



UNION Connection

Union United Methodist Church Irmo, South Carolina

Imagine The Future, Imagine Tomorrow

Imagine the Future. What will your life be like? Will you be moving closer to what God desires for you? Will you be seeing personal goals accomplished? Or will you still be busy doing the same old things?

Things are definitely not the “same old” around Union. There is a lot of energy and anticipation, work and excitement. We had a great VBS last month, for the end of July we have Camp Kindness, and all summer long we have been water-logging our youth! Well, it seems that way with all their water outings.

Our Africa UMVIM team is finally in Zimbabwe - there to put a roof on Chitenderano UMC and do other work at Hartzell School and Fairfield Children’s Home. We also have a team preparing to go to Ecuador in October.

We are adjusting to staff changes with the arrival of Rev. Faye Jones as our Associate Pastor, and Amy Gustafson as our Communications Director. On August 7th we say farewell to Don Kirkindoll (and Kriss and Natalie) as they depart for First UMC in Waynesville, NC. Afterward, Frank Turner will return to Union as an interim choir director.

We are seeing a lot of changes in the Wesley Center – painting, refurbishments, etc., as volunteers and teachers are gearing up for the new year of Union Day School. Plans for the fall, with Bible studies, classes, and Wednesday Night Suppers are all in the works. Great stuff!

If you are interested in travel, I have finalized dates for two trips. Next year Cynthia and I are hosting a Fellowship Cruise in Alaska that begins in Anchorage and ends in Vancouver. That trip will be May 23rd – June 2nd. Brochures are being printed with all the information you will need. Then in 2024, we will return to the Holy Land for a Journey Through The Bible tour, Jan. 23rd through Feb. 2nd, with an Egypt extension available. Let me know if you are interested in either of these.

Finally, we are wrapping up our “Imagine The Future” campaign with great success. This campaign was done to underwrite our building mortgage for a year. For the minimum goal of \$402,000 we have received commitments of \$407,526. That is excellent!

We have received 158 pledges made to the Building Fund, which is far short of the 246 pledges made to the annual budget. The monthly payment of \$33,500 is paid out of the Building Fund account, not out of our annual budget. This is why I keep encouraging everyone to make some level of commitment or contribution to the Building Fund, especially since all that we receive over the monthly payment amount will go to pay down the principle. We presently owe \$3,587,200 on our facility, but we are taking the right steps to Imagine our Future without a debt to pay off.

Imagine what God can do through us and through our church! - Blessings to all, Stephen

Notes from Rev. Faye -

Behold, I am doing a new thing... or is it new?

First, I want to thank you all for the warm welcome as the new Associate Pastor here at Union. I appreciate the hugs, smiles, and hospitality. You have really made this little preacher girl feel at home.

Although working in various roles in ministry is not new for me, in other's eyes, my role here at Union is new. If I could be candid, there are obvious differences. One is my ethnic background. Secondly, my interpretation of our Methodist tradition, which is still very Methodist, is viewed through a cultural, and contextual lens from what many would consider a charismatic upbringing. Lastly, I am fresh out of seminary, and I am going into an awesome congregation with wise and seasoned believers, with the hopes that I can share profound words about Jesus though I am only a babe on this journey. This is new for you all and for me, but is it new in the eyes of God?

The great prophet Isaiah spoke about God's promise of new things and change for the people of Israel. God spoke through the prophet in Isaiah 43:19, beginning the verse with "Behold! I am doing a new thing..." For us, new things are happening, but for God, this "union" (pun intended!) is not new. This is what the Church universal, the Body of Christ, and Christ-centered communities are supposed to look like! It is our society that has developed certain standards about how we should live out our faith journey. This is counter to God's vision.

No, this is not new to God because God is our Creator. As humans, God made us for each other! We learn and grow into relationship with each other, and that experience is new. However, the love and divine friendship has always connected us to each other by the Spirit that dwells within us! So, I say hello to you, my brother. Greetings to you, my sister; and nice to finally meet you, my friend.

- Rev. Faye Jones

Fond Farewell

Dear Union Family,

For the last four and a half years I have had the distinct honor and privilege to serve as your Director of Music at Union. It has been wonderful getting to know you all and doing ministry together. As you know, I have accepted the position of Director of Music and Worship Arts at First United Methodist Church in Waynesville, NC. It was not an easy decision to make this move. I have loved my time at Union. But, as we have tried to express to those who have asked about our move, we are not so much "leaving" Union as we are "going to" the mountains. Kriss and I met and fell in love in the mountains of North Carolina about 25 years ago. Her parents still live in Flat Rock, and we have always loved to hike and be outside. This really is "going home" for us. It is also an opportunity for us to share our love of the mountains with Nat, who will be going off to college in a couple of years.

I want you to know that I will miss you all terribly. This is a rare opportunity because the kind of specialized work that Kriss and I both do is hard to come by in the mountains. Towns are smaller and so are the churches most of the time. I feel strongly that this is what God wants for my family. For over four years, the folks who volunteer in the Music and Worship Arts Ministry at Union have heard me make a big deal about us being a "choir family" and a "church family" because I take that very seriously and I truly mean it. We have been through A LOT together in the last 4 ½ years and I would not trade it for anything. You all have been wonderful to me and my family and I will always be grateful for this time we have had together. It has been an honor and a pleasure to be your music director.

May the grace, peace, and love of Christ be with you all now and forever. I pray that God will continue to richly bless you and the Music and Worship Arts Ministry at Union in the days to come.

Much love,
Don

Garden Bed Dedication

A Gift from the Harbour family, as told by Lauryn -

My family and I joined Union UMC shortly after enrolling our twin daughters in the 2-year-old program at the Pre-school. In May, they graduated from the 4-year-old program and will soon embark on their journey to kindergarten at Lake Murray Elementary School. My family and I became close friends with their teachers, Ms. Nicolle Rogers and Ms. Jennifer Slusher, throughout the year, as a neighbor and through being a homeroom mom. When Jennifer shared her plans to retire at the end of the year, we wanted to do something special to celebrate both her and Nicolle's tenure and dedication to Union Preschool.

In talking with Kathy Horne, I decided upon a garden bed with a dedication plaque. Since our girls' class would be the last graduating class from the Crab Shack, as Union Preschool was evolving into Union Day School, the name and idea was born. This new Crab Shack Garden was previously used as a class vegetable garden.



Garden bed before

Several of the Crab Shack families contributed monetarily to the project to donate the plants and mulch. My wife, Kelly, owns a landscaping company, and did the actual design and work herself. We planted bushes and flowers that will be self-reliant after the initial transition of being planted. The project was completed the second week of June and we couldn't wait to present it to their teachers! Jennifer and Nicolle loved it! Several of our Crab Shack kids attended the dedication, so it was a very sweet moment all around!



Nicolle and Jennifer with Crab Shack kids at dedication



Harbour family with new garden bed and plaque



A note from our Day School Director -

Union Kindergarten and Preschool has a new name. We are now Union Day School comprised of two programs. Our traditional half-day program, which has been in place for 48 years, operates during the school year and will continue to provide the high-quality education that Union is known for.

We are excited to add a second program, which will allow us to serve our community more fully. We have added three full-day classes, which will operate year-round: Infants, Toddlers and Twos. Next year, we will add a full-day/year-round 3K class and follow that up the next year with a full-day/year-round 4K class. This way our little ones who start as

infants or toddlers can continue at Union through 4K.

We will have a Back-to-School Kick-off Tuesday, August 30th, from 5:00-7:00 p.m. Our evening will start with a parent orientation in the Sanctuary. Then the fun starts with free bounce houses, slides, and face painters. An ice cream truck and a food truck from Cox Family BBQ will also be present with food available for purchase. We will have a meet-n-greet with teachers in the classrooms, a meet-n-greet with the Director in the Wesley Center, and paperwork tables. Be on the look-out for volunteer opportunities soon. *(see page 10 for current ways to help)*

Helen Kline, Director



Our Vacation Bible School Food Truck Party rose to the top!

Each day our children learned how God provides for us through food and the people in our lives. We had so much fun with DJ CakePop, who taught us about running a food truck and being a Top chef. He loves music so much that is how he got his name DJ, for spinning the tunes.

Our children, or chefs, made crafts each day they took home to remind them of all we learned during the week. The children made picture frames, aprons, snack plates (with blessing), and a blessing box (to collect their daily blessings). The children went to recreation to play games involving our theme. They also had a homeroom time with their small group. They got to review the Bible story through conversation and science experiments.

At the beginning and end of each night our children gathered together in the Sanctuary. We celebrated with music and shared Bible stories such as: Feeding the 5,000+, Manna, and Quail. The Sanctuary was where we met with DJ CakePop at our Food Truck "On A Roll." It is also where we learned our main course, "Give Us this Day our Daily Bread" Matthew 6:11.

Thank you to all of our Volunteers and Union members for their time, energy, gifts, and prayers that were shared with our children! Without the support of our Union family it is not possible to do all we do for our children! *Thank you!!*



Promotion SUNDAY

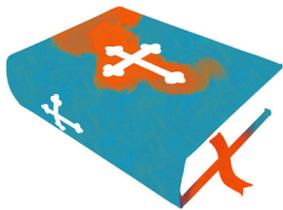


Sunday School Promotion - August 14th

We have Sunday school classes for all ages from 3 years to 18 years old that meet in the Education Building each Sunday, usually from 10-10:45 a.m.

On August 14th we will promote, or move folks up, to their next grade. Some of our grades meet together, so check with Suzy or Eleanor if you are unsure where your child or youth should go. Youth classes are downstairs in the Education Building and Children's classes are on the second floor.

On Sunday, August 14th, Sunday school starts at 9:15 a.m. with one worship service at 10:30 a.m. Join us as we start a new year in Sunday school!



Third Grade Bibles

On August 28th we will present a Bible to our third graders during the 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. worship services. If you have not heard from Suzy or been in contact

with her, please do so as soon as possible (suzy@unionirmo.org). We are ordering personalized Bibles for each of our kids.

In the afternoon of **August 28th**, we invite our 3rd graders with a parent (or two) to **Bible Boot Camp!** We will meet from **1:30-3 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall**. This is the time when we go through how to use their new Bibles through videos, activities and fun stories.



SAVE THE DATE Trunk or Treat

Sunday, October 30th from 4-6 p.m.
(Yes! We are planning for treats in the trunks this year)

FAMILY MINISTRY KICKOFF



Sunday, Sept. 11th, from 5-7 p.m.
for ALL Parents, Students and
Ministry Leaders!

What is The PHASE EVENT?

At The Phase Event, we will gather two of the most significant influencers in a kid's life - Parents and Adult Mentors - and talk about the unique opportunities at their current life stage so we can all work together to surround each child with a strong community to help them navigate their lives and faith journey.

Dinner and nursery will be provided! -
DON'T MISS THIS EVENT!



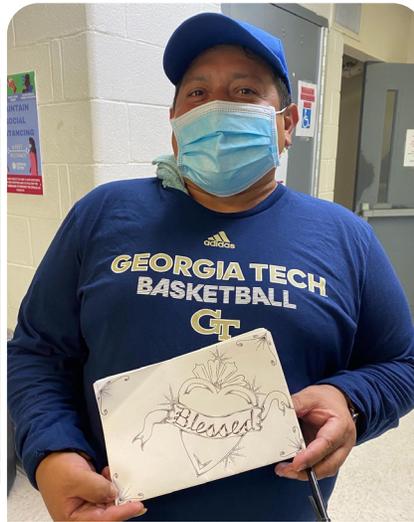
Save the Dates!

Aug 20 - 3 p.m.- 6 p.m.
Sept 10 - 11 a.m.- 2 p.m.
Oct 15 - 3 p.m.- 6 p.m.
Nov 12 - 11 a.m.- 2 p.m.
Dec 10 - 11 a.m.- 2 p.m.

Children from infant to 1st grade, \$10 per child, includes lunch or dinner.

(Let us know of any allergies, when you sign up.)

RSVP the Wednesday before to:
Stacy.burggraf@gmail.com



Atlanta Mission Trip in Review

Our Youth of Union M25 Atlanta Mission Team had incredible experiences sharing and encountering Jesus on their Homeless Mission Trip. Students had many opportunities to minister to their homeless brothers and sisters through serving at the food bank, sitting down with them and eating a meal, playing board games together, walking them through a pop up STD testing and vaccine site, serving at a clothing closet, and so much more. The people our students encountered, the stories they heard, and the unadulterated love they shared was so incredibly beautiful.



If your rising 6th grade or older student is interested in being part of the *Confirm23* Confirmation Class, please send Eleanor an email.

Confirmation classes will be held on Sunday mornings from 10-10:50 a.m. beginning **September 11th.**

A registration packet will be mailed out in the next couple of weeks for those interested. Email: Eleanor@unionirmo.org



YOUTH DISCIPLESHIP

Join us beginning August 14th for a new Sunday Morning Bible Study Series called GOSPEL FOUNDATIONS.

Classes will be divided by Middle School (6-8 grades) and High School (9-12 grades). We will meet at 10 a.m. in each respective classroom (Middle School in the Green Room and High School in the Yellow Room).

This is a GREAT series that will dive into the entire Bible and its grand narrative of redemption from the beginning to now. Our students NEED Biblical knowledge to navigate this world - we highly encourage students to participate in this great series!



Summer Youth Events

Left: Beach Day; Below: River Tubing Day; Left: Lake Day



Above: These are silly pics of our girls during down time after long hours working outside repairing homes at Camden Salkahatchie. We are so proud of the work they did and their willingness to serve Jesus.

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Dinner and nursery will be provided! -
DON'T MISS THIS EVENT!

August 14th

ONE Service at 10:30 a.m.

Promotion Sunday & Sunday School at 9:15 a.m.

BACK TO SCHOOL BASH

Sunday August 14th
5:00pm

Concert by the Union Praise Band
followed by Food Trucks and games for the whole family
We will be "Blessing the Backpacks" so make
sure you bring yours!

*Please bring items to donate to the D5 Snack Pack Program
(grits, oatmeal, granola bars, juices boxes, etc...)*



UNION UMC
7582 Woodrow Street
Irmo Sc 29063





Why We Sing, In Review -

Well, we finally did it! After 3 ½ years of planning (and praying!), 8 months of rehearsals, and 12 awesome days of travel and singing, the Union Choir has completed our choir tour to the UK. What an amazing tour it was! It is impossible to capture the whole tour in an article like this, but I want our Union Church family to know a little bit about the tour. If you want to hear more, just find any of the folks who went and I'm sure they will talk your ear off about it!

After our trip "across the pond," our journey began in London, England. Once we landed, we met our amazing courier, Louise, and our intrepid

coach driver, Dave. In short order the choir adopted them into our choir family, and off we went!

Over the next few days, we led Sunday worship at Wesley's Chapel (as in John Wesley's Chapel), performed a full concert at Southwark (pronounced Suth-uck) Cathedral, saw a ton of sights in London, and took a day trip to sing at Canterbury Cathedral (where our group picture was taken above), and toured Dover Castle and the White Cliffs. After all of that, we departed London and headed west to Stonehenge. It was a glorious day, blue skies and cool. Then it was on to Stratford-upon-Avon for the night. A bit of trivia about Shakespeare's hometown: "Avon" means "river" in Old English, so the Avon River where the town is set is the River River. You can see a picture of Stratford in the Union Church office building. It is the painting around the corner from Suzy's office.

Heading north, we visited Oxford on our way to York, where we spent the night and sang our full concert again at the beautiful St. Helen's Church-Stonegate. While we were there we walked the town and saw York Minster, the ancient Roman wall that still surrounds the old city, and the famous "Shambles" marketplace. After our stay in York, we visited Durham for a few hours, where we saw Durham Cathedral, and got to do some shopping and eating. From there it was north again to Edinburgh, Scotland!

Edinburgh was fantastic! The maze of streets, bridges, and old buildings were a little interesting to navigate, but it was beautiful and packed full of fascinating history. We toured the town on the bus (whew!) and visited Edinburgh Castle before striking out to explore on our own. Our last full day of the tour was July 4! We celebrated with one more full concert at Canongate Kirk (where the Queen goes to worship when she is in town!) and the locals in attendance loved our medley of traditional Scottish folk songs: "A Scottish Tribute!" They really liked "Battle Hymn of the Republic" too! Some of them even sang along in the chorus! The same night we had a lovely "farewell" dinner at the Royal Scots Club in Edinburgh.

Thanks to all the wonderful people who made this tour possible! The choir, of course, our planning team, our tour company ACFEA, our awesome courier and driver, Louise and Dave, and all of our Union family who supported us and prayed for us along the way! We had a great time, but more importantly, we proclaimed a message of peace, love, and salvation to hundreds of people and thoroughly answered the question of "Why We Sing." Sing it with me: I sing because I'm happy, I sing because I'm free, for His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me. Amen.

- Grace and peace, Don



Union UMC Columbarium & Memorial Garden Update:

Onsite: the Memorial Garden construction now has most of the brickwork completed. Next will be ornamental fencing with landscaping to follow once temperatures drop.

Offsite updates: The Columbarium niches are being built in Minnesota with delivery targeted for late 2022. COVID related shutdowns at the factory and quarry have caused significant delays.

Keep an eye out for our information and reservations campaign to kick off in September!

Jan's Van

Jan's Van



Jan's Van (The Lexington Medical Center's Mobile Mammography Van) will be at Union United Methodist Church in the church's side parking lot on Wednesday, September 28th, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

It is sponsored by Sarah Circle and named in memory of Jan Croft, who lost her courageous battle with metastatic breast cancer.

Registration starts on Sunday, August 21, in the Narthex at the 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. services. You can register by contacting Jane Davis: 803.960.6874 or janesdavis@yahoo.com. Women are encouraged to register even without insurance.

Because mammograms cost \$486.00 without insurance, donations are now being accepted to pay for mammograms that are not covered. Please help by donating to "Jan's Van" at unionirmo.org, click GIVE, or by calling church office.



Love to golf?

Join us for the **Sharing God's Love Golf Tournament** on Monday, September 12th!

All of the net proceeds will benefit your neighbors in need in the Dutch Fork, Irmo, St. Andrews, and Ballentine communities. Established in 1984, Sharing God's Love has faithfully provided thousands of families with food, clothing, personal hygiene items, and financial aid for utility, medical, and other emergency expenses.

During 2021, 1,868 families, totaling 5,233 people, including 330 new clients, received assistance valued at \$745,265, plus \$963,746 in assistance to other agencies.

Registration and sponsor forms can be found in the church office. Contact Jim Sharp at 803-727-7297 or Ron Feaster at 803-741-4846 if you would like to give, get involved, or with any questions.



The Blessing Box

The presence of the Blessing Box continues to be a needed resource for our community. Thank you for the donation of food items. A collection box has been placed in the Narthex for your convenience. As the weather turns cool, please think of chicken n' dumplings, ravioli with meat, hearty soups and canned fruit.

Hello!

I have thoroughly enjoyed my first three weeks of working at Union United Methodist Church. It has been a pleasure to meet all those who have stopped by the office to say hello. I look forward to working with you all to keep Union UMC growing through being a vibrant member of the church staff, and helping communicate and promote all of Union's many projects and events.

My background is in Communications, from working at Ashland UMC (in Irmo) as a Youth Director and communicating with teens, their families, and the church as whole, to working at Lowe's Home Improvement in many positions from Customer Service to the Pro Desk Department Manager, to most recently working as Office and Project Manager for a local contracting company.

Communicating with people correctly and effectively is a passion of mine, along with sharing the word of God. This position is exciting to me as it allows an excellent opportunity to be able to blend these two passions of mine together. Additionally, it is an honor to join the wonderful and highly committed team at Union UMC.

Again, it is my goal to help you effectively communicate your events, groups, meetings, and the list goes on! Please stop by or feel free to email me, amy@unionirmo.org, so we can work together to spread the word on your current project! I am looking forward to it!

- Amy Gustafson



Volunteers Needed!

The Union Day School Directors are in need of volunteers! Help is needed on August 1 & 3, 9:00a.m.-12:00p.m. to complete sanding and painting all classroom cabinets and inventory of books. All painting materials have been purchased by our Day School Directors except for additional electric sanders (if you have one, please bring it), otherwise paint, rollers, etc. are supplied. If you can help with book inventory, please bring your laptop.

Contact Marian Hanna at mkhanna@sc.rr.com with the dates you can help. Thank you!

Union Day School First Days

Be prayerful for our new students, new teachers and new parents during the following days as they start their school year.

Full Day Infants - Aug 8
Full Day Toddlers - Aug 8
Full Day 2s - Sept 1

Half Day Kindergarten - Sept 1
Half Day 3s & 4s - Sept 1

Memorials - May 30th – July 23rd

Memorials received in memory of:

Frank Bacon by: Kathy Boland

Henry Chastain by: Leslie and Jeff Archie, Candace and Barry Holloway, Barbara and Mike Holmes, Mr. And Mrs. William Lide, Jeanine and Edwin Weill, Brenda and George Williams, and John Rowland Sunday School Class

Willie Mae Hinson by: Joan and Orris Bickley, and Frances McDonald

Thomas Pinckney Owens by: Libby and Donnie Allen

Dave Ruddle by: Anna Bess Tisdale

Phyllis Smith by: Anna Bess Tisdale

Jeanette Steppe by: Anna Bess Tisdale

Jean Teague by: Anna Bess Tisdale

Honorariums given in honor of:

Judy Smith by: Jan and Jim Buck

Cynthia Cook Taylor by: Elizabeth Matthews

We extend our sympathy to the following families at the loss of their loved ones:
IN MEMORIAM

Walter Franklin "Frank" Bacon
September 10, 1949 - June 27, 2022

Beth Sawyer in the death of her father, **Thomas Pinckney Owens**

George Drakes Williams
October 5, 1933 - July 16, 2022

John Joseph Brooks
September 23, 1937 - July 17, 2022

Celebrate the birth of:

Emma Bailey Blicht was born on June 10, 2022; born to William and Lexi Blicht. Emma has two siblings, Mary and Liam. Her grandparents are Bill and Judy Blicht, and her aunt is Sharon Blicht.



AIR HUG ZONE

Thank you for practicing
social distancing.

Safe Distancing Section

We're bringing back the safe-distancing section in the Sanctuary starting Sunday, **August 7th**. As you enter the Sanctuary, it will be the far left section. Masks will be required to sit in this section. Masks will be available, however, feel free to bring and wear your own.

The Union Connection Deadline: 15th of each month

The Union Connection is a monthly publication of Union United Methodist Church.

Articles should be submitted to Amy, by the 15th of each month via email (amy@unionirmo.org).

Our Ministry Team

Senior Minister
Rev. Stephen Taylor

Associate Minister
Rev. Faye Jones

Minister of Visitation
Rev. David Anderson

Church Administrator
Susan Vinson

Administrative Assistant
Erin Schoolmeester

Finance
Barbara Tanner

Director of Communications and Promotions
Amy Gustafson

Director of Ministries to Children & Families
Suzy Broadus

Director of Youth and Leisure Ministries
Eleanor Cannon

Youth Ministries Associate
Thomas Walsh

Director of Music Ministries
Don Kirkindoll

Coordinator of Contemporary Worship
Michelle Cochcroft

Facilities Manager
Ned Calvert

Assistant Facilities Manager
Steve Ragan

Day School Director
Helen Kline

Assistant Day School Director
Angela Hough

Nursery Coordinator
Stacy Burggraf

Production Manager
Jake Cosentino

Organist
Joey Rothfuss



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Union United Methodist Church Irmo, South Carolina

Join us for **ONE SERVICE August 14th!**

Sunday School at 9:15 a.m.

ONE Service at 10:30 a.m.

Back to School Bash at 5 p.m.



*Everyone is welcome to our Back to School Bash for a concert,
food trucks & Blessing the Backpacks! See pg. 7 for more!*

Sunday worship times:
9 a.m. Traditional worship
11 a.m. Contemporary worship
Telephone: 803-781-3013
Fax: 803-781-3034

www.unionirmo.org

Ministers:
Rev. Stephen Taylor, Senior Minister
Rev. Faye Jones, Associate Minister

