



# NEWSLetter

July 2024

Moncks Corner United Methodist Church

*Proclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord to our community and to the world through worship, mission, discipleship, and service to others.*

## Message from the PASTOR

*I am using information from my sermon from June 16. For those of you who heard the sermon directly, please remember that the good news of Jesus Christ never gets old. For those who are hearing this for the first time, may the Holy Spirit fill you with the Word of God for the people of God. Amen.*

Back when the Old West was being settled, pioneers flocked across the country to California and Oregon. In one particular spot on the Eastern slopes of the Rockies there was a large, dirt-covered rock protruding in the middle of the trail. Wagon wheels were broken on it and men tripped over it. Finally, someone dug up the odd stone and rolled it off the trail into a nearby stream. The stream was too wide to jump over, but people used the stone as a step to cross the cold creek.

It was used for years, until finally one settler built his cabin near the stream.

He moved the odd stone out of the stream and placed it in his cabin to serve as a doorstep. Well, the old settler's grandson went East to study geology. On a visit to his grandfather's cabin, the grandson happened to examine the old lump of stone and discovered within that lump of dirt and rock was the largest pure gold nugget ever discovered on the Eastern slope of the Rockies. It had been there for three generations, and people never recognized its value. To some it was a stumbling stone to be removed. To others it was a stepping-stone, and to others it was just a heavy rock, but only the grandson saw it for what it really was—a lump of pure gold.

We can be stumbling stones in God's ministry. We are stumbling stones when our focus is diverted away from proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ, to something we believe is more important like attitudes, self-righteousness, and money. Jesus is either a stepping-stone that gives you access to God, or He is a rock over which you stumble...so close and yet so far. Let's continue to use Jesus as our stepping stone in the path we walk in our daily lives.

Peace,

Rev. Randall Haase, Pastor

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

### **WOMEN in Mission (WIM)**

Fourth Monday every month 5pm

### **PRAISE Team**

Every Monday at 6pm

### **United Methodist MEN (UMM)**

July 14th at 9am.

### **Finance COMMITTEE**

July 15th at 6pm

### **Feed BERKELEY**

June 28th at noon & 29th at 8:30am

### **CHURCH Council (OPEN to ALL)**

July 29th at 6pm

### **Meeting with SC UMC**

July 29th at 6pm

### **Salkahatchie**

July 6-13 - More details to follow!!!

## **FireLight VBS Thanks You!**

Thank you so much for your dedication and commitment to our Vacation Bible School. Through your kindness and generosity we were able to provide a fun-filled week of games, crafts, music and time spent deepening the faith of over 40 children. The smiles, the excitement and the joy brought to these children this week shows your love and commitment to MCUMC. Each of you shined and we are so very lucky to have you! - Molly

# GENERAL CONFERENCE



Delegates to the postponed 2020 General Conference of The United Methodist Church, meeting April 23-May 3, 2024, adopted several changes to the denomination's Book of Discipline and its Social Principles regarding human sexuality. It is important that South Carolina United Methodists know what has changed and what hasn't.

## **What has changed**

The General Conference removed restrictive language in The Book of Discipline pertaining to human sexuality.

## **What has not changed**

The General Conference did not add any language requiring local churches or pastors to host or preside over same-sex weddings and did not add any language requiring annual conferences and boards of ordained ministry to commission or ordain openly gay candidates for ministry.

## **What this means for the local church**

- ◆ Local churches can choose to open their sanctuary for a same-sex wedding, but they are not required to do so.
- ◆ Pastors can choose to officiate a same-sex wedding, but they are not required to do so.
- ◆ Bishops will continue to make appointments, in consultation with local church leaders, to ensure the best pastoral leadership for the church's ministry context.

May 2024

## **IMPORTANT MEETING:**

On Monday, July 29 at 6:00pm in the fellowship hall, a representative of the South Carolina United Methodist Conference will join us to share information about the decisions made by the General Conference and how those decisions may affect our church.

If you have an interest in the future of our church, please consider attending this important meeting.

# Finance COMMITTEE

Our financial situation at Moncks Corner United Methodist Church has been deteriorating steadily over the last few years. We have reached the point where we need to be making and acting on some tough decisions.

Weekly, we usually have between 60 and 80 parishioners in worship service. We have experienced a drop in attendance over the last several years. Over time, incremental changes to a variety of factors, like those listed below, have resulted in significant declines in attendance.

- Series of pastors that were not a good match for our congregation
- Poor handling of the Covid crisis
- An aging congregation (members passing away or physically unable to attend/participate in church activities)
- Uncertainty surrounding the position of the National United Methodist Church has driven some of our congregation to transfer to other denominations

Our low attendance has a direct relationship to our poor financial position. Our monthly receipt of tithes and offerings is normally less than \$30,000 per month. Our monthly expenses average over \$37,000. In short, our church is struggling to survive. Below is the financial status of our church over the last two years.

	<b>Annual Income</b>	<b>Annual Expense</b>	<b>Variance</b>
<b>2022</b>	\$388,498.16	\$404,886.71	(\$16,388.55)
<b>2023</b>	\$412,633.44	\$441,764.53	(\$29,131.09)

Through April of 2024 our income was \$119,870.87 and our expenses were \$150,302.00, resulting in a deficit of \$30,431.13. Projecting similar results for the rest of 2024 would lead to an annual deficit of over \$90,000.

No church or any organization can survive with a financial outlook like this. We must address our church's financial imbalance to stay solvent and to meet the spiritual needs of our parishioners and our community. There are two ways to bring about a financial balance:

- On the giving side, our congregation is very generous, but there are not enough regular attendees to accomplish a significant increase. Meanwhile, we are currently evaluating other income sources.
- On the spending side, every area is on the table as we look for ways to reduce expenses to balance our budget.

Our three largest areas of spending are Salaries to Staff, Apportionments to the General Church, and Trustees related expenses for utilities and property upkeep. These three account for 89% of our annual budget; therefore, could provide the greatest opportunities to reduce spending. Reductions in other program related costs aren't significant enough to cover the deficits we are facing. Below are actions that Council approved on June 18, 2024:

- Trustees are looking at raising insurance deductibles to reduce premiums, holding off on maintenance projects, and disposing of some buses that we no longer use.
- SPRC is looking at hiring a part-time youth director in lieu of a full-time position.
- All committee chairs are being asked to review their budgets and cut where they can.
- A letter is being sent to the SC Conference asking for a re-evaluation of the formula for our church's apportionments, and a reduction in our monthly allotment from almost \$6,000 to \$2,500 a month until we can get our finances back on track. When our circumstances improve, we could consider increasing our apportionments.
- Apportionments will be cut to \$2,500, effective immediately.

These are tough times. Unfortunately, we are experiencing financial unrest when the United Methodist Church is going through a period of change, but we must have faith that we will overcome these struggles and be the prosperous vibrant church we once were. If you have any suggestions about how we can improve our financial situation, we encourage you to share them with a member of Church Council. We ask you to join us in praying for our church that we may continue to seek God's guidance and direction as we serve Him and care for His people.

## Congregational CARE Team:

The Congregational Care Team sent end-of-year cards to a total of 14 college students, including those who have very recently graduated and those who remain in school pursuing a degree. Each student received a \$25.00 Chick-Fil-A gift certificate as well.

We have lost two longtime members recently. Radford Bates passed away on June 8th and Chris McLaurin passed away on June 10th. Many thanks to Bernona Rodgers for organizing a meal for the Bates family on June 12th. The meal for the McLaurin family was the following day so many of our cooks and helpers were pressed into service two days in a row. Both of the families were grateful for the kindness extended to them.

## May 2024 FINANCIAL

### Summary

May Receipts: +\$27,397.06

May Disbursements: -\$26,175.18

*Giving tithes and offerings with hope for how God will use it is sowing to the Spirit, and this hopeful giving empowers the Church to collectively sow to the Spirit as it does good.*

### MCUMC Staff:

Rev. Randall Haase

VACANT Position

VACANT Position

Molly Purvis

Bubba High

Mary Miller

Lori Glover

Mike Holtsclaw

Bobby Rozier

VACANT Position

Senior Pastor

Youth Director

Secretary

Children's Ministries

Director of Music

Custodian

Financial Secretary

Maintenance

Grounds Maintenance

Nursery

## We NEED School Supplies:

The Missions Team is gearing up to collect school supplies for the book bags for the next few weeks. It's hard to believe that school supplies are already in stores! We have gotten input from teachers in the past and some of their requests are more specific because certain brands last longer and are easier for children to handle.

### Here is the list of supplies that are needed:

- 24 pack of Crayola crayons
- Ticonderonga pencils
- Glue sticks (.21 oz size)
- Zipper Pencil pouches
- Marble type Composition notebooks
- Scissors
- Bar erasers
- 3-prong folders
- Notebook paper
- Liquid glue (4 oz bottles)

There will be boxes in the church office and foyer to sanctuary to put the supplies in during the month of July.

Missions has also discussed initiating a mission later this year with Undue Medical Debt who purchases and forgives the medical debts of those whose income is 4 times the federal poverty limit or less or whose medical debts are 5% or more of their annual income. The longest a campaign can run is for four months so look for more information as the Missions Team looks for the best block of time for our campaign.

# Salkehatchie CAMP

July 6-13

Camp will be upon us in no time at all – our campers arrive on Saturday, July 6 and will stay on our campus until Saturday, July 13. We have 22 campers this year, so two homes have been selected as work sites. We have many returning workers from previous years, as well as some new faces who will be experiencing Salkehatchie for the first time.

We have two things to ask the congregation to do for us. First, we will have a covered dish dinner on Sunday, July 7 following the worship service. We will purchase chicken as a main dish; we need for you to bring a vegetable or a side dish of some kind, or make a dessert. Our visitors will be part of our worship service that day, and we would love for you to help make them feel welcome.

Second, it takes purchasing many items large and small to make our camp a success. We not only need building materials, we need safety gear, paint supplies, work gloves, sunscreen, and dozens of other items for our work teams.

There are several ways that you can contribute to our camp: you can call the church office during the week and choose an item or items that you would like to cover; you can look on our amazon wish list if you use this url:

[https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/QUE6HCAL4A6J?ref\\_=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/QUE6HCAL4A6J?ref_=wl_share)

or you can scan the QR code on the bulletin insert and choose from there. If you prefer to make a general contribution without designating a specific purchase, you may also do that through the church office.

The Covid pandemic damaged many of our routine activities, and Salkehatchie did not escape those effects. However, our 2024 camp has grown from what it was last year, because we still have dedicated people who act as the hands and feet of Jesus in meeting the needs of others. Please see what you can do to help our camp meet those needs!

## Prayer List:

Bill Bergmann, Barbara Bates, Bart Brock, Susan Polk's Aunt Julia and Uncle Dwight, Jim Edwards, Susan Garrison, Laura Haase, Betty Lou Hanna, Betty Jean Harvey, Bubba High, Senetta Hubbard, Sue Hagan, Danny McLaurin, Penny Metts, Carolyn Parler, Marvis Solley, Miriam Talley, Maxine and Robert Tanner, Donna Tucker, Frankie White.

## Trustees Notice:

Please lock all doors if you are the last to leave any of our church buildings. Please check to make sure you have turned off all lights in the rooms, bathrooms, and halls when you leave.

Thank you for helping us improve security and reduce expenses.

-Your Trustees

**Moncks Corner United Methodist Church**  
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Moncks Corner, SC 29461

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Visit our website: [MoncksCornerUMC.org](http://MoncksCornerUMC.org)

Email: [office@MoncksCornerUMC.org](mailto:office@MoncksCornerUMC.org)

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