

2024

CHURCH

COUNCIL



# The St. John's Post

January 2024 Edition

Church Council Chair: R.W. Edmondson

Church Council Vice-Chair: Justin Isenhour

Lay Leader: Lise Turner

SPRC Chair: Wayne Bouldin

Trustees Chair: Les Spencer

Finance Committee Chair: David Harroff

Church Treasurer: Jason Creel

Church Recording Secretary: Elisabeth Williamson

Lay Members to the Annual Conference:

Barbara Gaither

Judy Tilly

Nancy Rivers

Les & Susan Spencer

Alternates:

Phyllis Helms

Brenda Stowe

Steve & Minda Siebert

United Methodist Men President:

Steve Siebert

United Women in Faith President:

Barbara Gaither

Children's Council Chair:

Brandy Powers

Youth Council Chair:

Elisabeth Williamson



Missions Committee Chair: Shawne Heeren

Care Ministry Co-Chairs: Joy Honeycutt

Charlene Williams

Networking Chair: Jemma Hardinger

Education Committee Chair: Nancy Rivers

Worship Committee Chair: Nancy Stark

Connections Co-Chairs: Joan Pate,

Barri Helms & Jennifer Isenhour

Stewardship Committee Co-Chairs:

Martha Jones Ruth Orwig Judy Tilly

Epworth Representative: Katherine Burns

Scouting Coordinator: Tevis Vandergriff

Disaster Response Coordinator:

David Armstrong

VIP's Coordinator: Open

**Dr. Jonathan Hall–Music Director   Mallory Capps–Children & Youth Director**

**Beth Meador–St. John’s W.E.E. School Director**

At Large Church Council Members:

|                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Anne Purcell      | Adriane Starnes |
| Wayne Bouldin     | Avis Wilson     |
| Nancy Lerch       | Suzanne Fisher  |
| Debbie McCrorie   | Ashley Helms    |
| Beverly Anderson  | Emily Lee       |
| Patrick Edmondson | Mandy Shamblin  |



**Mission  
Ministry  
Purpose**

Lay  
Leadership:

Pastor Karen Radcliffe   Lise Turner–Lay Leader   Russ Williamson  
Judy Tilly–Annual Conference Delegate   Sherri Bivins   David Helms  
Ellie Davies   Brenda Stowe   Sarah Robertson   Martha Sides  
Tevis Vandergriff   Elaine Cryderman

|                     |                   |               |              |
|---------------------|-------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Wayne Bouldin–Chair | Karen Rowe        | Lise Turner   | Steve Natoli |
| Beth Hozey          | Barbara Gaither   | Matt Edwards  |              |
| Parker Harroff      | Charlene Williams | Jan Patterson | Barri Helms  |



Finance  
Committee:

Pastor Karen Radcliffe  
David Harroff–Chair  
Lise Turner–Lay Leader  
Wayne Bouldin–SPRC Chair  
R.W. Edmondson–Church Council Chair  
Jason Creel–Church Treasurer  
Phyllis Helms–Lay Member to the Annual Conference  
Les Spencer–Trustees Chair  
Martha Jones–Stewardship Chair  
Beth Meador–W.E.E. School Director  
Phil Lewis–Facility Manager

At Large Members  
to Finance

Bryan Meador  
Amber Boan  
Jemma Hardinger  
Avis Wilson

St. John’s Trustees:

Les Spencer–Chair  
Jonny Bivins  
Shawne Heeren  
Frank Gravely  
Zeke Patterson  
Nancy Rivers  
Kristi Vandergriff  
Jon Turner  
Scott Gainey





# NEED TO KNOW



**SCRIPTURE SNACK SUNDAY** \*snacks will be donated to various organizations!  
JANUARY 28TH

**Church Office Closed - January 1, 2024**

## 2024 CHURCH COUNCIL WORKSHOP

Our Church Council Workshop for the 2024 year will be held January 20th from 9:00am - 1:00pm in the Fellowship Center.

We will gather at 8:30am for coffee then begin our planning at 9:00am. Lunch will be provided.

The workshop is open to everyone in our congregation not just church council members.

Please sign up on REALM or in the Communication Center if you would like to attend.

The number of folks attending is needed in order to have enough food.

Deadline to sign up is January 14th.

We welcome your ideas and input as we prayerfully consider & discern God's will for the programs and ministries here at St. John's in the new year.

R.W. Edmondson, 2024 Church Council Chairman

**Networking Email:**  
[stjohnsfm.network@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnsfm.network@gmail.com)

**Exercise with Avis:**  
Mon-Wed-Fri  
11:00 am - 11:30 am  
in the Fellowship Center



## UPCOMING MEETINGS:

January 14 @ 6:30pm (MBC)  
\*Finance Committee Meeting

January 21 @ 12:15pm (Loft)  
\*Missions Committee Meeting

## LUNCH BUDDIES:

Lunch Buddies will be going to Calvary Church in Charlotte on Thursday, January 25. After enjoying a free organ concert, we will reassemble in the dining room for a delicious lunch.

*Reservation deadline will be Sunday, January 21.*

Payment of \$9 will be required to hold your place; please make cash payment only, to Barbara Gaither by that date. For more information, please contact Barbara Gaither, [bgramb@outlook.com](mailto:bgramb@outlook.com) or 814 384-1389.

## GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP (JANUARY MEETINGS):

January 3, January 17 & January 31

4:30 pm in the Men's Bible Classroom

**Questions:** contact Frieda Price  
[friedaprice@comporium.net](mailto:friedaprice@comporium.net)



## **BIBLE QUIZ:**

**by Rev. Bob Romanello**

**As a Volunteer Chaplain in 1993-1996, I once sat listening at the bedside of an aged country preacher. I have chosen to share part of a poem I wrote about that visit hoping that it will encourage you in your various ministries in the year ahead.**

**It is not polished, but the message is clear.**

### **Preaching Wind**

**He was lying on a bed not his  
This man of God in waning year  
Ill at last and needing care  
Yet with so much of God to share.**

**I spoke his name with voice of cheer  
As to me he turned his bright eyes clear  
Eyes that mirrored the inward grace  
To see the end of his life's race.**

**Though gospel fires still burned within  
He said to me, "I've lost my wind.  
Oh! if I could, I'd preach again  
To a lost world so steeped in sin."**

**I knew as I left him that day  
God had well said through him to me,  
"Go now and in his footsteps walk  
Preach strong the Word and do not balk"**

**But not for me alone was he  
Revived that day in faith to speak  
For I alone can carry not  
This message forth to all who seek.**

**You, my friend, must do your part  
To send it forth with burning heart  
And in strong voice this message send  
While you still have your "Preaching Wind."**

**His words that day in the first year of my preaching ministry were a challenge to me;  
however, God calls us to various ministries. My question for you is:  
"As you are able, will you accept this challenge to witness or serve in some way in 2024?"**



# JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

January 1 Cindy Lobo  
 January 2 Charlie Elliott  
 January 4 John Edward Frick  
 Davis Lee  
 Barbara Newton  
 January 6 John Lee, III  
 Ron Masters  
 Drew Fey  
 Marina Nielsen  
 January 9 Pam Huckabee  
 Dr. Bill Mayes  
 January 10 Jon Turner  
 Audrey Johnson  
 Shelley Pruitt

January 22 TJ Fuller  
 Larry Taulbert  
 January 23 Brad McDonald  
 Wes Moore  
 January 24 Jacob Meenaghan  
 Zeke Patterson  
 January 26 Crissy Anderson  
 Jason Damm



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

January 11 Peggy Powers  
 January 12 Anissa Beth Miller  
 January 14 Lauren Meador  
 Brent Meche  
 January 15 Scott Conant  
 January 16 Lauren Johnson  
 January 17 Christopher Dowdy  
 Owen Fey  
 January 18 Gina Hill  
 January 19 Sidney Hillhouse  
 Bonnie Meche

January 26 Abigail Edmondson  
 Benjamin Edmondson  
 Ford Bond  
 Wells Johnson  
 January 28 Les Spencer  
 January 30 Catherine Kinley  
 Sarah Kinley  
 January 31 Courtney Bonéy  
 Ed Carswell  
 Lori Clyburn  
 Nelson Odom

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

January 10 Bill & Beth Hozey

January 17 Rick & Becky Diak

January 24 Jason & Glory Creel



# ST. JOHN'S PRAYER LIST

Lee Starnes & Matthew Starnes – grandsons of Brenda Stowe

Rheanon Thomas – sister of Bethany Stone

Jerry Hunter, Sr. – brother-in-law of Billie Vaughn

Melanie Lee – daughter of John & Sherry Ede

Barbara Williams – sister of Janet Tracey

Jo-Ann Meece – sister of Janet Tracey

George Reeves – father of Nancy Neal

Cathy Maynard – sister of Nancy Rivers

Juanita Williams – mother of Ricky Williams

Bert Williams – father of Ricky Williams

Revé Richardson – mother of Kristen Richardson-Frick

Rhonda Buckner – mother of Amber Boan

Lincoln Johnson – great-grandson of Sandra Wallace

Nancy Jerrolds – sister of Ellie Davies

Sandy Vinson – sister of Margaret Bryson

Daniel & Judy Murr – cousins of Phyllis Helms

Kara Mitchell – sister/sister-in-law of Marty & Katherine Burns

Edie Ryman – mother of Dawna Spilmann

Jeff Stuck – son-in-law of Martha Jones

Jim Patterson – brother-in-law of David Rowland & uncle of Barri Helms

James Henry Carlisle – brother of Rebecca Conant

Ann Foster – former St. John's member

Jean Farmer & Brenda Thomason – mother & sister of Beverly Anderson

Bernice O'Rourke – mother-in-law of Heather Taylor

Hope Dabney – granddaughter of Brenda Stowe's neighbor Kay Dabney

Travis Stutts – son-in-law of Joan Pate & Jim Wolfe

Price Yount – brother of Chris Yount

Barbara Carson – cousin of Bill Bagwell

Psalm Brantley – child of family friend of Nancy Rivers

Deloris Rouse – mother of Kenny Rouse

Richard Edkins – son-in-law of Glen & Laura Lindsey (new residents)

David Secondino – husband of Sharon Booth (Finance Coordinator)

Terry Kearns

Liz Harris

Margaret Bryson

Peg Brust

Peggy Powers

Loyce Sutton

Rev. Bob Romanello

Sandra Wallace

Carolyn Griffin

Judy Helms

Carla Vowell

Julie Taulbert

Anthony Rivers

Bethany Stone

Odell Pettus

JoAnn Becknell

Shawne Heeren

April Brown

Kay Gibson

Bill Tilly

Brenda Little

Tom Turner



# CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY

We extend our  
Christian Sympathy  
to the family of Frances Jackson  
(grandmother of Anna Gilreath)  
who passed away  
December 17, 2023.

## IN LOVING MEMORY:

***Polly Collins***

by  
Margaret Ervin

***Tommy Chambers, Jr.***

by  
Tim & Gina Hill

***Carolyn Rowland***

by  
David Rowland  
Larry & Tracie Kistler



# WEDNESDAY NIGHT MEAL

JANUARY 2024



## JANUARY 10

Hamburgers  
Tater Tots  
Coleslaw  
Brownies

**\*sign up on REALM or in the Communication Center by Sunday before the meal! REALM gives you the option to pay for your meal. Payment will also be taken at the door.**

## JANUARY 17

Chicken Pot Pie  
Salad  
Dessert



**DINNER BEGINS  
AT 5:45PM**

### Costs of meals:

**Children 2 & under eat free**

**(Children Age 3-8) \$6**

**(Age 9 - Adults) \$10**

**Family maximum - \$25**

## JANUARY 24

Eggs  
Sausage  
Biscuits & Gravy  
Fruit

## JANUARY 31

Chicken Alfredo  
Caesar Salad  
Breadsticks  
Italian Desserts

**Vespers Service:** begins @ 6:30pm immediately following our meal



# **SPECIAL DONATIONS:**

## **THE DEBI EDMONDSON SCHOLARSHIP FUND:**

by

**St. John's UMC Men's Bible Class  
Jean M. Hummer**

## **HONORARIUMS:**

### **IN HONOR OF**

***Joyce Patterson, Barbara Newton, Barbara Gaither  
Joyce Kimbrell & Margaret Bryson***

by

***St. John's UMC Ladies Bible Class***

### **IN HONOR OF**

***Karen Rowe, Brenda Little, Peggy Bishop, Jessica Hall,  
George Rhinehardt & Jonny Bivins***

by

***St. John's UMC Men's Bible Class***

### **IN HONOR OF**

***Carolyn Griffin by Crissy & Warren Anderson***



**Congratulations to Jim Wolfe & Joan Pate on the birth of their grandson on October 31, 2023. Proud parents are Jordan & Caitlyn Wolfe. Baby Westley Orion Wolfe weighed 8 lbs. 1 oz.**

## **THANK YOU!**

**I have truly enjoyed my first semester of graduate school! It has been challenging to remember all of the necessary terms in my chosen field and juggle all my responsibilities through my classes and work, but the experience has been fulfilling, thought-provoking, and insightful. I would like to thank the St. John's family for thinking of me by sending a care package. I look forward to returning home and singing on Christmas Eve to celebrate this season of Advent.**

**Sincerely,  
Alex Meche**

# Music News

Dr. Jonathan Hall, Music Director

## Joy to the world, the Lord is come!

These lyrics are often associated with Christmas Day as a way to celebrate the Christ child's birth. However, the lyrics were originally written by Issac Watts to celebrate the second coming of Christ. Although the lyrics are appropriate for both celebrations, it is a good reminder why we celebrate the Christmas season and points us toward Easter.



## Hopeful for Next Year!



We were sad to cancel caroling and soup supper this year, but hope that you all had an opportunity to enjoy fellowship with your church family and 'break bread' in other ways during this season. Weather permitting, we look forward to having this event again next year!

Thank  
you

Thank you to the adult choir, children's choir, and handbells for their participation in our Advent and Christmas Eve services. The service you provide throughout the year enriches our worship experience!



# UNITED METHODIST MEN

submitted by Steve Siebert, President



**HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM  
ST. JOHN'S UNITED  
METHODIST MEN!**

**UMM had their breakfast meeting on Saturday, December 2. Our first order of business (other than enjoying our meal) was to elect officers for 2024, and I am humbled and honored to report that I was elected President. A huge thank you to Jimmy Wolfe who is the outgoing President of UMM. George Dickinson is Vice President, Phil Lewis Treasurer and Dick Stark is Secretary so please congratulate these men the next time you see them.**

## PANCAKE BREAKFAST

As soon as our December breakfast meeting ended, Tevis Vandergriff, Scott Gainey, Russ Williamson and several other men got busy preparing a wonderful pancake and sausage breakfast for everyone to enjoy prior to the start of the Fort Mill Christmas parade. If you were not there, you missed out on an awesome time, and I would encourage you to consider attending before the parade next year.



These same men and several more were then busy the next morning preparing the Advent breakfast for the congregation. Attendance at this always popular event was incredible, but was in fact so large that we ran out of food. Next year we will definitely prepare a larger amount.

**We are currently planning our activities for 2024, and would love your input. If you have any suggestions for activities that you would like to see the men lead, please let me or any of the other UMM members know your thoughts. Also, I would highly encourage all men of the church to consider joining us at our next event. Please feel free to contact me in person, by phone or text at (803) 389-3952 or email me at [Steve.Siebert@Domtar.com](mailto:Steve.Siebert@Domtar.com) if you have any comments or suggestions regarding United Methodist Men**

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January 2024

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# Children and Youth News

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Children and Youth Director: Mallory Capps- stjohsumc.youthandchildren@gmail.com- (843)-504-5419

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Happy New Year!!! I hope you all have a wonderful 2024! We have so many fun things happening this month! UMYF will begin again on January 14th and REAL Kids starts back up on January 21st. Thank you for all your support for the luminaries and poinsettias this year! We look forward to all the fun and growth of the 2024 year!



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## UPCOMING EVENTS COME JOIN US!

REAL Kids will be starting back on January 21st directly following the 11 am service. This is open for all children Kindergarten- 5th grade!

UMYF will start back on January 14th at 4:00pm and will be every Sunday afternoon of January.

February 10th the Youth will be going snow tubing. If you are interested in joining us, please let Mallory know!



Camp Firelight Vacation Bible School will be June 17-21, 2024! Please plan to join us for a fun filled week as we learn about how our light is Jesus! Registration will open in March! More information to come!

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# W.E.E. School News!



Beth Meador, Director  
sjumcweeschool.org

## W.E.E. School Registration 2024-2025

W.E.E. School registration for the 2024-2025 school year begins Monday, January 29th at 9:00am for currently enrolled students and their families and church members. Registration will open to the public on Monday, February 5th. For more information please visit our website [www.sjumcweeschool.org](http://www.sjumcweeschool.org) or contact Beth Meador at (803)548-6557 or [sjumcweeschool@gmail.com](mailto:sjumcweeschool@gmail.com)



W.E.E. School  
Spirit/Fundraising

Please join us at Toppers Pizza in Fort Mill, Doby's Bridge Road on Tuesday, January 23rd from 4:00-9:00pm. Please mention WEE School when placing your order. Thanks for supporting our WEE School



The W.E.E. School receives a portion of your purchases as a rebate from Harris Teeter. Please help us out by linking your card to our school. Our Harris Teeter number is 6893.

Visit <http://www.harristeeter.com> to link your card today. Thank you!!





You are invited to an

# Epiphany Luncheon

Sunday, January 7th

Directly following the 11am service

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All women of St. John's are invited!

Hosted by United Women In Faith.

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Sign up on Realm or in the Communication Center





# UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

*"Faith is the reality of what we hope for, the proof of what we don't see." Hebrews 11:1.*

## **UW Faith Regional Missionary**

*"God makes a way where there seems to be no way. I give glory to God for being there for us."*

*Grace Musuka, UW Faith Regional Missionary  
serving in Cameroon, the DRC, Malawi,  
Namibia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe.*



## **Epiphany Luncheon**

*Happy New Year! And it's going to be an exciting one for our United Women in Faith. We'll be starting the year with our annual Epiphany luncheon following worship on Sunday, January 7. All women of the church are invited to celebrate with us. Have you made your reservation yet? The deadline for reservations is December 31.*

## **New Officer Election:**

*After our Epiphany program, we will have a brief business meeting to elect two officers and recognize three church members for their service to the church and the community.*

## **Mittens, Gloves & Socks**

On January 7, we will begin to collect mittens, gloves and socks for all ages, to be donated to local mission providers.

The collection will end on January 28, so that the items can get to the hands and feet of those in need while cold weather persists.

## **Upcoming Events:**

*We'll be traveling down the road to Philadelphia UMC for the annual Call to Prayer and Self Denial on February 11 as we prepare to enter the season of Lent. On March 16, we'll have the honor of hosting the Day Apart for all women in the Rock Hill District - you will be getting information on ways you can help for that day. Please mark your calendars now!*

*As 2023 draws to an end, I am taking this moment to thank all of the ladies of UW Faith for your energy, your labor, your support of our work to serve women, children, youth, and each other. Remember, God does have hands - they're just attached to your wrists!*

*May God continue to bless us as we grow in understanding and love, Barbara Gaither*

# STEWARDSHIP

## THINKING ABOUT STEWARDSHIP IN THE NEW YEAR

*As we enter the new year, it's a time for new beginnings and growth. It's a time to recommit to a life lived for Jesus Christ. Here are a few things to consider to grow your stewardship commitment.*



### Stewardship of Prayer

Nothing is more important than growing our relationship with God. Make a new commitment to a daily prayer time.



### Stewardship of Family

Resolve to find a special time with each family member each week. Make sure that family meals are celebrated frequently. Plan to be involved in a stewardship activity as a family.



### Stewardship of Health

Without good health, we lack the energy to serve the Lord well. Resolve to make that doctor or dentist appointment. Make one healthy change in your eating habits. Add a few minutes of extra exercise to each day's routine.



### Stewardship of Possessions

Live more simply. Give more freely of what has been given to you. Challenge yourself to sacrifice something you like, but that you know another person may need more than you.





### Stewardship of the Parish Family

Offer your service to a ministry of our church in the New Year. Enrich our church and your personal church experience by becoming involved.



### Stewardship of Money

Take charge of your budget and your checkbook. Reprioritize your financial goals to ensure that the Lord is coming first in the expenditure of your financial resources.



### Stewardship of Work

Do your best at your chosen profession. Be honest and faithful. Strengthen your knowledge and expertise. Bring a prayerful attitude to your job.



### Stewardship of Neighborhood

Be aware of those around you - co-workers, fellow church members, neighbors, service workers in your daily life. Be kind. Offer your help.



### Stewardship of Support

Resolve to give support and aid to the less fortunate in some specific way this year. Bring them into your prayer life as well.

# MISSIONS COMMITTEE NEWS

HAPPY NEW YEAR ST. JOHNS!

## Foster Care Parent's Night Out

In early 2024, we would like to host a Parent's Night Out for our local foster families through Defend the Fatherless. To make this a successful event, we need multiple volunteers per age group to help make this happen. The children will be divided into the following categories: Toddler/Babies, K-2nd, 3rd-5th, and youth. If you are willing to help, please sign up and communicate the age ranges you would be willing to help with. A sign-up genius link will be sent out.

St. Johns members and the community around us we thank you for all of the coats you donated during our coat drive in November. We collected 453 Coats! They were distributed to:

Pilgrims Inn, these folks distribute to all ages in need through the Rock Hill District.

Bethel Shelter, distributed to homeless adult men and women.

Defend the Fatherless, received many coats for ages 2T-12 years of age for the foster children.

Tender Hearts, they give needed clothes to homeless. Also proceeds from them selling to the public goes to help single women and their children.

### Bethel Shelter Update:

This month the Bethel Day Shelter is having a sprinkler system put in their ceiling. We have been asked if we can pack the clothes, so they won't get dirty. I am asking for volunteers to help sort and fold clothes to pack at the Bethel Day Shelter on January 12 and 13th. Please contact Shawne Heeren if you would like to join us. I need at least 10 people. No lifting needed.





**Missions will be collecting hygiene items for Bethel Day Shelter in February.**

**Items needed are:**

**TRAVEL SIZE:**

**Shampoo**

**Bars of soap**

**Travel size deodorant and shaving cream**

**Disposable razors**

**Chapstick**

**Feminine hygiene products**

**Small Kleenex**

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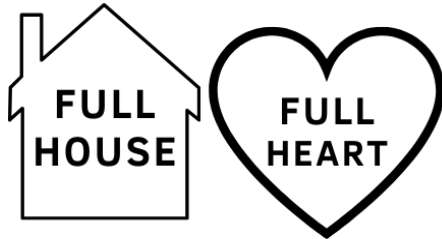
The Mixed Adult Bible Study Class is collecting eye glasses and sunglasses for a mission project that a friend of Rev. Bob Romanello organizes. If you have any kind of glasses to donate, a bin will be located in the Mixed Adult Bible Study Class (Senior Seekers) located in the Fellowship Center. The glasses will be sent to Nicaragua to people there in need of glasses. Deadline to send in glasses are January 7th. They will be boxed and taken by Rev. Bob's friend later in the month of January. Thank you for your support of this ministry. For questions reach out to Shawne or Rev. Bob.

**THANK YOU AGAIN FOR ALL THE LOVE....GOD BLESS EVERYONE!**

**Lord,**

**We pray for your Spirit to lead us each step of this New Year. We ask that you will guide our decisions and turn our hearts to deeply desire you above all else. We ask that you will open doors needing to be opened and close the ones needing to be shut tight. We ask that you would help us release our grip on the things to which you've said "no," "not yet," or "wait." We ask for help to pursue you first, above every dream and desire you've put within our hearts.**

# Epworth Children's Home



During pre-marital counseling at their Baptist church, Sarah and Justin Weller were advised to think through where they wanted to be in five years as a couple.



After the Wellers tied the knot in 2018, they became close friends with another church couple who were applying to become foster parents.



The Wellers, in their twenties, did not see themselves as foster parents, but they were happy to babysit their friends' foster children on weekends while they spent the next few years focusing on their careers. Sarah worked for a church and Justin maintained computer software systems. Life was good, but as time went on, the commitment they'd made to their five-year marriage goals weighed on their minds.



In 2021, the couple went to a Christian concert where a children's charity made a brief presentation.



It turns out that for months both Sarah and Justin had been thinking about fostering and praying for guidance, but each had been nervous to share their thoughts with the other in case that's not what their partner wanted. They soon chose Epworth as their foster care licensing agency.



"We realized we both wanted to live our mission, to serve, to be a light in our community," Sarah said. "We weren't sure how we would do this, but we knew it would be important to our marriage."

"Suddenly, there were children around our friends' table," Sarah said. "We watched and saw that while they had lots of challenges and it was very hard, they survived each situation as it arose. They told us they felt more joy than ever."

"We were happy, but we felt like something was still missing," Sarah said.

"They told a compelling story about giving of yourself to make it possible for a child who is lost to be found," Sarah recalled. "Later I looked at Justin, and I said, 'There's something I just can't get off my mind,' and he finished my sentence and said, 'fostering.'"

"We wanted to go through an organization that had a focus on the Gospel, but we also wanted to be licensed to offer therapeutic foster care," Sarah said. "Some faith-based fostering organizations do not offer that option, but Epworth does. And we heard that Epworth provided a lot of support to foster parents."



Within days of being approved for a foster care license, a post appeared on the Facebook page of a foster care group that the Wellers were following.

“A foster parent posted that a 2-year-old boy in their care needed to go because he didn’t fit in with the other kids,” Sarah said. “I felt bad for that baby.”

They arranged to have the child transferred into their care until he was returned to his biological mom four months later.

Soon after, in July 2022, Epworth asked the couple if they could take in two elementary school children. They agreed, and when they learned that the two children’s two older siblings – adolescents – were being placed in Epworth’s group cottage, Sarah and Justin asked to take in those children as well. At first, the Wellers feared they’d overcommitted. All four children were in counseling for trauma and other diagnoses, one needed speech therapy, and each had an Individual Educational Plan at school. On average, the Wellers had to coordinate about 15 appointments a week. The two older children were “a bundle of emotions” and even made a halfhearted attempt at running away shortly after moving in. Sarah ended up quitting her full-time job a few months later to stay home with the children.

“At the time, we weren’t sure how we could make it without my salary ... but we stepped out on faith,” she said. “Soon after Justin was offered a new opportunity that made up for the lost income.”

The Wellers have since worked hard to guide the four children into steady routines and wholesome activities. They all eat together at the table each evening, and they focus on providing a nourishing diet, which has helped one child who was greatly overweight lose 30 pounds.

“It took some time for them to realize that this was all out of love,” Sarah said. “But they went from trying to run away to considering us their family. Consistency is what pays off.”

Sarah said one key to fostering is having people “holding the ropes for you.” The meals that churches deliver, the babysitting offered by friends, the laundry help offered by Justin’s mom – all make a difference.

Today, their home is filled with the bustle and hum of family life – children yelling and joking as they bounce on the trampoline, dogs barking, and Sarah and Justin directing traffic. They go on lots of walks and the children enjoy helping in the backyard garden. Negative behaviors have diminished.

“It is very clear to them now that they are loved, not just by us but by Epworth ... by the therapists, the caseworkers, all the people involved in their care,” Sarah said.

She and Justin know it will be hard when the children are reunited with their birth family, but they are at peace about it.

“God has a vision for families, and it is restoration,” Sarah said. “We tell the children that even after they go back to their parents, they will always be our kids too.”

Not only has fostering brought the couple joy, it also helped them meet their five-year marriage goals.

“Bringing the nitty gritty of ministry into our home escalated our growth as a couple and deepened our love,” she said.

| Sunday   | Monday  | Tuesday  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
|  | <p>1</p> <p><b>NEW YEAR'S DAY</b><br/> <b>CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED</b></p> <p><i>Happy<br/>New year</i></p> | <p>2</p> <p>6:30pm Handbell practice<br/> 7:30pm Handbell Ensemble Practice</p>  |  |
| <p>7 <b>BAPTISM OF THE LORD</b><br/> <b>EPIPHANY SUNDAY/COMMUNION SUNDAY</b></p> <p>8:30 am Worship Service<br/> 9:45 am Hospitality<br/> 10:00 am Sunday School<br/> 10:00 am Confirmation Class<br/> 11:00 am Worship Service<br/> 12:15 pm UWF Epiphany Luncheon-FC</p> | <p>8</p> <p>11am Exercise with Avis-FC<br/> 5pm Clara Phillips Circle Meeting<br/> 7pm Book Club-FC</p> | <p>9</p> <p>10:30am Morning Glory Circle-MBC<br/> 6:30pm Handbell practice<br/> 7pm Scouts-FC<br/> 7:30pm Handbell Ensemble Practice</p>                         |  |
| <p>14</p> <p>8:30 am Worship Service<br/> 9:45 am Hospitality<br/> 10:00 am Sunday School<br/> 11:00 am Worship Service<br/> 4:00 pm UMYF-Zone</p>   | <p>15</p> <p>11am Exercise with Avis-FC</p>   | <p>16</p> <p>6:30pm Handbell Practice<br/> 7pm Scouts-FC<br/> 7:30pm Handbell Ensemble Practice</p>  |  |
| <p>21</p> <p>8:30 am Worship Service<br/> 9:45 am Hospitality<br/> 10:00 am Sunday School<br/> 11:00 am Worship Service<br/> 12:15 pm Missions Meeting (Loft)<br/> 12:15 pm REAL Kids-FC<br/> 4:00 pm UMYF-Zone</p>  | <p>22</p> <p>11am Exercise with Avis-FC</p>   | <p>23</p> <p>6:30pm Handbell Practice<br/> 7pm Scouts-FC<br/> 7:30pm Handbell Ensemble Practice</p> <p>WEE School Spirit Night<br/> 4pm-9pm @ Topper's Pizza</p> |  |
| <p>28</p> <p>8:30 am Worship Service<br/> 9:45 am Hospitality<br/> 10:00 am Sunday School<br/> 10:00 am Confirmation Class<br/> 11:00 am Worship Service<br/> 12:15 pm UMYF-Zone</p>   | <p>29</p> <p>11am Exercise with Avis-FC</p>   | <p>30</p> <p>6:30pm Handbell Practice<br/> 7pm Scouts-FC<br/> 7:30pm Handbell Ensemble Practice</p>  |  |



| Wednesday   | Thursday   | Friday  | Saturday   |
|---|--|---|--|
| <p>3</p> <p>11am Exercise with Avis-FC<br/>4:30pm Grief Support Group-MBC</p>   | <p>4</p>   | <p>5</p> <p>11am Exercise with Avis-FC</p>  | <p>6</p>   |
| <p>10</p> <p>11am Exercise with Avis-FC<br/>5:15pm Music Makers Practice<br/>5:45pm Wednesday Night Meal<br/>6:30pm Vespers<br/>6:30pm Pack 130 Den Meetings<br/>7pm Choir Practice</p>   | <p>11</p>  | <p>12</p> <p>11am Exercise with Avis-FC</p>   | <p>13</p>  |
| <p>17</p> <p>11am Exercise with Avis-FC<br/>4:30pm Grief Support Group-MBC<br/>5:15pm Music Makers Practice<br/>5:45pm Wednesday Night Meal<br/>6:30pm Vespers<br/>6:30pm Pack 130 Den Meetings<br/>7pm Choir Practice</p>                    | <p>18</p>  | <p>19</p> <p>11am Exercise with Avis-FC</p>   | <p>20</p> <p>9am-1pm<br/>Church Council Workshop<br/>(Fellowship Center)</p> |
| <p>24</p> <p><u>WEE SCHOOL PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES</u><br/>11am Exercise with Avis-FC<br/>5:15pm Music Makers Practice<br/>5:45pm Wednesday Night Meal<br/>6:30pm Vespers<br/>6:30pm Pack 130 Meeting-Sanctuary<br/>7pm Choir Practice</p> | <p>25</p> <p><u>WEE SCHOOL PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES</u><br/><u>Lunch Buddies:</u><br/>Calvary Church Organ Concert &amp; Lunch</p> | <p>26</p> <p>11am Exercise with Avis-FC<br/>11:30am W.E.E. School<br/>Early Dismissal</p> | <p>27</p>  |
| <p>31</p> <p>11am Exercise with Avis-FC<br/>4:30pm Grief Support Group-MBC<br/>5:15pm Music Makers Practice<br/>5:45pm Wednesday Night Meal<br/>6:30pm Vespers<br/>7pm Choir Practice</p>   | <p><b>JANUARY 2024</b></p>   |   |  |

# FORT MILL CARE CENTER

Care Center Sunday is January 28th

## **Current Needs:**

- \*Coffee \*Hot Cocoa \*Jelly and Jam \*Peanut Butter \*Liquid Dish Soap \*Cleaning wipes
- \*Shampoo \*Deodorant, \*Toilet Paper

***fortmillcarecenter.org***

**CARE CENTER ADDRESS: 2760 OLD NATION ROAD FORT MILL, SC 29715 (803) 547-7620**

**CARE CENTER HOURS: MON-WED-FRI 9AM - 12PM**

***THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!***

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**Karen H. Radcliffe, Pastor**  
**864-313-9348 (Cell)**  
**khradcliffe@umcsc.org**

- Robert E. (Bob) Romanello ..... Pastor Emeritus**
- Lisa Henley ..... Administrative Coordinator**
- Mallory Capps ..... Children and Youth Director**
- Beth Meador ..... W.E.E. School Director**
- Sharon Booth ..... Finance Coordinator**
- Jonathan Hall ..... Director of Music**
- Jessica Hall ..... Accompanist**
- Nancy Rivers ..... Handbell Director**
- Jennifer Isenhour ..... Music Leader-Vespers Service**
- Dawna Spilmann ..... Custodian**
- Suzanne Fisher ..... Kitchen Coordinator**
- Katherine Burns ..... Music Makers Director**
- Jemma Hardinger ..... Noteables Director**
- Lauren Meador ..... Nursery Worker**
- Abby Tate ..... Nursery Worker**

***THE VISION OF ST. JOHN'S UMC IS TO MAKE DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST BY REACHING OUT  
 TO GOD'S COMMUNITY THROUGH WORSHIP, WITNESS, NURTURE, AND SERVICE.***