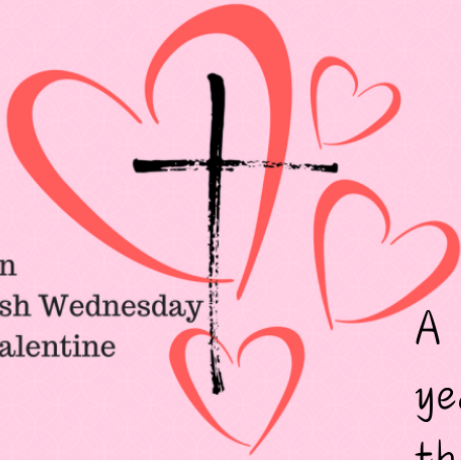


THE St. John's Post

February
2024
Edition



An
Ash Wednesday
Valentine

A Rare Collision On This Day

A rare event will be happening on February 14th this year. We will celebrate Valentine's Day but it will be the 1st day of Lent as well. Saint Valentine was an Italian, 3rd Century Roman Saint. Since the Middle Ages, his Saint Day has been associated with a tradition of courtly love. Saint Valentine is also known as the patron saint of Terni, epilepsy and beekeepers.

He was a bishop during the Roman Empire who ministered to persecuted Christians. Saint Valentine was martyred and his body was buried on February 14th. The Feast of Saint Valentine has been observed on this day since the eighth century. Today, most people only know about Cupid, the ancient Roman god of love, the little boy with a bow and arrow spreading love to everyone. Giving candy, flowers and sharing a meal with a significant person in your life has become a tradition.

This year, Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 14th and will continue for six weeks, ending on Holy Saturday. This is such a rare event that it has only happened five times in this century: 1923, 1934, 1945, 2024, and 2029.

Because this is such a rare event, I will use the cross symbol during the Imposition of Ashes, which reminds us of our mortality and penance for our sins. Also, this year, I will use the symbol of a heart that reminds us of God's unrelenting love for all through his son Jesus Christ.



So, on the night that so many of us are thinking about our love for one another, God is reminding us of the love that he always has for all of his children that is never failing and will never end. So, for Valentine's Day this year, would you consider celebrating on an earlier day, maybe Saturday, Sunday or Monday night? Then, you would be ready to come to celebrate Fat Tuesday with a delicious pancake supper in preparation for the beginning of Lent the next day. Lent is the season in which we face the reality of how much God loves us by giving us the gift of Easter.

Friends of St. John's, I invite you to come on Ash Wednesday and be a part of a rare collision where love and sacrifice make an offering of eternal life for all of God's children.

I look forward to seeing you in the only place you could be involved in a collision that offers eternal life.



Shalom, Karen



February Birthdays

February 1 *Eli Patterson*
Beverly Poissant
February 3 *Renee Howard*
February 5 *Ella Crocker*
Frank Gravely
February 6 *Billie Vaughn*
February 7 *Phoebe Howie*

February 8 *Brenda Ervin*
Matteo Natoli
February 10 *Hallie Conrad*
Gene Snyder
February 11 *Mary Johnson*
February 12 *Bailey Mitchell*
February 13 *Kathy Marakoff*
February 15 *Charlene Williams*
February 18 *Nancy Lerch*

February 20 *Greg Griffin*
February 22 *Karen Rowe*
Adriane Starnes
February 24 *Grea Quinn*
February 26 *Jim Harris*
Mary Ann Pinson
Jacob Siebert
February 27 *Mary Adkins*
Samuel Emelife
Jack Lyles

February Anniversaries

February 1
Johnny & Ronda Myers

February 9
Richard & Dawna Spilmann

February 27
Scott & Bethany Stone



CHURCH CALENDAR 2024

February

2/4-Communion Sunday (UMCOR)
2/6- Panera Spirit Night (W.E.E. School)
2/11-Scout Sunday
2/11- UWF Call to Prayer and Self-Denial (Philadelphia UMC)
2/13- Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner (FC) 5:30pm
2/14- Ash Wednesday Service (Sanctuary)- 7:00pm & Lent Devotion Starts
Lenten Bible Studies will be offered during this season in the morning and evening.

March

3/1-3/3- Confirmation Retreat (Hinton Rural Life Center)
3/3-Communion Sunday (Defend the Fatherless)
3/5- Abbott's Frozen Custard Spirit Night (W.E.E. School)
3/8 & 3/9- Scouts Pinewood Derby (FC) All Day
3/23- Parent's Day Out (1:30pm-3:30pm) for Foster Children of York County
3/24- Easter Egg Hunt (FC)- 3:30pm
3/28- Seder Meal- (FC) 6:30pm
3/31- Easter Sunday

April

4/1-4/5- Spring Break for Fort Mill Students
4/7- Communion Sunday (Confirmation Mission Project)
4/14- Spring Tea Party (FC)-12:30pm
4/15-VBS Registration opens to church members
4/19- W.E.E. School Spring Event (FC) - 5:30pm-7pm
4/22- VBS Registration opens to the public
4/28- Children & Youth Sunday-11:00am service only
4/29-5/1- Scholastic Book Fair

May

5/5- Communion Sunday (VBS)
5/8- Last Vespers of the Spring
5/12- Mother's Day (Epworth Offering)& Graduation Sunday (11:00am only)
5/23-W.E.E. School Graduation-Sanctuary-(9:30am, 10:15am, & 11:00am)
5/19 Confirmation Sunday-11:00am & Pentecost
5/31-Last day of school for Fort Mill students

CHURCH CALENDAR 2024

June

6/2-Communion Sunday (Kindness Weekend)
6/3- W.E.E. School Camps Begin
6/9 - 6/12- Annual Conference (Greenville, SC)
6/17-6/21- Vacation Bible School
6/15-6/22- Fort Mill Salkehatchie
6/16- Father's Day

July

7/7-Communion Sunday (Teacher Appreciation)
7/13-7/20- Fairfield Salkehatchie
7/24-7/27- Kindness Weekend
7/28- Blessing of the Teachers

August

8/4-Communion Sunday (Classroom Ready)
8/4- Blessing of the Backpacks, Promotion Sunday & Sunday School Kick-Off
8/8-First day of school for Fort Mill Students
8/26-8/29-W.E.E. School Teacher Work Week
8/29- Meet the Teacher (W.E.E. School)

September

9/1- Communion Sunday (Hope Laugh Play, Inc)
9/3- W.E.E. School Starts
9/11- Vespers will begin for the Fall
9/25-9/27- Leadership Institute (Kansas City, MO)

October

10/6- Communion Sunday (Children's Ministry Fund/ College Care Packages)
10/6-11/3- Stewardship Season
10/27- Trunk or Treat- 3:30pm

CHURCH CALENDAR 2024

November

11/3-Communion Sunday (Fort Mill Care Center) & All Saints Sunday

11/10- Stewardship Sunday

11/17-Veteran's Sunday

11/24- Harvest Sunday

December

12/1- Chrismon Service

12/8-Angel Tree Gifts Due

12/24- Christmas Eve- 4pm & 6pm (Communion to Pastor's Discretionary)

12/29- 10am service only (No hospitality or Sunday School)

Church Office Hours: Monday-Thursday: 8:30am-2:30pm

Friday: 8:30-12:00pm

Summer Hours: (Church office closed on Friday)-May 31st-August 30th.

Holidays the church office is closed: April 1st (Easter Monday);

May 27th (Memorial Day); July 4th (4th of July); September 2nd (Labor Day);

November 27th-29th (Thanksgiving); December 24th-December 27th (Christmas);

December 31st & January 1st (New Years)

January 2025

1/5-Epiphany Sunday, Communion Sunday (Children/Youth Summer Camps)

1/5-Epiphany Luncheon (FC) 12:15pm

Church Council Dreaming and Planning Session (TBD)

Wednesday Night Meal

DINNER BEGINS AT 5:45PM

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



February 7th

PORK LOIN, MASHED POTATOES,
GREEN BEANS & VALENTINE DESSERT



February 21st

TACO BAR, BLACK BEANS,
CORN SALAD & CINNAMON CHURROS

February 28th

CHICKEN & RICE CASSEROLE,
CARROTS, SALAD & DESSERT



Costs of meals:

Children 2 & under eat free (Children Age 3-8) \$6 (Age 9 - Adults) \$10
Family maximum - \$25

CHURCH MEMBERS NEEDING PRAYER: Marty Burns, Chip Heemsoth, Tom Turner, Brenda Little, Bethany Stone, Odell Pettus, JoAnn Becknell, Shawne Heeren, Liz Harris April Brown, Carolyn Griffin, Judy Helms, Carla Vowell, Kay Gibson, Peggy Powers, Bill Tilly, Margaret Bryson, Loyce Sutton, Rev. Bob Romanello, Sandra Wallace, Terry Kearns, H.F. Jackson, John & Mary Vaughan

FAMILY & FRIENDS NEEDING PRAYER:

Jean Aseret - mother of Phyllis Helms' friend
Psalm Brantley - child of family friend of Nancy Rivers
Rhonda Buckner - mother of Amber Boan
Barbara Carson - cousin of Bill Bagwell
James Henry Carlisle - brother of Rebecca Conant
Laura Cripe-Troop 130 Leader
Richard Edkins - son-in-law of Glen & Laura Lindsey
Ann Foster - former St. John's member
Jean Farmer & Brenda Thomason - mother & sister of Beverly Anderson
Tori Fulton - daughter of Nancy & Anthony Rivers
Ginger Griffin - daughter of George Rhinehardt
Jerry Hunter, Sr. - brother-in-law of Billie Vaughn
Lincoln Johnson - great-grandson of Sandra Wallace
Nancy Jerrols - sister of Ellie Davies
Melanie Lee - daughter of John & Sherry Ede
Jo-Ann Meece- sister of Janet Tracey
Cathy Maynard- sister of Nancy Rivers
Daniel & Judy Murr - cousins of Phyllis Helms
Kara Mitchell - sister/sister-in-law of Marty & Katherine Burns
Bernice O'Rourke - mother-in-law of Heather Taylor
Jim Patterson - brother-in-law of David Rowland & uncle of Barri Helms
Deloris Rouse - mother of Kenny Rouse
George Reeves - father of Nancy Neal
Revé Richardson - mother of Kristen Richardson-Frick
Eddie Ryman - mother of Dawna Spilmann
Lee Starnes & Matthew Starnes- grandsons of Brenda Stowe
David Secondino - husband of Sharon Booth (Finance Coordinator)
Travis Stutts - son-in-law of Joan Pate & Jim Wolfe
Jeff Stuck - son-in-law of Martha Jones
Rheanon Thomas - sister of Bethany Stone
Margaret Therrell - mother of Sherri Bivins
Sandy Vinson - sister of Margaret Bryson
Barbara Williams - sister of Janet Tracey
Juanita Williams - mother of Ricky Williams
Bert Williams - father of Ricky Williams
Price Yount - brother of Chris Yount

Memorials/Honorariums/Christian Sympathy

In Loving Memory of Ida "Tootsie" Massey by her children & grandchildren

In Loving Memory of Carrie "Polly" Collins by Charles & Ellen Bryan
James & Joyce Kimbrell
John & Renee Howard

In Loving Memory of Tom Vinson, Charlie Powers & Lois Thomas
by John & Renee Howard

In Loving Memory of Rosanne Spinelli & Frances Jackson by Karen Vinson

In Loving Memory of Jesse & Thelma Hord by David & Annie Hord

**SPECIAL DONATIONS TO:
THE DEBI EDMONDSON
SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

by

James & Joyce Kimbrell

In Honor of New Wesley Fellowship

by John & Renee Howard

**We extend our Christian Sympathy
to the family of Rosanne Spinelli
(niece of Connie & Bob Gunsch)
who passed away December 30, 2023**

**We extend our Christian Sympathy
to the family of Mariann Kling
(mother of Kathy Marakoff)
who passed away January 7, 2024**

**We extend our Christian Sympathy
to the family of Avis Gibson
(sister-in-law of Kay Gibson &
Peggy Powers) who passed away
January 9, 2024**

In Honor of Karen Vinson

by John & Renee Howard

In Honor of Loyce Sutton

by Davin & Emily McQuay

In Honor of Lauren Meador

by Bryan & Beth Meador

NEED TO KNOW

Lunch Buddies

Tuesday, February 20 the Lunch Buddies will return to Blue Bar & Smokehouse at 1500 Fort Mill Parkway #111, Fort Mill, 29715. We have enjoyed previous meals there & are looking forward to more great food & fellowship!
Join us at 11:30am.
Sign up on REALM or in the Communication Center by Sunday, February 18th.

Networking Email:

stjohnsfm.network@gmail.com

Exercise with Avis:

Mon-Wed-Fri 11:00 am - 11:30 am
in the Fellowship Center

Upcoming Meetings

February 11

12:15pm-FC

Special Called

Church Council Meeting

February 18

12:15pm-Loft

Stewardship Committee Meeting

February 25

12:15pm-MBC

Finance Committee

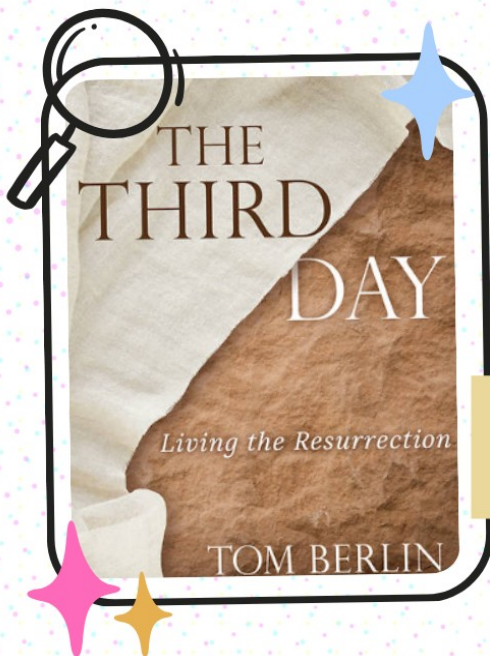
Meeting

February 26

6:30pm-MBC

Education Committee Meeting

*Sign up on REALM or in the Communication Center to participate in a session



Use this QR code to order your book.



If you prefer, books can be ordered at the Cokesbury website at www.cokesbury.com

Cost of the book is \$13.49 + tax

Lent Bible Study

Thursdays: February 15, February 22, February 29

March 7, March 14, March 21

Morning Session @ 10am (Loft) Barbara Gaither-Leader

Evening Session @ 6:30pm (Loft) Lise Turner-Leader

Salkehatchie Regional Gathering

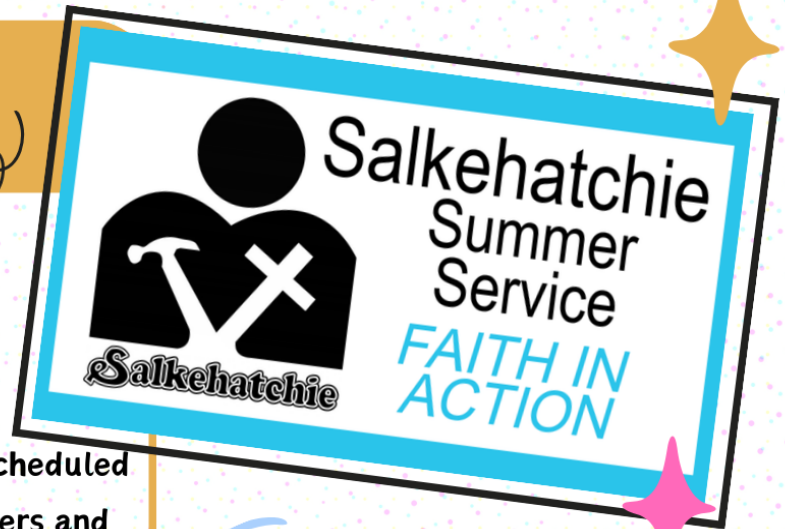
Saturday, February 3, 2024 @
St. John's UMC-Fort Mill
12pm-5pm - Fellowship Center

Salkehatchie Summer Service leaders have scheduled a series of regional gatherings to give campers and camp leaders a chance to get to know others from around the South Carolina Conference. This regional gathering will provide an opportunity, close to home, to fellowship with Salkehatchie friends, meet and learn from folks who participate in other Salkehatchie camps & share Salkehatchie stories with other interested youth and adults.

These regional gatherings are designed to increase interest and excitement as Salkehatchie camps across the state progress toward registration in March 2024.

*Please join us here at St. John's on February 3rd as we host the Rock Hill district event.

All are invited! Bring a friend to learn about Salkehatchie so we can bring awareness to Faith in Action!



February Grief Support Group

February 14
February 28

Meetings begin
@ 4:30pm
in the
Men's Bible
Classroom

contact Frieda Price for
questions @
friedaprice@comporium.net

ASH WEDNESDAY

Ash Wednesday Worship Service
February 14 @ 7pm
in the Sanctuary

WEE School Spirit/Fundraiser Night
Panera Bread-Kingsley Fort Mill
February 6th
4pm-8pm

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner
February 13th @ 5:30pm
Fellowship Center

Bible Quiz:

by Rev. Bob Romanello

In Chapter 15 of the Gospel of Luke we find Jesus teaching using three parables: “The Lost Sheep” “The Lost Coin” and “The Lost Son” which is more often called “The Prodigal Son”.

I find it interesting that author Charles Dickens, who wrote “A Christmas Carol” once proclaimed “The Prodigal Son” to be the best short story ever written. We all are very familiar with this parable.

My question for you is “After the son had lost everything and returned repentant to the father, what four things did the father ask the servants to do?” You may check your answer in Luke 15:22.

Side note: I was once asked to speak at a home for homeless men. As I walked to the podium, there was a note pasted there that said, “Do not preach on The Prodigal Son.”

THANK YOU!

Thank you for all the cards and letters we have received from Sunday School Class and various congregants. John and I have appreciated being remembered. Thank you too, all of you who were responsible, for the lovely surprise "sunshine" box full of goodies. We miss the church and all of the wonderful friends we made there. Please forgive me for not having sent Christmas cards this year. Between the church and our Senior center, there are just too many to send to. I certainly thought of all of you and said a prayer of blessing for the church.

With much appreciation and gratitude,
John & Sharon Ede

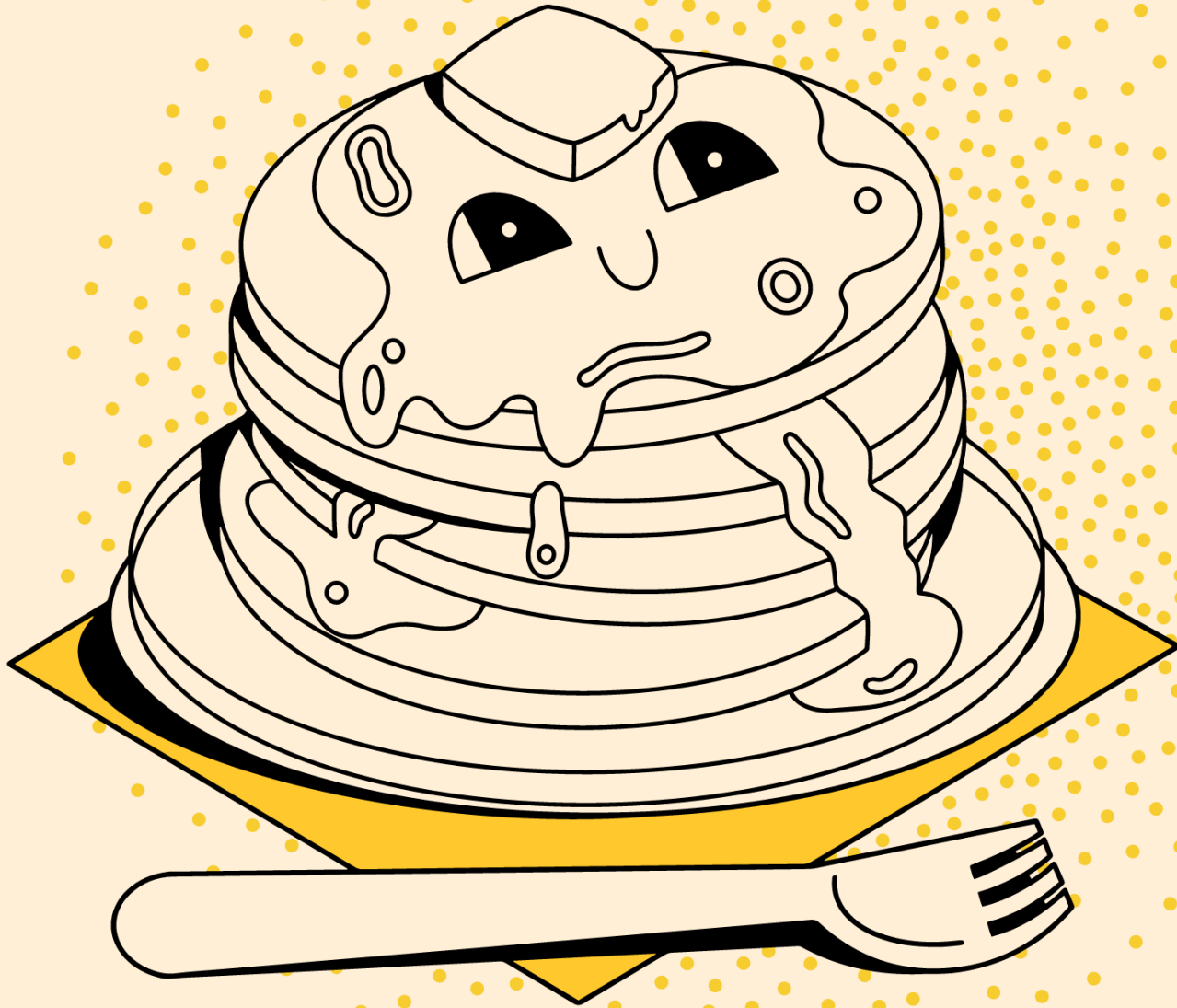
Welcome to St. John's



Mrs. Ann Kempka
1163 Traditions Drive
Apt 108
Fort Mill, SC 29715

*joined December 10, 2023

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner

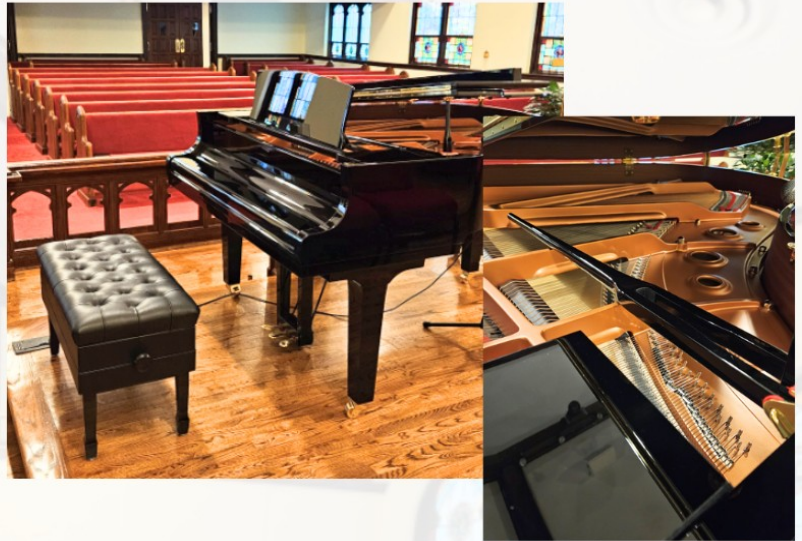


**ALL DONATIONS GO TO SALKEHATCHIE
SUMMER SERVICE!!**

5:30- 7:00 PM

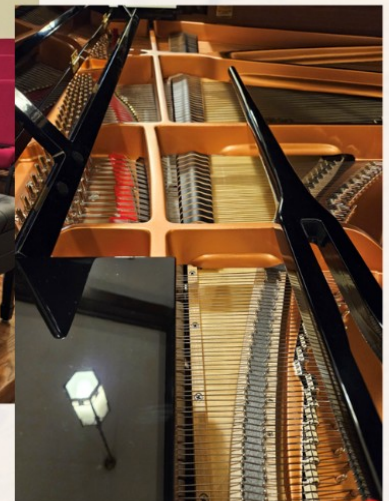
FEBRUARY 13, 2024

Music Department News!



Our most exciting news for this month: The piano has arrived!
We are excited to have our new piano in the sanctuary. This instrument will last many years and serve as a vital part of worship. Thank you to everyone who contributed toward this project and those who joined our church family in prayer for the new instrument.

As we approach spring, the music ministry areas have begun rehearsals again. The adult choir is working on their Easter cantata, which will be presented on Easter Sunday during both morning worship services.



Dr. Jonathan Hall, Music Director



Education Committee

YOU ARE WANTED AND NEEDED!



You are wanted and needed in Sunday School!

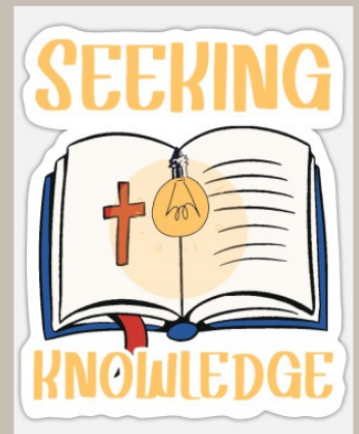
Have you ever heard it said that “God wants a relationship with you”? He does. Think about your relationships with family and friends. It takes spending time together to build and grow a relationship. At St. John’s you have many options to build relationships with one another and with God. I believe that Sunday School is a very effective relationship builder. With six (Yes, that’s right!), six adult Sunday School

classes there are several options from which you can choose. We currently have four Sunday School classes for our children and youth, plus a nursery. We have enough children at this church to have more classes for them, if we get them to attend Sunday School. (Of course, more classes will require more teachers and assistants.)

I learned at our 2024 Church Dreaming and Planning Retreat that we have almost 1,000 professing members. That is fantastic! But it makes me wonder where everyone is when our attendance at Sunday School rarely reaches 100.

You are wanted and needed on the Education Team!!!

A new year brings a feeling of new beginnings. I am beginning a term as Education Lead. There is a need for members on the Education committee to help us develop our educational programs here at St. John’s - Sunday School, Bible studies, planning for recognition and appreciation of our Sunday School teachers, assisting in finding additional teachers and substitutes, etc. If you are interested in this team, please, let me know - speak to me at church, email me at nriversnc@gmail.com, or call or text me at 919-618-1156.



We will have our first meeting on Monday, February 26 at 6:30 in the Men’s Bible Study classroom. You are wanted and needed!

Nancy Rivers, Education Lead

*“Train up a child in the way he should go:
and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”
Proverbs 22:6*

UMM

United Methodist Men



IDEAS WELCOME!

I would love to get some feedback from the congregation regarding activities that UMM should consider sponsoring in 2024. My goal is to update the church calendar regarding UMM events for the year with some of your ideas!

If you have any comments or questions regarding St. John's United Methodist Men, please feel free to contact me at (803) 389-3952 or Steve.Siebert@Domtar.com

JOIN US!

We are gearing up to plan some very special events this year! UMM will be having a meeting this month so be on the lookout for that date coming soon! As always, I would encourage all men of the church to consider attending a United Methodist Men's event this year. The upcoming season of Lent would be an ideal opportunity for any of you to consider joining our group.

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

JESUS SAID TO THEM,
"I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE;
WHOEVER COMES TO ME
—SHALL NOT HUNGER,—
AND WHOEVER BELIEVES IN ME
SHALL NEVER THIRST."

John 6:35

GO, EAT YOUR
BREAD WITH
ENJOYMENT,...FOR
GOD HAS
LONG APPROVED
WHAT YOU DO.
ECCLESIASTES 9:7

Thanks to all who attended our Epiphany luncheon and helped us recognize the work of our special mission awardees: Jeff Lerch, Darren Edwards, and Joy Honeycutt. Special thanks to our chef, Scott Gainey, who as always provided a wonderful meal and to Nancy Stark, who provided our delicious dessert.

ALL WOMEN OF THE CHURCH ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY OF OUR ACTIVITIES.

Our Circle meeting programs in 2024 follow the theme, "Food, Faith and Fellowship." From talking about communion and living water to the harder discussions about food deserts and food justice, each month's meeting will be an opportunity to learn and celebrate with our sisters in faith. Please check the calendar each month for meeting dates and times for the Clara Phillips and Morning Glory Circles - and look for an announcement about another Circle coming soon!

We will be observing the annual Call to Prayer and Self-Denial with our hosts at Philadelphia United Methodist Church at 2:00 on Sunday, February 11. The program and fellowship time will end before 3:30. This is a wonderful opportunity to start our preparation for Lent, which begins the following Wednesday. Please bring an item from nature for the altar table that day. The offering collected will be combined with those from other Units around the world to further the work of United Women in Faith.

It's not too soon to mark your calendar for Saturday March 16, when we host the Day Apart with friends from the entire District - an opportunity to highlight our facilities (new piano!) and our members.

With prayers for each one reading this,
Barbara Gaither, UWF President

Stewardship Committee News



#1

3 BIG IDEAS OF CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP OF OUR MONEY

WE ARE FREE WHEN WE ARE FAITHFUL STEWARDS

But first we must ask ourselves, “Are we a faithful steward?”
“Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 6:21)

Jesus is saying to us that our hearts follow where we put our treasure. Therefore, we can't be called faithful if our hearts are not following Jesus' commands regarding the treasure he has given us. So we must let our love of God, and our gratitude to God for how he has blessed us, foster in us a self-discipline that will serve us in becoming a faithful steward. A faithful steward is one who manages his/her finances with a view toward pleasing God.

If you've been working harder and longer to maintain a certain lifestyle, then you know that serving money doesn't lead to freedom. Money is a harsh task master. Remember, Jesus' burden is easy and his yoke is light. (Matthew 11:28 - 30).

The faithful steward understands and acts on the core truths of scripture about finances:

1. God created and owns everything (Genesis 1:1; Colossians 1:16)
2. God is the source of every gift that we have been given (James 1:17)
3. Everything we have are gifts from God and we manage these gifts for a limited time (Luke 15:20; 1 Timothy 6:7)
4. God will hold us accountable for how we manage his gifts to us (Romans 14:12)
5. We must choose between serving God and serving money (Matthew 6:19-24)

*In the March Newsletter, we will look at Big Idea #2
submitted by Martha Jones, Co-Chair

W.E.E. School News!

www.sjumcweeschool.org

Beth Meador, Director

sjumcweeschool@gmail.com



2024-2025 REGISTRATION

It is hard to believe that it is already February and we are over halfway through this school year. It has been a blessing to open our doors each day to our WEE School children and families. Registration is currently underway for the 2024-2025 school year and we are excited for all of the new families that will be joining our W.E.E. School family in September.



MARCH

In March, we will be holding a canned good/toiletries drive for the Fort Mill Care Center to help those in need in our community. We have a wonderful group of parent volunteers who are working on celebrating our staff the week of March 18th for Teacher Appreciation Week.



APRIL

Our big event of the year for our W.E.E. School families will be on April 19th from 5:30-7:00pm. Join us for an evening of "barnyard" fun, which will include games for the children and concessions. This event is open to everyone; we would love to have you join us for an evening of family fun. More information coming soon.

MAY

May brings us to our final month of preschool. Our Scholastic Book Fair will be held April 29-May 3rd in the Fellowship Center and will be open during Vespers and Wednesday night meal. We will celebrate our parents during Pastries for Parents, the children have their spring program and our 4 year olds will have their graduation ceremony.



As always, thank you for your support of our preschool program and we ask for continued prayers as we move through the last four months of the school year.

SPIRIT NIGHTS

Mark your calendars for our upcoming Spirit/Fundraising events:

- *February 6th 4-8pm
Panera Kingsley
- *March 5th 3-7pm
Abbott's Custard
Tega Cay
- *April 23rd 4-8pm
Super Chix Fort Mill

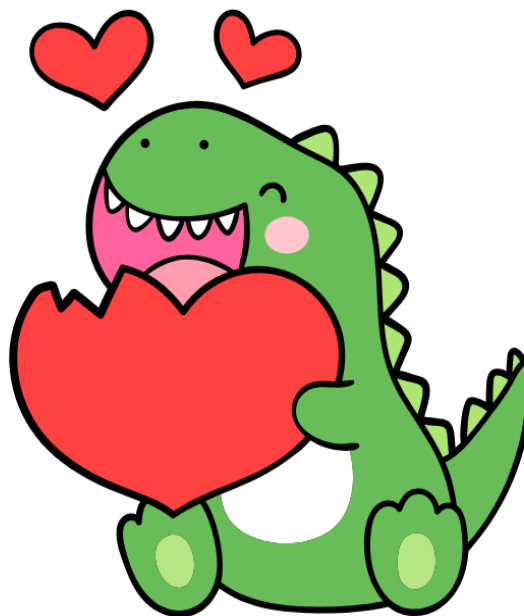


February 2024

Children and Youth News

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

2024 is off to a great start!!!! We have begun meeting again for REAL Kids and UMYF. Our Confirmation class is progressing and we are having such a good time working on this process! Please remember to join us for Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner on February 13th at 5:30pm. All proceeds will go to Salkehatchie Summer Service Project!!



UPCOMING EVENTS COME JOIN US!

REAL Kids will be February 4th & 18th directly following the 11 am service. This is open for all children Kindergarten- 5th grade!

UMYF will be on February 4th, 11th, 18th, & 25th at 4:00pm-5:30pm.

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



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 on April 15th for church members and April 22nd for the public! More information to come!

LILY LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

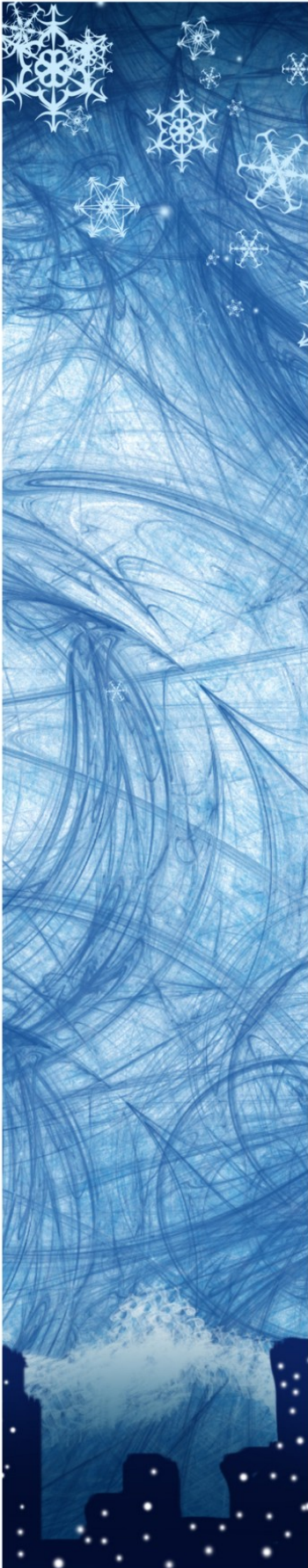
Many people recall childhood as a time of safety and comfort when mom or dad took care of everything. Eighteen-year-old Lily carries starkly different memories of childhood.

“My dad was hugely addicted to alcohol,” Lily said. “He would promise to work and pay the bills, and he’d have a job for a couple of weeks, but then he would quit or get fired and use most of the money he’d made on weed and alcohol.”

Lily’s childhood was also shaped by the chaos and trauma of homelessness. Her family moved from a northern state to South Carolina when she was 8 years old. In SC, she attended school for a few months until eviction forced her to enroll in a different school. This happened repeatedly. Sometimes the family stayed in a motel, other times with acquaintances or in a shelter. In the last home the family lived in, the water heater barely worked and didn’t produce enough warm water for Lily and her brother to take regular baths or wash clothes. Lily remembers going to school in dirty clothing and being bullied by other children as a result. She was a very bright child, but by seventh grade, she was failing most of her classes.

One day the principal pulled her and her brother out of class to introduce them to social workers with the S.C. Department of Social Services. “I knew right away that they were taking us,” Lily said. “I was anxious thinking about having to live with other kids, and it was scary going somewhere unfamiliar.” Still, she remembers the first night she arrived at Epworth, the sheer relief she felt at finally being able to take a shower and change into clean clothing. When she was assigned a roommate, the girls found they had much in common and became best friends.

When Lily started 8th grade, girls in her cottage introduced her to other kids at her new school. For the first time, Lily began looking forward to going to school. She also spent time each week with tutors at Epworth’s on-campus Barnes Learning Center. Her grades improved. “When Lily came as a middle school student, she was





LILY LOOKS TO THE FUTURE, CON'T.....

quiet and reserved as many children are in a new environment,” recalls Barnes Learning Center Director Christy Mooneyhan. “As she built relationships, her personality began to flourish. I enjoyed days where she would simply stop by my office to say hello or to talk. I knew she felt at home when she would share her frustrations with me and then listen as I offered suggestions or advice.”

Once after she moved to Epworth, Lily’s mom came to see her on family visitation day. “It was really good to see her...but that was the last time I saw her,” Lily said. “Right after that, she moved out of state and never came to a family day again.” The same is true of her dad – Lily has seen him only once since being removed from the family home. “I kind of knew I was never going home,” she said.

As the years passed, Lily made her way through high school. Neither of Lily’s parents had graduated from high school, and Lily had always assumed that she wouldn’t graduate either. But she focused on doing the best she could each day. “I learned to push through hard moments by staying within the day, within the moment,” Lily said.

She graduated from high school last year, the first person in her family to do so. Not only did she earn her diploma, she earned a special certification in business, even while holding a part-time job to earn spending money. “I feel like had I not been taken into care and ended up at Epworth, I would never have made it, never graduated,” she said.

Lily has since moved into Epworth’s Independent Living Center, which is a supportive housing program for young adults who’ve aged out of the foster care system. “Lily worked very hard to earn the business certificate, and I was happy when she decided to apply for our Independent Living Center program,” Christy Mooneyhan said. “She has the ability to achieve anything she sets her mind to, and I believe the encouragement, guidance and support she continues to receive there will allow her to achieve her goals and set her up for success.”

Today, Lily continues to work part-time to save for a car. She just started taking classes at Midlands Tech and hopes to become an early childhood educator. “I’d like to one day work with kids in foster care or at a place like Epworth, helping kids who are in the same situation I was in,” Lily said.

submitted by Katherine Burns, Epworth Representative

Missions Committee

submitted by Shawne Heeren, Committee Chair

Fort Mill Care Center

Fort Mill Care Center needs pancake syrup, grits, jams and jellies.

In 2023, FMCC distributed over 250,000 pounds of food and hygiene items.



They were able to fill 2,071 request for our communities needs, WOW!

Care Center Hours:

M-W-F 9am-12pm
TUESDAY EVENINGS
5pm-7pm

Glasses for Nicaragua

We collected 75 pairs of glasses to go with Kim to Nicaragua. Thank you to Pastor Bob and Kim for the idea.



Foster Parent's Day Out

We would love more volunteers for Foster Care Parent's Day out happening **March 23rd. Just two hours, 1:30pm-3:30pm.** Please sign up if you are available! 😊 Thank you!



Defend the Fatherless

THANK YOU! To St. John's for all of your wonderful assistance and support.

See below a Facebook post from Defend the Fatherless regarding our coat drive in November:

"There are some super special folks over at St John's UMC Fort Mill who show such love for local vulnerable children. Time and time again this congregation has responded to our needs in BIG ways to make sure Defend the Fatherless is equipped to fulfill our mission.

Thank you for holding a recent drive for winter coats to keep the York County Foster Care Closet stocked and ready for children in York and surrounding counties!"

February Prayer

For this I send my prayers to the Lord and give thanks. Oh, Heavenly Father, thank You for the life You have breathed into the church. Thank You for all the people it represents and the people who mean so much to me. Amen

Bethel Shelters



On January 15th, a wonderful group of volunteers went to Bethel Day Shelter and completely packed the WHOLE closet. The Day Shelter is getting a new roof with an inside fire prevention sprinkler system. The Day Shelter will have beds in the future, and therefore the building is being brought up to code for overnight guests. Currently, the Men's night shelter has 92 men every night. The women's shelter, Pathways, sleeps 42 women every night. Last Tuesday when the rains and high winds went through our area.... the Day shelter had a 137 men and women in attendance.

Shelter Needs:

Travel Size: shampoo, bars of soap, deodorant, shaving cream, disposable razors, Chapstick, small Kleenex packets, feminine hygiene products. Men and Women sweat shirts and pants: S, M, L, XX-L, XXX-L
Men's briefs: S, M, L, X-L

Missions Committee

Betty's Blessings

Betty's Blessings finally arrived in El Salvador January 9th. Hooray! Please look at the pics to see if you can recognize your garment. It took 40 days travel time from when the garments were mailed to arrive at the PICK-UP station. Patience is not my cup of tea!!! 😊 But the children were very excited to have a dress (or pair of shorts) to pick out.



Sunday

Monday

Tuesday



4 Communion Sunday-UMCOR

8:30 am Worship Service
9:45 am Hospitality
10:00 am Sunday School
10:00 am Confirmation Class
11:00 am Worship Service
12:15 pm REAL Kids-FC
4:00 pm UMYF-Zone

5

9am WEE School Public Registration
11am Exercise with Avis-FC
7pm Book Club-MBC

6

9am WEE School Public Registration
6:30pm Handbell practice
7pm Scouts-FC
7:30pm Handbell Ensemble Practice
WEE School Spirit Night @ Panera
4pm-8pm

11 Transfiguration Sunday

8:30 am Worship Service
9:45 am Hospitality
10:00 am Sunday School
10:00 am Confirmation Class
11:00 am Worship Service
12:15 pm Special Called Council Mtg.-FC
2:00 pm UWF Call to Prayer & Self Denial
Philadelphia UMC
4:00 pm UMYF-Zone

12

11am Exercise with Avis-FC
5pm Clara Phillips Circle Meeting

13 Shrove Tuesday

10:30am Morning Glory Circle-MBC
5:30pm Shrove Tuesday Dinner-FC
6:30pm Handbell Practice
7:30pm Handbell Ensemble Practice

18 1st Sunday in Lent

8:30 am Worship Service
9:45 am Hospitality
10:00 am Sunday School
10:00 am Confirmation Class
11:00 am Worship Service
12:15 pm REAL Kids-FC
12:15 pm Stewardship Comm. Meeting-Loft
4:00 pm UMYF-Zone

19 President's Day

11am Exercise with Avis-FC



20

6:30pm Handbell Practice
7pm Scouts-FC
7:30pm Handbell Ensemble Practice

25

8:30 am Worship Service
9:45 am Hospitality
10:00 am Sunday School
10:00 am Confirmation Class
11:00 am Worship Service
12:15 pm Finance Comm. Meeting-MBC
4:00 pm UMYF-Zone

26

11am Exercise with Avis-FC
6:30pm Education Comm. Mtg.-MBC

27

6:30pm Handbell Practice
7pm Scouts-FC
7:30pm Handbell Ensemble Practice

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 11am Exercise with Avis-FC	3 Salkehatchie Event Rock Hill District Gathering 12pm - 5pm Fellowship Center
7 11am Exercise with Avis-FC 5:15pm Music Makers Practice 5:45pm Wednesday Night Meal 6:30pm Vespers 6:30pm Pack 130 Den Meetings 7pm Choir Practice	8	9 11am Exercise with Avis-FC	10 York District OA Leadership Development & Banquet - FC All Day Event
14 Ash Wednesday 11am Exercise with Avis-FC 4:30pm Grief Support Group-MBC 7pm Worship Service NO MEAL/NO MUSIC PRACTICES	15 10am Bible Study-Loft 6:30pm Bible Study-Loft	16 11am Exercise with Avis-FC	17
21 11am Exercise with Avis-FC 5:15pm Music Makers Practice 5:45pm Wednesday Night Meal 6:30pm Vespers 7pm Choir Practice	22 10am Bible Study-Loft 6:30pm Bible Study-Loft	23 11am Exercise with Avis-FC	24
28 11am Exercise with Avis-FC 4:30pm Grief Support Group-MBC 5:15pm Music Makers Practice 5:45pm Wednesday Night Meal 6:30pm Vespers 6:30pm Pack 130 Meeting-Sanctuary 7pm Choir Practice	29 10am Bible Study-Loft 6:30pm Bible Study-Loft		



FORT MILL CARE CENTER

Care Center Sunday is February 25th

Current Needs:

*Pancake Syrup*Jelly and Jam *Grits

fortmillcarecenter.org

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

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

TUESDAY EVENINGS 5PM-7PM

EXCEPT HOLIDAYS

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

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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.***