

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

117 THIRD STREET, CHERAW, SC 29520

843-537-7002

www.cherawfirstumc.org



THE CHURCH WITH A HEART, IN THE HEART OF CHERAW.

A SERVICE OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

JANUARY 29, 2023

4TH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

LITURGICAL COLOR: GREEN

Please sign the attendance pad and pass it to everyone on the pew. Once the last person has signed, please fold it in half and put in the offering plate.

CHIMING OF THE HOUR		Martha Starling
PRELUDE	<i>"Basse Et Dessus Trompette"</i>	LOUIS-NICOLAS CLÉRAMBAULT
WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS		Jenny Keefe
CALL TO WORSHIP¹		
L: People of God, who do you come to worship?		
C: We come to worship the one true God.		
L: How will you worship?		
C: Not with words alone, but by living lives of justice and love.		
L: Come, you who belong to God. Come, you who are foolish in the eyes of the world.		
C: Come and abide in God's tent and in God's heart, now and forever.		
OPENING PRAYER²		Jenny Keefe
Loving God, we come this morning seeking to abide in your presence. Open our minds to your spirit of wisdom, that we may know how to live as your people. Open our hearts to your spirit of truth, that we may love all your people with a love that speaks of justice, kindness, and radical grace. May this time of worship be authentic and pleasing to you. Amen.		
PSALTER NO. 747	<i>Psalm 15</i>	Jenny Keefe
OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE READING:	<i>Micah 6:1-8</i>	Jenny Keefe
*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH NO. 880	<i>Nicene Creed</i>	Jenny Keefe
*GLORIA PATRI NO. 70		GREATOREX
*HYMN NO. 577	<i>"God Of Grace And God Of Glory"</i>	CWM Rhondda
MORNING PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER		Pastor Debra
ANTHEM	<i>"The Little Brown Church "</i>	William S. Pitts
1 There's a church in the valley by the wildwood, No lovelier spot in the dale; No place is so dear to my childhood As the little brown church in the vale. Refrain: Come to the church in the wildwood, Oh, come to the church in the vale; No spot is so dear to my childhood As the little brown church in the vale. 2 Oh, come to the church in the wildwood, To the trees where the wild flowers bloom; Where the parting hymn will be chanted, We will weep by the side of the tomb. [Refrain] 3 How sweet on a clear Sunday morning, To list to the clear ringing bell; Its tones so sweetly are calling, Oh, come to the church in the vale. [Refrain]		
OFFERTORY	<i>"Ein' Feste Burg Is Unser Gott"</i>	Martin Luther
DOXOLOGY No.94	<i>"Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow"</i> Lasst Uns Erfreuen	
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia! Praise God the source of all our gifts Praise Jesus Christ whose power up lifts! Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!		
OFFERTORY PRAYER		
HYMN NO. 402	<i>"Lord, I Want To Be A Christian"</i>	I Want To Be A Christian
GOSPEL SCRIPTURE READING	<i>Matthew 5:1-12</i>	Pastor Debra
SERMON	<i>A Light to the Nations: Light of Blessings</i>	Pastor Debra

BENEDICTION

***BENEDICTION RESPONSE NO. 206 (Verse 1) "I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light"**

Houston

I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to follow Jesus, God set the stars to give light to the world. The star of my life is Jesus. In him there is no darkness at all. The night and the day are both alike. The Lamb is the light of the city of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.

POSTLUDE

*"Improvisation on Olivet"****If you are able, please stand**¹ <https://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/4636>² Ibid

OUR PRAYER LIST – Our President, our Congress, all Governors, Mayors, State, County, and Local employees, all health care workers, EMT's, all who defend our nation, all who make decisions for our nation, Jim Bennett, Scott Tomberlin, Margaret Stanton, Mary Snookie Lomas, Shep Straughn, Betty Thraikill, Tony Thraikill, Bill Eutsler, Jr., Mary Burr, Dan Ellenburg Family (Patty Fisher's Brother-In-Law), Jody Reid, Craig Norton, Martha Griggs, Katie Chapman, Thomas McKinnon, Zenda Rushing, Jennifer Rayfield (Lanny Rayfield's wife), Carole Hennessee Family. **NOTE: Names are left on the prayer list for two weeks; after two weeks, they are removed unless the church office is notified.**

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, January 29, 2023

10:00am Sunday School
 10:30am Chancel Choir Practice (Choir Room)
 11:00am Worship
 3:00pm Reception for Angie Smith (Parlor)
 5:30-6:30pm Fireflies Meeting (Kid's Nook & Fellowship Hall)
 5:30-6:30pm Youth Meeting (Youth Hut & Fellowship Hall)

Monday, January 30, 2023

9:00am-2:00pm Church Office Open
 6:30pm Boy Scouts (NETC)

Tuesday, January 31, 2023

9:00am-2:00pm Church Office Open
 5:00pm Girl Scouts (Youth Hut)

Wednesday, February 1, 2023

9:00am-2:00pm Church Office Open
 12:00pm Bulletin/Newsletter Deadline
 1:30pm Grief-Share (Parlor)
 6:00pm Bible Study (Parlor)
 6:00pm Carillon Choir Practice (Choir Room)
 7:00pm Chancel Choir Practice (Choir Room)

Thursday, February 2, 2023

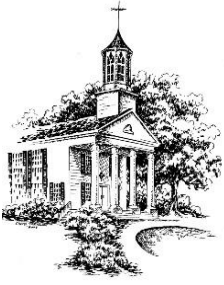
9:00am-2:00pm Church Office Open
 10:00am Bible Study

Sunday, February 5, 2023

10:00am Sunday School
 10:30am Chancel Choir Practice (Choir Room)
 11:00am Worship
 5:30-7:00pm Fireflies Meeting (Kid's Nook & Fellowship Hall)
 5:30-7:00pm Youth Meeting (Youth Hut & Fellowship Hall)

Grief Share sessions are held at 1:30pm every Wednesday in the Parlor. For information or questions please call Bonnie Cundiff at 843-910-7526.





THE CONNECTION

The Mission of First United Methodist Church is to win and nurture souls for
Jesus Christ by sharing and living the message of salvation.

www.cherawfirstumc.org

Volume 19,
Issue 5
January 29, 2023

A few words from our Hartsville District Congregational Specialist...

Greetings in the Name of Jesus Christ. It is once more that I have the distinct pleasure of offering a few words of meditation on the fourth Sunday of the month. This Sunday's gospel reading is taken from Matthew 4:12-23, a passage often preached with an emphasis on being fishers of people; however, I want to offer a slightly different focus for this week's greeting.

We are in the time after the Advent, Christmas, Epiphany cycle and before the Lent, Easter, Pentecost cycle as we are presented with this reading highlighting the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. This time between Jesus' birth and His second coming reminds us of the importance of his life. It is a true statement to say that Jesus came to earth to die on the cross for our sins but this is not the totality of the implications of his incarnation. We are reminded in this passage that Jesus' life is of importance as well. As Jesus begins his public ministry, he begins to call human beings to join him in fishing to human beings. This call is not about throwing a net over people and dragging them into following Jesus but rather about the redemption of creation, particularly human beings. Prior to the invitation to become a fisher of people, Jesus calls for those who would follow him to, "Repent for the kingdom of heaven has come near." Jesus ties our repentance to joining Jesus in calling others to salvation.

As we witness to others, we are sanctified. As we share what we know about the life and love of Jesus Christ we are convicted of our need for continual repentance and forgiveness. As we share the Word of God with other, this same Word continues to perfect and purify us. Anyone who has ever taught a lesson to someone else knows this mutual improvement to be true. It is impossible to do a good job of teaching any subject without learning more about that subject yourself. For anyone who has taught, when you prepare thoroughly, even if it is something you have been teaching for years, if you prepare thoroughly, there will be something that you had not thought about before. There will be something that strikes you just a little differently than any other time you taught this subject.

So it is with evangelizing others. If we do a thorough job of expressing the love of God as made manifest in the person of Jesus Christ, then we will grow in our relationship with God and each other. If we really open ourselves to hear what Jesus says to the person we are witnessing to, we will find ourselves being drawn further into the light and find our desire to please God deepening. God calls us to be fishers of people so that the good news of Jesus Christ is spread throughout the land but also so that we too are brought out of the darkness of sin and death and into the light of life and love. Our God truly does work all things together for our God and God's glory. Even our attempts to do something for God turns out to be a means of our growth in grace. How can we not serve a great God like this? I pray that as we go through our daily lives we like Andrew, Peter, James, and John take every opportunity to emulate the life of Jesus Christ. Of course, we are not Jesus but by the power of God the Holy Spirit we are invited to accountable discipleship in relationship with God and each other. To God be the glory!

Grace and Peace,
Walter E Strawther
Congregational Specialist
Columbia/Hartsville Districts
African American Church Concerns
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CHURCH COUNCIL REVIEWS NEW PROCESS FOR LOCAL CHURCHES

On December 19, 2023, the South Carolina Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church published a process for local churches to discern whether to continue in ministry with or to separate from the United Methodist Church. The General Conference 2024 Task Force created by the First United Methodist Church Council gave a presentation to the Council on this process for its consideration at the January 22, 2023, Council meeting. The information presented is included in this issue of the Connection.

The first step in the process is for the Church Council to determine that it is in the best interest of the church to allow the congregation to pursue separation. After asking questions, receiving answers, and faithful discussion, the Church Council took no action on this process. First United Methodist Church will be able to consider using this process again in the future because there is not a sunset clause on this process.

The task force will be discussing additional ways to share this information with the congregation. Please feel free to contact Pastor Debra and Council Chairperson John Wagon with your concerns and questions.



RECEPTION: Hello FUMC, family! On behalf of the SPRC committee I would like to invite you to join us for a reception honoring Angie Smith, our administrative assistant on Sunday, January 29 at 3 PM. Please make plans to come and join us as we honor and thank Angie for all of her hard work and dedication to this church for over 22 years. She is much more than just an administrative assistant she is family and a part of this church. We love her and have been truly blessed by her. We wish her the very best in her retirement. I look forward to seeing you all there! Jenny Keefe, Chairperson of SPPRC

DONATIONS BEING COLLECTED BY FUMC UNITED WOMEN OF FAITH: Caroline Quick, sister of Betty Hurst and a former teacher in our Child Development Center and worker in the church nursery for many years, recently lost everything in a house fire. The United Women of Faith are collecting donations for her benefit. Checks may be made payable to the UMW, designated for Caroline Quick.



SYMPATHY: *The pastor, staff, and congregation offer our deepest sympathy to the family of Mrs. Carole Hennessee upon her death and to Patty Fisher and her family upon the death of her brother-in-law Dan Ellenburg.*

South Carolina Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church Local Church Discernment Process available as “a faithful step forward”

To ensure congregations are equipped to make decisions that enable them to best live into their disciple-making mission, South Carolina Conference leaders have adopted a process through which a local church can discern whether it will continue in ministry within The United Methodist Church or separate from the denomination.

The Local Church Discernment Process is designed to help local churches determine whether they can function as a United Methodist church if they firmly believe that the denomination has not consistently upheld its stated doctrine on issues of human sexuality. It will provide an opportunity for church members to engage in dialogue, to allow every voice in the congregation an opportunity to be heard, and to discern the congregation’s sentiment regarding separation.

The new process is distinct from the disaffiliation pathway created when the 2019 General Conference added Paragraph 2553 to The UMC Book of Discipline. In South Carolina, no local church that has inquired about disaffiliation from The United Methodist Church has qualified under this provision, since they do not profess to disagree with the human sexuality language in the Book of Discipline or how the South Carolina Conference has interpreted it.

“It has been my hope that the division so present in the rest of the denomination would not affect us in a negative way,” said Bishop L. Jonathan Holston. “But it has become increasingly difficult over time to shield South Carolina United Methodists from these distractions.

“There are a growing number of churches in our conference inquiring about a way to leave the denomination, especially since disaffiliation under Paragraph 2553 is not available to them. While this is a source of real sadness, I have concluded that providing churches the space for conversation and discernment is a faithful step forward within the provisions of The Book of Discipline.”

The Trustees of the Annual Conference and the Extended Cabinet have prayerfully developed the Local Church Discernment Process. Their intentional and meticulous work is not intended to encourage churches to leave the denomination or to remain with The United Methodist Church. Rather, it was designed with the singular goal of ensuring that churches will be fruitful in their mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

While similar to the disaffiliation process found in Paragraph 2553, the Local Church Discernment Process is grounded in Paragraph 2549 of the Discipline, which is typically employed when a local church is closed because it no longer serves the purpose for which it was organized. Unlike the disaffiliation process, the Local Church Discernment Process has no long-term “sunset” provision.

The process consists of multiple steps, including but not limited to:

- 1) If the church council of a local church determines that it is in the best interest of the church to allow the congregation to pursue separation, the council must ask the district superintendent to call a church conference.
- 2) Before the church conference takes place, the local church must complete an intentional, 30-day process of discernment to consider whether the congregation can continue to function as a United Methodist church.
- 3) Representatives of the congregation will be assigned the responsibility of ensuring that certain financial obligations – as calculated by conference trustees – are satisfied before the congregation can vote on whether to separate. These payments include:
 - A tithe equal to 10 percent of the appraised value of all church property and liquid assets.

- All unpaid apportionment giving for the prior year, as well as for the year of closure up to the date of the Annual Conference vote to close the church.
- An additional 12 months of apportionment giving.
- All unpaid salary and benefits due to clergy appointed to the church.
- A withdrawal liability equal to the church’s proportional share of any unfunded pension obligations.

4) Other financial considerations and legal liabilities of the local church – such as the disposition of any debts, loans, leases, endowments, foundations and cemeteries – must be satisfied or transferred to a new entity.

5) At the church conference meeting, support of two-thirds of professing church members present and voting is required to formally declare that the church can no longer continue to function as a United Methodist church. This vote must take place by March 1 each year to be considered by Annual Conference members during their regular session the following June.

6) Once all terms of separation are satisfied, the members of the Annual Conference must vote on a resolution to close the local church and transfer its assets to a new entity. A simple majority vote in favor of the resolution is the final step before the local church separates from The United Methodist Church, maintaining its property.

All inquiries about the Local Church Discernment Process must be communicated by the church council to the district superintendent.

Bishop Holston continues to implore South Carolina United Methodists to remain patient and focused on what should be the top priority of every local church – our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

“During this time of discernment, I am encouraging everyone to pray for our church and for each other, to trust in the Lord with all your heart and not lean only on your own understanding,” Bishop Holston said. “Amid all of the distractions the world casts across our path, let us seek a more excellent way to focus on what matters most – trusting, believing and knowing that God is with us.”

Report of February 22, 2023, Meetings		
Church Council	Finance Committee	Trustees
Received reports from Committees	Reviewed December Treasurer’s Report and Year End Report.	Elected 2023 Officers
Reviewed and passed the 2023 Preliminary Budget	Approved 2023 Preliminary budget and will review again at next meeting.	Jerry Tucker, Chairperson David McLean, Vice-Chair Susan Marsh, Secretary
Reviewed New Discernment Process for Local Churches	Approved request to use contingency funds to replace heating and air conditioning units in the fellowship hall.	Approved a request to Finance Committee to use contingency funds.

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

BIRTHDAYS

2/3 Collins Lewis
2/6 Susan Allen
2/7 Cameron Crouse
2/9 Alex Lee
2/12 Gini Eddins
2/14 Jimmy Duffy
2/16 Shellie Mears

2/17 Jake Williamson, Sammy Quick
2/18 Keith Stubbs, John Sanderson
2/24 Scott Tomberlin
2/28 Will Smith

ANNIVERSARIES

2/26 M&M Jackson Rushing

SERVING IN FEBRUARY

GREETERS FOR FEBRUARY

February 5 Renie Seel
February 12 Ray Crouse
February 19 Patty Fisher
February 26 Jerry & Julia Tucker

FLOWERS FOR FEBRUARY

All month is OPEN

NURSERY FOR FEBRUARY

February 5 Choles Reid & Christy Ruffner
February 12 OPEN
February 19 Choles Reid & Michelle Rohde
February 26 Kelly Dusa & Lesley Jean Watson

LITURGIST FOR FEBRUARY

February 5 Sammy Quick
February 12 Rsy Crouse
February 19 Eric Dusa
February 26 Rhett Butler

HEAD USER FOR FEBRUARY

Keith Smith

ACOLYTE FOR FEBRUARY

Renie Seel

IN HONOR OF:

In honor of Lib Norton

FUMC Kinsey Mulloy Bible Class

Weekly amount needed budget: \$5,928.83
Amount Needed to Date: \$23,715.32
Sunday School Attendance, January 22: 43
FUMC Food Pantry Item: Ramen Noodles
Greeters: Jeff & Shannon Johnson
Acolyte: Nancy Wagnon
Nursery Worker: Lesley Jean Watson & Christy Ruffner
Soundsystem Operator: Holly Miles

Amount received week of January 25: \$19,46.50
Amount Received Year to Date: \$37,485.03
Worship Attendance, January 22: 59
McArn Items: Individual size cereal boxes
Head Usher: Rhett Butler
Liturgist for next Sunday: Sammy Quick
Flowers next Sunday: OPEN
Video Technician: Bryson Hunter

FUMC STAFF

Rev. Debra Armstrong, Pastor (fumcpastor1@gmail.com) 843-537-7002 O 843-253-3132 C
April Polson, Administrative Assistant (fumcadassistant1@gmail.com)
Jim Glass, Director of Music/Organist (fumcmusic01@gmail.com)
Child Development Ministry Director (fccdm@yahoo.com)