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June 2022

# Becoming one annual conference

## UMCSC celebrates 50 year anniversary of historic merger

By Dr. Phillip Stone

When Annual Conference convenes on June 5, it will meet on the 50th anniversary of the last sessions of the 1866 and 1785 conferences and of the convening of the new South Carolina Annual Conference.

On Monday, June 5, 1972, the 107th and final session of the South Carolina Annual Conference (1866) met in Leon-

ard Auditorium at Wofford College. Bishop Paul Hardin Jr., who had served as the bishop of both annual conferences since 1968 and of the 1785 Conference since 1960, led the last session.

According to the Rev. John W. Curry's book "Passionate Journey," Hardin read the same Scripture Bishop Osman C. Baker had read in April 1866 when he convened the

first session of that annual conference. He read a historical statement about the 1866 Conference, members approved some items of business, then the body approved a resolution transferring all of their members and property into the new annual conference that would be organized that evening.

See "50-Year Anniversary," Page 11

### Judicial Council: Annual conferences not permitted to disaffiliate

By Jessica Brodie

Annual conferences in the United States are not legally permitted under current church law to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church.

That's the final word from the Judicial Council, the UMC's top court, in its ruling released May 10 (Decision 1444). The UMC Council of Bishops had asked the court to review this and other related questions as two annual conference in the United States—South Georgia and Northwest Texas—were set to consider disaffiliation resolutions at their next session.

Citing Para. 16 in the UMC Constitution, the court ruled, "Separation has serious ramifications not only for the departing annual conference but also entities and persons outside its boundaries because it is a dramatic departure from connectionalism—the 'vital web of interactive relationships' among the people of The United Methodist Church. At stake here is the unity of the Church. The question of annual conference withdrawal from The United Methodist Church is a connectional matter and requires a churchwide legislative solution primarily because General Conference has 'full legislative power over all matters distinctively connectional.'"

See "Judicial Council," Page 11

## Sunflowers for Ukraine



All proceeds from the class were sent to UMCOR to help the people of Ukraine.

### Brookland creates fused-glass art, donates all proceeds for relief

By Jessica Brodie

WEST COLUMBIA—Some people pray for the crisis in Ukraine, some send money, while some are on the front lines supplying food, water and medical supplies.

But for a group of people at Brookland United Methodist

Church in West Columbia, their way to help involved art.

Glass artist Karen Mixon guided attendees in making fused-glass suncatchers using colors related to Ukraine, the bright blue and yellow of their nation's flag prominent among all.

See "Sunflowers for Ukraine," Page 12

## Virtual Annual Conference set for June 5-6

By Jessica Brodie

Thousands of South Carolina lay and clergy will gather virtually June 5-6 for an abbreviated 51st session of Annual Conference.

This year's session also convenes on the 50th anniversary of the last sessions of the 1866 and 1785 conferences and of the convening of the new South Carolina Annual Conference, which occurred June 5, 1972.

With the 2022 theme of "Seeking A More Excellent Way: Trusting, Believing, Knowing God is with Us," South Carolina's Resident Bishop

L. Jonathan Holston will preside over a gathering that begins Sunday at 2 p.m. with the virtual clergy session, then continues at 7 p.m. with the Commissioning, Ordination and Retirement Recognition Service.

Holston, joined by ordination preacher Bishop Gary E. Mueller, resident bishop of the Arkansas Conference, will commission or ordain 18 men and women as full or provisional elders or deacons. Three additional

See "Virtual Annual Conference," Page 11

## S.C. women 'turn it up' for faith, action at quadrennial Assembly

By Jessica Brodie

Fifty South Carolina women headed to Orlando in May for United Women in Faith's Assembly 2022, a multiday event at the Orlando Convention Center that featured powerful preaching, opportunities for service and action, and the consecration of the largest-ever class of deaconesses and home missionaries—60 in total

from 29 conferences.

Another large group of South Carolinians joined their sisters in participating in the virtual Assembly component of the event, which livestreamed most of the festivities plus included their own set of webinar workshops, a mix and mingle and more.

Held every four years, Assembly is a massive

gathering of women to focus on their mission to connect and nurture women so that they can inspire, influence and impact local and global communities. It was held May 20-22 with the theme, "Turn It Up."

This year's theologian-in-residence was Janet Wolf, a United Methodist pastor who works

See "Assembly," Page 13



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## MSN students start breakfast effort for homeless people

For the homeless and food insecure in downtown Columbia, weekends can sometime be a challenge to find a free, nutritional meal.

Recently, the Methodist Student Network (Wesley Foundation) at University of South Carolina began a new effort. Having served in the Washington Street United Methodist Church Soup Cellar for many years and having gotten to know many of Columbia's homeless people and the challenges they face, students began an every-several-weeks Saturday morning breakfast served outside the Soup Cellar in the church parking lot.

Students arrive at 6:30 a.m. on Saturdays to cook at the Campus Ministry Center, then transport the food and set up for the meal at 8 a.m. Pancakes, grits, sausage, fruit, coffee and hot chocolate are among the staples. (Students have especially learned to make a lot of coffee.)

Not only do the students offer food, but also a listening ear to hear about the challenges of being poor and marginalized. In return, breakfast attendees share a funny story or a joke. They offer appreciation and thanks as well, and students feel like they were minis-



Pancakes, grits, sausage, fruit, coffee and hot chocolate are among the staples.

tered to.

The students who serve—who rarely struggle to find a good meal and almost always have a place to sleep—are served up a plate of humility and a course of attitude adjustment. As they say, the worries that seem to consume don't seem quite the burden when they hear about someone else's life's struggles.

Christian service is a kind of evangelism that goes both ways.



The breakfast is served outside the Washington Street UMC Soup Cellar.

## Augusta Road 'Holy Grounds' offers fellowship, good coffee

By Denise Morgan

I would imagine that after 40 years of wandering the desert, Moses and the other exiles would have gotten pretty tired. From time to time, a little pick-me-up different from the usual manna would have been welcome.

Now imagine the day that Moses heard a voice from the burning bush telling him to remove his sandals because he was standing on holy ground. Well, with a little jolt of caffeine and a few thousand years later, Moses might want to be in Pelzer, with his shoes on, visiting with other travelers at a place called Holy Grounds.

Augusta Road United Methodist Church in Pelzer has a beautiful building and lovely neighbors. What it lacked was a place nearby to sit and chat with others over coffee and snacks. Much as in the case of Moses, the inspiration of the burning bush came from someone other than Moses. At ARUMC, the inspired person is a member of the congregation who stood on "holy ground" at a local Lutheran church that was doing the same thing.

Debbie Welborn, chair of the Worship Team, and the Rev. David Smith, senior pastor, traveled from Pelzer to Mauldin to learn about the coffee shop idea from the pastor and volunteers at Messiah Lutheran. Both returned energized with coffee and ready to submit a proposal to the trustees.

With that, Holy Grounds began operations at ARUMC in January.

Simply put, Holy Grounds is a group of some 10 round tables with two or three folding chairs each. The rest is magic, members say. Volunteers accept donations of coffee and snacks, cups and other items. There is no charge for food or beverages, but each individual who attends

profits in personal ways. Some attendees share devotionals or Bible stories. Some come for companionship and leave with new friends. Some were looking to get more exercise and now walk as a group before sitting down as a group.

And just as the burning bush was unexpected, ARUMC has discovered a champion square dance caller amongst the regulars who now leads a class on Monday nights for the church.

Since ARUMC also offers AARP Tax Aide service on Wednesday and Friday mornings, Welborn and her crew of volunteers are open on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 8 to 11. Given the signage at the street about tax assistance, there are a few folks who try to get taxes done at the same time they're enjoying their coffee. They just make appointments to come back.

Similarly, the volunteers who work the tax program field questions from taxpayers who praise the lovely quilted tablecloths on the bistro tables in our narthex. Those were supplied courtesy of another group at ARUMC: Sew What. This group focuses on preparing quilts for seriously ill members but also used their skills to make Holy Grounds' table coverings, which do double duty as conversation starters for our visitors.

Holy Grounds has given ARUMC neighbors and church members another opportunity to get to know each other and share creative ideas for service to God and community. Some of the coffee drinkers come back on Sunday, or to dance, or to look at Welborn's bulletin boards to find other activities to enjoy with the congregation.

As members say, at Augusta Road UMC, no one's just standing at Holy Grounds.

## Bickerton becomes COB president, calls for unity

### UMCSC's Holston is new secretary

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The bishops of The United Methodist Church completed their Spring meeting April 29 in a spirit of collegiality and love for one another and the worldwide denomination.

In a moving time of worship, the bishops celebrated the leadership of the Council of Bishops with the passing of the gavel as New York Area Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton assumed the mantle as the new president of the COB.

In his address, Bickerton called on the United Methodists to commit to "spending most of our time positioning our church for the next chapter of our life together: talking about the movement of the spirit in our midst, the exciting days that lie ahead, and the joy we will have being able to live out our calling to preach the Good News of God's love rather than the bad news of what's happening to us in the current moment.

"This is our church—let us claim it, guard it, preserve it and use it to bless generations for years to come just as we were blessed by those who came before us."

Referring to the launch of the Global Methodist Church on May 1, Bishop Bickerton called for the re-launch of the UMC.

"In the midst of the heartache of separa-



Holston

tion, let us launch and proclaim once again a unity of purpose and ministry together. In the midst of legal documents and term sheets, let us launch and affirm the reality that United Methodists are Bible-based, faith-driven, mission focused and global in scope," Bickerton said.

He urged United Methodists to be hopeful: "Let's get out of the

boat of our malaise, the boat of our current dilemma, and let us walk, no, run on the water keeping our eyes focused on the only one who can calm our anxious spirits, focus our blurry eyes and point us in the direction that will lead us once again to strength, relevancy and joy."

The bishops began the last day of their five-day meeting in executive session as outgoing COB President Bishop Cynthia Fierro Harvey shared the news that Bishop J. Mike Lowry had notified the COB of resignation of his membership in the COB in accordance with Para. 408.4 in the *Book of Discipline* effective May 1. Lowry stated he will join the Global Methodist Church on May 1 and continue his service on the Transition Leadership Council. Prior to his retirement in 2021, Lowry was the resident bishop of the Central Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church/

Fort Worth Episcopal Area.

Harvey shared on behalf of the COB her appreciation for Lowry's high level of integrity and his immeasurable contribution to the COB and the worldwide UMC but grieved his decision to leave the UMC.

The bishops and those joining on Facebook live were encouraged by the prophetic and timely word of Bishop James Swanson as he turned hearts and minds to Isaiah 40:31-32.

Addressing the issue of separation, the bishops acknowledged tension that exists with the leaders of Wesleyan Covenant Association remaining in the UMC. In a motion that was passed, the bishops urged the WCA leaders to clarify their intent to remain in the UMC or depart for the GMC.

The bishops then shared the work of their leadership teams and finally the highlight of the day: the passing of the gavel and welcoming of new officers.

Bickerton, who has served as president-designate, becomes president while Bishop Tracy Smith Malone of East Ohio Conference is the new president-designate and Bishop L. Jonathan Holston of South Carolina Conference is the new COB secretary.

Bishop Bruce Ough and Bishop Sally Dyck will continue in their roles as COB executive secretary and COB ecumenical officer, respectively.



# Four awarded with United Women in Faith scholarships

## Recipients represent Orangeburg, Rock Hill and Walterboro districts

The 2022 Presidential Scholarship of the South Carolina Conference United Women in Faith (doing business as United Methodist Women) is awarded to four deserving future leaders: Paige Barnes, Walterboro District; Ashley Downs, Orangeburg District; TaSheea Franklin, Orangeburg District; and Kara Gommer, Rock Hill District.

Each scholarship is in the amount of \$1,000. It is awarded to financially assist young women with their higher education needs. As a supportive community of women, the goal with the scholarship is recognize future leaders and provide support through prayer and financial gifts.

Scholarship Committee Chair Ruby Hannah, South Carolina Conference United Women in Faith treasurer, evaluates all applications, which are received by a March 1 due date. A combination of grade point average, leadership and community service and United Women in Faith and church involvement is examined for selecting winners.

"We are in awe of these amazing young women, who are talented, intelligent, dedicated Christians, and all they achieve at young ages," said Cathy Ford, South Carolina Conference United Women in Faith president. "We are blessed and give thanks to God for these wonderful inspired young women and those who have guided and nurtured their paths in life."

The Presidential Scholarship Award began in 2017 with Alleah Glover, Walterboro District, and Allison Simpson, Rock Hill District, the first recipients. Including the newest four winners in 2022, more than 20 scholarships have been awarded.

The gifts are made on behalf of all members of United



Barnes



Downs



Franklin



Gommer

Women in Faith in South Carolina Conference who generously fund this program.

Each of the recipients offered words of appreciation. "It is my honor to be chosen as the 2022 Presidential Scholarship recipient," Barnes said. "I am truly grateful and blessed beyond measure. The core values that the United Methodist Women tend to have are ones that I aspire to gain along my spiritual journey and educational journey. Thank you all so much for helping me reach my dreams."

Downs said, "I am so honored and humbled by the path God is laying out for me through this scholarship and in finding my new home at Charleston Southern University. This scholarship will allow me to not only pursue higher education but grow my faith with the Lord through the ministries at CSU. Thank you so much to the South Carolina United Women in Faith for this scholarship, and know that it will be used to bless many generations as I plan to become a teacher and major in early childhood education. Furthermore, I would like to thank my church, Wagener United Methodist Church, for raising me to be the young woman I am today, and for supporting me in all my endeavors; I am forever grateful."

Franklin said, "I am thankful, honored and it is a bless-

ing to have been selected to receive one of The South Carolina UWF Presidential Scholarship awards for the 2022-2023 academic school year. I am a member of Edisto Fork United Methodist Church. I thank God for the blessing; my parents Mr. and Mrs. William Franklin; my pastor Rev. Ellis White Jr.; Mrs. Barbara Simpson, president Orangeburg District UWF; Dr. Judith Salley, church lay leader; my teachers; Edisto Fork UWF; and my

church family for their support and encouragement. After graduating high school, I plan to attend North Carolina A&T State University and major in child development and family studies. I genuinely believe that a college experience will inspire me, instill values and push me to become a better student, daughter and woman in general. Having this scholarship will assist me in achieving my higher educational needs. My goal is to continue to serve in the community and church where my passion is helping children, youth and women. As I embark on my college journey, I hope to inspire others through leadership and service."

Gommer said, "I am so blessed and grateful to God to be a recipient of the United Methodist Women scholarship for this year. I was very excited to open my letter and read such good news. As a nursing major attending Anderson University, I believe I can use this help as a way to benefit those around me and most importantly serve my creator. God has blessed me this year in so many ways, and receiving this scholarship is just another example of his many mercies. I would like to thank everyone who has helped me on my journey through freshman year of college, especially all of the amazing women and who are a part of the UMW. God bless!"

## WCA revises mission, elects Therrell as new president

By Walter Fenton  
Excerpted and reprinted with permission of the Wesleyan Covenant Association



Therrell

In light of the third postponement of The United Methodist Church's 2020 General Conference, delegates to the Wesleyan Covenant Association's Fourth Global Legislative Assembly endorsed a revised mission statement for their association.

They also overwhelmingly and enthusiastically voted to elect the Rev. Jay Therrell as the association's second president.

Meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, at an in-person assembly with 240 delegates from around the world, the revised mission statement and Therrell's election were the major developments during a full day of legislative business bookended by two worship services.

"The WCA warmly supported the Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace through Separation," said Rev. Keith Boyette, WCA's current president. "Our members and friends, who people thousands of local UM churches, were looking forward to amicably and orderly departing the UM Church later this year. But with yet another postponement of the General Conference, and a number of bishops and annual conferences imposing onerous terms for churches wanting to leave the denomination, the WCA will advocate on behalf of its members and friends at annual conferences and at the 2024 General Conference."

The revised mission statement also committed the WCA to fulfilling aims in both the UMC and the Global Methodist Church. It will support efforts to see that the UMC maintains faithful adherence and accountability to the standards of doctrine and discipline embodied in its current *Book of Discipline*. And it will continue to act as an advisor to the Global Methodist Church as its leaders work to shape its doctrine, polity and mission in preparation for its convening General Conference.

"It is obvious a number of our regional chapter delegates, who represent thousands of theologically conservative local churches in Africa, Europe/Eurasia, the Philippines

and the U.S. have no intention of leaving the UM Church under punitive exit terms," said Boyette. "They plan to continue to work for the protocol's approval, so they'll join their allies at Africa Initiative, the Confessing Movement, Good News and UMAction to organize for the 2024 General Conference."

An election of a new WCA president was necessitated by news that Boyette will become the Global Methodist Church's transitional connectional coordinating officer beginning June 1. He recently withdrew from membership in the Virginia Annual Conference of the UMC and is now an elder in the Global Methodist Church. He will serve as its senior executive and administrative officer through its convening General Conference.

The Transitional Leadership Council, the body that officially brought the denomination into existence, will continue to provide governing oversight during the church's transitional period.

Therrell, an ordained elder in the Global Methodist Church, currently leads the Florida WCA Regional Chapter. He served several local UMCs in Florida including First Methodist churches of Kissimmee, Ormond Beach and Cape Coral. He also served as the North East District superintendent for four years, serving the greater Jacksonville area.

After earning an undergraduate degree at Presbyterian College (Clinton, South Carolina), Therrell earned his law degree at the University of Florida (Gainesville). For several years he practiced estate planning and tax law before receiving a call to ministry. He completed a Master of Divinity degree at Asbury Theological Seminary's campus in Orlando.

Under Therrell's leadership, the Florida WCA Regional Chapter has flourished. He made presentations in numerous locations throughout the state, helping WCA members, friends and local church leaders understand the WCA's mission and purpose. With the announcement of the protocol, he produced resources and delivered addresses to help local churches discern their options

under its terms. And with the formation of the Global Methodist Church, he has helped people understand its mission and its governance structure during its transitional period. He was also part of a drafting team that assisted the Transitional Leadership Council in preparing the new Global Methodist Church's *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline*.

"I am humbled to be following a leader that I admire greatly," said Therrell. "Keith has served our movement with extraordinary courage and wisdom. As the WCA moves forward it does so standing on the shoulders of those who led it to a firm and strong foundation. The task before us is clear: helping as many theologically conservative churches and clergy as possible move to the Global Methodist Church where they can be free to make disciples of Jesus Christ that worship passionately, love extravagantly and witness

boldly. As John Wesley famously said, 'And best of all, God is with us.'"

Therrell will assume his duties on June 1.

In other business, the assembly overwhelmingly adopted a resolution celebrating the formation of the Global Methodist Church. The assembly also adopted a resolution urging UMC bishops, annual conferences and their boards of trustees to adopt fair and gracious exit pathways for local churches seeking to separate from the UMC.

Delegates also heard reports from the WCA's Task Force on Sexual Holiness, Wholeness, and Brokenness and its Task Force on a Catechism for the Global Methodist Church. After debate and deliberation, the assembly amended and approved resolutions proposed by both task force teams, and then it commended the resolutions to the Global Methodist Church's convening General Conference.

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# Viewpoints



## Editorial

by Jessica Brodie

### Care, not just 'dominion'

**H**ave you ever been struck by a visual so powerful, so jarring, that it left you not only breathless but powered with a drive so deep within you that you knew it had to come from the Holy Spirit?

I had the opportunity to hear compelling remarks from Heather McTeer Toney, climate justice liaison for the Environmental Defense Fund and senior advisor to Moms Clean Air Force. Toney was a keynote speaker at United Women in Faith's Assembly 2022, which I attended virtually, and I was blown away by the gathering. Not only was it an inspiring time that brought together sisters in Christ across the nation and world, but it prompted a reinvigoration in my heart to do all I can in the name of Jesus on this earth.

For me, serving Jesus usually means "people projects." I have a passion for mental health and mental illness, for advocating for the marginalized and unseen, for doing all I can to cultivate racial justice in a world that can be so blinded by hate and so fearful of difference.

But I'm also a huge nature lover. I grew up in what is sometimes referred to as the "concrete jungle" of Miami, which has made me extremely appreciative of untamed creation. I've always felt a deep sense of the responsibility God gives us as stewards of this earth. And Toney's words about the perfect and intimate connection among us, the land and our creator struck a chord in a way I can't quite put words to.

See, Toney grew up along the Mississippi Delta, yet she was raised in church to embrace the visual imagery of Psalm 23—the shadow of the valley, the green pastures lying beside peaceful, still waters. Yet as Toney put it, the beauty of the Scripture contrasted starkly with the environment around her, which "is not necessarily a pasture you want to go lay down in."

Look around. Do you see green pastures and peaceful, still waters? Do you see the lushness of the Promised Land? Sometimes I do, yes.

But I also see smokestacks and litter, pollution and urban sprawl. I see a world increasingly sick, a world that needs us to step up and advocate. A world that needs a real steward, someone who loves this place God gave us, not a people who carelessly use it up like it's worthless.

Being stewards mean sometimes being uncomfortable so nature can win. It might mean paying more money or shelling out more tax dollars or even passing expensive legislation that prioritizes the land over reckless consumption. It means love and proper, respectful care, not just "dominion."

Toney's words have stirred me to reach out to my elected representatives and urge them to implement policies that care for creation instead of knocking it down. Will you join me?

### Letters Policy

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## Bishop's Corner

by Bishop L. Jonathan Holston

### Never alone

*"Don't get off track, either left or right, so as to make sure you get to where you're going. And don't for a minute let this Book of The Revelation be out of mind. Ponder and meditate on it day and night, making sure you practice everything written in it. Then you'll get where you're going; then you'll succeed. Haven't I commanded you? Strength! Courage! Don't be timid; don't get discouraged. God, your God, is with you every step you take" (Joshua 1:8-9).*

**A**s this edition of the *Advocate* arrives, the 2022 session of the South Carolina Annual Conference will be starting. On June 5 and 6, we will gather virtually for a time of giving thanks to almighty God and celebrating the ways in which we have been seeking and fulfilling God's purpose for the church.

This year's theme—"Seeking A More Excellent Way: Trusting, Believing and Knowing God is With Us"—builds on the journey of faith we have taken together over the last ten years as we confidently lean on our Savior, Jesus Christ to guide and direct us. Miraculous things can happen when we leave our place of comfort and allow God to stretch us in new and different ways. We will convene filled with hope, remembering who God has called us to be and what God wants for us.

This year's Annual Conference will again be held virtually. We made this decision to ensure the safety and good health of all involved, and we look forward to engaging with you virtually as we live into the broadened definition of what it means for God's

people to gather.

We are deeply grateful for the perseverance, innovation and faithfulness exhibited by all clergy and lay members as we have navigated the pandemic-driven challenges over these last two years. We look forward to celebrating the mission and ministry of devoted South Carolina United Methodists who are answering God's call and taking the next faithful step.

We are delighted to have Bishop Gary Mueller join us as the guest preacher for the Service of Commissioning, Ordination and Retirement Recognition, and our very own Dr. Robin Dease will join us as the preacher for the memorial service.

The hard work of so many people makes this gathering possible. A profound word of gratitude is expressed to the Rev. Terry Fleming and the people and churches of the Florence District, our host district and to the Rev. Josh McClendon and members of Pisgah United Methodist Church, our host church. For many months, this team has worked closely with our conference secretary the Rev. Ken Nelson, assistant conference secretary the Rev. Mel Arant and the Committee on the Annual Conference to consider every detail. I am certain you will join me in saluting the proactive leadership of all of these people who have worked so diligently on our behalf.

As we prepare for the 2022 Annual Conference, I ask for your prayers that great and marvelous things will happen through the Holy Spirit who guides and sustains us. Pray that our presence online will be a living witness to the grace, mercy and love of Jesus Christ for all whom we meet.

## Appointment Changes

Bishop Jonathan Holston has announced the following changes of appointment:

Effective April 21: Charleston District  
Carly Wicklund, Pediatric Staff Chaplain, UNC Health Care, Chapel Hill

## Letters to the Editor

### A pastor's confession: 'I lied!'

My life has been filled with contempt and disdain for callous liars, who seem to lie for enjoyment or the sport of it. My mom was quick to state, "If an individual would lie, that individual would steal!" The notion was that our words should be our bond. That is, "We should say what we mean, and mean what we say."

Today, I find myself marred by the flaw that I deplore—lying. Also, I readily confess I, too, have lied. And to make it more egregious, I've done it over and over again.

See, each time I see or hear of man's inhumanity to man, I am brought to tears, and each time I promise not to cry again.

I saw my brother George literally being killed in handcuffs with a knee on his neck while he cried like a baby for his mother, and I couldn't help him, so I cried. I saw videos of some mother's daughter being slain in her bed while she slept and some father's son on a friend's couch where he crashed for the night—both at the hands of those who took oaths to protect them. I have heard and or seen numerous parents and loved ones grieve over these countless atrocities unable to have provided protection and unlikely to get even a little inkling of justice or accountability, and as a parent, I realized it could have been my child.

And again, and again, I cried.

One day I heard a prominent athlete say he loves America, but it doesn't seem America loves him. I know I love America, but I often wonder also: Does she love me? Today, our America looks more like the place my great-grandparents experienced when they arrived despite the blood they shed to make her great. And that thought saddens me and bring tears to my eyes.

Then I thought of the great church we helped build. While others fled because of what it was, some of us stayed because we knew what it could be. Together, struggling and falling,

# LETTERS: Readers sound off on split, racism, women's rights

From Page 4

under the unction of the Spirit, we began the transformation of the world, making it look a little more like the kingdom of God.

Our history of social justice is second to none. Our mission is worldwide. We have done great things together. At the top of my list, next to the changed souls, is Africa University, a testament to God and the world communities under God.

So I cried in relief that with God and our great church, we got this, and vowed to cry no more.

Then I read the Rev. Clayton Childers' article in the May *Advocate*, "What's Going To Happen?," and was reminded that the church we love and look to for guidance and moral compass, the church that has epitomized God's love, is thinking seriously about divorcing because we are not in total agreement on every issue that confront us.

I realized I had lied again and began to cry—and have been unable to stop.

Let me suggest that failure to work through our differences would highlight that we are not capable of leading anyone no matter what name or justifications we use. I prefer the idea of the Righteous Judge (that's not me or you) being the judge of us all. I believe God is up to the task. Let God be God and we be his people of love.

Finally, my brethren, if you are the saved, you have a duty to stay in the relationship so that the unsaved may be sancti-

fied through you. However, if you are the unsaved and desire to leave, well, so be it! (1 Corinthians 7:14 KJV)

*Rev. Joseph Abram Jr., retired  
St. Matthews*

## Women's rights and racism

Two things are on my mind this month. First, regarding women's rights, The United Methodist Church has a long history of concern for social justice. The Social Principles are a prayer-filled and thoughtful effort on the part of the General Conference to speak to the human issues in the contemporary world from a sound biblical and theological foundation.

"Our belief in the sanctity of unborn human life makes us reluctant to approve abortion. But we are equally bound to respect the sacredness of the life and well-being of the mother, for whom devastating damage may result from an unacceptable pregnancy. In continuity with past Christian teaching, we recognize tragic conflicts of life with life that may justify abortion, in such cases we support the legal option of abortion under proper medical procedures" (*Book of Discipline*, Para. 161J).

The 1973 decision *Roe v. Wade* upheld that women had a constitutional right to privacy and decision making. Key rights for women are in danger and so are other rights. Psalm 146 gives us guidance.

Second, a word on racism. The United Methodist Church does not support or believe in White supremacy. "The Great

Replacement Theory," the belief that White Americans are being systematically replaced by immigrants and minorities, is a sinful position or thought. Hate crimes are being motivated by this sinful thinking. Hate crimes are at a 12-year high according to the FBI (Charleston, El Paso, Pittsburgh, Buffalo, New York, and other cities).

Racism is real in America. The UMC *Book of Discipline* addresses racism in Para. 162A: "Racism is the combination of the power to dominate by one race over other races and a value system that assumes that the dominant race is innately superior to the others. Racism plagued and crippled our growth in Christ, inasmuch as it is anti-thetical to the gospel itself. Racism breeds racial discrimination. Therefore, we recognize racism as sin and affirm the ultimate and temporal worth of all persons." Love and justice.

*Rev. John Culp, retired  
West Columbia*

## Clarifying the split

This is in reference to the Rev. John Culp's letter (April *Advocate*). He wrote, "There are religious leaders known as Global Methodist Church who want to split the UMC over the fear of the LGBTQ people." Wow, is that really what he thinks? Let me help you understand the truth of the matter as to why the UMC will split. Incidentally, I have been a Methodist all my 92-year life.

See "Letters," Page 6



## Guest Commentary

by Emily L. Cooper

### Remembering College Place

Look! I'm doing a new thing" (Isaiah 43:19)—but that's hard to accept when you're saying goodbye to a church that has meant so much to you, to your loved ones and your community.

So it was for all those who have known College Place United Methodist Church through its 108 years of ministry in Northeast Columbia, sitting at the front edge of Columbia College and in a historic community; one that has gone from "the new church on the street-car-line" to "the nearest neighbor of the UMC Conference Center and Columbia College to, now, a part of Columbia College and its United Methodist ministry to all its students and staff.

A wall-to-wall crowd gathered May 1 when former pastors, members, associated friends and family and the beloved community shared hugs and pieces of their part in the story. The Rev. Joe Alley, the Rev. Wiley Cooper, the Rev. Tiffany Knowlin, the Rev. Fadetra Harrington-Boyd and the Rev. Mary Johnson spoke, along with the Rev. Hope Avins, a Columbia College student who entered ministry while attending College Place.

People were there from as far away as Kenya and people who live just up the street, including and funeral-home owner Bill Shives who has poured out his respect for the church and its members through decades. There were missionaries, musicians, teachers and children of the children who grew up at College Place church before it was the "UMC."

And as always, it welcomed Columbia College students and faculty.

College Place people called Columbia Realtors out for "red-lining"—illegally refusing to show houses to White people when the city got to where many of these homes were affordable for the lower incomes, and then they invited Realtors into the parsonage for "tea" so they'd know it was a safe and wonderful community for all. College Place was available for all sorts of good things, including sponsoring one of the first U.S. Communities of Shalom. Among other vital services, its members cleaned out a nasty, water-filled ditch in a "city park" near a well-traveled street and the home of a councilman, one that the city had ignored for decades. And



This historic photo shows the Rev. Wiley Cooper doing "children's time" when he was appointed to College Place UMC, Columbia.

then it helped transform that area from a drug and prostitution alley to a beautiful, affordable residential neighborhood.

College Place was truly a welcoming and diverse church for its diverse community, the home of the reconstituted Eau Claire Community Council, the Mediation Center, Children's Garden child development center, the North Columbia AA, the Shalom-sponsored Dyslexia Resource Center and many additional service and outreach ministries.

Generations of Columbia College students knew College Place as the Columbia College Chapel and a haven of support and refuge. Columbia College presidents from 1914 through Peter Mitchell were active members of College Place. Even a substitute teacher for the elementary school arrived at the pastor's house at 5 a.m. and asked to sit inside until the school opened at 7.

As the community grew more diverse, its residents grew stronger, more open, with events sometimes leading to a parade down Main Street that always ended in hugs and fellowship. And College Place was a go-to place for people in trouble or who needed not just dollars but God's help.

May that new thing God has in mind come to be and lead us out from those church steps embedded in our memory to serving him even more fully wherever we go.

*Cooper is editor emeritus of the Advocate.*



## Guest Commentary

by William (Billy) R. Robinson Jr.

### Caring hands

Late Friday night May 13, at 11:35 p.m., a heart-wrenching call for help came into Orangeburg County Emergency Services Dispatch for a 6-year-old who had been shot in a drive-by shooting into a mobile home in the Town of Woodford.

The first arriving medical first responders were three United Methodists from North United Methodist Church, who are also members of North Volunteer Fire & Rescue.

Six-year-old Winston Conner had been fatally shot, and our first responder efforts changed from trying to physically save a life to those of comfort and care to a growing crowd of family, friends and other first responders, many of whom had witnessed the horrific scene that left shell casings at our feet outside the home.

The Rev. Richard Toy of North UMC and I are also both chaplains, and we refocused ourselves into being God's hands and arms of comfort to a distraught crowd who were dealing with a senseless and horrific act of violence that were beyond belief for them as well as us. We prayed with them, hugged, cried and listened as we all tried to make some sense out of a senseless act of horror.

As I was handing out drinking water and Scripture resources, Winston's older brother begged me, "Mister, I know you are with the fire department. Please go back one more time and try to save him—he's my brother!"

I wrapped my arms around him and, with a loss of words, could only say, "I am so sorry, but he is gone."

His cry for his brother and for us to perform a miraculous healing still haunts me. How can an adult understand such a loss, much less a child?

In the fire (emergency response) service as well as our United Methodist Early Response Teams, we have learned the dire need for Critical Incident Stress Debriefing, known as CISD. Sometimes it is simply at the fire station or around an ERT trailer after returning from a difficult and stressful call. At other times such as this, there is the need for a more structured and professional CISD for everyone involved from dispatchers, fire, rescue, EMS, law enforcement, first responders, etc. The idea is to get responders talking and not keeping everything bottled up inside, plus seeing that they have a wonderful connection of brothers and sisters in service who care for them and are always there 24/7 to lend a shoulder to cry on or give a much-needed hug of hope.

We all underwent a CISD for this event, and one of the leaders putting it on was the Rev. Shay Long of Mill Creek UMC in Columbia, who is a member of the SC FAST Team, which stands for First Responders Assistant and Support Team.

The session was very successful and started us all well onto our healing process. Long brought with her a special pair of "Caring Hands" in the form of a real raccoon in a baby crib. At the end of the session, we all got the chance to pet Remington the raccoon and allow him to wrap his arms of care and love around our arms and touch us with his hands. What a wonderful, loving ministry of care and love!

There are many times in this life that seem so senseless and we simply do not understand why God allows them to happen. When you are down in some of the deepest pits and valleys of life, it is then that you come to realize God is all you really need and he will meet your needs and see you through. Sometimes his hands even come in the form of a raccoon's arms wrapped around your arms and his caring hands gently touching your face.

*Robinson is a member of North UMC, North, and the South Carolina ERT coordinator.*

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# Growing in Faith:



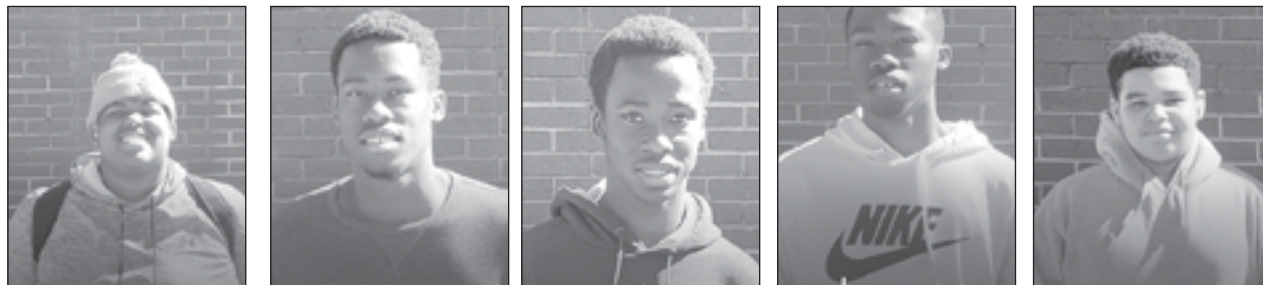
Photo courtesy of Amber Forrest

Grace UMC, North Augusta, celebrates its 2022 Confirmation Class. From left are the Rev. Randall Haase, K.K. Kirkland, Emily LaFont, Addison Stone, J.P. Calhoun, Caeden Cannon, and Rev. Tommy Wilkes. Kirkland and Cannon were also baptized that day.



Photo courtesy of Michael Goldston

St. Paul UMC, Greenville, confirmed four students May 15. The students enjoyed the Theotokos confirmation retreat at the Hinton Rural Life Center in North Carolina.



Silver Hill Memorial UMC, Spartanburg, will confirm five students on June 5. Above from left are Joel Brooks, Matthew Brooks, Miles Brooks, Nicholas Brooks and Tony Moss.

Whether big or small, United Methodist churches across South Carolina celebrated what is for many an incredibly meaningful and important time in the life of the church: confirmation of youth into the life of the church. Here are scenes from across the conference. (If you would like the Advocate to run a photo of your church confirmands, email it to [advocate@umcsc.org](mailto:advocate@umcsc.org).)



Photo courtesy of Lesli Wood

The 2022 Confirmation Class at Shandon UMC, Columbia, gathers for a smile on Confirmation Sunday, April 24. Here, the 26 confirmands gather on the church's front steps with their sixth grade Sunday school teachers and confirmation mentors, along with the Rev. Smoke Kanipe, senior pastor.



Photo courtesy of Martha Timmons

St. James UMC, Spartanburg, welcomed three confirmands into the church this year. Leaders said they enjoyed weaving their faith story into the greater Christian story, and loved being a part of the Hinton Center Retreat with other churches from the UMCS.

## LETTERS: On Putin, clarifying Global Methodist Church view

From Page 5

Those of the soon-to-be Global Methodist Church are not afraid of anyone. They are simply Methodists who believe in God's word as inspired by God and want to obey it. They are people who know what Scripture says and want the Methodist *Discipline* to say the same. They know that God warned all those who try to add to or subtract from his word that they will not enter the kingdom of God.

Global Methodists believe God said that marriage is between a man and a woman—as God made them. They believe Leviticus 20:13 and 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 (NLT2) that clearly state that those who practice homosexuality will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Global Methodists believe that our UMC *Discipline* must not be changed to allow homosexuals to be ordained and that homosexuals not be joined in a “marriage” that is contrary to God's word. Globals believe that the *Discipline*, as currently written pertaining to this subject, is in accordance with God's word. And, Wesley said, “Amen!”

Globals believe all have sinned and should repent in accordance with God's word found in the Holy Bible. Globals believe all, includ-

ing LGBTQ, should be in God's church, worshiping God; repenting, teaching, learning and living by the truth of the Bible; and upholding God's commands instead of the lustful traditions of men.

God said he does not change; therefore, his word doesn't change. That is why there's going to be a split in the UMC—not because we are afraid of anyone. Some currently in the UMC want to do it their way instead of God's way. In fact, that is so in keeping with what John wrote: “Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever. Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that anti-christ is coming, even now many anti-christs have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us” (1 John 2:15-19).

(Those that went out = those who love the things of the world rather than God.)

I honestly believe when we all face Christ for judgment that he is going to ask some, “What exactly didn't you understand about my word pertaining to this or that sin? My word was very clear.”

Thanks for “listening.” I pray the conference does not interfere with the split!

*Sam Grant, member  
Trinity UMC, Darlington*

### The cost of loving the enemy

I have been thinking about the teaching of Jesus where he says, “Love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you.”

About as close as I think I could come to doing that with Putin is this: Take an 18-wheeler flatbed truck. Build, on the flatbed, a clear bulletproof case large enough to put Putin in it. Put him in a chair where he would have to sit during the day and a bed where he would have to lay at night and put speakers inside the case.

On the outside of the case, have a chair facing Putin anchored to the floor of the 18-wheeler for use if needed. Install a microphone outside the bulletproof case that

would be connected to the speakers inside the case Putin is in. Move the 18-wheeler from city to city in Ukraine. Let Ukrainians who would like to do so come stand/sit in front of Putin and tell him their stories.

At nighttime, let Putin try to sleep if he can as the sounds of the actual bombings are played, and let rotating spotlights shine on the destroyed buildings around him. Have the World Feeding Kitchen feed Putin each day. Let the truck stay in each city as long as there were people who wanted to come and tell their story to Putin.

I really do believe this is the only way we would ever hope to change Putin's heart.

Could it be an act of love? If you have trouble with this idea, get a copy of “The Cost of Discipleship,” a book by the Christian German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who lived and taught in a seminary in Germany during the time Hitler was in power. Bonhoeffer decided to take part in an attempt to kill Hitler. The attempt failed. Bonhoeffer was captured and was killed two days before the war ended. The cost of war. The cost of discipleship. The cost of loving the enemy.

*Dr. Michael Vandiver, retired  
Anderson*



# Confirmation 2022



First UMC, Myrtle Beach, confirmation students gathered at their 2022 confirmation retreat, which was led by Dr. George Howle in his 40th year in ministry. This is Howle's final confirmation class, as he retires this June.



Photos courtesy of Carolyn Brashear

Trinity UMC, Anderson, celebrated eight confirmands on Easter Sunday. All received their Bibles in worship prior to their first class, Feb. 27. Classes were held on Sunday afternoons, and a one-day confirmation retreat was held at Camp Providence March 5.

Pond Branch UMC, Gilbert, celebrated the confirmation of 10 students this year.



Photo courtesy of Todd Handell

Lexington UMC, Lexington, confirmed four students May 22. Here, the students share a smile at their confirmation retreat.



Photo courtesy of Rev. Steve King

Dacusville UMC, Easley, welcomed three confirmands this year on Confirmation Sunday, April 3. From left are Elizabeth Mowbray, Alayah Bolding, and Annabelle Mowbray.



Photo courtesy of Amy Jernigan

The sixth and seventh grade confirmation classes at St. John's UMC, Aiken, gather on Confirmation Sunday, March 27.



On Easter Sunday, April 17, Grace UMC, Union, confirmed nine young men and women by Profession of Faith. From left are Jake Glenn, son of John and April Glenn; Sebastian Fowler and Greyson Day, sons of Missy Kirby Wilkes and Paul Wilkes IV; Reagan Turner, daughter of Jason and Ashley Turner; Ben Balkum, son of Bill and Kim Balkum; Bayla Morrow, daughter of Becca Lipscomb Morrow; Sarah Paige Glenn, daughter of John and April Glenn; Corley Turner, son of Jason and Ashley Turner; and Alex Wagner, son of Christy Kincheloe and Stewart and Melissa Wagner. Pastor Lee Phillips stands with them Ben Balkum.



Photo courtesy of the Rev. Rusty Godfrey

On Jan. 9, at Monaghan UMC, Greenville District, retired local pastor Diane Boyer (center) presented confirmation certificates to Alex McCauley (left) and Christian McCauley.



Photo courtesy of Jared Lee

Mount Hebron UMC, West Columbia, confirmed 11 students this year. Here, the students gather on Confirmation Sunday, April 3.



Trinity UMC, York, confirmed eight youth May 8. After a series of classes to discuss the UMC, their faith journeys and their beliefs, they made the decision to join the church. Pictured with Trinity Program Director Alice Smith are Connor Altman, Noah Morrison, Tanner Cowart, Lydia Smiley, Caleb Craig, Jackson Rampey, Henry Fulk and Kylie Hudgens. The youth also conducted the majority of the worship service that day.



Mount Horeb UMC, Lexington, confirmed 95 eighth graders the weekend of March 25-27.



Photo courtesy of Julie McLaughlin

St. Mark UMC, Greenwood, confirmed its students May 15.



# Bethel's Son Shine Kids revitalizes church

By Dianna Anderson

Bethel United Methodist Church is a small rural church in Andrews. We had not had a program for children at our church for several years.

Frequently, I would say, "If we don't get some young people in this church, we are going to die out." About six years ago at annual conference, a guest speaker quoted those very thoughts. He asked, "What are you and your church offering to the children and youth in your community?"

I thought about it and all I could come up with was an almost-empty Sunday school room and Bible school one week out of the year. God spoke to my heart that day, and I knew we had to do more.

I had all kinds of excuses not to listen. Where would we get the children? There were only three children I could think of who might possibly come. The congregation was too old to take on a children's program. There wouldn't be enough help.

But God was not giving up. We started our Son Shine Kids program that fall. God has done the rest. He has blessed us with children. We average about 15 children a week and pre-COVID had as many as 32 a week. We have great support from the adults who assist faithfully each week.

That was six years ago, and as the children reached middle school age, we saw a need for a program for that age group. Last fall, we started a youth program for sixth grade and up. Once again God has blessed



Bethel averages about 15 children per week.

us with children and helpers. That program averages 10 to 12 young people a week. We still don't have a lot of children in church on Sunday morning, but that wasn't the goal. Our goal has been to teach them about Jesus.

It has been a blessing to all of us involved to see these children grow in Christ as their knowledge of the Bible increases and they start to have a personal relationship with Jesus. To God be the glory!

*Anderson is lay leader at Bethel UMC, Andrews.*



Cameron Spann accepts his scholarship.



L. Jordan Jones accepts her scholarship.

## Wesley awards \$500 'Hope for the Future' scholarships in memory of Ella Belle Watson

LADSON—Wesley United Methodist Church, with the support of Dr. Carlton J. McClam Sr. and in partnership with the Watson family, established for the first time and awarded two \$500 scholarships on Sunday, May 15, honoring the legacy of the late Mrs. Ella Belle Watson.



Mrs. Watson

After her death on July 7, 2020, Wesley UMC in partnership with her children established the Hope for the Future Scholarship in her memory.

Wesley UMC leaders said Watson had her own quiet way of reaching out to individuals who needed help. She always had valuable, encouraging advice for young people to continue to get an education and to always trust in the Lord. Her great passion to instill learning and prepare young people for the future was with love and devotion as she taught children in Dorchester School District II, Wesley UMC Sunday school and throughout the community.

The first recipient is L. Jordan Jones, daughter of the Rev. Clayton and Gail Jones. She will attend the University of South Carolina this fall and will be a premedical student with a minor in a STEM related field. She aspires to help bridge the shortage of workers in these fields, especially the shortage caused by the pandemic.

Jordan writes, "My dreams and goals are

to become the best version of me I can be while fulfilling God's purpose for my life and helping others around me."

She will graduate from Fort Dorchester High School, North Charleston.

The second recipient is Cameron Spann, son of Robert Spann. At an incredibly early age Spann realized his talents with

recognizing and troubleshooting problems with machines. He will attend Trident Technical College this fall and plans to enroll in the Industrial Maintenance Technician program. In an economy still suffering from the effects of manufacturing shortages because of the ongoing pandemic, Spann writes, "My personal commitment to create 'Hope for Future' is by joining the workforce as an industrial maintenance technician who can understand and troubleshoot any electrical machine; keeping factories or plants running smoothly during the production of goods."

Spann will graduate from Stratford High School, Goose Creek.

The Wesley UMC family said it is grateful to the children of Mrs. Ella Watson for establishing this fruitful scholarship fund benefitting high school students. The Watson and the Wesley family celebrate these first recipients' achievements.



### Eggs-citing!

Manning UMC, Manning, hosted an egg hunt on Palm Sunday at the church.



Church members served on committees.



The parade is a big part of the fun.

## Church plays big role in Lamar Egg Scramble

Around the town of Lamar at the end of March, eggs can be seen sprinkled around the town in trees, in yards, on doors and various other places.

The town holds their annual clean-up day in preparation for the Annual Egg Scramble Jamboree.

All week Lamar gets all "dressed up" getting the town ready for the festivities, which feature live entertainment, a Railroad Avenue Walk & Run, a parade, kiddie entertainment, health, crafts and food vendors and a plethora of traditional Southern food.

On April 2, thousands of festival goers

made their way to Lamar for a fun-filled day of family fun and food.

Several members of John Wesley United Methodist Church, Lamar, worked with the Egg Scramble committee in various areas: parade committee Edith Josey, chair, and Rosalind Pringle member; gospel stage committee Dorothy Evans, chair; technical assistant Sam Robinson; and chair of the Egg Scramble Committee, Jeronell Bradley.

The weekend was rounded out with a community worship service, which was the kickoff to start the sesquicentennial celebration of the Town of Lamar.



### Camp Providence, coming soon

Camp Providence in Anderson will be open and running its day camp in July. This ministry with South Carolina Camps & Retreat Ministries and Asbury Hills will serve campers in first to ninth grades on Lake Hartwell. Fun activities, worship, small group devotions and fellowship will be part of each day. Here, counselors share a moment with kids at last year's camp.

Photo courtesy of Paige Helms



### Greater mobility

Students from the Methodist Student Network (campus ministry at University of South Carolina) built two wheelchair ramps in Summerton May 9-11.





## Book Review

by the Rev. Carol Rexroad Cannon (retired)

### The Bible Told Them So

On April 17, 1960, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr said on Meet the Press, “The most segregated hour in Christian America is 11 on Sunday morning.” He was not the first person to say that, but he and many others repeated it often during the 1960s, including President Lyndon Johnson and Malcolm X.



I have heard it many times over the years. I experienced it as an indictment against the church, that we are not living out God’s vision for the body of Christ where all of God’s children are one family.

White Southern Evangelical Christians in the 1950s and 1960s would have agreed with Dr. King’s statement. However, they would have disagreed with his assessment that it was “appalling.” Rather, they believed that segregation was the proper Christian response to the issue of race, specifically that the separation of races was God’s ordained plan for humanity, established in creation.

The theological underpinnings of segregation and its influence on the South is the subject of “The Bible Told Them So,” a book by J. Russell Hawkins, professor of humanities and history in the John Wesley Honors College at Indiana Wesleyan University. This book is particularly relevant for the people of the South Carolina Conference in that he explores his thesis through an examination of the proceedings of White Methodists and Baptists in South Carolina from 1954-1976.

I found the book fascinating. I learned about it from a friend in the greater Kansas City area who is a retired clergy member of the Great Plains Annual Conference. His Sunday school class had read it and found it interesting. I found it captivating not only for its content, but because I already knew—or knew of—many people mentioned in the book: the Rev. McKay Brabham, the Rev. John Murray, the Rev. George Lovell, Rhett Jackson, William Workman, Dan Albergotti, T. Elliott Wannamaker, Tom Turnipseed and others. Because Hawkins’ focus is segregationist theology, he does not refer by name to Black leaders in the Methodist church.

The book begins in 1954, with the Supreme Court decision in the case *Brown v. Board of Education*, which outlawed racial segregation in public schools. *Brown v. Board of Education* combined five cases, including *Briggs v. Elliott* from Summerton. Hawkins traces the opposition to this decision in the South, highlighting actions of South Carolina Methodists and Baptists. He explores not only how local congregations responded but also the response of the South Carolina Southern Baptist Convention and the South Carolina Annual Conference (Southeastern Jurisdiction). He further discusses what White Southerners understood as the biblical foundation for their beliefs.

Hawkins then looks specifically at the desegregation of Furman and Wofford. Here he compares and contrasts the polity of the Baptists and Methodists, with the Baptist emphasis on the autonomy of local churches and the Methodist focus on the connectional nature of the church. Interestingly, the theological differences between Methodists and Baptists do not come into play in the efforts for and against desegregating their respective institutions of higher education.

In the next chapter, Hawkins focuses only on us Methodists, as he discusses the merger of the 1785 (White) Conference and the 1866 (Black) Conference. Again, because his focus is segregationist theology, he discusses the actions of White Methodist individuals and churches both for and against merger, while only reporting the actions of the 1866 Con-

ference. He begins by discussing the formation of the Central Jurisdiction in 1939 when the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church South and the Methodist Protestant Church merged to form the Methodist Church. The Central Jurisdiction was a construct to keep Black local churches and White local churches in separate annual conferences. When The United Methodist Church was formed in 1968, the Central Jurisdiction was dissolved. Because South Carolina had the largest number of Black local churches, the formation of the UMC with the corresponding dissolution of the Central Jurisdiction had greater impact upon the two South Carolina conferences than any other conferences across the nation.

In this chapter on merger, Hawkins discusses the evolution of segregationist theology from public statements on the biblical justification of segregation to more private discussion within the church. The focus became the need to change persons’ hearts. The argument was that this would be best accomplished by gradual change of individuals rather than forcing change systemically on an institutional level.

The final chapter focuses on the formation of private schools in South Carolina during the 1960s and 1970s as a response to the courts forcing the desegregation of public schools. These segregationist academies resulted in many public schools in South Carolina becoming desegregated rather than truly integrated. In other words, most public schools are largely made up of either 1) Black students (along with students of color, such as Hispanic) or 2) White students. The private schools had strong support among White congregations. As in the case of merger, the theological arguments had shifted from the openly segregationist theology of the 1950s and early 1960s. The focus was now on concern for the family and protecting children from outside influences.

“The Bible Told Them So” is relevant for South Carolina Methodists today. First, its narrative gives a sense of our history. It tells us the stories that have shaped us as congregations, Black and White, connected through the annual conference.

Second, the book also shows how Christians on both sides of an issue can use the Bible to support their world view. Those for segregation pointed to the curse of Ham, the bans against intermarriage in Ezra and Nehemiah and God establishing “bounds of habitation” in Acts 17:26. Those for integration pointed to Jesus’ crossing racial and gender barriers as he encountered the Samaritan woman at the well, Peter’s vision in Acts 10 that led him to believe that the Gospel of Jesus Christ was not only for Jews but for Gentiles, and Paul’s claim in Galatians 3:28, “There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.”

Today, Methodists on both sides of the issues surrounding human sexuality use Scripture to support their viewpoints. As with the issue of race in the 1950s and 1960s, there is strong disagreement on what Christians should believe. In 1972, the prediction was made that many congregations in South Carolina would leave the UMC as a result of merger. That mass exodus never occurred.

Today, though, with the establishment of the Global Methodist Church, it appears that separation will again occur within Methodism. I wonder how our Methodist descendants 50 years from now will view our use of Scripture.



### ‘I was hungry...’

Beaumont UMC, Spartanburg, recently installed a blessing box on the church grounds in an effort to reach out and help those in need. Richard Beauchene, a member of The Church of the Covenant, built the box and donated it to Beaumont for this mission project. “We praise God for allowing us to be in service to our community,” said Pastor Annie Crocker, reminding all of the words of Jesus in Matthew 25:35: “For I was hungry and you fed me.”

Photo courtesy of Annie R. Crocker

## Guest Commentary

by the Rev. Mickey Fisher (retired)

### The heart of Methodism

Methodists are in danger of losing their soul,” so said Edgardo Colon-Emeric, dean of Duke Divinity School. That also can be said of the Lutherans, the Presbyterians and the Catholics!

In today’s world all but the most conservative among the faith groups are subject to shrinking support. We, all of us, must recover our passion for the faith and a commitment to share it with friends and family members and with those who have abandoned the church to embrace the secular world. The great task before us is to open ourselves to the Spirit and to each other that the image of God might be stamped afresh within us.

Disputes are not new in Methodism nor in most congregations and denominations. The Twelve, Jesus’ first disciples, had to deal with disputes among themselves. John Wesley had to deal with it on his visit to South Carolina in 1738. He chastised those who were caught up in arguments about what to believe. He distinguished between opinions on extraneous issues and the central affirmation of the Gospel. He cut through all the fussing, saying, “If thy heart is as my heart, give me thy hand.”

Mr. Wesley was a man of practical wisdom who had no time for foolish debate about matters of belief!

Contrary to some who would squelch all serious thinking regarding the faith, we Methodists embrace the appropriateness of holy discontent. We understand that no individual and no group owns a monopoly on the Gospel. It is greater than anyone can fully comprehend. Thus, we embrace our salvation with a humble heart. Let us respect and honor each other. Let us pray for each other and for Shalom.

Prayer enables us to rise above that which separates us into different camps. It provides the energy to get the work done! No Methodist I know celebrates the tensions we face in considering our future as a denomination. In my judgment none of the three proposals under consideration preserves what many value most: the sense of connectedness with generations of our Wesleyan friends and family.

We cannot feel good about tossing that to the wind in an attempt to mollify the different factions. The gift of connectivity is shattered. Placing blame will not restore it! Some committed and caring people have been engaged in searching for a solution to avoid the end of The Connection we know and love as “The United Methodist Church.” Our thanks to those who have labored in that task.

Yet it is too painful to give up the struggle. We are surrounded by witnesses who say, “Don’t give up yet!” If the test of a church is its ability to create saints, then we are well off in South Carolina Methodism. We have produced and continue to produce flesh-and-blood saints: Hawley Lynn, Eben Taylor, DeQuincey Newman, Sara Shingler, Florence Caldwell, Mike and Joe Watson, Sam and Charles Johnson, Doris Chambers, Bessie Parker, Tom Brock, Ann Betis, Rosetta Ross, James Gadsden and countless others.

Let us learn from the giants in the faith.

Let them be our teachers while we acknowledge the diversity of gifts and insight among us. And let us be vigilant, humble and caring for the gospel and for each other.

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## Reflections

by Deborah Len

### All for the good

She prayed and prayed and prayed. Every day all day. Still nothing! Rebekah just shook her head and wept quietly in the back of the sanctuary. She loved this church and the sermons the minister presented every Sunday.

She had found the church by accident. One day there was construction on the regular route she took to work from her home. She had to take a detour. It wound her through some neighborhood she had never been in before. There was a four-way stop, and the cutest little church building she had ever seen was right before her very eyes. It was like a picture postcard of pure Americana. It even included a white picket fence.

She decided to find out more about the church. As she traveled on to work, she realized she was not angry anymore about that ding-dang-dong detour.

Rebekah was never pleased with changes of any kind. Change made her feel very uncomfortable. She avoided it. She had told herself for decades now that change was the work of the enemy. God would want her to stay truly focused on the path she was on. God would provide. She worked at an assisted living facility and volunteered at the food pantry. This she was sure was God's desire for her. She was kind and compassionate. She gave her tithes. Sometimes she would throw a little extra in the plate.

There was so much more that she wanted in life. Rebekah wanted a husband. More than anything she wanted someone to love her. Now, dear readers, you already see the problem. Rebekah wanted something from God—and she did not like change.

As she wept that Sunday morning, the pastor noticed her head bowed longer than usual. He heard that voice in his head: "This is the day to actually speak to this lady." After all, she had been coming to his church for two months now. She always slipped in and out so quickly he never got to speak to her. Well, this time would be different.

At the last administration meeting the worship director had suggested a change. The pastor would come from the pulpit and announce the last hymn and proceed to the exit and deliver the benediction from the back of the little country church. Pastor Samuel was delighted. He embraced any change that would benefit God's people.

Pastor Samuel was also single, and he had been praying for a wife.

Rebekah wiped her eyes and lifted her head to see the minister walking toward the back of the church. Oh, no! He had not ever done that before. How would she get out ahead of him? Panic rose in her mind.

She darted out of her seat and stumbled on her purse strap. Pastor Samuel caught her just in the nick of time from smacking her head on the edge of the pew. This was almost too much. Then a small voice in her head said, "Since I could not get you to change, therefore I your Father in heaven changed all things to work for your good."

Rebekah got it. The new assisted living facility had been built across town, the road construction, the "accidental" "finding of this church, the change in order of worship and that ding-dang-dong purse strap—they all led her to be in the arms of this kind man with the dark brown eyes.



## View from the Pews

by Bill Barnier

### Meditation: The noise of silence

I recently learned a most thoughtful observation. Prayer is our outbound communication with God and the Holy Spirit. Meditation is how we hear the answers.

Prayers come in many forms and may be delivered quickly or purposefully depending upon the situation. Many who have regular conversations with the Holy Spirit will understand the need for a distinct connection, whereby the petitioner (us) feels a free and private joining with God. We are instructed to first give praise and recognition for the power and love of our father. We should also acknowledge he may be unwilling to accomplish what we ask, but through faith anything is possible.

In Romans 8:26-27 Paul writes, "We do not know what we ought to pray, but the Spirit intercedes for us in groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the spirit."

In many religious cultures, it's a common ritual to cleanse the body before prayer. Washing of feet and hands and cleansing the place of prayer in preparation is an action of humility. Removing distractions sets the stage for deliberate thought. It tells the Holy Spirit nothing is more important to you than your prayer. God comes first.

My friend, Mark Waters, wrote in his book "Three Days in Heaven" of the main character relaying to his mortal wife God's advice about prayer: "He wishes that every once in a while, we would be less formal and just talk to him like we would a friend. Here in Heaven, he's only a chat away, if you want to. You never need an appointment to visit with the almighty."

Of course, answers to prayers seldom come in direct conversation. We have become impatient in an age of instant everything. You can be fairly sure there won't be

an email or text, or even a letter delivered. The answer may be "no," and nothing will happen. Or you may already know the answer and you were praying for some sort of validation or reconsideration. Whatever the answer, if the noise and interruptions of modern life are all around, it will be difficult to hear the message. If your mind is cluttered with stuff and not ready to really listen, well ... your bad!

Medical science has years of study results confirming the power of deliberate meditation. In general, the body becomes at ease. The mind becomes less influenced by outside stimulus and enters a state similar to restful sleep. From this place, the Holy Spirit has a chance to be heard, so God's message can be wrapped in the love and peace he offers.

Just as prayer requires at least a small bit of preparation, so too does the practice of listening. My wife often reminds me that I heard what she said, but I didn't listen. We're all guilty of that sometimes. But it's important to train ourselves to prepare to listen, just as we should prepare to speak. Successful professionals in mental health, clergy and best friends will say their first and most beneficial skill is listening. It could be said that listening is respectful and tells the speaker they're important.

In this modern cacophony of unrelenting noise, judgement, untruths, spins, rhetoric and intentional disrespect, it becomes more important than ever to seek peaceful time with the Holy Spirit. Within the energy of the universe, our heavenly host will never, ever, lie. His love is unconditional and everlasting.

In prayer you may find comfort in asking the toughest questions. In meditation you will certainly find the answers you seek.

I wish you peace in the sounds of silence.

Barnier attends St. Paul United Methodist Church, Ridgeland.

### South Carolina Conference United Women in Faith

## Come Together Be Together Event via Zoom

Registration is Free

### Surrounded By Love

Saturday June 25, 2022 at 10:00 AM

Preparations and plans are complete for a lively, inspiring time of fellowship and friendship for all. The Charleston District will host this fun gathering for all. The link will open up at 9:40 am.

With everything we all have experienced lately we decided that we all need to be "Surrounded by Love." Our fun event for all ages will include a passionate keynote speaker, Rev Debra Dowdle from the Goose Creek UMC. Rev Dowdle leads many different types of missions including a popsicle ministry, a breakfast ministry, to mental health ministry with the homeless, and the list continues to climb. We are delighted to have her on our event in June.

All attendees will hear the inspiring message as one group before attending one of the four workshops for additional learning, fellowship, and fun. Workshops will be: Rock Painting; Charleston Palmetto Rose Craft; Bible Study on "Surrounded by Love"; and Belly Dancing.

Surround yourself with LOVE. Feel free to make your Zoom full of LOVE themes and wear your LOVE colors.

Online registration is available at <https://bit.ly/3u1Oo3G>.

Visit our website at <https://www.umcsc.org/women/>  
and scroll down to Events for more information.

For questions, please contact our chairperson registrar: Angela Allen  
Phone: 864-680-9029 | Email: [Angela.Allen@charter.net](mailto:Angela.Allen@charter.net)

Visit our website: <https://www.umcsc.org/discipleship/united-methodist-women/>



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## Guest Commentary

by the Rev. Robert Cox (retired)

### Designated funds and their proper use

During my time helping churches with administration and record keeping, I have discovered that a great many churches do not properly understand designated funds and often times use them in a way that is harmful to the church.

So I would like to help explain what designated funds are and how to use them in a way that benefits the church and is consistent with proper accounting methods for nonprofit organizations.

An unrestricted asset is an asset (usually cash) that can be used for any purpose. This is generally the gifts received by a church and used for paying the payroll salaries and program and operating expenses of the church.

A temporary restricted asset is one that is restricted to a particular use over a period of time. A church example might be a building fund. Think of this fund as a cash bucket that is used to accumulate funds for a future use of a new building, major repairs or additions. When the new building or addition is completed and the money is used, the fund is closed. Any remaining funds left over from the completion of the project may be transferred to unrestricted use.

Permanently restricted funds are funds that are permanently restricted in their use. Such funds typically are major gifts,

bequests and memorials given in such a way that the gift itself may never be spent; only the income produced by the gift may be spent. The income may be unrestricted or temporarily restricted, depending on the wishes of the donor church governing body.

Note: A mistake many churches make is creating restricted funds for everyday expenses of the church. These are often set up to ensure that the ministry has the money to operate. This becomes a problem when the church can't pay apportionments or the pastor's salary and wants to borrow from these other funds. The *Discipline* prohibits reclassifying restricted funds to unrestricted unless the donors give their permission to make that reclassification.

What should be done is prepare a budget that provides the needed money for the ministries but allows the fixed costs of the church adequate funding as well. Great care should be used in setting up restricted or designated funds or accounts.

I hope this is helpful. For more information on the proper use of designated or restricted funds or accounts, see the Church Financial Records Handbook: <https://www.cokesbury.com/9781501835711-The-United-Methodist-Church-Financial-Records-Handbook-2017-2020>

For more information, go to [www.church-admin.org](http://www.church-admin.org).



# ANNUAL CONFERENCE: Body to consider \$15.6M budget for 2023

From Page 1

people, who were ordained in another conference or tradition, will have their orders recognized and will be received as full members of this annual conference.

The next morning, after training on the online voting platform at 9 a.m. and presentation of all Annual Conference video reports at 10 a.m., Holston will call the session to order.

“We will convene this summer filled with hope, remembering who God has called us to be and what God wants for us,” Holston said.

Key this year in pre-conference reports includes consideration of Council on Finance and Administration’s \$15.6 mil-

lion budget for 2023 (it is 2.1 percent less than 2022’s \$15.9 million budget); review of health benefits and pensions; and a proposed 6 percent cost of living increase for pastors from the Committee on Equitable Compensation “to ensure pastors can pay their bills after the large amount of inflation we saw in 2021.”

(Read these and all reports in full at [www.umcsc.org/ac2022](http://www.umcsc.org/ac2022).)

The business of Annual Conference is expected to take up most of the day, with time on the agenda for the Committee on Standing Rules, the Consent Calendar, any additional nominations for the Committee on Nominations, first reading of the budget by CF&A, and reports from Conference Connectional Ministries, the Commission

Early deadline for July *Advocate*: June 4 (as the July *Advocate* comes out earlier than normal to provide prompt coverage of Annual Conference). Email submissions to [advocate@umcsc.org](mailto:advocate@umcsc.org).

on Equitable Compensation, the Cabinet and Conference Lay Leadership.

Slated for approximately 3:40 p.m. is adoption of the Consent Calendar, elections via the Committee on Nominations and voting on the budget as presented again by the Council on Finance and Administration.

Resolutions on church closing and

charge line changes will follow, then after a break will be Holston’s official sending Forth and Fixing of the Appointments, with a service preached by him as well.

Monday night will conclude with a Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving, preached by Dr. Robin Dease, to honor the 53 clergy and spouses who passed away since Annual Conference 2021.

The *Advocate* will be covering the session and include full reporting in the next (July) edition, which comes out early to provide rapid news post-conference.

The event will be livestreamed for all to view at [www.umcsc.org](http://www.umcsc.org). Only those needed for the official business of Annual Conference will gather in person at the host site, the Florence Center, in Florence.

# 50-YEAR ANNIVERSARY: Effort to merge, not absorb

From Page 1

Their final act before adjourning “*sine die*” was to take up an offering for a hospital and church in Rhodesia.

It seemed symbolic in some way that the conference that had for so long been intertwined with Claflin University had its final session on the campus of another conference college. In remarks to the meeting of the South Carolina Conference Historical Society this spring, Dr. A. V. Huff, conference historian, noted the high emotion in the room. He noted he and some other members of the 1785 conference had attended to witness the historic moment that had been in the works for more than 30 years.

At two that afternoon, the 1785 Conference met at Spartanburg Memorial Auditorium for its final session. It also approved similar resolutions transferring its members and property to the new annual conference. Following some other final remarks and recognitions, the 1785 Conference adjourned “*sine die*.”

At 7:30 that evening, the two conferences met together in Spartanburg Memorial Auditorium for a service of worship and act of unification of the conferences. Representatives of the youth, laity, clergy and Women’s Society of Christian Service joined in the litany of union.

At the end, members of both conferences joined in stating, “We are united in Christ. We are united in the United Methodist Church. Now we are united in the South Carolina Annual Conference. We pledge our love and loyalty. Amen.”

Hardin then declared “the Conference of ’85 and the Conference of ’66 to be united in a new Annual Conference to be called the South Carolina Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church.”

## Hard work not over

Union had been accomplished, but the hard work was not over. The new conference had to live into the promises that its Plan of Union had made. And, while the denomination and the leaders who had brought about the merger had intended for it to be just that, a merger, at times it may have seemed much more like an absorption.

The 1866 Conference had been much smaller, and it would have been very easy for all of the Black members of the new conference to have lost all of the leadership positions they had exercised in the former 1866 Conference. Financial and leadership concerns had been some of the biggest obstacles to merger.

Curry’s book noted one of these financial questions arose on the floor of the 1785 Conference, and it was specifically about the different pension rates paid in the two conferences.

on our shared mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, which is the more important matter.

“This decision reminds us that ‘connectionalism’ is more than simply a shared word in our vocabulary,” Holston said. “What we know is that the General Conference is the only body that speaks for the denomination, and the General Conference will not convene again until 2024. These are unsettled times that we are navigating, and our hope is that resolution will be achieved when General Conference next meets.”

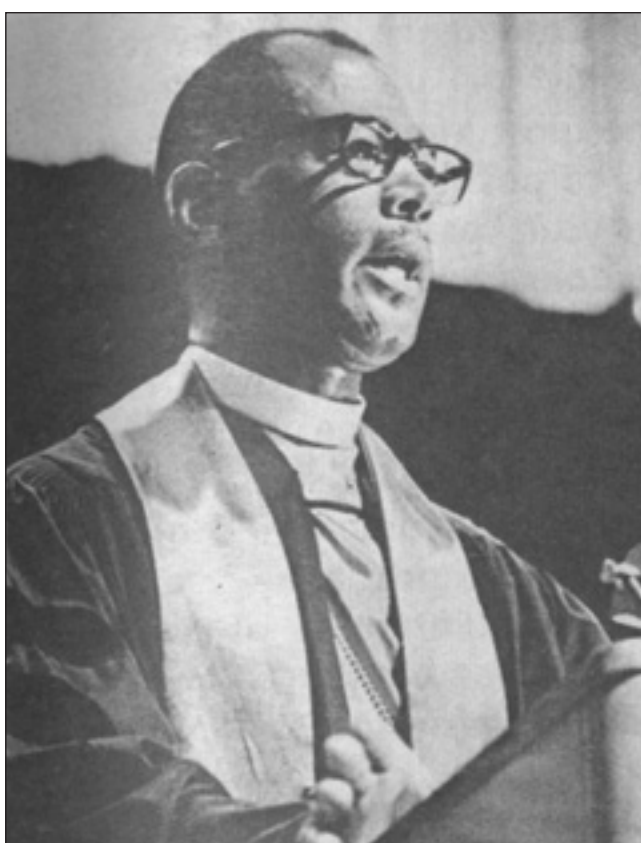


Photo from the *Advocate*, courtesy of Dr. Phillip Stone/conference archives  
Bishop James Thomas delivers a sermon at the service of union June 5, 1972.

However, the former 1866 Conference had worked hard to increase its pension fund, and as a result, the pension rate after merger was higher than in either conference before merger.

Another challenge that the new conference faced was leadership. Hardin finished his third quadrennium and retired in 1972, leaving a new bishop, Edward L. Tullis, to lead the new conference. Curry noted that members of the 1866 Conference had been nervous about Hardin, but “his clearness of vision, brotherly kindness and skill in presiding soon dispelled this uneasiness.”

Tullis likewise worked hard to earn the trust of the conference, particularly by visiting Black churches, attending clergy funerals and by learning clergy members’ names.

## Gentle but firm reconsideration

An adjourned session of the conference met in October to elect leadership for conference boards and commissions. On Wednesday, Oct. 4, the conference elected members of all conference councils, boards, commissions and commit-

tees based on the nominations that came from the Committee on Nominations. These groups then met to select their officers.

While the Plan of Union called for ensuring leadership opportunities for members of both former conferences for several quadrennia, when the elections took place, all of the conference boards had elected chairs from the former 1785 Conference.

According to Curry’s history, the bishop gently but firmly encouraged them to reconsider. The conference minutes show that the conference directed the boards to meet again within 30 days following the adjournment of the conference to elect officers, and offered guidance from the continuing committee on merger.

That stumbling point could have eroded trust in the Plan of Union, but the boards and commissions responded positively, and eight of them—including the Conference Board of Trustees, Council on Ministries, Board of Pensions and the Committee on Resolutions and Appeals—all elected chairs from the former 1866 Conference.

## Important changes

The 1972 merger initially only affected the conference-level organizations. The 11 districts from the 1785 Conference and the four districts from the 1866 Conference continued for two more years.

In 1974, the district lines were redrawn to create 12 new districts. While the bishop always had the right to choose their superintendents, the continuing merger committee recommended that four of the superintendents come from the former 1866 conference.

The new districts meant that White congregations would have Black district superintendents, and vice versa. Curry’s book noted it meant in some cases that a congregation—which a dozen years before would not have welcomed Black worshipers—would be welcoming a Black clergy person to preside over their charge conferences.

It would also mean a Black parsonage family might be living in a largely White neighborhood.

## Living into the promises

The merger of the two South Carolina conferences 50 years ago this month was the result of work begun in 1939, but it left unresolved questions that have taken years to untangle.

Merger took years to become effective, and relied on building new relationships among clergy and laity.

For 50 years, South Carolina Methodists have tried to live into those promises made in the spring and summer of 1972.

that assist in living into our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”

To read the ruling in full, visit <https://www.resourceumc.org/en/churchwide/judicial-council/judicial-council-decision-home/judicial-decisions/decision-1444>.

To read the United Methodist New Service article on this, “Church Court: Conferences Can’t Exit Unilaterally,” by Heather Hahn, visit <https://www.umnews.org/en/news/church-court-conferences-cant-exit-unilaterally>.

# JUDICIAL COUNCIL: Holston urges patience, mission focus

From Page 1

Only General Conference can set the process and conditions for these regional church bodies to leave the United Methodist connection, and General Conference has not done this. Because of health concerns surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, that gathering has been postponed until 2024.

Bishop L. Jonathan Holston, resident bishop of the South Carolina Conference of the UMC, urged United Methodists to be patient and remain focused on ministry and

For now, Holston called on South Carolina United Methodists to pray for the church and to be patient. He reminded people that Para. 2553 in *The Book of Discipline* exists as a path to disaffiliation for local churches who wish to consider this.

“If you have questions, we encourage you to be in further conversation with your district superintendent, who has the most recent information available,” Holston said. “Moving forward, we will communicate about ways that every congregation in our Annual Conference can make the decisions



# SUNFLOWERS FOR UKRAINE: A way to stand with the people

From Page 1

Held May 14 at the church, 30 artisans of all skill levels came to the church for fun while using their creative expression to show Christian love for war-torn neighbors 5,000 miles away.

All proceeds were donated to United Methodist Committee on Relief to help the people of Ukraine directly.

A member of Brookland UMC, Mixon was a high school art teacher for 37 years

and has never stopped creating. Since retirement, her passion has been fused-glass art and glass mosaics. Mixon often teaches art classes at Brookland for adults in the church and surrounding community, donating a portion back to the church in gratitude.

But as headlines continue to remind about the crisis in Ukraine, her heart stirred, and she knew she needed to do something.

"The heart-wrenching suffering and the bravery of Ukraine's people encouraged me

to do a fused-glass sun catcher class based on their national flower, the sunflower," Mixon said.

She approached her pastor the Rev. Mark Payne, and he readily agreed.

"I believe one of my greatest responsibilities as a pastor is to encourage our members to use their gifts and graces in new ways," he said. "This was the perfect opportunity to encourage Karen and support the people of Ukraine."

For several weeks before the class, she donated, cut and prepared the glass pieces, then on the day of the class, all came together for a time of fellowship, service and Christian love.

"We had a wonderful experience together, and some beautiful suncatchers were made," Mixon said.

Candi Payne, who attended the class, said while she has attended other fused-glass classes and enjoyed them immensely, this particular class was meaningful on a whole new level.

"I can honestly say this class held greater meaning for me, as we used the Ukraine colors for fusion and all money went to support them, she said.

Also, she noted the response to this class was tremendous, which to her shows the heart people have for helping others.

After, Mixon fired the pieces and then delivered them to the church for all to pick up.

So far, they have raised \$1,370 through the class, and more contributions are still coming in.

As for Mixon, she has been overjoyed as what she called an "overwhelming response."

"I feel blessed that God gave me this ability and desire to create the things I visualize, and it is one of my joys to help others create beautiful art pieces," she said.

And thanks to her God-given gifts, and the support and interest of the people of Brookland UMC, the people of Ukraine have some extra love, care and prayers.

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**Storm damages church**

After a major storm Friday, May 6, Porter's Chapel UMC, Pickens, experienced major damage. The Rev. Dick Waldrep said they are in the midst of dialogue with the insurance company and seeking contractors. The congregation is meeting in their Family Life Building until debris is removed.

Photo courtesy of the Rev. Dick Waldrep

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# ASSEMBLY: Turning it up

From Page 1



Fifty from South Carolina attended Assembly in person, with many joining online as well.

with the Children's Defense Fund focusing on public theology, transformative justice and non-violent direct action organizing to disrupt and dismantle the cradle to prison pipeline.

Other keynote speakers included the Rev. Sung Yeon Choimorrow, director of the National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum; Heather McTeer Toney, climate justice liaison for the Environmental Defense Fund and senior advisor to Moms Clean Air Force; United Women in Faith General Secretary Harriett Jane Olson; and 'Ainise 'Isama'u, the youngest and the first Pacific Islander president of United Women in Faith.

The event included a host of workshops, a special film screening of "Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools," a Legacy Banquet, plus a pre-conference Ubuntu Day of Service the day prior.

South Carolina's United Women in Faith President Cathy Ford called this year's Assembly a powerful, energizing, informative and motivational experience.

"Memorable community gatherings with lively hand clapping music, interpretive dancers, vivid stage-sets with the theme Turn It Up and colorful fabrics connecting attendees filled us with sights and sounds we will long remember," Ford said. "The message from the stage expanded our understanding of our new name, reinforced our commitment to this beloved organization and set us forth knowing many others, including general secretaries and bishops, confirm our path forward and support us in this special moment in our 153-year history.

"Along with our international members, South Carolina attendees are well equipped to share our story with compassion and love."

Janice Cockfield Eaddy, vice president for South Carolina United Women in Faith, agreed.

"Our 2022 Turn it Up Assembly was just awesome. The Ubuntu Day of Service, workshops, community gatherings and the Legacy Banquet provided me an opportunity to connect with old friends and gain new friends. All the presenters spoke such positive words that inspired me to put my faith into action to help create changes around the world."

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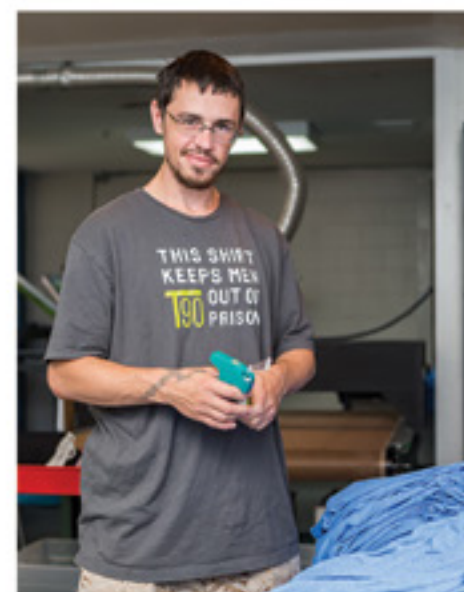
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# TURN90

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# 40 to retire at Annual Conference

The *South Carolina United Methodist Advocate* congratulates this year's class of retiring pastors. Together, they have served nearly 1,000 years in local churches, universities, agencies and the conference. We wish them well in their future ministries and their time away from the pulpit.

This year's class of retiring pastors was asked to respond to the following questions.

1. Think of one ministry or occasion that makes you smile.
2. What do you plan to do June 30 or slightly after that?
3. How are you planning to continue your ministry after retirement?
4. What's one thing you're glad to leave behind?

## Randall Eugene Bowers



**Journal entry:** FL, PL 2004, FL 2007. SC: 2004 Dalzell, 2007 Cayce Associate, 2009 Summerton, 2017 Main Street-Pine Grove.

1. One ministry that has made me smile is Disaster Recovery. Seeing the homeowners' joy when their homes have been put back together and being able to get their life back on track in a dry and nice environment. God answered prayers and provided what was needed at the time to assist the homeowners.
2. The only thing I have planned after June 30 is a cruise to the Caribbean in August. Other than that, the field is wide open.
3. I will always be in ministry to others in multiple ways.
4. The one thing I will be glad to leave behind is the process of moving.

**Years of Service:** 18

## Scott Meade Bratton



**Journal entry:** FE, PE 2007, FE 2010. SC: 2007 Trinity, Blythewood, Associate, 2012 Fair Lawn, 2019 St. Paul, Florence.

1. I smile when I think of marrying both our children and baptizing our granddaughter.
2. I look forward to tending six acres on Lake Wateree and all those projects.
3. To be determined.
4. Drama associated with the childcare center.

**Years of Service:** 15

## Randall Lee Calcutt Sr.



**Journal entry:** PL, SY 2018, PL 2019. SC: 2018 Tabernacle, Florence (SY) (1/2), 2019 St. Paul, Coward (1/4).

1. This past November, my children along with my church families from both of my churches surprised my wife and I with a 50th anniversary celebration. We were invited to the church under the ruse of a "Pastor's Appreciation" drop-in. Boy, were we appreciated! All my family were present along with many of our church families and friends. Many of the attendees were in our wedding 50 years ago.
2. I plan to keep on "keeping on!" I am taking retirement status only, I plan to keep preaching as long as God is calling me to the ministry. I haven't found one Scripture that says that we are to retire from God's work. In fact, it says to work diligently until he returns or calls us home.
3. I plan to keep preaching as long as my health allows me to do so.
4. Meetings! Meetings! Meetings! They never go away

**Years of Service:** 3

## Lisa Kim Eanes



**Journal entry:** FE, OE 2001, FE 2002 (transferred from Iowa Conference). SC: 2001 Aldersgate (Greenwood), 2005 Epworth Memorial (Columbia), 2007 Associate Surfside, 2015 Grace Community, 2018 First (Cheraw), 2020 Lexington.

**Years of Service:** 32

## Joyce Marie McMahan Edwards

**Journal entry:** FE, SP 1/1/2002, PE 2004, FE 2007. SC: 1/1/2002 St. Mark-St. Matthews Associate (Taylors), 2003 Zion Andrews/Bethel Charge, 2004 New Beginnings



Mission, 2007 Emmanuel (Sumter), 2011 Salem (Florence), 2014 Bethesda (Lake City).

1. When my husband, Bernard Timmons, passed, the outpouring of love that was shown to be will never be forgotten. Bishop Holston, District Superintendent John Hipp, my fellow clergywomen and men and my church families at Bethesda, Kingstree, and St. Mark, Taylors, were outstanding.
2. Relax. I am going on vacation to New Orleans. My husband and I will travel. I will reclaim my home in Greenville and stay as long as I want, although I will be living between Greenville and Kingstree.
3. Fill in when needed when pastors need a substitute. Minister to family and friends when needed.
4. Paperwork. Grumbling and complaining from members.

**Years of Service:** 20.5

## Hazel Lathonya Epps



**Journal entry:** PL, PL 2017. SC: 2017 Asbury, Kingstree (1/2).

**Years of Service:** 5

## Emil Jerome Finley



**Journal entry:** PL, SY 4/9/2017, PL 2017. SC: 4/9/2017 Central-Sandy Springs (SY), 2017 Central-Sandy Springs (PL) (1/2), 8/1/2019 Soule Chapel.

**Years of Service:** 5

## Bobby Gordon



**Journal entry:** PL, PL 2002. SC: Rocky Swamp, 2004 Associate, Greenwood-Ninty Six, 2010 Claffin, 2019 Orange Grove, Bamberg (1/2).

**Years of Service:** 18

## Michael Lewis Hammett



**Journal entry:** RE, OE 2014, FE 6/7/2017 (Transferred to SC), RE 10/11/2021. SC: 2015 Gilgal-Shiloh (OE) (1/2), 2017 St. Luke (Walhalla), 2018 Covenant Associate (Greer), 2020 Shiloh (Piedmont), 2021 Adnah, 10/11/2021 Ad Interim Retirement.

**Years of Service:** 30

## Donald Mitchell Houston



**Journal entry:** FE, OT 1976, FE 1979. SC: 1976 In School, 1978 Homeland Park-John Wesley, 1979 Olanta, 1982 Florence-Central Associate, 1983 Knightsville, 1985 Pendleton, 1990 Central, 1994 Wesley, 2000 Carteret Street, 2006 Salem, Irmo, 2016 Bethany, Summerville.

**Years of Service:** 46

## George Kenneth Howle



**Journal entry:** FE, OT 1982, FE 1984, SC: 1982 St. Matthew Circuit, 1986 Wagoner, 1990 Cokesbury-Hodges, 1991 Associate St. John's, Aiken, 1994 Kingstree, 2000 Clemson, 2005 St. John's, Aiken, 2014 Greenville District Superintendent, 2019 Myrtle Beach First.

**Years of Service:** 40

## Frank Vertell James



**Journal entry:** FE, PM 1993, FE 1998. SC: 1993 Orangeburg Circuit, 1998 St. Paul, 2008 Mount Carmel, 2010 Orangeburg Parish, 2015 St. Stephen, 2020 Friendship (Kingstree).

**Years of Service:** 24

## Ronnie Lee Jeffcoat



**Journal entry:** FE, PL 2004, PE 2010, FE 2015. SC: 2004 Greenwood-Ninety Six, 2011 Rock Hill South Charge (1/2), 2015 Mechanicsville, 2017 Rock Hill Central Charge, 2020 Clover Parish.

1. What made me smile was the reaction of my congregations to my sermon titles; for example, sermon title "Let's Just Kiss and Say Goodbye." They are how I am going to apply theology to that sermon title.
2. I plan to travel.
3. I will see where God leads me.
4. Paperwork: Charge conference forms.

**Years of Service:** 18

## Clayton Jonathon Jones Sr.



**Journal entry:** PL, PL 2016. SC: 2016 All Saints Charge (1/2).

**Years of Service:** 6

## Joel Robert Jones



**Journal entry:** FE, OT 1979, FE 1984. SC: 1978 Lamar Circuit, 1979 In School, 1980 Trenholm Road Associate, 1982 Cameron Charge, 1986 Gordon Memorial-Greenbrier, 1990 Hemingway Circuit, 1003 Pisgah, 2001 Ashland, 2012 Simpsonville, 2018 Trenholm Road.

1. When people ask me what I do for a living, my response is: "I help folks connect the dots." It has been an honor to walk alongside folks on their spiritual journey and encourage them to connect and dive deep into the faith.
2. I look forward to moving from the interstate to the dirt roads, walking and biking paths less traveled. A trip to Scotland and Ireland with my wife and friends is scheduled for autumn.
3. I will be heavily engaged in family ministry, giving attention to my family for longer lengths of time than was available the past few decades.
4. Getting up at 4 a.m. on Sundays.

**Years of Service:** 44

Continued on next page



Continued from previous page

**Michael Steven Leonhardt**



**Journal entry:** FE, PM 1992, FE 1994. SC: 1990 Marlboro Circuit, 1994 Pinewood, 1997 Adnah, 2003 Herbert Memorial, 2011 St. George, 2013 St. John's, Lugoff, 2019 Woodland, Rock Hill.

1. Sitting with someone who may be going through a time of struggle, difficulty, suffering or just uncertainty, as we celebrate together in a time of fellowship, prayer and just care for one another. I always find myself blessed in those moments. Sometimes laughing, sometimes crying, but always embracing a spirit of togetherness and love.
  2. Become more intentional about setting up an exercise, meditation and study daily schedule.
  3. To actively offer the unconditional, inclusive, welcoming, love of Jesus Christ to those who have felt left out, rejected, excluded, ignored, unwanted by religious people they have known and met, including members of their own family churches.
  4. Most totally administrative focused meetings.
- Years of Service:** 32

**Julius Lavonia McDowell**



**Journal entry:** FE, OT 1981, FE 1985. SC: 1979 Laurens Charge, 1982 Seneca Circuit, 1984 St. Stephen Parish, 1986 Clover Parish, 1989 Camden Circuit, 1992 LOA, 1994 Pin-ville-Bowman, 1998

New Covenant, 2001 Wesley (Yonges Island), 2009 Wesley (Ladson), 2018 Wesley (Charleston).

**Years of Service:** 41.75

**Shirley Ann McKnight**



**Journal entry:** PL, LP20 2009, PL 2014. SC: 2009 Not Appointed, 2014 Asbury, Shiloh.

**Years of Service:** 8

**Anna Graham Miller**



**Journal entry:** FE, PM 1991, FE 1993. SC: 1991 Allen-Sims-Florence Chapel, 1995 Brookgreen, 1999 Bamberg Parish, 2002 St. James, Darlington, 2010 Friendship, Kingstree, 2012 Wesley,

Charleston, 2018 North Orangeburg.

1. Having the opportunity to serve one week per year with conference youth and coordinators at camps, retreats and trips especially trips to Washington, D.C., and was able to introduce local youth to the conference environment also.
  2. I plan to take a deep breath, relax and reflect.
  3. I plan to continue to work in an advisory capacity, counseling within the church and school system.
  4. Having to move often and living in parsonages.
- Years of Service:** 31

**Blondell Stephenson Miller**

**Journal entry:** FE, FL 2003, PE 2013, FE 2015. SC: 2003 West Camden, 1/1/2010 Lynchburg Parish, 2015 Pendleton Charge, 2018 Bishopville Circuit.



1. I have enjoyed ministering with our youth and seniors over the years. The excitement shared during my contact with these individuals has brought a lot of smiles and joy to my heart. The smiles have

exceeded the pain that is experienced in loss, broken families and trouble. I thank God for giving me the opportunity to be his servant in his church.

2. James and I are looking forward to spending time with our family. We have several trips planned with our children and family starting in late July. Looking forward to a little me time.
  3. I plan to be available to share God's word whenever the opportunity present itself whether in the pulpit, other settings or with others who need someone during difficult times. I love being with people and serving others through volunteerism within the conference, churches, mentoring, school, hospital or Council on Aging.
  4. Preparing for Charge Conference.
- Years of Service:** 19

**Warren Murdock Sr.**



**Journal entry:** FE, SP 1988, PM 1993, FE 1996. SC: 1988 Orangeburg Circuit, 1990 Laurens Charge, 1992 Pendleton Charge, 1994 Wesley-Pinopolis Charge, 2000 Mount Carmel, 2008 New

Grace, 2012 Friendship, 2015 Central Circuit.

**Years of Service:** 33.75

**Miyoung Paik**



**Journal entry:** FE, PM 1990, FE 1992. SC: 9/1/90 Charleston Korean Associate, 1991 Folly Beach-St. John, 1992 In School, 1998 Sabbatical Leave, 1999 Lexington Associate, 10/1/2014 Columbia

Korean, 2018 St. James (Goose Creek).

1. Doctor of Ministry Project, "Becoming Alive with Prayer."
  2. Settle into a new house with no agenda.
  3. After taking a year off from any commitments in ministry, I will be open to wherever God leads.
  4. Administration.
- Years of Service:** 31.75

**Louis Otto Perez**



**Journal entry:** FL, PL 2012, FL 2018. SC: 2012 Lake View Charge, 2015 Marlboro Circuit, 2018 Ebenezer (Hemingway), 2021 Ebenezer-First (Hemingway).

**Years of Service:** 10

**David Norris Phillips**



**Journal entry:** FL, PL 2008, FL 2016. SC: 2008 Ocean Grove, 9/1/2009 Jamestown Parish, 2016 New Hope.

1. I have always smiled when I had the opportunity to baptize babies and young children.
  2. Just taking a step back and enjoying the time with my wife.
  3. I have been asked to serve as a fire department chaplain and will be willing to be pulpit supply for a couple of weeks at a time.
  4. The paperwork of the charge conference and the day-to-day operations of the church.
- Years of Service:** 14

**William Harvey Phillips**



**Journal entry:** FE, PM 1985, FE 1988. SC: 1979 Gethesmane-Trinity, 1981 Whitney, 1986 Beaumont-Cherokee Springs, 1988 Lyman, 1992 Spartanburg-St. James, 1997 St. Mark-Seneca, 2001

St. Andrews, Orangeburg, 2003 Union, Irmo, 2013 Myrtle Beach First, 2019 St. Paul's Waccamaw.

1. Ministry begun for the "Goat Alley" children in Gaffney.
  2. Travel to Florida to watch my granddaughter play softball.
  3. One person at a time.
  4. My calendar being dominated by interruption!
- Years of Service:** 40.5

**Brian Thomas Rainwater**



**Journal entry:** FE, OE 2003, FE (Transfer to SC 1/1/16). SC: 2003 Associate, Mount Horeb, 2016 Wightman (Prosperity), 6/30/2020 Personal Leave of Absence.

**Years of Service:** 31

**Victoria Richardson**



**Journal entry:** PL, PL 7/1/2001. SC: 7/01/2001 Associate, St. Thomas Charge, 2005 Enoch Chapel-Grove Hall.

1. When we go out into the community and minister and help them in their needs.
  2. Go on vacation.
  3. DOT has taken our church because of the expansion of Interstate 26. I would like to stay with the church until they move to a new location.
  4. All the paperwork and charge conference.
- Years of Service:** 21

**Terry Abner Roof**



**Journal entry:** FE, PD 2006, FD 2009, FE 2012. SC: 2006 Grace, North Augusta, Minister of Outreach and Programs, 2010 Fairfield Circuit (FD/FL), 2014 Bethel Park.

1. I was at a gathering to officiate a memorial service when one of the members came to me, and pulled me aside with her daughter who was pregnant and unmarried. The daughter was too shy to ask her question directly. So, with the three of us off to the side alone, the mother said: "Terry, my daughter wants to know if you'll marry her?" Somehow without hesitation, I looked at the young lady and replied: "I'm sorry darlin'—but I'm already taken." That broke the ice, we all chuckled, and she and her husband currently have three beautiful children.
2. My wife and I will retire to our North Augusta home. We plan to travel, enjoy our children and grandchildren, and keep active with volunteer work at church and in the local community.
3. I do not plan to actively serve in either a permanent or part-time position. However, I will assist the local church as needed.
4. The time spent separated from my wife, as she was employed as a nurse at University Hospital in Augusta, Georgia prior to her retirement. When I served in the Winnsboro area and then again at my current appointment in Denmark, she was living at our North Augusta home and I was in the parsonage. She was

faithful to travel to be with me on those weekends she was not working. It was lonely for both of us during the weekdays.

**Years of Service:** 15.5

**Michael Ellis Rouse**



**Journal entry:** FE, PM 1986, FE 1988. SC: 1985 McBee, 1989 Lynwood, 1992 Landrum, 1998 Mount Holly, 2005 Main Street, Dillon, 2013 Moncks Corner, 2018 Latta-Mount Andrew.

**Years of Service:** 37

**Candice Yeary Sloan**



**Journal entry:** FE, OE, 2002 Transferred from Texas Conference. SC: 1989 Bethlehem, 1995 Bethlehem-Panola, 1998 Panola, 2000 Lupo Memorial-Panola, 2002 Chaplain, Spartanburg Methodist College,

2017 Hopewell, Lancaster.

1. There have been too many ministries and occasions that have made me smile to count. But memories of taking Spartanburg Methodist College students on alternative fall and spring breaks make me laugh.
  2. I plan to not plan.
  3. After of period of rest and healing, I will be in conversation with the pastor of the church I am attending and the DS of the district in which I reside to discuss ways I might be of service.
  4. Meetings
- Years of Service:** 37

**Murray Arthur Snow**



**Journal entry:** FE, SP 2002, PL 2003, PE 2010, FE 2012. SC: 2002 Slater, 2010 St. Paul, Greenville, 1/1/2016 Grace, Columbia, 2019 Trinity, Fountain Inn.

1. Occurred while teaching Bible study one night during my first appointment in the Social Hall. The Social Hall was on the ground floor with stairs leading up to the sanctuary. During my PowerPoint presentation, a bat buzzed the class, flew by my head and then up the stairwell. Before we could react, the bat flew back down the stairwell and buzzed us again before disappearing through a vent in the bathroom. For some reason, I never regained control of the class.
  2. Whoop-Whoop-Whoop! Later, Susan and I plan to spend time with our fur babies, Hank and Sammy, as we tour parts of the country in our RV. Acadia National Park and Yellowstone are first on our list and other places of interest along the way. Also, I plan to continue my weekly kayak fishing adventures between trips. Watch for Kayak Fishing with Pastor Murray at: <https://youtube.com/user/murraysnow>.
  3. Susan and I plan to become part of a church family. We will seek to follow where and in what ways God calls us to serve.
  4. The politicizing and division of our denomination, the disregard of Scripture, church tradition and our *Discipline*.
- Years of Service:** 20

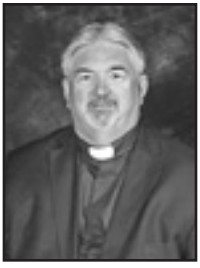
**Kim Mallory Strong**

**Journal entry:** FE, OT 1982, FE 1985. SC: 1979 Slater-Renfrew, 1982 Bethel-Ebenezer, 1984 Starr Charge, 1987 Brown Swamp, 1991 Hodges, 1993 Greenville-St. Paul, 1997 Salem, 2000 Bowman, 2001 Knightsville, 2006 Bethany, James Island, 2011 Mount Holly, 2018 Trinity (Con-

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way), 2020 Pendleton.  
1. When I was a young minister in my 20s, I went to the hospital to visit an 86-year-old lady who was a church member. I arrived at her door and knocked and she told me in a

loud voice to come on in. Unfortunately she was sitting naked on a bed pan. She said "Preacher, I've been wanting to talk to you." I excused myself very quickly saying, "I'll come back." From that moment on I never entered a hospital room without hesitation again. The ministry that has brought me the most satisfaction has been the food pantries that we started in four churches that I have served.

2. My wife and I are going to return to our home near North Myrtle Beach. Chances are very good I will be on the beach reading a John Grisham book and wondering why I waited so long to do this.
3. I plan to pastor Joseph B Bethea UMC in Myrtle Beach on a part-time basis. I hope to finally edit a book of devotions I've written and perhaps write another book.
4. MEETINGS. I'm pretty sure Hell will be one long, eternal council meeting.

**Years of Service:** 44

## Thomas Michael Summerlin



**Journal entry:** PL, SY 2011, PL 2013. SC: 2011 Manning Chapel (Parnassus Circuit) (SY), 2013 Oakland-Manning Chapel.

**Years of Service:** 9

## Margaret Hutcherson Vance



**Journal entry:** FE, OD, FD 2007. SC: 9/18/2006 St. Luke, Minister of Music, 6/13/2007 Transferred to SC, 2/13/2013 Transitional Leave, 9/1/2014 First UMC (Bennettsville) Music Director (1/2)

**Years of Service:** 23.75

## Richard Wilson Waldrep



**Journal entry:** FE, SP 2004, PE 2008, FE 2011. SC: 2004 Lowell Street, 2012 Mount Bethel-Porter's Chapel.

1. It is always a joy to baptize persons regardless of their age, but especially infants and children. The atmosphere truly becomes holy in those services.
2. Linda and I will celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary June 9, and July 23 we will celebrate with family and friends with a party.
3. I will be appointed as retired supply at Annual Conference, so my ministry will continue in a new location with a new

- "flock" and new opportunities.  
4. The next-door neighbors' 20+ cats that have free-range of the neighborhood.

**Years of Service:** 18

## John Lafitte Warren Jr.



**Journal entry:** FE, PM 1983, FE 1987. SC: 1985 Easley-Zion, 1988 LOA, 1989 Mount Hebron Associate, 1993 Union Associate (Irmo), 1998 Trinity (Greenville), 2003 St. John's (Fort Mill), 2010

Bethel (Charleston), 2015 St. Paul (Spartanburg), 2021 St. Paul (Spartanburg) & Skylyn (SY) (1/2).

1. During worship I asked the children where they were going for summer vacation. One little girl shouted, "I'm going to Las Vegas!"
2. Go to Las Vegas and see what that little girl was so excited about.
4. The Committee on Lay Leadership.

**Years of Service:** 34.25

## Jimmy Washington



**Journal entry:** FL, PL 1999, FL 2002, PL 2006, FL 2010. SC: 1999 Waterboro Parish, 2006 Anderson Circuit, 2010 Bethel-Red Bank Charge.

1. When I see youth helping with worship service.
2. Take a long vacation with my wife; and stay home and relax.
3. By being a supply pastor.
4. Having and two and three point charges.

**Years of Service:** 22.5

## John Paul Watts Sr.



**Journal entry:** AM, SP 1998, FL 2002, AM 2010. SC: 1998 Blenheim Circuit, 2006 Rehoboth-Zoan, 2019 Jordan.

**Years of Service:** 24

## Charles Kemith Wilson



**Journal entry:** FE, PM 2000, FE 2004. SC: 2000 Lamar-Ebenezer, 2012 New Grace, 1/1/2021 Medical Leave.

**Years of Service:** 22

## Frederick Nortei Yebuah



**Journal entry:** FE, OT 1980, FE 1982. TN: 1976 SP. SC: 1985 Summerville Parish, 1994 St. John-Wesley Chapel, 2007 York-St. James Charge, 2012 Orangeburg District Superintendent, 2020 Cumberland.

**Years of Service:** 46



Photo courtesy of Phillip Deal

## Church starts veteran coffeehouse

On Thursday morning, April 28, Mountain View UMC, Taylors, launched its Veteran Coffee House. Mountain View's veterans and seven veterans from surrounding communities joined in the launch, sharing coffee, conversation and fellowship. The Upstate Warrior Solution provided information on available veteran services. Need is great and the interest is high. This outreach continues the fourth Thursday of each month from 8:30-10 a.m.



## United Women in Faith

by Angela Allen

## 'Surrounded by Love'

The South Carolina Conference United Women in Faith Membership Nurture and Outreach Committee is excited to hold the Come Together Be Together event via Zoom. This is a free event that will be held Saturday, June 25, at 10 a.m.

Preparations and plans are well under way for a lively, inspiring time of fellowship and friendship for all. Our selected theme this year is "Surrounded by Love." The Charleston District will host this fun gathering for all. The link will open up at 9:40 a.m.

With everything we all have experienced lately, we decided we all need to be "Surrounded by Love." Our fun event for all ages will include a passionate keynote speaker, the Rev. Debra Dowdle, from Goose Creek UMC. Dowdle is a native and granddaughter of a United Methodist minister and grew up hearing stories about her late grandfather's ministry. This sparked a dream that she'd enter the ministry herself one day. She has been in the Goose Creek community for more than 23 years, surrounding many with God's love. Members at her church feed their community and have a popsicle ministry, water ministry, breakfast ministry, mental health ministry with the homeless, prayer ministry and more. We are delighted to have her at our event in June.

All attendees will hear the inspiring message as one group before attending one of four workshops for additional learning, fellowship, and fun. Workshops will be on rock painting, Charleston palmetto rose craft, Bible study on "Surrounded by Love" and belly dancing.

Rock painting will teach the fun craft of

decorating rocks with words and images. Charleston palmetto rose craft attendees will learn this historic traditional art of making a beautiful keepsake flower. The Bible study "Surrounded by Love" will inspire and encourage sharing God's love with all. And the belly dancing workshop will be a lively program filled with movement and music, motion and techniques centuries old.

Surround yourself with love. Feel free to make your Zoom full of love themes and wear your love colors. We hope to see hearts everywhere—on clothing, hats, jewelry and backdrops to Zoom screens.

We look forward to our morning together as we put faith, hope and love into action. See you on June 25.

Online registration is available at <https://bit.ly/3u1Oo3G>. Visit our website at [www.umcsc.org/women/](http://www.umcsc.org/women/) and scroll down to Events for more information.

For questions: 864-680-9029 or Angela.Allen@charter.net.


The Membership Nurture and Outreach also conducts the annual Membership Survey. The long-awaited Unit Survey/Census for 2021 is now available and being released to district officers for distribution. Only unit presidents are invited to complete the survey. All individual members can remind their unit presidents as every member needs to be recorded in the count. We hope to maintain our position from 2020 with reporting the largest number of members and units in America.

*Allen is the South Carolina Conference United Women in Faith Membership Nurture and Outreach mission coordinator.*




## Helping people in need

Unity UMC, Union, recently put up a rather large blessing box on the Hart St. side of the church. Randall and Susan Hanvey repurposed the old church sign as a box for food and provisions for those in need. The church dedicated the box. Pictured from left are Susan and Randall Hanvey, Barbara Holley and Gwen and Jim Russell. Not pictured were Bob Holley, Willie Young and Mavis Lancaster.



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Hartsville District Superintendent the Rev. Telley L. Gadson served as keynote speaker, and Dr. J. Elbert Williams gave the morning prayer.

## Churches host Sumter ‘Day of Community Fellowship’

The YWCA of the Upper Lowlands Inc., under the direction of its director Cleyardis McDonald-Amaker, held a “Day of Community Fellowship” April 29 at The North Hope Center, Sumter.

The program was designed to bring the Sumter community together.

Emmanuel United Methodist Church of Sumter served lunch. Its pastor, the Rev. Michael Brisbon, read the Scripture for the occasion and was presented a plaque for his service by the community. Deborah Calhoun was the soloist. Yolanda Debra Wilson presented gifts and awards. Dr. J. Elbert Williams of the Lamar-Ebenezer Charge did the morning prayer and blessed the food. Williams also received an award for community service. Dr. Giselle Chandler welcomed the crowd.

The mission of the YWCA is to provide domestic violence services for communities. It is also dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting independence and mental health awareness.

The Rev. Telley “Pastor T” Lynette Gadson, Hartsville District superintendent, was the guest speaker. The event was sponsored by Universal Benefits Insurance, Erin Wilson-James, Dr. Ted Wilson, State Farm Insurance, Tammy Kelly and Williams.

## Epworth Children’s Home

### Help for parents

Pandemic parenting. Cyberbullying. Fractures in families and society. The challenges facing parents and caregivers are enormous.

Imagine a safe space for parents to gather to share concerns, celebrate victories and learn together. Imagine the church as the location for this community of trust where parents develop as leaders of their families and in their communities.

Given this, Epworth is eager to partner with churches to offer a Circle of Parents® to families in the church’s community.

Circle of Parents® is a national model for parent-driven mutual self-help groups. It is proven to strengthen families.

Families gather in a church or community agency, share a meal together and then meet in a circle of trust and support while the children participate in their own programming.

As the state partner for this national program, Epworth trains group facilitators, parent leaders and children’s program leaders; meets with host planning teams; helps recruit participants; and supports the group until it can function on its own.

The model is built around meals, children’s programming and trained facilitators and parent leaders. Churches already know how to feed families and care for children, and Epworth equips the church to do the rest.

Kinship caregivers are grandparents, aunts and uncles and close family friends who step in to care for children when their parents are no longer able to. In South Carolina, the number of children being raised by extended family is growing six times faster than the general population. In South Carolina, there are 67,000 children in kinship care families. In many cases, grandparents are going back to work or dipping into their retirement savings in order to be able to support and care for their grandchildren.

Navigating the challenges of raising children in our super-saturated technology era is challenging enough for parents. It can be even more challenging for older family members.

United Methodist churches seeking to faithfully engage their communities can make a difference in the lives of local children and families by hosting a Circle of Parents® for their community. It can be general for any parents or caregivers, or for a specific group of parents like kinship caregivers, single moms or parents of special needs children.

Epworth can be a resource for your church as you seek to connect with children and families in your community.

To talk with Epworth about partnering with your church, contact the Rev. Kathy James at [kjames@epworthsc.org](mailto:kjames@epworthsc.org).



### Church helps family get a home

Trinity UMC, York, mission team members completed a 16-month project to renovate a mobile home for occupancy by a local family. This project involved replacing floors, plumbing, electrical work, fixtures, painting, septic and well services, along with gravel for the uphill driveway. Almost \$7,000 was donated toward the project plus in-kind donations. Volunteers worked alongside the homeowner to make this dream of home ownership a reality. On May 15, volunteers gathered for a Service of Blessing of a Home. Above, Rev. Wanda Altman-Shirah offers the blessing.



## LSM to hold training event in August

South Carolina Lay Servant Ministry Academy will hold a “Train the Trainer” event in August.

Slated for Aug. 6, the event will be held at Trenholm Road United Methodist Church, Columbia.

To attend, contact your district director at [www.umcsc.org/lsm](http://www.umcsc.org/lsm).



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Program Director

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# St. Mark and community 'Rise Against Hunger'

On Saturday, April 30, St. Mark United Methodist Church in Seneca kicked off its annual St. Mark Festival by sponsoring a Rise Against Hunger food packaging event in its St. Mark Center.

Nearly 300 people participated, including parishioners from Trinity Baptist Church, Ann Hope UMC, local scout troops, honor students and Call Me MISTER members from Clemson University. It was an all-ages, interfaith endeavor to help hungry people—mainly African school-age children—around the world. By the end of the well-orchestrated, two-hour event, 40,114 meals (a mixture of rice, soy, dehydrated vegetables and vitamins) were measured, sealed, labeled and packed on pallets to be shipped where needed.

The founder of Rise Against Hunger, the Rev. Ray Buchanan (based in Virginia), was present at St. Mark to oversee the event and to preach the following day.

“For more than 90 percent of the children these meals go to, this will be the only meal they get for the day,” he said.

Most children would not attend school without these meals. Education, Buchanan said, is the best way to end the



The meals are a mixture of rice, soy, dehydrated vegetables and vitamins.

cycle of poverty.

“It’s obvious that St. Mark is a mission-minded church,” Buchanan added.

Although the pandemic prevented such gatherings for the past couple of years, 2022 marks the eighth year St. Mark has held a Rise Against Hunger event.

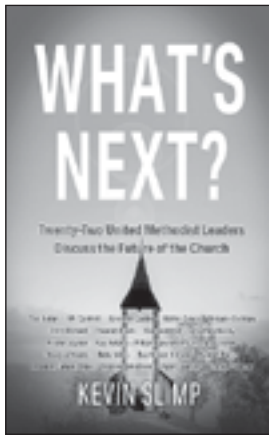


Call Me MISTER members from Clemson University load boxes.

## Three tied to UMCSC contribute to new book on future of the church

Three with South Carolina ties— Bishop Ken Carder, the Rev. Melanie L. Dobson and the Rev. Ryan Spurrier—are among the contributors of a new book that came out last month.

In “What’s Next: Twenty-Two United Methodist Leaders Discuss the Future of the Church,” author Kevin Slimp continues the conversation he initiated in his 2019 bestselling book, “Where Do We Go From Here? Honest Responses From Twenty-Four



United Methodist Leaders.”

In his latest book, Slimp asks 21 United Methodist lay and clergy leaders to share their thoughts about a simple question: “Once the next General Conference eventually concludes, some will go in different directions but most of us will still be calling ourselves United Methodists. What’s next?”

Their answers run the gamut from personal spiritual disciplines to congregational com-

munities, from higher education to houses of worship, from remembering our covenant to being the church in a post-pandemic world. No stone is left unturned.

As the book’s back cover notes, “It was John Wesley who coined the phrase ‘agree to disagree’ in a memorial sermon at the death of George Whitefield in 1770. Since that time, Wesley’s theological descendants have often seemed to disagree more than agree. Nevertheless, author Kevin Slimp believes most United Methodists aren’t as disagreeable as they might seem at first glance.”

Carder, a retired United Methodist bishop

who lives in South Carolina, shares his thoughts on shifting the margins.

Dobson, assistant professor and director of the Spiritual Direction Certification Program at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, discusses how we can belong to each other again.

And Spurrier, who grew up in the South Carolina Conference and now leads campus ministry at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, shares on how Christ will sustain where faithfulness flourishes.

The book is available on Amazon and at <https://www.marketsquarebooks.com>.

### ON SALE NOW FROM THE ADVOCATE PRESS

## BETRAYED WITH A KISS

One Pastor’s Story of Finding God in the Wake of Sexual Assault and Intimate Partner Violence



Raised a “good girl” pastor’s daughter in a wholesome Christian environment, Christie Reeves-Pendergrass thought the horrors of abusive relationships or sexual assault were things that happened to other people. But quickly she found herself in the midst of an abusive marriage, wedded to a predator who convinced her she was to blame for the rape and degradation she endured. Betrayed With a Kiss is the story of how she escaped her marriage, the chaos of post-traumatic stress disorder, and other mental anguish that threat-



ened to tear her apart. But escape she did, going on to graduate from Duke Divinity School and become an ordained elder in The United Methodist Church while finding the true heart of God in the process. “My story is not new, sensational or exceptional. It’s quite common,” she writes in the introduction. “That is why I am writing it: So the world stops believing it’s rare. My story could be your story, your daughter’s, your sister’s, your friend’s, or your co-worker’s, and it very well might be.” Betrayed With a Kiss shines light into the spiritual transformation she experienced out of heartbreak and betrayal.

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## UMs among contributors to new book on healing divides

United Methodists are among those contributing to a new book, “How to Heal Our Divides Volume Two: An Abundance of Opportunities,” which released May 24.

The book features chapters from more than 25 different contributors, with a particular focus on additional organizations doing the important grassroots work to heal different types of divides.

Among the contributors are Tambray Harris, founder of Going Forward: Survivors to Thrivers that helps abuse and trauma survivors and member of SouthPark Church,

a United Methodist church in Charlotte; Jeanne Torrence Finley, a writer and clergy member who pastors rural United Methodist churches in southwest Virginia; the Rev. Sheila M. Beckford, an active anti-racism trainer who serves John Wesley UMC in the New York Annual Conference.

The book is billed as a project to build awareness of voices and organizations that are taking real action to address division issues, highlighting tangible efforts that are solving problems in effective and practical ways. It is available on Amazon.

## Carter produces booklet for sale

Fletcher Carter, a retired diaconal minister of the South Carolina Conference and an active member of Virginia Wingard Memorial UMC, West Columbia, has produced a booklet titled “I Was a Share-Croppers Son Who Moved to Town.”

The booklet shares Carter’s story from his childhood on a farm and almost dying from diphtheria to becoming a United Methodist, with plenty of encouragement from many influential people along the way. The subtitle of the book, “Choices Made on Life’s Paths Determine the Future,” is a theme that echoes throughout.

To get a copy, mail \$10 (includes shipping) to Carter at 2345 Robin Crest Drive, West Columbia, SC 29169.

## In Honor and Appreciation of Lisa Allen

Retiring Children’s Coordinator at Aldersgate UMC in Rock Hill

The members and staff of AUMC will be eternally grateful for the loving care and teaching of God’s love to our children that Lisa has provided during the past 19+ years. She has freely given herself to the molding of our children into little Christians, preparing them to share Christ’s love with others. Lisa has had a tremendous impact on their lives, both at Aldersgate and beyond the church.

Happy Retirement and God’s abundant blessings!  
Thank you, Lisa!



**Scranton UMC  
Easter Cross**

Scranton UMC, Scranton, decorated their cross with flowers for Easter. There were approximately 200 bunches of flowers needed to cover the cross from top to bottom and side to side. Their pastor, the Rev. Rusty Crimm, suggested the project. Members who jumped to the challenge included Pat, John and Patrick Singletary; Carolyn Humphrey; Carroll Evans; Howard Cooke; Wesley Sparrow; and Inez Owens. Favorable comments for the beautiful cross were not only expressed by church members but also by many others in our community. Scranton UMC is a part of the St. John Charge.



**Global Briefs**

**Resources for responding to racism**

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—As people in the U.S. struggle to understand deadly shootings at a New York grocery store and a California church, United Methodist Discipleship Ministries is suggesting resources to help leaders undo the work of racism. Among the recommendations are videos on decolonizing the church, a book edited by prominent United Methodist pastor the Rev. Rudy Rasmus and an online anti-racism course from the United Methodist Commission on Religion and Race.

**Deadline for landmark status expanded**

MADISON, N.J.—The deadline to apply for United Methodist Heritage Landmark status has been pushed back to July 1, 2022, because of the delayed General Conference. Heritage landmarks in the church are buildings or locations related to significant history of The United Methodist Church or its antecedents. COVID-19 and related travel restrictions have led to business of the 2020 General Conference being delayed until 2024.

**Churches condemn hate, urge action after shootings**

BUFFALO, N.Y.—After what officials quickly identified as a racist attack, United Methodists are responding with prayers, counseling and condemnations of hate. Many church members in Buffalo are also grieving after the mass shooting at a grocery store claimed the lives of friends and loved ones. United Methodists also are responding after a gunman opened fire at a Presbyterian church in Laguna Woods, California.

**Bishops seek clarification from church court**

WASHINGTON—The United Methodist Council of Bishops is requesting a declaratory decision from the Judicial Council on the meaning and application of Paragraph 2548.2 in the *Book of Discipline*. The paragraph deals with the deeding of church property to another denomination. Council of Bishops President Thomas Bickerton describes the paragraph as ambiguous.

**Traditionalist group not going away**

AVON, Ind.—The Wesleyan Covenant Association took the lead in creating the new Global Methodist Church, but WCA leaders say their organization needs to stick around and advocate for congregations wanting to leave The United Methodist Church.

**Conference, church move toward settlement**

MARIETTA, Ga.—The North Georgia Conference trustees and Mount Bethel United Methodist Church jointly have agreed to a settlement in principle of a dispute over church property. Cobb Superior Court Judge Mary Staley spent several days meeting with the parties and attorneys in mediation, leading to this resolution.

**Black leaders discuss church future**

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—Speakers at the annual meeting of Black Methodists for Church Renewal were leery of what a possible splintering of The United Methodist Church will mean for Black churches. The meeting was held virtually April 28-May 1 under the theme “We Are Strong. We Are Relevant. We Are Here.”

**Ukraine-Moldova moved from Russian bishop’s area**

COPENHAGEN—The Northern Europe and Eurasia Central Conference voted by a 98 percent majority to move the Ukraine-Moldova Provisional Annual Conference from the Eurasia Episcopal Area to the Nordic and Baltic Episcopal Area. The vote came in an April 30 online extra session. The move is effective immediately but is temporary, lasting until the central conference’s next regular session.

**Church World Service gets national award**

BALTIMORE—Church World Service, a United Methodist partner that works with refugees, has been named the 2022 National VOAD Member of the Year. National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster, or VOAD, is a coalition of more than 70 national organizations in the U.S. Church World Service has helped thousands of Afghans start new lives in the U.S. and responded to the deadly tornadoes in Kentucky.

—Courtesy of UMNews



*Resource Center*

by Betty Stalnaker

**Several new options**

The following are new Bible study resources available from the conference Resource Center. From sharing your faith to worship that will have guests eager to return to church and new studies for women, the Resource Center has a study for your group.

**Contagious Faith Training Course:  
Discover Your Natural Style  
for Sharing Jesus with Others**

(DVD2764EV=) 6 sessions, 20-23 min/study guide/bk/2021

In this video-based training course, Mark Mittelberg introduces you to the five “contagious faith” styles—friendship-building, selfless-serving, story-sharing, reason-giving and truth-telling—and helps you discover which of these approaches (or combination of them) will enable you to naturally share your faith in Jesus with the people around you. The contagious faith assessment will help you identify your primary style, along with any secondary styles you discover. It will give you next steps for developing and deploying your natural approach in order to reach others for Christ. It will also emphasize the importance of all the skill set areas discussed in the “Contagious Faith” book and prompt you to try out the skills discussed on the video with someone else in the group. In this way your effectiveness and confidence will grow and, with it, your potential for bearing spiritual fruit by impacting the lives of others. The six sessions can be used in small groups, classes, student ministries and church-wide campaigns. Age: YAS.

**The Art of Hospitality**  
(DVD2765EV=)

Engaging worship and intentional follow-up processes are important, but what compels guests to return to our churches is the warmth of our welcome and hospitality

that goes beyond their expectations. “The Art of Hospitality,” a new comprehensive program developed by hospitality experts from The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection, promises to guide a local church in exactly what the program’s title implies: the artform of creating radical hospitality that infiltrates the heart and culture of the entire church. Complete with techniques and strategic planning throughout, “The Art of Hospitality” will effectively change how you do church, leaving guests surprised, delighted and eager to return. Includes DVD, implementation guide, hospitality book, companion book and usher greeter handbook. Age: YAS.

**The Names of God:  
His Character Revealed**

(DVD2769WM=) 6 sessions, 25 min. each/leader’s guide/participant wkb/2020

Today’s culture and others’ views, even those of other Christians, can present a distorted view of God. Some suggest God exudes qualities he does not possess, such as being unloving or apathetic toward his creation. In a world where we find people creating God in their own image, studying God’s names can remind us that we are created in his. In fact, one of the best ways to know God’s true character and grow closer to him is to study his names. In “The Names of God,” Melissa Spoelstra leads women on an exploration of the many names of our triune God—from El and Elohim to Yahweh and its many combinations to names such as Abba, Jesus and Holy Spirit, plus many others. Age: YAS.

*The South Carolina Conference Resource Center is your connection to DVDs and seasonal musicals. We are here to serve your church family. To reserve resources, call 803-735-8798 or visit [www.umsc.org/resource-center](http://www.umsc.org/resource-center)*

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Ken is available to come speak to your group or church about Who Spiritual Direction is right for, and how the practice works on an individual and group level.

For more information on booking your free introductory session, booking Ken to speak to your group, or learn about upcoming classes simply visit [kenowenssd.com](http://kenowenssd.com)

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## SEJ's historical society meeting set for July

By Franklin B. Buie

All who have interest in Methodist history are invited to register and attend the Southeastern Jurisdiction Historical Society Annual Meeting, which convenes at the South Georgia Retreat Center, Epworth By The Sea, on St. Simon's Island, Georgia, July 26-29.

The Historical Society of The United Methodist Church will meet concurrently.

Under the theme "Walking With Wesley," attendees will travel by air-conditioned bus to Savannah to tour Wesley sites in the city and visit John and Charles Wesley's landing site on Cockspur Island. Lunch, included in the tour, will be served at the Pirates' House, a portion of which was the gardener's shed for the Trustees' Garden, the only known building remaining that was known by the Wesleys in Savannah.

South Carolina's the Rev. Franklin Buie will present two talks: "The Decision for Georgia and the Voyage" and "The Wesleys' Travels in South Carolina" illustrated. The Rev. Dave Hanson will present "The Wesleys in Frederica," recounting their ministry and difficulties in the colonial frontier settlement, now a national monument. A short bus tour of St. Simon's Island will include a visit to Frederica.

Registrations for the meeting and rooms in the resort motels may be made at the website for the event, [www.umchistory.org](http://www.umchistory.org). Cost is \$140 and includes the tour to Savannah and two meals. Rooms with meals may be booked also.



by Rev. Meredith M. Dark

## Conference Historical Society

### The roots of faith and history

This month's column is a summary of the meeting of The South Carolina Conference Historical Society of The United Methodist Church that took place Saturday, April 23, at the Sandor Teszler Library on the campus of Wofford College, Spartanburg. The article is an adaptation of the minutes from the meeting by Secretary-Treasurer the Rev. Roger M. Gramling.

This meeting was the annual meeting of the Historical Society that has been postponed from 2020 and 2021 because of the pandemic; it was the first time the society has met since October 2019.

Historical society President Joyce E. Plyler opened the meeting and prayed a prayer of thanksgiving for the privilege of being able to meet again in person. Plyler said she was very appreciative of the time she has served the historical society and noted her time was a privilege and a pleasure. As she referenced Revelation 3:2, and the thought to "Wake up, and strengthen what remains," she also quoted Edmund Burke, "Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could do only a little."

Plyler's words remind us we have an imperative to keep and learn history, and inspire others to do the same.

Many positive happenings have taken place since the last meeting. Gramling reported that membership has increased from 109 to 128 for the period, including 48 life memberships. If you would like to join the historical society, membership is open to anyone, and applications are available on the historical society's page on the conference

website ([www.umcsc.org](http://www.umcsc.org)).

Dr. A. V. Huff Jr., editor of The Mark, noted that more selections on The South Carolina Methodist Historical Trail Project will be forthcoming. These histories are exciting to read and provide us with a way to enjoy our Methodist history throughout South Carolina. Huff indicated that the histories can certainly be reprinted in church newsletters and papers. Sharing information about these sites is encouraged. The descriptions are not copyrighted.

Conference Archivist Dr. Phillip Stone gave a report on the Conference Commission on Archives and History. The archives housed at Wofford College receive many questions throughout the year. This year alone, they have received 120 questions. Joseph R. Gainey has joined the staff, and the Rev. Luther H. Rickenbaker, who chairs the conference commission, is working on processing the papers of the late Rev. Eben Taylor.

The Burdine Lodge Restoration Project is an area that continues to provide excitement for the historical society. Plyler was presented with three pens, handcrafted by Ken Nabors from wood from one of the structure's logs, as an expression of appreciation for the \$30,000 contributed through the society for the restoration project. The historical society adopted the restoration project as a fundraising effort in late 2013.

Plyler presented one of the pens to Stone for the conference archives. She announced that a second pen would be sent to the congregation of Antioch United Methodist Church, which is the successor church

to the Methodist Society organized in the Burdine home. The third pen was presented to Gramling in appreciation for his leadership and work in organizing the project and leading the fundraising efforts.

The Rev. Franklin B. Buie reported that the Southeastern Jurisdiction Historical Society will host its annual meeting July 26-29 at Epworth By The Sea on St. Simons Island, Georgia. The Historical Society of The United Methodist Church will be joining the SEJ Historical Society for the meeting. The theme of the meeting will be the Wesleys' presence in Georgia, "Walking with Wesley," and will include trips to sites associated with the Wesleys at Savannah and on St. Simons. To attend, the link is available on Epworth By The Sea's website, [www.epworthby-thesea.org](http://www.epworthby-thesea.org). Search "Epworth Events" and select "SEJ Historical Society Meeting," and you may pay on their webpage. Meeting registration is through the South Georgia Conference. Housing registration is through Epworth By The Sea.

Overall, the meeting was a great success with many positive aspects to report. Stone provided those present with a tour of the new Archives space at Wofford in the Sandor Teszler Library. New officers include Gramling as secretary-treasurer, the Rev. Joseph D. Kovas as vice president and the Rev. Meredith M. Dark as president.

If you have any questions on how to gain membership in the historical society or attend the event at St. Simon's Island, contact Dark at [mmdark@umcsc.org](mailto:mmdark@umcsc.org) or Gramling at [gramlingrm@bellsouth.net](mailto:gramlingrm@bellsouth.net).

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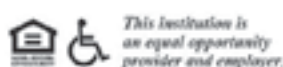
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# A heart for all: Remembering Hattie Best Polk

By Donna Fisher

The journey of Hattie Best Polk has ended the earthly segment of one remarkable life, spanning almost 96 years. Growing up on a farm with no running water, no electricity and no indoor plumbing, she worked at home in the cotton and tobacco fields. As a public schoolteacher in South Carolina and North Carolina for a span of more than 50 years, she mentored many students and teachers alike.

The seeds of her spiritual birth were planted, nourished and blossomed at Sandy Plain United Methodist Church, Galivants Ferry, in a schoolhouse donated by her great-grandfather to be used as a Sunday school. It was led by her father as lay preacher and finally served by the Rev. Charles Polk, who would make her his wife. During her early years at Sandy Plain, she learned about God's love for children, "Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in his sight. Jesus loves the little children of the world." This lesson would forge the path she would lead the rest of her life.

As preacher's wife, Polk held a very demanding job, one in which she excelled.

As she shared before her passing, "I was expected to play the piano for church, sing in the choir, teach Sunday school, know the Bible, pray on command, direct plays, bake the most delicious cakes, the most unusual casseroles, fry the best chicken and be well-dressed on \$1,700 a year."

In those days, churches were blessed not only to have their senior pastor sent by the bishop, but they also got in their spouse a full-time volunteer to be the role model for all good Christians. Together they served nine churches in South Carolina.

One theme stands as a thread through her missions. She often asked before her passing why God had allowed her to outlive all her loved ones. When told she should look to the Bible, she quickly quoted Esther 4:14: "And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" Certainly, many felt these days needed the lessons she gained.

In addition to being an exemplar for all her family, she also changed the lives of so many who have crossed her path. With her faith, she turned every obstacle into opportunity, every pain into an important lesson, every mistake into a chance to reconcile. It was no surprise that she became the first married student to graduate from

Columbia College after she marched into President Wright Spears' office, asking why a Methodist minister's wife could not graduate from a Methodist school. Years later, that same relationship grew much stronger. Both living at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina, they began many missions of peace together.

In the 1960s, during the height of the civil rights struggle, she was the preacher's wife in Walterboro when the upheaval of racial justice played out on the front steps of the Methodist church. She also was preacher's wife and district superintendent's wife for her own family during the tumultuous years of civil rights, causing turmoil in the church she loved. There she learned the hard work of loving those who had different perspectives, especially in the family. She stood up and spoke out, at much personal risk, to her mother, brothers, sisters and fellow church members to insist that an authentic Christian church would celebrate and welcome African-American siblings into the fellowship of faith. Those lessons would serve her in efforts to achieve justice yet to come. She learned the importance of peace.

Several critical missions remained at the end of her life, for God's work is never done. While COVID-19 has paused critical decisions in the UMC, she hoped see progress in a new UMC that will celebrate and welcome fully all of God's children made in his image. It will translate into reality the UMC motto, "Open minds, open hearts, open doors."

As she entered her final phase of life, she saw visions of glorious flowers like those in her garden at Inspiration Point, a legacy she left for all. One quotation she saved says it all: "Where there were thorns, she planted flowers."

Her parting words are these: "My prayer is that my life has made a difference."

A recent visitor noted, "I'm sure I speak for countless others as you have touched my soul with your presence. Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

She is survived by daughter Donna Fisher (Tom); son Charles Polk (Lessie); grandchildren Derek Fisher (Jess), Blake Fisher and Jason Fisher; and eight great-grandchildren. Memorials may be sent to Lake Junaluska Assembly, Inc. Inspiration Point Endowment, Office of Development, P.O. Box 67, Lake Junaluska, NC 28745.

## Leesville receives surprise legacy gift from late member

Those who knew Gene Berry, a member of Leesville United Methodist Church, Leesville, knew of his great love for others and his immense generosity.

Berry shared his talents for the benefit of many others over his lifetime. Whether using his musical skills by singing or playing the piano, decorating a sanctuary for a wedding or raising funds for a community project, no task was too large or too small for him. He was generous almost to a fault with his time, talents and resources.

Berry became a member of Leesville UMC, Leesville, on Jan. 23, 1966, and served many years as the director of music. He was so much more than that to us, though—he was a beloved family member.

It was in his passing that we learned of his continued generosity like ripples on a pond. Berry gifted Leesville UMC with \$100,000 to be used to enhance the children's and youth programs.

In doing so, Berry not only invested into the future of our church, but other churches and organizations as well.

"Well done, good and faithful Servant!" (Matthew 25:23 KJV)

## Obituaries

### Charles Henry Foster

WALLACE—Charles Henry Foster, grandfather of the Rev. Fadetra Boyd, died April 20, 2022. Rev. Boyd is the pastor of College Place United Methodist Church, Columbia.

Funeral services were held April 27 at Ebenezer UMC with burial in the church cemetery.

### Chenoa Antoinette Franklin

CHARLESTON—Chenoa Antoinette Franklin, daughter of the Rev. Timothy Bowman and Juanita Franklin Bryant, died April 25, 2022. Rev. Bowman is a retired member of the South Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church.

Funeral services were held May 2 at Wesley UMC with burial in Carolina Memorial Garden.

Ms. Franklin is survived by her son and parents.

### Margie A. Friday

TIMMONSVILLE—Margie A. Friday, mother of the Rev. James Friday, died April 25, 2022. Rev. Friday is the director of the conference Congregational Development.

Funeral services were held April 29 at New Haven United Methodist Church with burial in Florence Memorial Gardens, Florence.

Mrs. Friday is survived by her husband, Monroe A. Friday, three sons and two daughters.

### William Avery Hightower

SALUDA—William Avery Hightower,

father of the Rev. William Hightower, died May 15, 2022. Rev. Hightower is the pastor of the Epting Memorial-Lebanon Charge, Newberry.

Funeral services were held May 18 at Bethany United Methodist Church with burial in the church cemetery.

Memorials may be made to Hospice and Palliative Care of the Piedmont, 408 W. Alexander Ave., Greenwood, SC 29646.

Mr. Hightower is survived by his wife, Frances Livingston Hightower, and three sons.

### Jerry Dean Jackson

SPARTANBURG—Jerry Dean Jackson, a retired local pastor of the South Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church, died May 4, 2022.



Jackson

Prior to his retirement in 2017, Mr. Jackson served the Fairmont Charge.

A private service was held.

Memorials may be made to Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System Hospice Home, 686 Jeff Davis Drive, Spartanburg, SC 29303; or to the Ronald McDonald House Charities of the Carolinas, 706 Grove Road, Greenville, SC 29605.

Mr. Jackson is survived by his wife, Margaret Ann Davis Jackson, two daughters and son.

### 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 work for the S.C. Conference of The United Methodist Church.

### Rev. Anne Richardson Parrott

GREENWOOD—The Rev. Anne Richardson Parrott, a retired elder of the South Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church, died April 27, 2022.

Prior to her retirement in 2011, Rev. Parrott served the Lebanon, Fork Shoals; Blacksburg



Parrott

Charge; and King's Mountain Chapel-St. Paul charges.

Funeral services were held May 7 at The Episcopal Church of the Resurrection.

Memorials may be made to the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection, 700 S. Main St., Greenwood, SC 29646.

Rev. Parrott is survived by her son and daughter.

### Hattie Best Polk

WAYNESVILLE, N.C.—Hattie Best Polk, widow of the Rev. Charles Polk, died April 25, 2022.

Funeral services were held May 8 at Waynesville First United Methodist Church with burial at Sandy Plain UMC, Galivants Ferry, on May 9.

Memorials may be sent to Lake Junaluska Assembly Inc. Inspiration Point Endowment, Office of Development, P.O. Box 67, Lake Junaluska, NC 28745.

Mrs. Polk is survived by her daughter and son.

### Trinity UMC, York recognizes

### Ms. Alice Smith, Program Director,

for her tireless efforts toward bringing young people to Christ.

Her love for God and her love for children shine brightly in the York community.

Thank you, Alice. We love you!

### Leave A Legacy To Change Lives

The South Carolina United Methodist Foundation  
P. O. Box 5087, Columbia, SC 29250-5087  
scumf@bellsouth.net



**May**

May 30—Memorial Day, United Methodist Center closed.

**June**

June 5-6—South Carolina Annual Conference, Florence Center, Florence

June 14—Flag Day

June 19—Father's Day

June 19-24—Music and Worship Arts Week 2022, Lake Junaluska. <https://lakejunaluska.com/events-calendar/music-worship-arts-week-2022/>

June 20—Juneteenth, United Methodist Center closed.

June 24-25—SMC Enrollment Days

June 24-26—Native American Conference, Lake Junaluska. <https://lakejunaluska.com/events-calendar/native-american-conference/>

June 25—Come Together Be Together (virtual), 10 a.m.

June 26—Brookland UMC, West Columbia, will host a dragonfly fused glass class at 2 p.m. in fellowship hall. Taught by Karen Mixon, the cost is \$40 and a portion benefits the church. All materials and supplies included. Register at [mixonkaren@gmail.com](mailto:mixonkaren@gmail.com).

**July**

July 2—Limitless (virtual), 10 a.m.

July 4—Independence Day, United Methodist Center closed.

July 21-23—Mission u, Spartanburg Methodist College, Spartanburg

July 26-29—SEJ Historical Society Annual Meeting, South Georgia Retreat Center, Epworth by the Sea, St. Simon's Island, Ga. [www.umchistory.org/](http://www.umchistory.org/)

**August**

Aug. 6—South Carolina Lay Servant Ministry Academy Train the Trainer, Trenholm Road UMC, Columbia. <https://www.umcsc.org/lsm/>



**30 pieces of silver**

In honor of the late Rev. John Wesley Hipp, who was the pastor at Chapin UMC, Chapin, for seven years, this year the church brought back one of Hipp's favorite offerings during Lent. Calling it "30 Pieces of Silver," he'd challenged members to bring 30 pieces of silver (the amount Judas Iscariot received for betraying Jesus) to the altar rail on Palm Sunday to be used for missions. On April 10, Chapin members brought their silver and donated a total of \$6,779.80, all of which will be given to the Africa University endowed scholarship in memory of Hipp.

**Sea Islands Camp and Retreat Center gets \$14K grant from UMC camp association**

South Carolina Camps and Retreat Ministries has a received a \$14,000 grant on behalf of Sea Islands Camp and Retreat Center (formerly Rural Mission).

This grant comes directly from the United Methodist Camps and Retreat Ministries Association to increase capacity at Sea Islands.

The United Methodist Camps and Retreat Ministries Association is a nationwide ministry that is committed to the mission of The United Methodist Church and networks to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of camp and retreat ministries. This association plays a major role in the

growth of South Carolina Camps and Retreat Ministries and the professional development of South Carolina staff.

Mid-February, the nationwide association secured \$2.5 million from an anonymous family foundation to distribute to all United Methodist Camp and Retreat Ministries in the U.S. South Carolina applied for a small portion of this.

Its project to "increase the capacity at Sea Islands Camp and Retreat Ministries" was one of the 86 projects chosen to receive funding.

They will be utilizing this grant to help open the ministry at Sea Islands Camp and Retreat Center. They said this

means that, ultimately, they will be able to host and serve United Methodists and others even better.

"We are so thankful for this association and the ability to work alongside UMCRM to grow our ministry," representatives of South Carolina Camps and Retreat Ministries announced. "The UMCRM Association doesn't cost anything as it has moved to being supported by voluntary donations. SCCRM is proud to support this association and has greatly benefited from all that it offers."

They are working to get the gates of Sea Islands Camp and Retreat Center open for guests soon.

**Trinity gives donations for Easter lilies to UMCOR for Ukraine relief**

On Easter Sunday, the sanctuary of Trinity United Methodist Church, West Columbia, like many churches, is typically festooned with Easter lilies. The sweet smell of the flowers fills the building, reminding the congregation of the sweetness of resurrection. The lilies are placed in memory or honor of loved ones. The placing of Easter lilies has been a long-standing tradition.

During COVID-19 with suspended or

limited in-person worship, it seemed pointless to decorate the sanctuary with flowers. However, people still wanted a way to honor the memory of loved ones on this day of resurrection. The worship committee decided to receive donations for Easter lilies, but instead of purchasing flowers, the money would go toward God's Helping Hands, the local food bank and assistance ministry. The congregation thought this was a good idea. Over the

past two years, about \$200 were raised for this ministry through Easter lilies.

This year, with more people showing up for in-person worship, Trinity was considering going back to putting Easter lilies in the sanctuary. But during the discussion, someone mentioned, "We should do something for Ukraine." This was just as the United Methodist Committee on Relief came out with their Advance for Ukraine Relief.

Trinity decided to give the donations for Easter lilies to UMCOR for Ukraine relief instead of flowers. The response was astounding. From their membership of 220, Trinity received more than \$2,000 in memorials and honorariums for UMCOR Ukrainian relief. In keeping with the message of Easter, they provided hope for life for the Ukrainian people over flowers that would eventually die.



**Classified Advertisements**

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([www.advocatesc.org](http://www.advocatesc.org)).

Deadlines are the 10th of the month  
for the following month's paper.

**Open Positions**

**Traditional Choir Director**

Simpsonville UMC is seeking a part-time choir director for our two traditional services. For more information or to send resumes, contact Rev. Dr. Mike Smith at [jmsmith@umcsc.org](mailto:jmsmith@umcsc.org) or Garry Smith, SPRC chair, at [garryrolandsmith@gmail.com](mailto:garryrolandsmith@gmail.com).

**Open Positions**

**Director of Student Ministries**

Leesville UMC, Leesville, has an opening for a part-time Director of Student Ministries, who will help children and youth to know God's love in their lives and to grow in their faith by involving students and their families in a Christian community; encouraging them to live God-centered lives; and preparing them to transform the world for Christ. Age groups range from 2 to senior high youth. Responsibilities include setting goals; providing programs in conjunction with teachers and volunteers; recruiting, training and equipping volunteers; and planning a calendar of events. This is a 20-hour per week position with a starting salary of \$15/hour. Interested persons should contact the church at 803-532-3817.

**Open Positions**

**Don't miss an issue  
(and help us save money):  
Send us your new address!**





by the Rev. Mary Johnson

# The fruit of the spirit

## June 5

### Receiving the Spirit's Gifts

**Lesson Scripture:** Acts 2:1-4, 17-21, 33, 38-39

**Background Scripture:** Acts 1-2

**Key Verse:** "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as the Spirit enabled them to speak" (Acts 2:4).

**Purpose:** To recognize the role of the Holy Spirit in preparing us for ministry in the world

A goal we share as Christians is to grow in faith. It's what United Methodists call "the process of sanctification," where we mature in our beliefs and put them into practice.

Franciscan priest and author Richard Rohr described spiritual growth as an ongoing, three-step progression. First is a sense of order, where we feel comfortable in the world. Things seem understandable and life seems predictable. Second is an experience of disorder, where something happens that disrupts our lives. Suddenly, we aren't so sure of ourselves and start questioning things.

The final stage is reorder. Ultimately, our experience of disruption broadens our vision and beliefs. Along with a deeper faith comes a changed lifestyle; new priorities emerge along with possibly new relationships. In each of these steps we must use spiritual practices such as prayer, study and service to discern where the Spirit is leading us.

Just as it is with our individual lives, churches go through a similar process of growing in faith. Something happens that disrupts the ordinary, whether it's a social/theological issue or a pandemic. New learnings and directions may emerge that would never have happened had it not been for the state of disorder. Vulnerability replaces the status quo, and a congregation and leadership must come together in seeking the Spirit's guidance. Perhaps you've seen this phenomenon played out in The United Methodist Church. Perhaps you've seen this in your own congregation.

The Pentecost story is timeless and provides a lens through which we can view discipleship—our own and that of our church. We will learn that it's OK to live in the disordered phase that leads to transformation. It's when we live in vulnerability, open to whatever the Spirit has in mind, that we will grow in faith, individually, as a congregation and as the church universal.

## June 12

### The Spirit Gives Wisdom

**Lesson Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 2:10-16

**Background Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 2:1-16

**Key Verses:** "We haven't received the world's spirit but God's Spirit so that we can know the things given to us by God. These are the things we are talking about—not with words taught by human wisdom but with words taught by the Spirit—we are interpreting spiritual things to spiritual people." (1 Corinthians 2:12-13).

**Purpose:** To understand the difference between human wisdom and divine wisdom

My friends on social media fit along a wide social and political spectrum. Some

are on the far-right side, others the far-left, and many vacillate back and forth between the extremes. No wonder our society is polarized. Politically, religiously, racially and socially, there is an assumption that if we just convey our views long and loudly enough, others will finally get it and come over to our way of thinking.

In this lesson, Paul is clear about the limits of our "human wisdom." When Paul visited the Corinthian Church, he saw firsthand how this young congregation was divided over a variety of issues. This separation from one another, and from God, resulted because people lacked awareness of their own flawed thinking.

Consequently, Paul contrasted two types of wisdom. One refers to the human understanding of what's true in life. This type of wisdom is gained through study, reflection and experience. It's logical and rational and expressed in philosophies and proverbs. The other is a higher understanding of God's wisdom and is beyond our understanding (1 Corinthians 2:7).

The dichotomy between the two is the more we gain a greater understanding of life through the Holy Spirit, we will not be understood by those in the world. Just as it was with the Corinthian Church, it is true for us today; if we are willing to look foolish in the world's eyes, then we will be open to receiving the gifts of the Spirit.

It is as if the more we live in peace with one another, the more we will be challenged by the world. So, the question for you, for me, and for the Church Universal is this: which do you desire most (which do you desire eternally), life through the Holy Spirit or life of the world?

## June 19

### Life Apart From the Spirit

**Lesson Scripture:** Galatians 5:13-21

**Background Scripture:** Galatians 5; Romans 8:5-9

**Key Verses:** "I say be guided by the Spirit and you won't carry out your selfish desires. A person's selfish desires are set against the Spirit, and the Spirit is set against one's selfish desires. They are opposed to each other, so you shouldn't do whatever you want to do" (Galatians 5:16-17).

**Purpose:** To recognize the consequences of living apart from the guidance of the Holy Spirit

In the focal passages for this lesson the Apostle Paul provides guidance for us. He says there are two choices we have in the use of our freedom. We can use our freedom solely for our self-gratification or we can use it for the benefit of the community. What is at stake isn't just individual salvation, but also the health and future of the church.

The selfish part of our nature can take advantage of freedom. If we are freed from the hundreds of Jewish laws, does that mean that there are no moral guidelines for us? Even though we have trusted Christ, been forgiven and received the Holy Spirit, we must constantly wage this battle. The question is, if we are freed from the Jewish laws, what are we freed for?

Paul says a Christian's duty was to use

freedom as an opportunity for love. He emphasized that we are to use our freedom on behalf of our brothers and sisters. Sacrificial freedom is the most concrete expression of faith working through love (Galatians 5:6).

"Those who plant only for their own benefit will harvest devastation from their selfishness, but those who plant for the benefit of the Spirit will harvest eternal life from the Spirit" (Galatians 6:8). God's unconditional love breaks down barriers erected by people. The follower of Jesus loves Jew and Gentile, friend and foe, equally. The old ways of identifying people no longer exist (Galatians 3:28). All people are now known by one label: neighbor.

What about you? When is the last time you expressed love to your "neighbor?" How broad do you love, how broad does your congregation love, how broad does The United Methodist Church love and how broad is the love of the Church Universal?

Choices matter. Will we choose the way of life or of death?

## June 26

### Life in the Spirit

**Lesson Scripture:** Galatians 5:22-26

**Background Scripture:** Galatians 5; Ephesians 4:1-6

**Key Verse:** "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the self with its passions and its desires" (Galatians 5:24).

**Purpose:** To demonstrate the change in our relationships that comes from living in the Spirit

We are shaped by people who impacted our lives as we grew up. Remembering them and giving thanks for them is a spiritual practice. My youth leaders at my local church influenced me in ways that are beyond

measure. I also remember my paternal grandfather as a person of integrity and unconditional love. Who were the influential people in your life? How did they inspire you through their courage, faith, sacrifice, commitment and compassion?

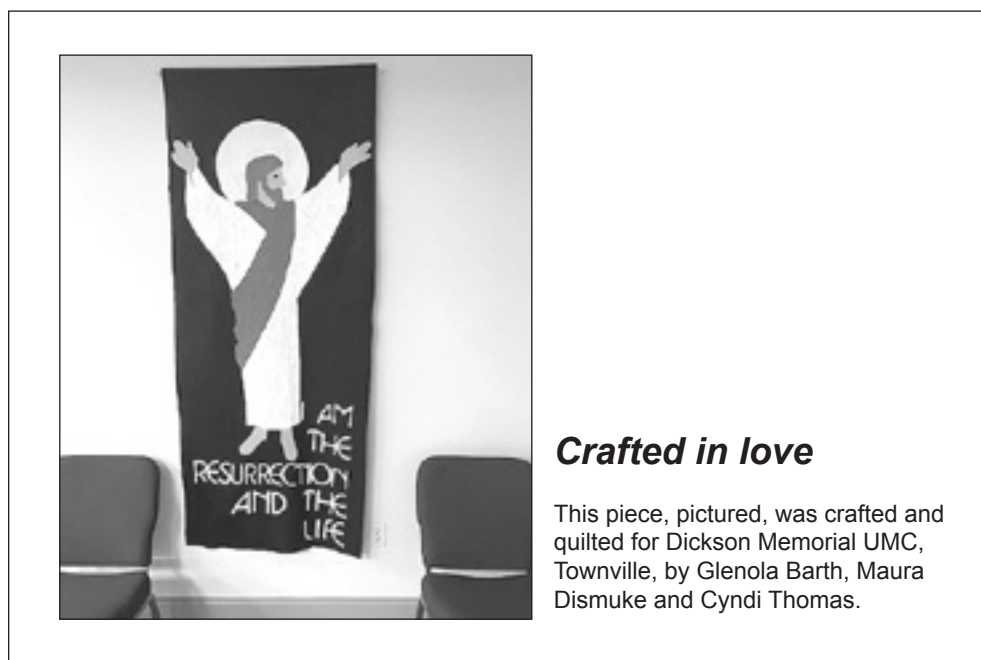
In the focal passage for this lesson, Paul wrote about the diverse fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22). When people manifest fruit in their lives, they influence others. The qualities he labeled as fruit are qualities manifested in the relationships between brothers and sisters within the community.

For Paul, a spiritual gift is a special ability bestowed by the Spirit on someone for the purpose of building up the faith community. On the other hand, a spiritual fruit is a specific quality that takes root within a person's life and expressed in their relationships with others.

Although these two categories are distinct, we must remember that they are mutually dependent upon each other. For example; can a person who does not demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit be an effective leader in the church? Is it possible for God to activate a spiritual gift in a heart that follows selfish desires?

It is no accident that I chose "Fruit of the Spirit" as the theme for my retirement celebration in 2018. This celebration was in recognition of the fact that instead of us bearing fruit for God, God bears fruit for us from the inside out!

Paul concluded this chapter contrasting living in the flesh and living by the Spirit. It is as if he was ending a sermon: saying now that you've heard this, what are you going to do (Galatians 5:25-26)? What a great way to end this four-week Bible Study: Now that you have heard Paul's teaching on "The Fruit of the Spirit," what are you going to do about it?



### Crafted in love

This piece, pictured, was crafted and quilted for Dickson Memorial UMC, Townville, by Glenola Barth, Maura Dismuke and Cyndi Thomas.

## What does your time in the Bible look like?

Are you an avid student, digging deep into books like Leviticus or Hebrews? Or do you prefer the poetry of Psalms and Proverbs? Are you an early-morning or a late-night studier? Have you been walking with Jesus for years, or did you just meet Him?

Regardless of who you are or where you're at in your spiritual life, Don Hocker understands the importance of spending time with God and reading His words to us. After ten years studying the Bible each morning, his dog Lucy nestled at his feet, Don now pours his wisdom, insights, and humor onto the pages of *Just Me, Lucy, and the Lord* (High Bridge Books, 2021).

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*Just Me, Lucy, and the Lord*, by Don Hocker, available as eBook or Paperback (Don is a certified lay speaker in the UMCSC)

**Available on Amazon or at Highbridgebooks.com**

# THANK YOU!

To All of Our Youth Coordinators

ShaWanna Graham, Marjorie Nesmith & Sylvia Anderson

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