



# UNION Connection

Union United Methodist Church Irmo, South Carolina

## "Show Me The Money Love"

February, the month of love is here, so let's "Show the Love!" I'm not talking about romantic love. {That I leave you to handle on your own.} Rather, it's a good time to be intentional about showing the love of Christ.

The Apostle Paul wrote: "Walk in love, as Christ loved us, and gave himself for us." Eph 5:2

That brief scripture says two things to me. First, walking in love is different than just choosing love in specific instances. Walking in love means making it a way of life. Secondly, to love as Christ loved, giving himself for us, means that loving will be sacrificial. To love as Christ loves means I am willing to give up something of myself - my time, my rights, my comfort, my money, my privilege, my space, my attention, and so on.

The experience of receiving such sacrificial gifts from someone can be inspiring and transformational. Again the Apostle Paul: "Let each of you look not to your own interests but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus." (Phil 2)

I invite you to join me in praying about how we each can grow by intentionally showing the love of Christ. Each day ask God, "How can I best show the love of Christ today?" And then pay attention, the answer may be closer than you expect!

I also invite you to being intentional about showing Christ's love at church. Yep, people can fall into a me-first attitude even at church. Do you have a preferred "space" in the pew, or the parking lot that you aren't happy about giving up? Do you go "out of your way" for others, or have you fallen into the trap of "each to his/her own?"

Remember, there are little things, important things, you can do to keep the focus on showing self-giving love at church. By the way, I've gotten reports from recent guests that they have been warmly welcomed at Union. That's great, and so important, and here's five easy ways to continue to show the love:

1. Wear your name tag to church.
2. Sign the guest register in the pew, which encourages our guests to sign in.
3. Greet others with your smile, and make room for folks.
4. Introduce yourself to those you don't know, and invite them to a class with you.
5. Make your welcome more than a greeting, begin a friendship.

What we experience when we focus on loving others is that our own world expands. The spirit of Christ continues to open and to fill our own hearts. I guess that's one reason the scriptures also say: Sisters and brothers, let us love not in word or speech, but in our deeds and in truth. 1 John 3:18.

Sharing the love of Christ, - Stephen



## Santa Ladies Pickleball Event

On December 17 we hosted our first ever Santa Ladies Pickleball event! There was friendly competition, door prizes, and most importantly donations collected for our Snack Pack Ministry. A special thank you to Amy Conley, our Recreation chair, for putting this event on!

### SUPER BOWL SUNDAY GRAB & GO PULLED PORK BBQ

Support the Pathfinders Sunday School Class  
Funds raised assist local missions

<b>Pre-order in</b> Narthex Jan. 18 & 25 or in Adult Sunday School Classes <b>Jan. 18-Feb. 1</b>	<b>\$16 per lb.</b> <b>\$70 for 5 lbs.</b> (packaged in 5-1 lb. tubs)	<b>Pick up</b> <b>FMC kitchen</b> <b>February 8</b> 10:00 am-12:15 pm <b>Pre-orders only</b>
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\*cash or check made payable to Pathfinders Class or  
 Venmo: @jenni-farmer-1  
 Paypal: jennifarmer0228@yahoo.com



## Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Our famous fun-loving Pancake Men are returning to invite you to our churchwide Pancake Supper on Shrove Tuesday, **February 17**, 5:30-7pm in the FMC gym. This is always such a great time to get together with the whole Union family and guests. There will be plenty of pancakes, sausage, music and fun! And don't forget our Silent Auction! New Life Class will be selling tickets soon!! Mark your calendars now!

### Ash Wednesday Service

**February 18 7 p.m.**

Rise Against Hunger  
EXPERIENCE

Rise Against Hunger works in countries worldwide to fight hunger, targeting communities facing high rates of food insecurity.

Join the movement!

Join us to pack 10,000 meals for  
Rise Against Hunger!

**February 25 - 6:30pm**

Scan to sign up today!



If you want to join us for dinner before packing, scan QR code below.

Cost: \$10; Menu: chicken bog, side salad, green beans & roll



# Congratulations!



Women of  
**Union United Methodist Church**  
on your participation in  
**United Women in Faith**  
(formerly United Methodist Women)



*For the Past 125 Years!*



**Come Help us Celebrate this  
Achievement at Our**

## Grit, Grace and Gratitude Brunch

Saturday, March 14, 2026

Family Ministry Center

10:00am—12:00pm



Sign Up On-Line at  
[unionirmo.org](http://unionirmo.org) or use this  
QR code.

**Grit** Perseverence Leadership Resilience Mission Connect Character

Nurture Family Spiritual Fellowship Strong Expanding Courage Impact

Empower Education **Grace** Kindness Thriving Mercy Purpose

Come See How our UWF Ladies Embody this  
Compassion Opportunity Inspire Influence **Gratitude**

Powerful Mindset  
**United Women in Faith**

Impact Thankfulness Blessings Grateful Well-Being Children Together

Developing Ministry Innovation Acceptance Optimism Productive

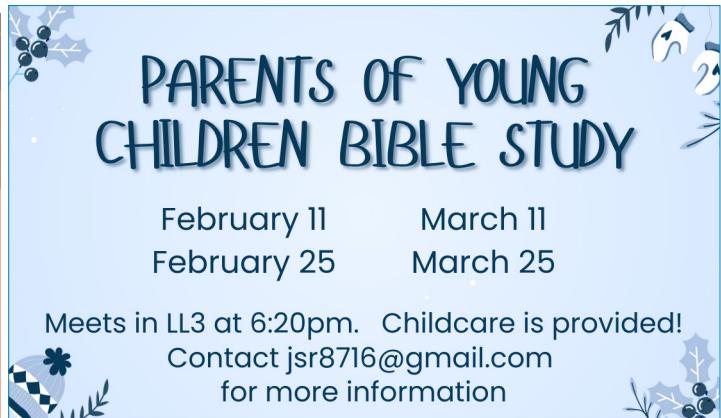


## SonZone Schedule for January - February

Feb. 1	Promise that it will work out
Feb. 8	Promise to help us Stand Strong
Feb. 15	No SonZone
Feb. 22	Promise that there is nothing to fear

## SonZone

We kicked off a New Year with some crazy games! We are excited to continue the fun in the coming Sundays from 4-5:15pm. All 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders join us in room F227 and don't forget to bring your friends! Contact Suzy if you are not on our email list to keep up to date. (Suzy@unionirmo.org)



## Celebrating our Day School!

Union is celebrating our Day School ministry on **February 22**. Children and teachers are invited to join us during the 11am worship service. We will highlight the Day School during the 9am service. Everyone is invited to drop in the Wesley Center during the 10am hour. We will have light refreshments and meet some of our school families. Thank you Union for over 50 years of love and support!!

## Youth Christmas Party!

We had a blast at our annual Christmas party! We played games, ate good food, did our annual gingerbread house competition as well as a gift exchange. Check out some of the fun below!



## Summer 2026 Mission Trip

June 14-20, 2026 - This summer we will head to serve with the Appalachia Service Project. We will work through direct service on some home rehab

projects along with regional education and cultural immersion for the community we are serving in. This trip is open to the whole church as we need adult leaders who have construction skills to lead our teams on the sites. For youth, you must have completed 6<sup>th</sup> grade to attend. **HARD DEADLINE OF 2/23 TO REGISTER.** Cost is \$425. Financial assistance is available - if needed, contact Thomas at [thomas@unionirmo.org](mailto:thomas@unionirmo.org). Sign up today with the QR code!



## Union Basketball

Thank you so much for your support of our teams all season! We will have updates in next month's newsletter on how all of our teams finished out the season.

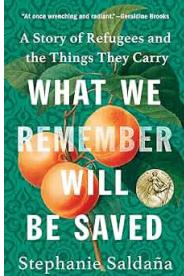


Bring your spare change/cash for Souper Bowl Sunday on February 8. We will have youth in the Narthex after both services collecting donations for Sharing God's Love!

## Middle School Lock-in -

Registration is now open for our Middle School Lock-In on **March 21**! We will head to Stars and Strikes for bowling, laser tag, and video games and then wrap up the night with ice cream. We will finish Sunday morning after attending worship and Sunday Morning Discipleship together. Sign up today for a night of fun, food, and fellowship together.





## Wilson Circle Book Club

The next meeting of the Wilson Circle Book Club is on Tuesday, **February 10, 2026** at 1:30pm in the Fellowship Hall. We will be discussing the book, *What We Remember Will Be Saved: A Story of Refugees and the Things They Carry* by Stephanie Saldaña.

Saldaña, a journalist and scholar who lived in Syria before the war, journeys across nine countries to meet refugees and learn what they took with them when they escaped. What she discovered was little things matter a great deal. Saldaña introduces us to "a woman who saved her city in a dress, a musician who saved his stories in songs, and a couple who rebuilt their destroyed pharmacy even as the city around them fell apart." She shows the reader a religiously diverse corner of the Middle East on the edge of unraveling and the people keeping it alive with their stories.

There are 3 copies of the book in the UWF collection in the Church Library, one copy in the Lexington Public Library, and a copy in Hoopla through the Richland Public Library. You do not need to be a member of the Wilson Circle to participate in the Book Club. All are welcome to join us. If you have questions, please contact Harriet Simpson at 803-530-5060 or Becky Dixon at 803-361-5046.

## PEP! - Bingo & Board Games -

Wednesday, **February 11**, at 1p.m. in the Fellowship Hall! Bingo fun first, then board and card games to follow. Snacks and prizes will be awarded. We would love to have you join us!



## Memorials - December 15 - January 14

### Memorials received in memory of:

**Jeanette Coulter By:** George and Jean How, Herb Hames, James and Jan Bradley, Melba and Michael Elsey, Nancy Corbin, Bill and Barry Lide, Charles and Gail Elfert, William and Sandra Black, Gary and Jean Dolan, The Roberts Family, Janet Karen and Benjamin Robertson, Danny and Sandra Derrick, Dalton and Barbara Parker and James and Rosalie Browning

**Bill McElveen By:** George and Jean How, Herb Hames, Bill and Barry Lide, and Dalton and Barbara Parker

**Shirley Owens, Beth Sawyer's mother By:** Bob and Becky Travis, and Charles and Gail Elfert



## PEP! Trip: Washington, DC

America's 250th Celebration - **September 2, 2026** | 5 Days

Celebrate America's 250th Anniversary with Union UMC PEP! on a guided Grand Tour of Washington, DC, including Monticello, Arlington National Cemetery, Smithsonian Museums, National Cathedral, Memorials, Mt. Vernon, DC sightseeing and more. Meals included: 4 Continental Breakfasts, 2 Lunches & 2 Dinners. Pricing per person: Double \$1,345 | Triple \$1,255 | Quad \$1,215 | Single \$1,659; Deposit: \$350 per person — paid directly to Christian Tours. Early booking discounts available thru May 30.

To reserve: Contact Christian Tours at 800-476-3900  
Important! When reserving, be sure to mention Union UMC, Irmo SC. Contact Faye Bailey at (803) 331-4349 | [fayebailey424@gmail.com](mailto:fayebailey424@gmail.com) with questions.

## 2026 Online Giving - Vanco Update

If you made a change to your pledge for 2026 you must log in to your account through the GIVE page on our website and personally adjust the dollar amount. Our finance office can answer questions and walk you through the process but cannot make this change for you in the church office. Also please check your card to make sure it is not expired and Vanco has the correct information. When a payment is attempted on an expired card, the church is charged a fee when your bank account or card is declined.

Thank you for continuing to support Union! If you have any questions, please contact, Laura Mars, our Financial Director, at [laura@unionirmo.org](mailto:laura@unionirmo.org).

## A Return to the Holy Land

Tour groups have returned to Israel. Reverends Stephen and Cynthia Taylor are planning an 8-day trip departing January 20, 2027. If you would like more information about this trip, an Interest Meeting will be held on Sunday, **March 1**, at 4:00 PM, in the Fellowship Hall, or email to [stephen@unionirmo.org](mailto:stephen@unionirmo.org).

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

Brandon Lee and Michele Poyner in the loss of Brandon's mother, **Carol Dawn Young**, on December 19, 2025.

Steve and Terri Leszczyszyn in the loss of both of Steve's parents, his mother, **Peggy Leszczyszyn**, on December 21, 2025, and his father, **Walter Leszczyszyn**, on December 25, 2025.

Lora and Marshall McKinney in the loss of Lora's mother, **Gladys Cooke Rose**. Grandmother to Jessica and Thomas.

Tom and Joan Goff in the loss of Tom's brother, **Michael Goff**.

**ROSEBUD**  
**(in celebration of the birth of)**

**Eleanor Hope "Ellie" Samson** was born December 15, 2025. She was born to Nick and Danielle Samson. Ellie's proud grandparents are Brian and Ashley Samson.

## **UUMC Phone System**

Union is updating our phone system on **February 16**, while the office is closed. You will not be able to call the church on Monday, February 16. We are hoping to have it completed in one day. Please be patient with us as we learn a new system in the coming weeks!

If you requested **Giving Envelopes for 2026**, they are available for pick up in the narthex. The envelopes are organized by last name. Thanks!

**The Church office will be closed on February 16 for Presidents' Day**

**The March Union Connection  
Deadline is February 11.**

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

**Articles should be submitted to Amy 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 Administraor

**Susan Vinson**

Finance Director

**Laura Mars**

Director of Communications and Promotions

**Amy Nedbalek**

Director of Ministries to Children & Families

**Suzy Broadus**

Director of Youth and Leisure Ministries

**Thomas Walsh**

Administrative Assistant

**Tiffany Braley**

Director of Music Ministries

**Frank Turner**

Coordinator of Contemporary Worship

**Michelle Cochcroft**

Children's and Youth Music Director

**Jaime Dow**

Day School Director

**Leslie Kulp**

Assistant Day School Director

**Julie Beale**

Day School Finance Director

**Stacie Vandervelde**

Facilities Manager

**Tim Alewine**

Assistant Facilities Manager

**Steve Ragan**

Nursery Coordinator

**Andrea Williams**

Production Manager

**Jake Cosentino**

Organist

**Joey Rothfuss**



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Visit us on the Web at [www.UnionIrmo.org](http://www.UnionIrmo.org)

If you would like your name removed from this newsletter  
mailing list, please contact the church office at 803-781-3013.

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# UNION Connection

Union United Methodist Church Irmo, South Carolina



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

[www.unionirmo.org](http://www.unionirmo.org)

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

