Frantz, Jimmy Gaddy, Jim Gilliam, Carlie Stevens, Karen Moffett, Kyle Brazell, Laura Moffett and Trace Silvers.

"Connect Church happened because people saw a vision of what could be," Faulk said.

Through a fundraising campaign, they raised \$175,000. Of that, \$24,000 came from a district grant.

"We did a renovation of the gym and turned it into Connect Church," Faulk said. "We were able to imagine what that might look like as a worship space."

Just before Easter, Connect Church opened its doors right beside Lee Road. Connect Church is run by the same council and staff as Lee Road UMC but considers itself its own entity.

Connect Church has a contemporary worship service at 11 a.m. every Sunday, and Lee Road offers a traditional service at 10 a.m.

"We wanted a sense of something new, something different," Faulk said. "(For) people that don't know church, it's a different view of what they had perceived. It's a different feel. We have a wonderful traditional church, Lee Road, and a wonderful contemporary church, Connect Church."

Connect Church's mission statement is to lead people into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ.

"My goal is to do what Jesus did, to reach people who aren't being reached. I look at people that ride by as, 'They just don't know yet; they don't know yet that God loves them.' Maybe they had a bad experience, or maybe they haven't understood the love of God. Sometimes, I believe, people don't know church can be a great place to be," Faulk said.

Faulk said Lee Road has been going through a time of transition, both losing some members and gaining new members. Connect Church has been enjoying attendance of about 80 people each week.

"We're trying to move forward. Change is hard. Everything does change and continues to change," Faulk said.

He said he's learned over the years that creating a very casual and enjoyable worship service can be appealing to all ages, races



Once a gym, the building has been trasformed into a church.

and backgrounds. "I believe there are a lot of churches, United Methodist churches, across South Carolina that can take this model and copy it and do the same thing," Faulk said. "It offers a chance to revitalize and reach people—new people that aren't coming to church."

Faulk said he believes God put him on this planet to help churches do this.

"Every church I've been in, I've tried to leave it better than I found it, (to) reach people," Faulk said. "I pray that Lee Road and Connect Church will continue to grow and reach people that aren't being reached. That's what I prayed for the last church, this church and any other church I work for in the future. It's a wonderful thing to lead people to Christ. Even if one person comes to Christ, all of Heaven rejoices. Everything we did up to that point was worth it."

"If this article will help another church do something like this and again change one person's life, all this is worth it."

To learn more about Connect Church, email pastorfaulk@yahoo.com.



Greenville District Superintendent the Rev. Jim Dennis blesses the new gym-turned-church.

CHARGES DISMISSED: Book of Discipline offers clear process

From Page 1

Florence County. Ballenger, an ordained pastor, was suspended from all ministerial duties for the protection of all parties.

On June 2 of this year, the Clergy Session of the South Carolina Annual Conference voted to change his status to "involuntary retirement," said the Rev. Ken Nelson, the conference's director of clergy services.

"At each step, the conference has complied with processes and procedures as set forth in *The Book of Discipline* of The United Methodist Church and will continue to do so in the future."

On April 19, 2018, in Florence County Circuit Court, Ballenger received a not guilty disposition on one of the charges. This summer, on June 26, the remaining charges were dismissed in a nolle prosequi disposition in Richland County General Session Court. His criminal record was subsequently expunged.

"That season's over with," Ballenger said. Ballenger said the last few years have been difficult, and he knows even though his record is clear, people have long memories.

"You don't ever get over the stigma of being charged with those kind of charges," Ballenger said. "It's life-altering. Things will never be the same again, but I don't think they're supposed to be."



Ballenger

He said regardless of the experience, God has a call on his life, and God's call will prevail however God sees fit.

"I have a calling, and I served faithfully in the South Carolina United Methodist Church for 22 or 23 years, and just because that situation arose it didn't stop the calling that I received back in 1993," Ballenger said. "I still have work to do."

He said he takes comfort that God knew even when He called him that the day was coming when Ballenger would be arrested.

"But the great thing about the Lord is when he picks you up and says, 'Follow me,' it does not stop till he's finished with you. I'm just going to keep going on and keep doing what I have been called to do, keeping taking the next step."

"In the midst of the whirlwind, God still works. And even though I was down and out, I was down, but I was not out."

Ballenger believes now is the next chapter—it's not a whole new book.

"The Lord uses everything. We'll just see what lies ahead. As they say, the best is yet to come."

Nelson said conference continues to be in prayer for everyone affected by the allegations that led to criminal charges against Ballenger 2015.

"We are committed to providing a safe space where all people may worship and be in mission," Nelson said.

He noted there is a process by which a pastor who has been involuntarily retired can attempt to gain readmittance if they so desire.

That process is detailed in Para. 368 of the 2016 *United Methodist Book of Discipline* (see sidebar).

Can a pastor be reappointed after involuntary retirement?

The *United Methodist Book of Discipline* does have a process if a pastor wishes to be readmitted after involuntary retirement.

Para. 368: Readmission After Involuntary Retirement—Clergy members of an annual conference desiring to return to effective relationship after having been placed in involuntary retirement (Para. 357.3) must meet the following conditions:

1. Submit a written request for reinstatement to the Board of Ordained Ministry.
2. The Board of Ordained Ministry and the cabinet shall review the member's qualifications and the circumstances relating to his or her retirement.
3. Recommendation by the Board of Ordained Ministry, the bishop, cabinet, and a two-thirds vote of the clergy members in full connection of the annual conference that granted the involuntary retirement. A period of at least two years of service as a local pastor shall be required prior to readmission to conference membership.
4. Presentation of the certificate of retirement.
5. Presentation of satisfactory certificate of good health on the prescribed form from a physician approved by the Board of Ordained Ministry. The Board of Ordained Ministry may require a psychological evaluation. Any pension being received through the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits shall be discontinued upon their return to effective relationship. The pension shall be reinstated upon subsequent retirement.

—2016 UMC Book of Discipline

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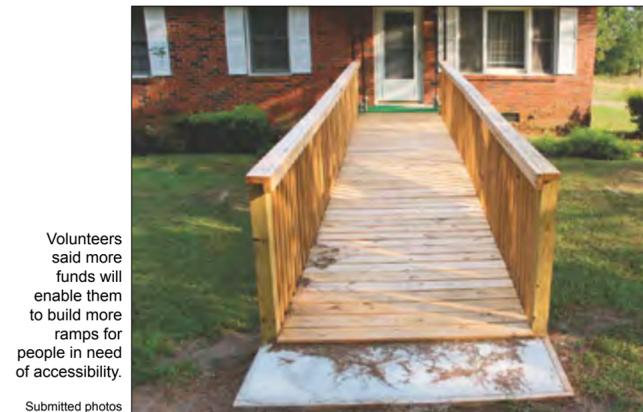


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RAMP MINISTRY: Continued

From Page 1



Volunteers said more funds will enable them to build more ramps for people in need of accessibility.

Submitted photos

"I felt good, like we are doing something that is pleasing in God's sight."

Now, White and others in the district have a drive to build even more ramps for people with accessibility troubles. Since the initial ramps, they have received several more requests for help from throughout the Florence District, and they are now doing what they can to raise funds to keep their ramp ministry going.

White said the ramps cost about \$1,000 on average to build. The labor is free, but they need to purchase wood and other materials.

"We are trying to help needy people, and these are people who can't afford to have a ramp built out of their pocket," White said. "We just need to come up with money to buy the materials."

Fleming said the men have already decided to do at least two to three work days annually, intentionally spread across the district, funds permitting.

The Florence District is currently collecting funds for the ramp ministry. Anyone interested can send to Florence District, Attn: Ramp Ministry, P.O. Box 408, Florence, SC 29503.

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Interfaith Peace Conference to ‘imagine the way to peace’ through the arts

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C.—All are invited to join celebrate and reflect upon the role that various arts play in reconciliation and peace-building during the Interfaith Peace Conference, a capstone event, Nov. 21-24, at Lake Junaluska.

The conference theme is “The Arts of Peace: Imagining the Way.”

The conference will highlight the way Abrahamic traditions have written, embellished and illuminated their Scriptures to

draw readers and worshippers into their deeper and more expansive meanings. Participants will draw on music, drama, textile art, dance and other art forms that lead people to new ways of imagining the peace promised within their deepest religious visions. Guest presenters include:

- Mariela Shaker, Syrian violinist, motivational speaker and award-winning advocate for refugees.
- Laurie Wohl, fiber artist and lecturer

internationally known for her unique Un-weavings*, liturgical projects and interfaith messages.

• Jonathan Homrighausen, biblical scholar and doctoral student in Old Testament at Duke University. He is also an amateur calligrapher.

• Ilyas Kashani, a “hakim,” or practitioner of traditional Islamic healing and medicine.

The Interfaith Peace Conference will

feature artists, interpreters, workshops, worship, films and other arts-related activities. Guest performances include a sema, or whirling ceremony, the Mars Hill University Gospel Choir and “Women and War,” a reader’s theater play by Jack Hilton Cunningham.

Registration for the conference is now open. Lodging and meal packages are available. Call 800-222-4930 or visit www.lakejunaluska.com/peace.

Bethesda UMC Farm Day celebrates God’s harvest, helps church mission

By David Bryant

EASLEY—One minute, he was clearing brush; the next, he was the victim of a potentially life threatening machinery accident. What did this man do while immobile and helpless in the hospital?

For Amery Brooks, a member of Bethesda United Methodist Church, the answer was simple, and more than a little ironic: “Why not plan a celebration of the farming heritage of the Powdersville community?”

That idea incubated and developed. Upon his release from the hospital and return to church services, Brooks took his idea to his adult Sunday school class. They, in turn, took it to prayer groups, committees and team, and the United Methodist Men.

There had to be barbecue. There had to be special music. There had to be tractors! But wait, of what value is a mere tractor? There had to be implements! The idea was, perhaps, getting a little out of control....

Fast forward to Sunday, Oct. 6. A procession of more than 15 tractors, with implements attached, paraded through the small community of Powdersville and arrived at Bethesda UMC.

The smell of barbecue wafted faintly in the fall air. Harvest hymns were sung by the congregation, and a last-minute sermon re-write delivered a message of each of us as God’s individual field, our lives prepared, planted, tended, weeded, matured and “laid by” as the harvest of His grace. Bluegrass Gospel music rounded out both the service and

the harvest feast of barbecue and fixin’s that followed.

The first annual Bethesda UMC Farm Day was about to draw to a close.

Yet there was more, much more, about this day. A dearly loved young lady of our church had previously gone on national and international mission trips. She attended university to perfect her calling to teach. Ultimately, she moved to Kenya to teach and live in a rural residential school (Comet House) in order to use her profession and her faith in service to others, plowing furrows of faith and the grace of Jesus Christ in fields near and far, at home and abroad.

Donations from this day went to support her ministry, her vision, her school and her kids. It’s harvest time!

Volunteers urged to pray now about involvement in January disaster ‘Day of Service’

South Carolina Conference disaster recovery leaders are hard at work planning for their conference-wide next day of service, and all United Methodists are encouraged to pray about getting involved.

The day of service will take place over the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. weekend (Jan. 18-20, 2020).

The January day of service is a followup to the successful service day held Sept. 21. That day, more than 100 people—117 adults and 16 youth—gathered at St. Paul United Methodist Church in Chesterfield and were deployed to 12 projects across the Pee Dee. Projects ranged

from drywall repair, replacement and painting to outdoor siding and roof repair. Volunteers ranged in age from 16 to 97.

Tim Whitten, conference disaster recovery director, said people from all over the state participated.

For the January service event, teams will be able to sign up for individual days or the whole weekend if they want. Work will be done in Marion and Marlboro counties.

Registration will begin in December, but people can contact Whitten if they have questions or want to reserve housing for the weekend: 843-506-1289 or disasterrecovery@umcsc.org.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN: ‘Possibilities are limitless’

From Page 1

Olson, whose talk Friday night at Buncombe Street United Methodist Church drew a standing ovation, brought a word on the limitless possibilities of what strong, committed Christian women can achieve when they come together in solidarity with Christ at their center.

Olson lifted up story after story of all United Methodist Women have done since their nascent start on a rainy night March 23, 1869, when a handful of women came together at Tremont Street Church in Boston to form the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Today called United Methodist Women, the organization has 800,000 members and is the largest denominational faith group for women in the world.

“We could write books of stories of their amazing accomplishments, women called to mission who were not welcome to speak in their own churches, and yet had an unbeliev-

able impact on women, children and youth in our own communities in the United States and around the world,” Olson said.

She shares some of the impacts: Bringing the Gospel to Korea through women whose culture dictated couldn’t even have their own given names. Supporting a mission in Japan during a time when our own government was rounding up Japanese Americans as enemies of the state. Starting orphanages and providing critical healthcare in places of dire need, sometimes right here in this nation.

Olson noted the theme for the annual meeting, “Celebrating 150 Years of Limitless Possibilities,” was almost ironic, for as she said, “As we tell these stories, we’re aware no one ever in the United Methodist Women’s history experienced resources as being unlimited. No one ever said, ‘What are we going to do with all this money?’ ‘How are we going to train all these new women, and all of them want to be leaders?’”

In fact, Olson said, if we are to read back over the journals and reports across that 150-



Harriett Jane Olson, general secretary of National United Methodist Women, speaks to South Carolina crowd at Oct. 25 meeting.

year history, we see time after time people said far different things: Who will follow this missionary? Who will we train? How will we get the young women who will participate?

While Olson said some of the United Methodist Women’s foremothers were certainly visionary, optimistic and faith-filled, seeing God guiding their work step by step, most just saw the need right in front of them and did what they could to help, persistently and doggedly taking one small step at a time.

“They saw one possibility or a handful of possibilities, and they did the next right thing,” Olson said. “I suspect they were not aware the possibilities were actually limitless. I suspect they felt the pressure of funding, the pressure of not being sure who would respond to the call.”

But they did respond, Olson said, “Persistently, pressing for the next possibility and the possibility after that. When they took the first risk, and then the next, and suddenly, they were in a place they never expected to be.”

That is how Olson expects the next 150 years of United Methodist Women to be: Opening hearts to the world right in front of us, persisting in our efforts, moving into needs we can see and taking us to the next right step.

“We don’t know what is possible, except we know that all things are possible through God who strengthens us,” Olson said to applause and amens. “We know with whom we walk. We know who calls us. And we know that God loves the world, the broken world, the world we can see.

“The possibilities are limitless, and the resources can be built.”

She noted combatting cultural norms has always been a part of United Methodist Women’s work, including in this 150th year. “Women are still being told they are not qualified to teach theology or to preach,” Olson said, noting the reports of sexual harassment and sexual abuse that are being shared as part of the #MeToo movement.

But, Olson said, “When we work together in a broken world it’s significant.”

She urged attendees to push the boundaries of culture, knowing the culture of this world is not the culture of God’s kingdom.

“Open your hearts to the way God is calling us to be constant in prayer for the world that needs to know the Lord so deeply,” Olson said in closing. “For the past 149 years we’ve responded. In this year, this our 150th year, we’re also responding. And with God’s help we will continue to be faithful to the call.”

Olson’s message was part of a two-day event that also featured worship, business, election of officers and workshops on everything from combating human trafficking to prison ministry to education to how to prayer-walk our cities.

Bishop L. Jonathan Holston, in his closing remarks after communion Friday night, lifted up the work of the women as they mark their sesquicentennial, and encouraged them in the many ways they are pressing on to do God’s work.

For more on the work of United Methodist Women, as well as information on upcoming educational and mission events, visit www.umcsc.org/discipleship/united-methodist-women/.



View from the Pews

by Bill Barnier

We might speculate what it was like for new Christians to worship in secret for fear of being persecuted for their belief. Similar situations have taken place throughout history. The strong and powerful take advantage of their position, wealth or influence to control others. Persecution for birth-right, beliefs, opinions or any manner of public display, contrary to established control, are repeatedly met with greater restriction, threats and force, if necessary.

We’ve all been in situations where we hesitate to reveal a secret, belief or opinion for fear the revelation will be met with negative, even hurtful, response. The current political climate in our country is a prime example of one political group using every manner of force, falsehood, intimidation and coercion to make life uncomfortable for their opposition. The ends seem to justify the means, even if those means are false, contrived, mean spirited and harmful to others. Violence, slander, property damage and serious injury are tools often used to silence personal opinion and suppress challenges to other viewpoints. A dangerous and unconstitutional path, to be sure.

Every Christian who truly embraces the wishes of our

Lord to spread the word about His love and offer of eternal life, has contemplated the wisdom of revealing their Christian belief in daily interactions with others. Social custom, though varied and diverse throughout the world, generally reserves religious revelation to situations or locations meant for such interchange.

Business protocol is even more restrictive. Unless a religious connection is known beforehand, it is considered inappropriate to profess one’s faith in any manner for fear of offending others in the business setting.

Of course, there are exceptions. During a recent business meeting in which we were meeting the other party for the first time, I was explaining our publishing business philosophy. I clarified that we use our talents and experience to give training and voice to new writers through their written stories. In the flash of a microsecond I evaluated the risk, felt the Spirit move me and pointed out that our talent came from God, who wants us to share it to help others. I further explained that we don’t publish that which demeans others, unnecessary violence or anything harmful to children.

I then waited for the meeting to come to an abrupt end. Looking across the table, I saw the other party break into

a grin, followed by his revelation that he, too, was a Christian and had a similar philosophy for his business. The foundation for a solid business relationship was laid using our faith in the Holy Spirit. How refreshing it was to understand the quiet guidance of the Holy Spirit, to trust in my courage to reveal my renewed faith. Not a shout from a street corner, nor an in-your-face challenge. Just faith in action.

We have all had similar occurrences in our lives, both personal and business. My wife has always extorted her belief that helping new writers to become better writers and authors is what God has asked us to do. In looking back over the past dozen years it’s clear that every step, every failure, each hardship and every new relationship were all meant to prepare us for the next step in God’s plan for us.

It is not always easy to see, nor are the pieces of the plan recognized as being stepping stones on a path to please God. Perhaps most difficult is to change the word “me” to the word “we,” in recognition of what is possible when the Holy Spirit moves for us, in us and through us.

I wish you interspection.

Barnier is a member of St. Paul UMC, Ridgeland.



Guest Commentary

by David McAda

Remember your baptism and be thankful. Words we often hear in church, but how does it look or feel? I discovered for myself at the recent Leadership Institute hosted by the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kansas.

I stood at a bubbling font outside the sanctuary to remember my baptism. I stood for a second, or 30, admiring the sight and sound of the running water as well as the reflections, and then I touched the cool, moving waters with three fingers. (Was I already remembering the marvels of the Trinity?) I held them there, lingering in thought and no thought. Within a few seconds, four or five other people walked up to remember their baptisms and, in that moment, I felt a connectedness to the global United Methodist Church that I had never felt before.

I didn’t take note of skin color, age, sexual preference or even if they were from the South! I just dwelled in the thought that we were in this together and committed to loving our God with everything we’ve got, and loving our neighbor as ourselves.

I admit I’ve been slow to comprehend and accept the history of the Methodist Church. As a child I heard stories of John Wesley having his heart suddenly warmed, and then my history lesson seemed to leap-frog to modern day, where all was “copacetic” in my small, South Texas town, where the local black church choir was invited to sing every couple years and women “enjoyed” their roles in the United Methodist Women. (Did I mention I can be sarcastic?)

Yes, now as a middle-aged white man, I see that our denomination has struggled with doing what is right because we seem to have trouble uniting on what exactly IS right.

So, I traveled to Leadership Institute somewhat unsure what to expect. I try to adhere to the Walk to Emmaus philosophy of “Don’t anticipate, but participate.” But still I wondered: Would this be a call to arms? Two days of lambasting those of differing opinions?

On the contrary, the presentations and conversations were framed in a kind of love that can only be perfected by Jesus Christ. There was no animosity—that would have been fruitless, given that a survey on the

first night proved we were a diverse-minded group. Instead, I heard that if a church, or individual, felt they couldn’t remain united, they would go with a collective blessing. Time and time again, I was reminded of the two great commandments: to love God with everything we’ve got and to love our neighbor as we love ourselves.

At Travelers Rest UMC, Travelers Rest, I’ve learned my neighbor doesn’t always look or act like me. I’ve found neighbors in the Muslim congregation we invited to dinner and conversation, the young Hindu college student my wife and I partnered with for four years, the single pregnant woman our Sunday school class loved and embraced, the gay couple who so faithfully participate in the life of the church, and even the homeless man we found sleeping in the church’s stairwell.

But is it enough to just acknowledge each of these neighbors? Or do those two commandments quoted by Jesus push the relationship to a level of inclusion and interaction?

At Leadership Institute, speaker after speaker expressed a vision for a UNITED Methodist Church—one where everyone has a seat at God’s table, one where we rise above our political frays and—regardless of the tag you may put on someone as conservative, progressive, traditionalist, etc.—we will love each other through our differences for the sake of the church. But to do that, we have to stop hurting people.

People of color have been hurt by the church. Church, stop doing that. Women, especially clergy, have been treated like second-class citizens. Church, stop doing that. LGBTQ people have been told you can come in but we can’t love you the way you are. Church, stop doing that.

My father taught the men’s class in that small South Texas Methodist church for well more than 50 years. As a young adult I listened to his concerns and questions when his church had their first female clergy appointed. I thought he, and his church, only needed some time to change. And they did, loving many female clergy since the first. Did they lose members? Yes. Was it painful? Yes. Was it fair to the pastor? Of course not. But minds were changed, grace was extended and love prevailed in a united congregation.



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Growing Stronger, Growing Deeper, Reaching Higher

Mechanicsville Children and Youth Ministries celebrated Children’s Sabbath Sunday Oct. 13 during the morning worship service. The theme was “Growing Stronger, Growing Deeper and Reaching Higher.” Speakers were Jah’kualria Montgomery, a sophomore at Lee Central High School, and Charena Myers, a junior at Winthrop University. The Rev. and Mrs. Ernest Frierson praised the young people for doing an amazing job, noting they are not just kids; they are our future leaders.



Guest Commentary

by Dr. Phil Thraikill

Reading Luke in Nigeria (Part 3)

When faced with the numerical decline, the numerous divisions and the noxious current environment of The United Methodist Church in the United States, reports of vibrant growth in our churches across Africa are encouraging, as if to say, "At least we're growing over there!"

To simplify, the life is over there and the resources over here. They can't get basic textbooks, while our seminary libraries have hundred of thousands of volumes. We have few converts and many books on evangelism; they have few books and many converts. It is not their desire to be sealed off in a freshly created Central Conference so that the U.S. church can embrace an ever-more-progressive agenda, which, in their mind, is a departure from the apostolic faith and its proven ethical boundaries. They are not sanguine about the culture's power to twist the church out of shape and into its mold as its smiling, benevolent chaplain. And if that is our aspiration, they will not go with us to the party.

Because their number of General Conference delegates is increasing along with new bishops, Africa's influence is increasing as they bring with them a commitment to the authority of Scripture for both faith and ethics and a more vivid understanding of the realities of spiritual warfare, both of which we long ago cast aside as irrelevant in our more sophisticated environs. We can no longer name the spiritual powers we face; they know better.

When lecturing on Luke's miracles in Ch. 3-9, each story was met with contemporary parallels. I did not have the time to verify every story, but when credible people tell unusual stories by Western standards, I tend to believe them. There they are a normal part of Christian living, but to us exceptional.

It doesn't take long to discover they are not skeptics when it comes to the super-

natural and must often edit the stories they share with their skeptical friends across the Atlantic. But when you signal that you are friendly to vivid religious experience (an old Wesleyan trait!), you hear the most amazing stories told by those who, on other grounds, are well oriented to reality. Stories of dramatic healings and exorcisms are common, as are guidance through dreams and even angelic encounters.

At times of quiet about 2 a.m. I woke up wondering, "Which world is real?" I could not deny their testimonies were more like the Book of Acts than ours, more like the journals of Wesley than our church newsletters.

Positioned as they are between the pressures of a militant and often violent Islam, the polytheism and animism of African traditional religion and the encroaching option of Western secularism and hedonism, especially in cities, Methodist believers in Nigeria are well aware the church's classic faith is just one among options and must be graciously offered and ably defended against alternatives, often at high cost, even martyrdom.

From leaders I heard stories of burned churches and destroyed Christian villages. Everyone knew someone who'd lost someone. When the government winks at such and does little to investigate, you can see why the church is often on the defensive. One of my lectures on the Sermon on the Plain led to energetic debate on turning the other cheek when faced with a machete or rifle.

When your neighbor on one side is a Muslim Fulani herder angry about open grazing, and when your neighbor on the other is a witch doctor or Juju priest making sacrifices and empowering fetishes and pronouncing curses, and when your nephew comes back to the village in a fancy Range Rover and a tailored suit, you are living at an intersection of options, and Jesus is only one of them. Whereas we live in the lengthened shadow of a fading Christendom and its

imprint, they've never known such and are closer to the religious diversity faced by the early church.

Here, prayer is not decorative or ceremonial but pressing. Without God's immediate aid, life does not work well, and neither does church. People living in a different universe are just next door. One rolls out his prayer mat five times a day and wants 7th-century Sharia law to rule, pushing back what rights the women of Nigeria now claim. Another makes his living in a fee-for-services manipulation of unseen powers, the ancestors and the local spirits who demand attention and obeisance from the living. In the middle hut sits a Methodist church member fasting and praying over an open Bible, loving Christ and looking for ways to make a witness in a tough neighborhood.

I go to Nigeria, and soon to Liberia and Kenya, with the fruits of faithful Christian scholarship. What I gain is an exposure to front-line Christianity contending for faith.

From time to time there would be an idea in my presentations that caused hands to shoot up. One was, "Faith is trust based on accumulated evidences of truth." Another was, "The real alternative to monotheism is not atheism but polytheism."

A third was, "Nigerians and Americans sin equally, just differently." And a fourth, "The American church is fat, lazy and idolatrous, and the Nigerian church is skinny, afraid and idolatrous."

Hands went up, this time waving and accompanied by murmuring. They did not know I'd set them up. Syncretism is the blending of incompatible ideas (e.g. classic Christianity and traditional occult practices). The first says, "Jesus is victor over all principalities and powers, so we need not fear them or pay them off." The second says, "Jesus may be Lord of heaven, but down at ground level we must keep the spirits and ancestors from messing with us or harming us."

Do you see the difference? It's a first commandment issue that cannot be minimized: "You shall have no other gods before me."

Since it is much easier to see the sins of another church rather than your own, I sharply critiqued their compromises with African Traditional Religion and its spiritual intercourse with and appeasement of alien spiritual powers.

There were several youngish pastors in my classes who lived in Muslim areas and carried fetishes with them for protection. One said to the class, "In times of trouble, it makes me invisible." And when I read to them our first baptismal vow, "Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of this world and repent of your sin?" they had not heard of such. This led to a long discussion about pre-baptismal teaching in the early church and its recovery today. That they do not have the 1989 United Methodist Hymnal, with its second-century baptismal services and robust vows, is an issue. So on my next trip, I'm adding a component on "Jesus as Victor over Evil" and the necessity of making a clean break with the spiritual forces of evil at baptism.

And when they, in turn, asked me about syncretism in America, I said that most Methodists are involved in modern forms of polytheism and worship the cultural gods and goddesses of Money, Sex, Chance, Comfort, Power, Beauty, Sports and above all the Inviolable and Sovereign Self. And, having just returned from a week in Vegas strolling the strip, Lori and I found temples and devotees to them all. Many worshipers, just not in churches. Everyone has devotions, only not to the same deity.

So, my fellow Methodists, what does my late-in-life exposure to Luke and African Methodists do for me? It drives me every deeper into the Trinitarian faith of the early church and to the task of offering and defending it in our current malaise.

2019 'Carolina-Clemson Challenge' helps campus ministries

At a critical time of life, The United Methodist Church is on campus reaching out to college students with the good news of Jesus Christ. Through worship, Bible studies, mission trips, retreats and more, campus ministries—known as Wesley Foundations—are able to offer God's love and support to a new generation of Christians.

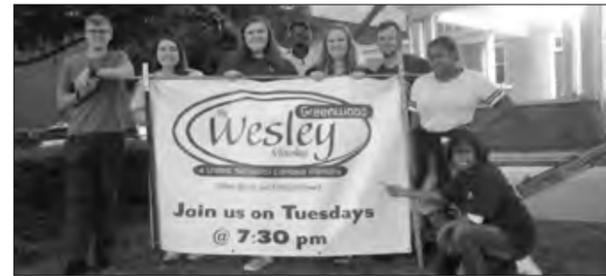
To that end, a fun football challenge aims to help campus ministries meet these needs.

The 2019 Carolina-Clemson football rivalry is an opportunity for a friendly competition in local churches sponsored by the Wesley Foundations at the University of South Carolina and Clemson University. Fans of each school are invited to drop their support in either a USC/garnet bucket or a Clemson/orange bucket as they leave/enter worship on Sunday, Nov. 24. (Dec. 1 is the alternate date.)

The money donated will be used to support the students

and United Methodist campus ministries at USC and Clemson. Checks can be made out to Clemson Wesley Foundation. Contributions should be sent to the Clemson Wesley Foundation with "Carolina/Clemson Challenge" as a notation with the amounts for each school.

For more information, contact Tom Wall at USC at 803-799-7363 or WallBrodie@aol.com, or Steve Simoneaux at Clemson 864-654-5547 or steve.simoneaux@gmail.com.



Where faith and friends are formed

Christian students at Lander University and Piedmont Technical College have been thriving thanks to Greenwood Wesley Fellowship, an offshoot of the Chiquola-Donalds Charge in the Anderson District. Every Tuesday at 7:30 p.m., the students get together for a time of food, fun and fellowship, and they are excited to see what God has in store for them this year. They meet in the Susanna Wesley Building at Main Street UMC. All students to come and join. For information: sbritz@umcsc.org.

S.C.'s Salley among those honored at Gammon Founders' Day

ATLANTA—South Carolina's Dr. James H. Salley will be the banquet speaker and the 2019 Trailblazer Justice Award recipient as Gammon Theological Seminary holds its 136th Founders' Day Banquet and 80th Thirkield-Jones Lecture Series.

Set for Dec. 3-4 in Atlanta, the theme is "Behold the Vision: Unity!" Bishop La'Trelle Easterling is opening worship preacher. Dr. Neichelle R. Guidry is closing worship preacher. The 2019 Emerging Prophetic Leader Award recipient is the Rev. Tiffanie C. Postell.

Dr. F. Douglas Powe Jr. is the Thirkield-Jones Lecturer. For cost and to register, go to www.gammon-itc.org and follow links for "2019 Founders' Day."



'Shoebboxes, Shoebboxes'

Sunday school girls sing the song "Shoebboxes, Shoebboxes" to the tune of "Jingle Bells" in Sunday worship. Last year Little Swamp UMC, Smoaks, contributed 100 shoeboxes to Operation Christmas Child, and members of the church's United Methodist Women are working hard gathering material for this year's shoeboxes.

Prayer walking with the St. James church family

The St. James UMC, Myrtle Beach, faith family had the opportunity recently to do a prayer walk together. After being led outside by their choir, the congregation prayed for St. James Elementary School for its 2019-2020 school year. Prayers were lifted for the administrators, children and parents for divine protection for everyone involved (Psalm 91). The Rev. Deborah Patterson is pastor.



Guest Commentary

by the Rev. Paul Tomasi

What do I tell them?

While I recognize that the loss of one member is not in and of itself sufficient enough to alter the course of our great church, I learned something valuable many years ago in business. I learned that whenever you have even one person complain or leave, there are actually many hundreds if not thousands of people who feel the same way, and who may make the same decisions. They simply never bothered to voice their concerns.

In short, just because the vast majority of people do not voice their concerns, do not mistake that to mean that they agree with you or your decisions.

To date, one of the three churches in the Smoaks Charge may have lost not only a lifetime member but also one of our youngest and most important members, who is also a great servant of the Lord. Another of our churches has also had a very important member, as well as a great servant of the Lord, ask me all about what is going to happen to her church should it adopt the new version of "human sexuality" currently under consideration.

In addition to these two, there are many others who have expressed their personal concerns in a general way regarding the possible course of The United Methodist Church insofar as the new version of human sexuality is concerned.

As a small, rural charge with a stagnant membership, the loss of one of our "sheep" is significant wherein we really cannot afford to lose even one more member, especially over matters beyond our control. In an effort to perhaps be better prepared to answer the numerous questions I get asked about this matter—the UMC's new version of human sexuality versus what the Bible says and what we have believed all of our lives—I present you with the following, to which I hope and pray I get good, prayerful responses that I can use to keep from losing any further sheep.

The vast majority of our church members' foundation for understanding human sexuality is rooted in our commitment to the Bible as the only authoritative guide for faith and practice. The first two chapters of Genesis constitute the paradigm and prerequisite of God's enduring creative intent for human personhood, gender and sexual identity, and sexual intimacy in marriage (see Genesis 1:27, 2:24 cf. Matthew 19:4-5).

Most of us also believe that humanity came from the hand of God with only two sexual distinctions—male and female—both in the image of God, and emerging from one flesh with the unique physical capacity to reunite as one flesh in complementarity within a marriage. God's creation design and intent for marriage, as expressed in Genesis 2, is therefore exclusively between one man and one woman. Marriage alludes to the love of Christ for "His Bride, the Church" (see Ephesians 5:22-33; Revelation 19:7-9). Within this monogamous context, intended to be lifelong, sexual intimacy is a glorious blessing from God.

Most of us also affirm the worth and relevance of human gender and sexuality, and of sexual intimacy as a distinctive of marriage, based on Scripture (Leviticus 18 and 1 Corinthians 5 and 6). Based upon such, most of us also believe that non-marital sex, homosexual sex, same-sex romantic relationships and gender identification incongruent with one's birth-sex all violate God's generous intention for human relationships. Most of us also believe that such practices misrepresent the nature of God Himself, and therefore are sinful under any circumstance. In God's standards, we find merciful restraint on our fallenness.

Most of us also believe that God's love and concern for all of humanity compelled Him to offer His Son as a ransom for our lives, and we consider His biblically recorded and specifically defined guidelines for sexual practice to be enduring expressions of His love and protection of our human identity (see Matthew 19:5-9, Ephesians 4:11-13 and 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8).

Most of us also willingly submit ourselves to these biblical mandates in light of our call to holiness and to self-surrender, wherein most of us also would also prefer to neither practice nor propagate positions or activities at variance with the Word of God as specifically stated herein.

I prayerfully look forward to whatever biblically based responses to the above that your readers might be so good as to provide me with so that I could in turn, as a pastor, relay such on to a group of rural disciples of Christ our Lord in South Carolina. Thank you.

Tomasi is pastor of the Smoaks Charge, Smoaks.



Photo courtesy of the Rev. Judy Hames

Prayer zone ahead!

Dickson Memorial UMC, Townville, had this sign installed as a sign of love, support and solidarity for their local elementary school, Townville Elementary. The sign says, "School Prayer Zone Ahead."



Photo courtesy of Rev. Becky McCorkendate

Acolyte training

In September, Ebenezer UMC in Ritter held acolyte training for the new and returning acolytes in the Hendersonville Charge. The afternoon included a photographic scavenger hunt, multiple lanes of practice candle lighting in the fellowship hall and full speed practice in the sanctuary. The charge is looking forward to the assistance these acolytes will provide at Sunday worship services.

should be specified in the letter of application.

- A college transcript (or a high school transcript if the applicant is a rising freshman)
 - A letter from the senior pastor of the applicant's home church or a college chaplain confirming that the applicant is a United Methodist and describing the applicant's participation and contributions to the church or to campus ministry.
- Send letter of application to jbrodie@umcsc.org or to Advocate, Attn: Scholarship, 4908 Colonial Drive, Columbia, SC 29203.

Advocate to offer college scholarship for student at UM college

Deadline is March 1

The South Carolina United Methodist Advocate invites applications for a \$1,000 scholarship for South Carolina United Methodist students who are planning to enroll or are already enrolled at one of the four United Methodist colleges in South Carolina: Claflin University, Columbia College, Spartanburg Methodist College or Wofford College.

The scholarship is available to South Carolina United

Methodist students with an interest in communications, journalism or business.

Applications for the scholarship are due March 1, 2020, and should be submitted to Jessica Brodie, editor of the Advocate, via email or postal mail.

The application will include the following:

- A letter of application to address the applicant's background, how the scholarship would help him or her in pursuing a college degree and their view of the role of journalism in ministry. If there is a specific financial need, it

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Resource Center

by Betty Stalnaker

Happiness, 'rebel Jesus' and loving God

How Happiness Happens

(DVD2468CL=) Author: Lucado, Max. 6 sessions, 18-19 min/study guide/2019.

In this six-session video Bible study, Max Lucado looks at several "one another" statements in the Bible that reveal how the happiest people on earth aren't those who have the most but those who are willing to give the most away. Although the world can be a disappointing place, we can be God's representatives to bring about a cascade of kindness. While we cannot solve every problem, we can bring smiles to a few faces. In this way, we might even initiate a quiet revolution of joy. Age: YAS.

Revolutionary Kingdom: Following The Rebel Jesus

(DVD2459CL=) Author: Slaughter, Mike/Smith, Karen. 6 sessions, 10 min each/leader's guide/bk/2019.

The good news of the Kingdom of God is here and now. Welcome to the revolution, a revolution led by Jesus, who provided us with the vision of a kingdom worth dying for, making him the most radical revolutionary of all time. In "Revolutionary Kingdom," we learn that to join this revolution—to be considered true disciples of Christ—we must exchange comfortable cultural worldviews and values for the radical requirements of living out the Kingdom in the here and now. It's when we get serious about God's call that we, too, live revolutionary, world-changing lives. Age: YAS

The Jesus Challenge: 21 Days of Loving God and Neighbor

(DVD2432CL=) Author: LaRosa, Justin. 3 sessions, 7-10 min/bk with leader guide/2019.

This is a three-week journey to help you become more attentive to your relationship with God. This book invites you to move from forgetfulness to remembering, from distraction to intentionality and from self-sufficiency to God-reliance so that you can live lives that center on loving God and loving others as ourselves. Age: YAS.

Also, we have a host of Thanksgiving resources for children:
 • Cherub Wings: #2 Gratitude Attitude—Thankfulness (DVD1550C)—Children will learn that God wants us to be thankful in all things. English and Spanish language tracks. 25 min.

• Squanto and the First Thanksgiving (DVD1114C)—Discover the moving true story of the Native American named Squanto, who is captured from his beloved Pawtuxet tribe, taken to Spain and sold into slavery. Years later, Squanto regains his freedom and embarks on a miraculous journey back to his homeland where he teaches the Pilgrims how to survive the difficult early years in the Plymouth colony—culminating in the first Thanksgiving celebration. A touching drama about trust, faith and renewal. 30 min.

• VeggieTales: Thankfulness (DVD1493C=) In VeggieTales: Thankfulness Sunday School Lessons, kids learn from Madame Blueberry, the very blue berry who wants more stuff. They'll learn alongside Madame Blueberry that "being greedy makes you grumpy—but a thankful heart is a happy heart!" 23 min.

• William Bradford (DVD2429C) William Bradford fled with the pilgrims to the new world, where he discovered that the price for religious freedom was hunger, sickness and death. As a peacemaker, he befriended the Native Americans who taught the struggling pilgrims how to survive. By the end of the first year, Bradford became governor of the new land. After their first critical harvest, he set aside time for the pilgrims and their new Native American friends to feast together and express their thanks to God. Thus, he became the Father of Thanksgiving Day. 26 min.

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Global Briefs

In U.S., Christianity's decline continues

WASHINGTON—Christians are still in the majority in the United States, but a shrinking one. Pew Research Center telephone surveys in 2018 and 2019 found 65 percent of U.S. adults identify as Christian, down from 77 percent a decade ago. Meanwhile, the percentage of the religiously unaffiliated continues to rise.

South African churches stand against xenophobia

DURBAN, South Africa—Hundreds of United Methodist congregations gathered to take a stand against xenophobia during a churchwide day of prayer. The event was a response to recent attacks on foreign nationals in South Africa.

Black bishops demand voice in church future

WASHINGTON—The Ebony Bishops are calling for African-American clergy and laity to have a voice in The United Methodist Church's future. "Our witness is grounded in our experience of deliverance from enslavement, Jim Crow, the exclusionary practices of the Central Jurisdiction and the ongoing discrimination in our world," said the bishops' statement.

New resource for discussing giving

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—A new Generosity Pastor and Leaders' Kit is now available to help church leaders talk to their congregations about generosity and giving, highlighting the impact their giving makes in the lives of individuals around the world. The kit features customizable bulletin covers, sermon starters and offering slides, which could be especially useful during fall stewardship campaigns.

UMCOR, partners start asylum seekers project

ATLANTA—A three-year, \$2 million pilot project by the United Methodist Committee on Relief will support asylum seekers in the U.S. Grants to Church World Service and National Justice for Our Neighbors, partners in the project, were approved recently by UMCOR directors.

Bishop Easterling remembers Baltimore congressman

FULTON, Md.—Bishop LaTrelle Miller Easterling writes of the passing of U.S. Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, who died Oct. 17 at a hospice center in Baltimore. "Our hearts cry out in sorrow at the loss of this faithful servant, friend and champion of justice," she said of the Baltimore congressman.

Ebola training well received in Congo

BUKAVU, Congo—After spending three weeks traveling around Congo to raise awareness and train health care workers about the spread of Ebola, Megan Klingler with the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries' Global Health unit said she is pleased with the progress made. According to the World Health Organization, more than 2,100 people have died since the Ebola outbreak began in the country more than a year ago.

Global Mission Fellows Program seeks applicants

ATLANTA—The Global Mission Fellows Program is accepting applications through Jan. 7. This two-year program is a way for young adults—ages 20 through 30—to engage with local communities outside of their home context, connect the church in mission and grow in personal and social holiness. The early access deadline is Dec. 2.

Full communion proposal is subject of videos

WASHINGTON—The United Methodist-Episcopal Church Dialogue Committee has released a series of videos about the committee's full communion proposal. The videos include a conversation between United Methodist Bishop Gregory Palmer and Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Michael Curry.

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Felder lauded by Council of Bishops

WASHINGTON—The legacy of the Rev. Cain Hope Felder is being honored by the Council of Bishops, which in a statement said he touched millions with his work as a pastor, scholar, professor and advocate. The council especially noted his work as the first executive director of Black Methodists for Church Renewal.

Filipino legislation calls for church unity

SOUTH COTABATO, Philippines—Amid various plans to split the denomination, a group of Filipino United Methodists has submitted 2020 General Conference legislation that aims to prevent separation. This is the first plan for the church's future to emerge from outside the United States.

Methodists in Bahamas cope with Dorian's trauma

FREEPORT, Bahamas—The Rev. Kenneth Lewis, a Methodist superintendent in Grand Bahama, has experienced numerous hurricanes, but Hurricane Dorian was exceptionally devastating. Two Methodist denominations in the Bahamas are responding to immediate needs and worrying about the hurricane's psychological impact.

Teaching on church's nature heading to GC2020

WASHINGTON—The United Methodist Committee on Faith and Order has proposed a theological statement titled "Sent in Love: A United Methodist Understanding of the Church." The document is being sent to the 2020 General Conference for its review and adoption as an official teaching statement similar to "By Water and the Spirit" on baptism and "The Holy Mystery" on communion.

Agency head denounces record-low refugee cap

WASHINGTON—The Trump administration decision to sharply reduce the number of refugees admitted to the U.S. is antithetical to the Bible, said Rev. Susan Henry Crowe, head of the United Methodist Board of Church and Society. The administration wants to limit the number of refugees admitted to 18,000 in 2020, the lowest since the program began in 1980. —Courtesy of United Methodist News Service

Bethel UMC celebrates 152 years of service

MARION—Former State Sen. Dr. Maggie Wallace Glover will serve as guest speaker as Bethel United Methodist Church celebrates its 152nd anniversary Nov. 10.

The celebration day begins at 9 a.m. with Sunday school, and worship follows at 10 a.m. in the sanctuary. Church pastor the Rev. J. Elbert Williams will deliver the morning message.

Then at 3 p.m., Glover will serve as guest speaker for the anniversary celebration on the theme, "Faith, Service and Hope Built on a Solid Foundation."

Bethel was formed in March 1867 in a blacksmith's shop several feet from the present structure. Its first pastor was the Rev. James Middleton. Today, Bethel offers weekly Bible studies, Sunday school, Sunday

worship service, revival service and other season religious services.

The current pastor, Williams, began to serve Bethel in July 2012, bringing his vision and what he calls "mini storm bound" sermon presentations.

There have been many pastors called to serve Bethel since 1867. Each possessed a different leadership style and personality. One common thread among all of them has been their love of God.

With hundreds of dedicated followers, Bethel has served the Marion community as the body of Christ. Williams said Bethel's past "is a testimony of her strength and faith in the Lord. With God's help and sustaining power and the constant labors of her people, her future shall be as glorious as her past."



The Bethel church family has been very busy preparing for the anniversary. They said they look forward to seeing many visitors, former members and friends during the anniversary celebration and they will have a special gift for all attendees to commemorate the day.

A meal will be served for all on church grounds following the event.

Bethel was formed in March 1867 in a blacksmith's shop several feet from the present structure.

First marks 100 years as 'Church with a Heart in the Heart of Myrtle Beach'

MYRTLE BEACH—First United Methodist Church celebrated 100 years as "A Church with a Heart in the Heart of Myrtle Beach" on Sept. 29.

The day began with worship at 10 a.m. followed by lunch on the front lawn of the church with tented seating, live music provided by the Anew Praise Band and plenty of activities for the children.

Historically speaking, Methodism along the Grand Strand reaches back to the early days of the movement, long before separation from the Church of England. In 1740, the Rev. George Whitefield, an early Methodist evangelist, came through Horry County on what would later be called Kings Highway.

By the early 1900s, summer worship services were held in Myrtle Beach, similar in format and style to the Myrtle Beach Campground Ministry held at the time in various participating campgrounds. In 1915, S.B. Chapin donated materials for the Sunday school program and, in 1918, a new Methodist church was organized at a meeting in the back of the Chapin Commissary.

In 1919, the Myrtle Beach Methodist Church was officially recognized by the South Carolina Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, which was part of the Waccamaw Circuit with the Rev. John Edward Cook, pastor.

In 1968, the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church merged to form United Methodist Church, and the church was renamed First United Methodist Church because it was the first church established in Myrtle Beach.

The property on which the church now stands was originally donated by Myrtle Beach Farms in 1920. The first church building, known as "The Little Church," was built in 1921 and was the only church structure in Myrtle Beach at that time. The sanctuary building on the current church property was constructed in 1939. In the years since, the membership grew from 200 to more than 2,000.

Several buildings were added on the church property, which included Asbury Hall, the Wesley Building, the chapel and administrative offices and widening of the sanctuary

building. The Coastal Samaritan Center, founded by the Rev. Thomas Brittain in 1980, is currently housed in the Asbury Building.

The television ministry started in 1982 with local broadcasts of the Sunday sermon and music. Also in 1981, the North Campus property at 65th Avenue North was purchased, which has been home to the Child Development Ministry of First United Methodist Church, a licensed child-care facility servicing the Myrtle Beach community.

In 1989, the winds from Hurricane Hugo knocked the steeple through the roof and into the sanctuary causing more than \$200,000 in damages.

Over the years, First UMC has been instrumental in the genesis of several community organizations, some of which are Helping Hand of Myrtle Beach founded by Rowan Crews Jr.; Community Flea Market; Mobile Meals; and Associated Charities.

First UMC continues to participate in these missions along with others on the local, state, national and worldwide mission fields.

Thank you for your participation and support of the 2019 Salkehatchie camps!

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Adnah, Rock Hill | Central, Newberry | Hebron, McBee | Oak Grove, Blythewood | St. Andrew by the Sea, Hilton Head |
| Advent, Simpsonville | Central, Spartanburg | Herbert Memorial, Georgetown | Pendleton UMC, Pendleton | St. George UMC, St. George |
| Aldersgate, Charleston | Central, Florence | Hibben, Mt. Pleasant | Philadelphia, Fort Mill | Surfside UMC, Surfside |
| Aldersgate, Greenville | Central, Laurens | Highland Park, Florence | Pisgah, Florence | Swansea UMC, Swansea |
| Aldersgate, Rock Hill | Chapin UMC, Chapin | Hodges UMC, Hodges | Platt Springs UMC, Platt Springs | Tabernacle, Lancaster |
| Antioch, Rock Hill | Cherokee Springs, Spartanburg | Holly Hill UMC, Holly Hill | Pleasant Hill, Fort Mill | Travelers Rest UMC, Travelers Rest |
| Antioch, Easley | Christ, Bennettsville | Hopewell, Lancaster | Point Hope, Mt. Pleasant | Trenholm Road, Columbia |
| Ashland, Columbia | Clemson UMC, Clemson | India Hook, Rock Hill | Red Bank UMC, Red Bank | Trinity, Blythewood |
| Ashley Ridge, Summerville | Cokesbury, Charleston | Inman UMC, Inman | Reidville Road, Moore | Trinity, N. Myrtle Beach |
| Augusta Road, Pelzer | Cornerstone, Rock Hill | Jamestown Charge, Jamestown | St. George UMC, St. George | Trinity, Sumter |
| Aynor UMC, Aynor | Covenant, Greer | John Wesley, Charleston | Salem UMC, Salem | Trinity, York |
| Barnwell UMC, Barnwell | Cypress, Ridgeville | Jordan, Manning | Sardis, Union | Trinity, Spartanburg |
| Belair, Indian Land | Dalzell UMC, Dalzell | Knightsville, Summerville | Shady Grove, Irmo | Trinity, Aiken |
| Belin Memorial, Murrells Inlet | Ebenezer, Hemingway | Lamar UMC, Lamar | Shandon, Columbia | Trinity, Newberry |
| Bells, Abbeville | Ebenezer, Chesterfield | Landrum UMC, Landrum | Sharon, Greer | Trinity, Conway |
| Bethany, Saluda | Emory, Saluda | Lebanon, Columbia | Shiloh, Gilbert | UMC of the Covenant, Boiling Springs |
| Bethany, Summerville | Epworth Memorial, Columbia | Lee Road, Taylors | Shiloh, Piedmont | Union, Conway |
| Bethany, Charleston | Epworth, Charleston | Lewis Chapel, Sumter | Simpsonville UMC, Simpsonville | Union, Irmo |
| Bethel, Chester | Fairlawn, Blythewood | Lexington UMC, Lexington | Socastee, Myrtle Beach | Virginia Wingard, Columbia |
| Bethel, Simpsonville | Faith, Lexington | Little River UMC, Little River | St. Andrews Parish, Charleston | Walnut Grove, Roebuck |
| Bethel Park, Denmark | First UMC, Cheraw | Lyman UMC, Lyman | St. John's, Rock Hill | Washington Street, Columbia |
| Bethel, Jackson | First UMC, Bennettsville | Lyttleton Street, Camden | St. John's, Aiken | Wayne, Georgetown |
| Bethel, Peachtree Rock | First UMC, Clover | Main Street, Dillon | St. John's, Fort Mill | Wesley Grove, Cordova |
| Bethel, Walterboro | First UMC, Easley | Main Street, Bennettsville | St. Luke, Lancaster | Wightman, Prosperity |
| Bethel, Sumter | First UMC, Isle of Palms | Main Street, McColl | St. Luke, Hartsville | Williston UMC, Williston |
| Bethel, Ruffin | First UMC, Conway | Manning UMC, Manning | St. Mark, Seneca | Windsor, Columbia |
| Bethesda, Easley | First UMC, Myrtle Beach | Mauldin UMC, Mauldin | St. Mark, Greenwood | Zion, Prosperity |
| Bethlehem, Hartsville | First UMC, Lancaster | McLeod Chapel, Rembert | St. Matthew, Bishopville | Zion, Lancaster |
| Beulah, Gilbert | First UMC, Hemingway | Memorial, Greer | St. Matthew, Greenville | Zion, Anderson |
| Beulah, Sandy Run | First UMC, Kingsland | Moncks Corner UMC, Moncks Corner | St. Paul, Spartanburg | |
| Bluffton UMC, Bluffton | First UMC, Watkinsville | Mount Hebron, West Columbia | St. Paul, Florence | |
| Boiling Springs, Lexington | Francis Burns, Columbia | Mount Holly, Rock Hill | | |
| Boone Hill, Summerville | Friendship, Chesterfield | Mount Horeb, Lexington | | |
| Broad Street, Clinton | Friendship, Rock Hill | Mount Vernon, Hickory Grove | | |
| Brown Swamp, Conway | Gilbert UMC, Gilbert | Mount Zion, Sandy Run | | |
| Browns Chapel, Johnsonville | Goose Creek UMC, Goose Creek | New Beginnings, Boiling Springs | | |
| Buford Street, Gaffney | Grace Community, Fort Mill | New Hope, Pomaria | | |
| Butler, Saluda | Grace, North Augusta | North Charleston UMC, North Charleston | | |
| Cambridge, Ninety Six | Grace, Columbia | North UMC, North Northside, Greenville | | |
| Capers Chapel, Chester | Grace, Union | | | |
| Carteret Street, Beaufort | Grace, Lancaster | | | |
| Cayce UMC, Cayce | Hampton UMC, Hampton | | | |



Herbert McLamb Allen

RALEIGH, N.C.—Herbert McLamb Allen, father of Dr. Barry Allen, died Sept. 21, 2019. Dr. Allen is the pastor of the Kings Mountain Chapel-St. Paul Charge, York.

Funeral services were held Sept. 25 at Highland Baptist Church with burial in Sandhills State Veterans Cemetery, Spring Lake, North Carolina.

Memorials may be made to Highland Baptist Church, 8524 Crowder Road, Raleigh, NC 27603; or to Wounded Warrior Project, P.O. Box 758516, Topeka, KS 66675-8516.

Mr. Allen is survived by his wife, Sarah Holland Allen, and two sons.

Carolyn Belding

NORTH AUGUSTA—Carolyn Belding, widow of the Rev. Talmage Belding Jr., died Sept. 16, 2019.

Funeral services were held Sept. 21 at Posey Funeral Chapel with burial in Pineview Memorial Gardens.

Memorials may be made to the Carolyn Belding Scholarship Fund, c/o Lewis Memorial United Methodist Church, 5555 Hereford Farm Road, Evans, GA 30809.

Mrs. Belding is survived by her son and daughter.

Rev. Philip Loren Bostrom

MILLS RIVER, N.C.—The Rev. Philip Loren Bostrom, a retired member of the South Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church and husband of the Rev. Katherine Bostrom, died Oct. 17, 2019.



Bostrom

Prior to his retirement in 2013, Rev. Bostrom served the Lockhart-Wesley Chapel, Buford Parish-Tabernacle, Rock Hill-Bethel, St. Paul-Clover, Kershaw Charge, First Church, Harleyville, and Plum Branch charges. He served churches in the Minnesota Conference prior to coming to South Carolina.

A memorial service will be Nov. 29 at St. Timothy UMC, Brevard, North Carolina.

Memorials may be made to St. Timothy UMC, 1020 Asheville Hwy., Brevard, NC 28712; to the Sierra Club Western North Carolina Chapter, 19 W. Hargett St., Suite 210, Raleigh, NC 27601; to the Metropolitan Ministries, 2002 N. Florida Ave., Tampa, FL 33602; or to Branches Lakeview and Main Office, 11500 NW 12th Ave., Miami, FL 33168.

Rev. Bostrom is survived by his wife, daughter and son.

James Ewing Bullion

GOODLETTSVILLE, Tenn.—James Ewing Bullion, father of the Rev. Shannon Bullion, died Oct. 10, 2019. Rev. Bullion is an associate pastor at Shandon United Methodist Church, Columbia.

Funeral services were held Oct. 15 at Spring Hill Mausoleum, Nashville, Tennessee.

Mr. Bullion is survived by his wife, Sherry Bullion, and two daughters.

Linda Faye Miller Carder

CHAPIN—Linda Faye Miller Carder, wife of Bishop Kenneth Carder, died Oct. 3, 2019. Bishop Carder is a retired bishop of The United Methodist Church and teaches at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia.

Two memorial services were held. The first was held Oct. 6 at Salem UMC, Irmo; the second was held Oct. 8 at First UMC, Waynesville, North Carolina.

Memorials may be made to the Linda Miller Scholarship Fund at Emory and Henry College, P.O. Box 947, Emory, VA 24327; to United Methodist Committee on Relief, 458 Ponce De Leon Ave. NE, Atlanta, GA 30308; or to UsAgainstAlzheimer's, 2 Wisconsin Circle, Suite 700, Chevy Chase, MD 20815.

Mrs. Carder is survived by her husband and two daughters.

Cheryl J. Engle

SCHOHARIE, N.Y.—Cheryl J. Engle, mother of Lydia Chichester, died Oct. 17, 2019. Mrs. Chichester is the wife of the Rev. Vaughn Chichester, pastor of the Bethel-Ebenezer Charge, Bennettsville.

Memorials may be made to the Middleburgh Rod and Gun Club, P.O. Box 24, Middleburgh, NY 12122.

Ms. Engle is survived by her two sons and three daughters.

Yvonne C. Forbes

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla.—Yvonne C. Forbes, sister of the Rev. Eleanor Ellington, died Oct. 9, 2019. Rev. Ellington is the pastor of Wesley United Methodist Church, Johns Island.

Funeral services were held Oct. 19 at Pentecostal Temple Church of God.

Ms. Forbes is survived by her three daughters and three sons.

John Thomas Greer Sr.

BAMBERG—John Thomas Greer Sr., father of Holly Gwaltney, died Oct. 15, 2019. Mrs. Gwaltney is the wife of the Rev. Rudy Gwaltney, pastor of the Vaucluse-Pentecost Charge, Vaucluse.

Funeral services were held Oct. 20 at

Obituary Policy

The *Advocate* prints death notices of clergy and their immediate families and laypersons who have served on conference boards and agencies or who worked for the S.C. Conference of The United Methodist Church.

Bethany Missionary Baptist Church, Ocilla, Georgia, with burial in the church cemetery.

Mr. Greer is survived by his two daughters and two sons.

Kenneth E. Grey

PAWLING, N.Y.—Kenneth E. Grey, grandfather of Alan Grey, died Sept. 17, 2019. Mr. Alan Grey is the husband of the Rev. Tammy Grey, pastor of Shady Grove United Methodist Church, Irmo.

Funeral services were held Sept. 22 at Crossroads Church, Lagrangeville, New York, with burial in Clove Valley Cemetery, Lagrangeville.

Memorials may be made to Crossroads Church, 1807 Clove Valley Road, Lagrangeville, NY 12540.

Mr. Grey is survived by his wife, Margaret, five sons and daughter.

David McClam

OKLAHOMA CITY—David McClam, brother of the Rev. Mack McClam, died Oct. 15, 2019. Rev. McClam is the pastor of Trinity United Methodist Church, Orangeburg.

Funeral services were held Oct. 22 at Quail Springs UMC with burial in Hillcrest Memory Gardens, Spencer, Oklahoma.

Mr. McClam is survived by his daughter and son.

Thomas Sumter Miller Jr.

SPARTANBURG—Thomas Sumter "Rosebud" Miller Jr., husband of Mary Lou Miller, died Oct. 1, 2019. Mrs. Miller is a retired deaconess and diaconal minister of the South Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church.

Funeral services and Masonic rites were held Oct. 4 at Central UMC with burial in Greenlawn Memorial Gardens.

Memorials may be made to Rite Care of SC (Speech and Hearing Clinic), P.O. Box 5851, Spartanburg, SC 29304; to Spartan Lodge 70, P.O. Box 2474, Spartanburg, SC 29304; or to Central UMC, 233 N. Church St., Spartanburg, SC 29306.

Mr. Miller is survived by his wife.

Virgil Milton Seaber III

FARMINGTON, Mo.—Virgil Seaber III, son of the Rev. Virgil Seaber, died Sept. 19, 2019. Rev. Seaber is the pastor of Central United Methodist Church, Marion.

Funeral services were held Sept. 21 at

Cozean Memorial Chapel with burial in Hillview Memorial Gardens.

Memorials may be made to Alcoholics Anonymous, 14 Sunnen Drive, Suite 144, St. Louis, MO 63143.

Mr. Seaber is survived by his wife, Ruth Butler Seaber, as well as a son, daughter and father.

Mary Gault Smith

ORANGEBURG—Mary Gault Smith, widow of the Rev. William Harold Smith, died Oct. 16, 2019.

A memorial service was held Oct. 28 at the Nancy Freeman Stringer Chapel at The Oaks.

Memorials may be made to The Oaks, P.O. Box 9005, Orangeburg, SC 29116.

Mrs. Smith is survived by her two daughters-in-law and son-in-law.

Rev. Jack Christopher Washington

COLUMBIA—The Rev. Jack Christopher Washington, a retired member of the South Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church and pastor of I. DeQuincey Newman UMC, died Sept. 28, 2019.

Prior to his retirement in 2012, Rev. Washington served the Brookgreen, Eadytown-Mount Nebo, St. Stephen Parish, Easley Charge, Edisto Fork and Mount Zion, Kingtree, charges. He also served as CCOM Associate Director from 1991 to 2006.

Following his retirement, he served I. DeQuincey Newman and Canaan-Sand Hill charges before returning to I. DeQuincey Newman UMC in 2016 where he served until his death.

Funeral services were held Oct. 2 at Francis Burns UMC with burial in Greenlawn Memorial Park.

Rev. Washington is survived by his wife, Johanna Anderson Washington, three sons and two daughters.

William Wilbanks

LEWISVILLE, Texas—William "Bill" Wilbanks, brother of the Rev. Charles Wilbanks, died Sept. 18, 2019. Rev. Wilbanks is the pastor of the Trinity-New Chapel Charge, Newberry.

A graveside service was held Oct. 4 at Flower Mound Cemetery, Flower Mound, Texas.

Mr. Wilbanks is survived by his two daughters and two sons.



Washington

From our home to yours, Happy Thanksgiving



'If he was in a room, you knew it'

UMCSC mourns after passing of Jack Washington

By Dan O'Mara

COLUMBIA—A servant who loved to proclaim the Word of God. Driven by a passion to help those in need. Christ's ambassador in the mission field. The holy conscience of love. Left a mark on every place he served. A giant.

But he just wanted to be "Jack."

The Rev. Jack Christopher Washington—who helped lead the South Carolina Conference Council on Ministries for 15 years and served local churches here for twice as long—died Sept. 28 after suffering a stroke four days earlier. He was 73.

"Whatever Rev. Jack did, he did it over the top," said the Rev. Millie Nelson Smith, a congregational specialist who worked with Washington during his tenure as associate director of the Outreach Section of the forerunner to today's Conference Connectional Ministries. "No just getting by for him. It had to be just right—and he expected that of the rest of his team.

"He did everything in a big way—preaching, leading, resourcing, celebrating the work of the mission of the Annual Conference. If he was in a room, you knew it. He could have acted as if he was higher than everyone else, but he just wanted to be 'Jack.'"

Through his appointment as associate director of the

Outreach Section, Washington might have been best known for implementing what would come to be known as the Communities of Shalom Ministries and fostering its remarkable growth in the South Carolina Conference.

When racial tension and the Rodney King verdict led to violence in the streets of Los Angeles in 1992, UMC General Conference delegates were meeting in Kentucky. They stopped their work to discuss cities in turmoil, and those conversations resulted in the creation of "Shalom Zones"—an initiative that would give churches and communities the tools they needed to reply to what was happening in their communities.

"Jack was a servant who loved to proclaim the Word of God," said the Rev. Charles Johnson, who worked with Washington for nine years in his appointment as director of the Council on Ministries. "In addition to being responsible for implementing the Shalom ministry within our conference, he was involved in the development of a partnership between the Conference and the State Department of Social Services that resulted in our Fostering Family and Fatherhood emphasis.

"He was always seeking to improve the lives of others." Salkehatchie Summer Service has improved the lives of

thousands of others, and Washington was among its staunchest champions. Salkehatchie's founder, the Rev. John Culp, credits Washington's support for the growth of the ministry, through which youth and adults have repaired homes across the state since 1978.

"Jack was Christ's ambassador in the mission field," Culp said. "From the dirt roads of St. Stephens, to Marlboro County, to Bamberg, to Lake City, to Charleston, to Anderson—he was the holy conscience of love. He loved his churches to the end—uncompromising preaching, courageous preaching, enthusiastic preaching.

"He was inclusive. His love for every child and adult was real, authentic. Jack transcended church politics. No one owned Jack—except Christ."

Even retirement in 2012 couldn't keep Washington from serving those who needed his guidance and care. He returned a year later to pastor I. DeQuincey Newman United Methodist Church in Columbia, where was serving at the time of his death.

He was ordained in the South Carolina Conference as an elder in 1982. He served for 30 years in South Carolina United Methodist churches. Washington also served for 15 years as associate director of the Outreach Section of the Conference Council on Ministries, what is now known as Johanna Conference Connectional Ministries. He and his spouse, Johanna, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in December.



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November

Native American Heritage Month
Nov. 1—All Saints Day

Nov. 2—World Community Day

Nov. 2—Annual Church Bazaar and Turkey Dinner, Mill Creek UMC, Columbia, 4:30-7:30 p.m.

Nov. 2—Bethel UMC, Spartanburg, UMW Vendor Party-Frozen Feast-Bake Sale, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Nov. 3—All Saints Sunday

Nov. 3—Advance Special Ministries Sunday (offering)

Nov. 3—Daylight Savings Time ends

Nov. 3—Mass Choir Eighth Anniversary Celebration, Mount Nebo UMC, Orangeburg, 2:30 p.m.

Nov. 5—Summit on the Black Church, S.C. United Methodist Conference Center, Columbia, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Nov. 7—ONEday Leadership Conference, Chapin UMC, Chapin, \$19.

Nov. 7—Clergy Orders Gathering, Union UMC, Irmo, 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m.

Nov. 8-10—IGC Confirmation Retreat #7, Shackford Hall, Lake Junaluska, N.C. <http://intentionalgrowthcenter.org/confirmation-retreat-weekends>

Nov. 10—Organ and Tissue Donor Sunday

Nov. 10—Greenwood District Safe Sanctuaries Training, Republican UMC, Plum Branch, 3 p.m. gwdist@umcsc.org or 864-223-2650.

Nov. 10-14—Outdoor Ministries Connection Great Gathering, Lake Junaluska. [Facebook.com/omcgreatgathering](https://www.facebook.com/omcgreatgathering)

Nov. 11—Veterans Day

Nov. 11-13—Experience the World of the Bible I, Lake Junaluska, N.C. <https://www.lakejunaluska.com/experiencing-bible>

Nov. 13-15—Experience the World of the Bible II, Lake Junaluska, N.C. <https://www.lakejunaluska.com/experiencing-bible>

Nov. 17—Mortgage Burning, Sand Hill UMC, Ridgeville, 11 a.m.

Nov. 18-21—SEJ Clergywomen's Conference, Jacksonville, Fla. <https://www.unchartedconference2019.com/>

Nov. 21-24—Interfaith Peace Conference, Lake Junaluska, N.C. <http://www.lakejunaluska.com/peace>

Nov. 24—Christ the King/Reign of Christ Sunday

Nov. 24—United Methodist Student Day

Nov. 24-30—National Bible Week

Nov. 27-29—Thanksgiving at Lake Junaluska, Lake Junaluska, N.C. <https://www.lakejunaluska.com/thanksgiving>

Nov. 28—Thanksgiving Day

Nov. 28—21st Annual Community Thanksgiving Dinner, sponsored by St. Andrew By-the-Sea UMC, Hilton Head, Hudson's Seafood House on the Docks. 843-505-1370, www.communitythanksgiving.com

December

Dec. 1—UM Student Day (offering)

Dec. 1—World AIDS Day

Dec. 1—Christmas in Word & Song, McBee Chapel UMC, Conestee, 6:30 p.m.

Dec. 1-6—Road Scholar Program: Solstice Through the Centuries: The Evolution of Winter Holidays, Program #20308, Lake Junaluska, N.C. Amy Ney, aney@intentionalgrowthcenter.org

Dec. 6-8—Balsam Range Art of Music Festival, Lake Junaluska, N.C. <https://www.lakejunaluska.com/balsamrange>

Dec. 10—Free workshop with Teepa Snow on "How to Enjoy the Holidays (and Beyond!) When Dementia is Part of the Picture," Buncombe Street UMC, Greenville. Register: www.buncombstreetumc.org/events/dementia-workshop.

Dec. 12-15—Appalachian Christmas, Lake Junaluska, N.C. <https://www.lakejunaluska.com/christmas>

Dec. 13—Handel's "Messiah," Lake Junaluska, N.C. <https://www.lakejunaluska.com/christmas>

Dec. 14—Lake Junaluska Singers in Concert, Lake Junaluska, N.C. <https://www.lakejunaluska.com/singers>

Dec. 16—Sing-Along Messiah, Washington Street UMC, Columbia, 7 p.m.

Dec. 21—Candlelight Service in the Moravian Tradition, Lake Junaluska, N.C. <https://www.lakejunaluska.com/events/worship>



Shandon hosts Fort Jackson Band for Veteran's Day Concert

The 282nd Army Band from Fort Jackson is coming to Shandon UMC. Join the full concert band, all 43 members, in the church sanctuary Sunday, Nov. 10, at 4 p.m. for a Veteran's Day "Salute to Service" in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the D-Day Landings and the Battle of Normandy. Hear traditional patriotic marches, favorite big-band era tunes and excerpts from John Williams' score for the major motion picture, "Saving Private Ryan." Don't miss the special finale when Band Commander CW3 Tom Bauer invites organist Debbie Bauer to join the band for Camille Saint-Saëns' "Organ Symphony."



St. Paul UMC member named Stovall citizen of year

One member of St. Paul UMC, Orangeburg, Ken Stovall, has been recognized as the Kiwanis Club of Orangeburg's Citizen of the Year. Here, he gathers with his wife, Becky, and their two daughters, Mollie Beth S. Huffman and Lindsay S. Miller, at the presentation ceremony. Stovall has been a member of the Orangeburg community since 1966. He served with the U.S. Army in Vietnam from 1966 to 1968 and was awarded two Bronze Stars for heroic and meritorious achievement and service in a combat zone. He worked at Utica Tool and as an industrial supply salesman as part owner of J.W. Smoak Hardware. Currently, he works in semi-retirement at Mayer Industries. Stovall has been a member of the Kiwanis Club of Orangeburg for 40 years. He does volunteer grounds work at St. Paul's UMC, where he has been a member for more than 50 years. He has served as a Sunday school teacher, church treasurer and treasurer of the church's men's group and is also a member of American Legion.

Faith is

by Dr. Sheila Elliott Hodge

**Nov. 3
Faith that is Tested**

Lesson Scripture: 2 Corinthians 13:1-11

Key Verse: 2 Corinthians 13:5, "Examine yourselves to see whether you are in faith; test yourselves. Do you now realize that Christ is in you—unless of course, you fail the test?"

What if it's just a test, how we Christians deal with church conflict? What if it's an opportunity to examine ourselves and the depth of our faith in Christ Jesus and the way of the cross?

In our lesson, Paul writes a rather confrontational letter to the Corinthian church, a church that has had some conflict between the Gentile and Jewish members who have struggled to embrace their new identity as members together in the body of Christ. Now, some "super apostles" contend that Paul lacks spiritual authority because, as he insists, his humility is taken for weakness.

Paul's concern for the Corinthian church necessitates that he addresses the underlying issues threatening the church's wellbeing and his relationship with them head on. Paul's goal is not to just "get them told," but to speak truth in love and to see that the relationship is fully restored; that they are built up and not torn down.

So often when conflict emerges in churches, there is either a tendency toward avoidance or a desire to give those with whom we are in conflict a "piece of our mind," not realizing we might need that piece later. How often in these situations is our concern to build up and not to tear down, to seek restoration rather than wanting to be right?

In addressing the conflict, Paul reminds the Corinthians of Christ, and that what may "appear to be weakness is sometimes a display of great strength."

Think about your approach to conflict. Do you seek a position of strength, or do you realize that in all situations that Christ is in you and he gives you real strength? If we cannot trust God and Christ, who is in us, when our faith is tested in times of conflict, then perhaps we have failed the test.

Nov. 10

Faith that Sets an Example

Lesson Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 1:2-10

Key Verses: 1 Thessalonians 1:7, 8a, "You became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God became known everywhere."

Often when I read Scripture or need to

Editor's note: We have recently learned that Cokesbury changed the Bible lessons many churches are using to a different book, but we were not aware of this ahead of time. This month's and last month's lessons, therefore, do not match up with Cokesbury's. We are working to remedy this and will be back on track soon.

encourage myself in the faith, a song from my past comes to mind. Paul's commendation to the Thessalonians about how their faith sets an example for others and how it must surely be motivated by their love for Christ, reminded me of a song: "Let it be real, whatever you do for the Master, let it be real."

It is evident to Paul and others that the faith that the Thessalonians have is real. Paul has received word that the Thessalonians were holding onto their faith by the power of the Holy Spirit, and despite persecution they had not reverted back to their old ways of living and believing.

Undeterred by their circumstances, their faith moved them to "do good for each other and for their community." It's sad to say, but there are many in our churches whose motivations are not based on a real love for Christ, but on enhancing personal power or prestige. These persons want to be seen and known for what they do. They may even do good, but it's not for the Master. They need to be noticed. And still there are others who believe, but whose faith in Jesus Christ does not motivate them to act on their faith—how real is that faith?

The Thessalonians' faith was real and evident. They had a reputation for joy, perseverance, Christian hope and love. They were an example of the Spirit's presence and power and how to live as faithful followers of Christ. Their realness for Christ drew others.

What is the reputation of our congregations? Are we known for our love for Christ and one another? Is our joy complete or conditional, and are others drawn to our realness for Christ? Should we be imitated or ignored?

Nov. 17

Faith that is Focused

Lesson Scripture: 1 Peter 1:13-25

Background Scripture: Galatians 5:22, 23; 1 Peter 1

Key Verses: "As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do."

I must admit that, as an African American, sometimes reading texts that appear to lift up suffering can be difficult. Like those

to whom Peter writes, African Americans faced real hardships, suffering and death at the hands of an oppressive system; and they also needed to focus on the God who had redeemed them through the precious blood of Jesus and who gave them grace and peace.

They had to focus not on their current conditions, but on a God who raised Jesus from the "grave to glory" and who would raise them also. And as a consequence, they were able to live in faith not fear.

No, the situations many of us find ourselves in today do not compare to those who were exiled and dispersed throughout the Roman world, or to those enslaved in America; but the call to focus our minds and ready our souls in order to live faithfully till Christ returns is still one we must heed.

We do face times of trouble that might tempt us away from faithfulness to satisfying our own desires, situations that may negatively affect our actions and our attitude. We do experience hardships that might cause us to lose hope if we do not focus on the truth that we are recipients of God's grace and peace. Therefore, we must focus our minds by being holy as God is holy.

Notice I didn't say holier than thou, but holiness of heart, thought and action. How many times have you or another believer smiled and spoke kindly to another believer to their face, but in reality, harbor ill feelings toward them or speak negatively about them to another?

Does that reflect a pure heart and obedience to God? Is that sincere love for one who is ready for Christ's return?

Nov. 24

Faith that Escapes Corruption

Lesson Scripture: 2 Peter 1:1-15

Devotional Reading: Psalm 90

Key Verse: 2 Peter 1:4, "He has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires."

There is a popular song today that has a line that says, "I'm living my best life, I'm not going back and forth with you." As followers of Jesus Christ we ought to want to live and are indeed enabled by God to live our best life, a life that is godly, a life that moves us ever closer to God and reflects our commitment to our relationship with Christ. And like any relationship, if it is important to us, it will take some effort on our part. It won't just happen by osmosis in an hour on Sunday morning.

The writer insists that through the Holy Spirit we have everything we need for a godly life. We are meant to and should desire to grow in our knowledge and understanding of God and of Jesus. It is his prayer that believers' intimacy with God increases. We are encouraged to make every effort to add to our faith, which we have received as a precious gift.

These holy habits—goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, mutual affection and love—are to always be increasing in us because without them we are unproductive and ineffectual. If we are not intentional about growing in our intimacy with God every day, we risk being corrupted and going back to our old ways. We can easily stumble into sin and become blind to the constancy of God's grace, goodness and forgiveness in our lives. In other words, we can't live our best life as Christians.

Are you living your best life as a child of God? Godly habits don't just happen. How is God calling you to greater intimacy? Do you keep going back and forth? Remember, God gives us divine power through the gift and presence of the Holy Spirit. Seek the Spirit's guidance.

Hodge is pastor of Silver Hill Memorial United Methodist Church, Spartanburg.



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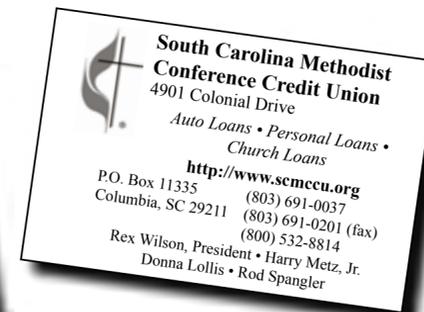
Dickson Memorial United Methodist Church in Townville, SC is seeking an accompanist for the adult choir beginning January, 2020. The choir rehearses on Wednesdays from 6:00 to 7:30 pm and sings an anthem on Sundays at the 11:00 am service. Please call Mrs. Nancy Walker, SPRC Chair, at 404-307-9145 or email her at dicksonumc@att.net for more information.

Organist wanted

New Francis Brown UMC, North Charleston, is looking for an organist. The organist will work with four choirs, play hymns and contemporary gospel music, and collaborate with a drummer. For more information or to apply, contact Tatum Hamilton at tatumhamilton@mail.com.

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GC2020 logo unveiled

NASHVILLE—The Commission on the General Conference has unveiled the logo for the 2020 General Conference to accompany the theme, “... and know that I am God,” based on an excerpt from Psalm 46:10.

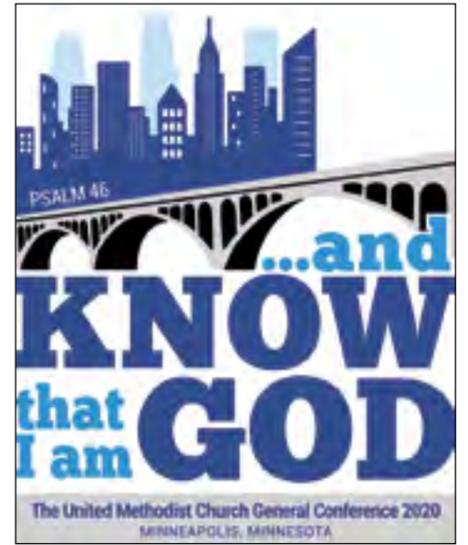
The entire verse reads: “Be still, and know that I am God! I am exalted among the nations. I am exalted in the earth.” (NRSV), although the verse number may vary in non-English translations.

United Methodist Communications designed the logo, which is used to maintain a consistent visual identity for the 2020 General Conference.

“The design challenge for the logo was to visually communicate a recognizable brand to a complex audience that leaves a positive lasting impression ... from the internet to the conference floor,” said Troy Dossett, manager for United Methodist Communications’ Creative Strategy team. “A core-branding image for such a large event needs to be practical for users, relatable to a diverse audience and easy to implement in print, web and within the conference facility.”

The design uses simple fonts and color tones, arranged in a way that quickly expresses one or two direct messages to its viewer at first glance. The design incorporates a bridge and cityscape as a geographical nod to Minneapolis’ beautiful bridges, lakes and waterfalls, along with the date and location.

The theme, suggested by the GC2020



Worship and Music team, was discussed and approved by the Commission on the General Conference. The team plans to create a new focus each day by pairing the theme with different words, such as “love” or “believe.”

“The theme provides the flexibility for each of the worship services to express a different way in which we experience God,” said Raymond Trapp, worship and music director. “At times this means we sit in silence, feeling God’s presence in our deepest foundation. At times we are jubilant, praising the Lord for many blessings. Whether we are quiet and still or joyous and celebratory, at all times, we know that God was, is and always will be God.”



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