



The Grapevine

Mt. Zion United Methodist Church

"I am the vine, you are the branches

Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit."

John 15:5

I know you have heard me say this before, but I am so happy to be here in Central and at Mt. Zion! I told Katie the other day it is still a shock to me that I am back in the Clemson area. I have to admit what has been the best thing for me though is not being in this place, but beginning to be with the people of Mt. Zion. I am a people person by nature, and so relationships have always been important to me. I have enjoyed having lunch with some of you and visiting with some of you. I look forward to continuing to build relationships. As I have mentioned in my sermons, a life connected to God and a life connected to one another is the most meaningful life there is.

I am excited about some things that are coming up in the near future for us. We are going to do a blessing of the backpacks on August 16th. In that service we are going to recognize and pray for our students and all of those who work in the school system. I believe that education is vital for children and a community. With that in mind we are going to collect some school supplies for Central Elementary and help those who are in need in our community.

In the theme of living life together we are going to do the Tailgate this year on August 30th at the parsonage. Some of you have already opened up your home to Katie and me and we want to do the same as well. Inviting one another into our homes is part of living out our calling as family together. We would love to have as many as possible join us that afternoon for a time of food and fellowship.

I cannot express how much all of the kind words and warm welcomes have meant to Katie, Ann Michelle, Lily, and myself. We love being at Mt. Zion and are looking forward to all the ways that God will use all of us to connect people to God and one another.

In Christ, *Gene*

ANNUAL CONFERENCE REPORT 2015

The Annual Conference of the South Carolina United Methodist Church was held at the Florence Civic Center in Florence, SC, from June 7-11, 2015. This year's theme was **Becoming Disciples God Can Use**.



*Electronic ballot-
ing devices were
used for the first
time at Annual
Conference in
June at the Flor-
ence Civic
Center.*

*There was a long
line to get to the
table where one's
credentials were
verified before
signing to receive
the voting device.*



The length of the conference was five days, instead of the normal four, in order to elect delegates to the United Methodist Church General and Jurisdictional conferences. **The General Conference will be held in May of 2016 in Portland, OR and will be the global United Methodist Church's quadrennial legislative gathering with representatives from all over the world.**

Last year was my first year as the lay delegate from Mount Zion to the SC Annual Conference. There was a learning curve as I adjusted to what was expected of the lay delegates. I was much more "at ease" this year and very receptive to the fact that we were going to use electronic devices to cast our ballots. What no one anticipated, was the fact that cell phones signals prevented the devices from communicating with the wireless receiver, so we were ordered to turn off our cell phones.

After a short training session, we successfully entered our votes and passed a \$16.8 million budget for 2016. The election of delegates to the General Conference was a **long process which took place each day** with the clergy voting on their devices to elect eight delegates and the laity voting on their devices to elect eight delegates for a total of 16 delegates from our state to the General Conference.

The clergy and laity delegates voted at the same time on several resolutions and two petitions.

An **Anti-bullying Resolution** was passed which opposes bullying in all forms and creates a safe space for all children of God regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, culture, citizenship, socio-economic status, gender identity, sexual orientation and physical or mental ability. The resolution also calls for United Methodists to respond to acts of bullying with acts of compassion and to take a public stand against hate speech, exclusion, harassment, and acts of intimidation and violence. **The original resolution was modified with amendments urging churches to strengthen their**

Safe Sanctuaries policies to better prevent child-on-child bullying.

The second resolution authorizing the sale of Sewee Coastal Retreat Center which is property owned by the Board of South Carolina United Methodist Camps and Retreats Ministries was passed. This property has not been used and would be too expensive to develop.

The third resolution was **withdrawn** before it could be voted upon. The resolution **Supporting, Recognizing and Honoring the Services of Law Enforcement Officers**, presented on the floor the first business day of Annual Conference by four United Methodist pastors was withdrawn for this year given the climate of police brutality in our nation.

A petition which dealt with withdrawing from the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice did not pass. The delegates chose not to send this petition to the General Conference which would ask that two United Methodist entities be withdrawn from this coalition. The fact that United Methodists are present at the discussion table is better than not having any religious voice at all in determining this coalition's platform which does include abortion.

The final petition, which was the most controversial, dealt with language in the Book of Discipline on homosexuality being incompatible with Christian teaching. The petition which would have gone to the General Conference in 2016 advocated eliminating this wording. **The petition did not pass which resulted in no petitions being sent to the General Conference.**

The Bishop launched a new **\$1 Million Imagine No Malaria (INM)** initiative for next year. This was dear to my heart since, thanks to all of you who helped, we had just finished raising \$587 at Mount Zion for INM.

There were 33 clergy who were ordained and commissioned at the Annual Conference. This service is beautiful and I would encourage all of you to attend it in 2017 when the annual conference will be held in Greenville, SC.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Chandler, Lay Delegate



At this year's conference, volunteers packed 285,000 Stop Hunger Now meals for hungry families in Uganda. Next year we are going to raise \$1 Million for Imagine No Malaria!



Publication Schedule Change with the *Grapevine*

At the April meeting of the Communication Committee, it was decided to change the bimonthly newsletter publication schedule for the remainder of 2015 in an effort for more timely reporting and planning.

The deadline for submission of information for the remaining issues is:

September 27 - October/November issue

November 22 - December/January issue

Belated best wishes to those of you had a birthday or wedding anniversary in July which wasn't printed due to this change.

Our newest July baby is Loretta Rae, born July 23rd. The daughter of Haley Rae Lee, she is the granddaughter of Steve and Terri Lee and great-granddaughter of Rae Romberg.



Scott and Karen Smith have a new granddaughter, **Anna Elizabeth Ray**.



August: Joey Parsons (6), Sherrie Youngblood (6), Kyle Owens (7), Amy Parsons (10), Larry Wingard (11), Elizabeth Bowman (12), Steve Lee (13), Kathy O'Brien (15), Helen Singleton (16), Sheila Malmgren (17), Ginger Allen (21), Chandler Coffman (31).

September: Ed Martin (1), Drew Gelder (3), Sam Miles (5), Dick Singleton (10), Sharon Miller (14), Terri Lee (15), Sara Kelly (19), Bonnie Littrell (20), Kathy Still (20), Ginger Mullinax (23), Allison Mullinax (24), Lynn Martin, (25)

August: Bill & Libba Carson (2), John Wisham & Lynn Martin (2), Wayne & Miriam Coffman (3), Mike & Catherine Ferguson (5), Dean & Elizabeth Finley (5), Chris & Kathy O'Dell (28).

September: Joey & Amy Parsons (13), Sam & Wanda Miles (21), Henry & Peggy Bodie (22)



Back to School...

Back to Sunday School

Although the Sunday School classes haven't taken a break during the summer, several groups have. Watch the bulletin for the times and dates when the UMW, Men's Club, prayer breakfast and the RAPPers resume.

Lynn Cureton teaches the Sunday School class for children elementary school age. They meet in a downstairs classroom. The nursery is open during Sunday School and church. Another teacher is needed to alternate Sundays with and/or substitute for Lynn. Help is still needed in the nursery on certain Sundays. Please let Pastor Gene know if you are able to help with the children's ministry.

Adult classes are located downstairs in the dining room and upstairs in the library. The Upstairs Class continues to use the International Bible Lessons series. Led by Ansel Miller, with Kristine Reeves as a substitute teacher, they will complete the current lessons on justice in August. September will begin a three-month study with the theme of "The Christian Community Comes Alive". The first month follows the early Christians as they, guided by the Holy Spirit, formed a faith community, prayed with boldness, shared their possessions, witnessed to the truth of Jesus Christ and stood firm in the face of opposition.

The Downstairs Adult Class, led by Lynn Martin and Benji Cumbie, will be starting a new study in August. A different letter of Paul will be studied for six Sundays. "...the where, when, and why they were written, leading you to a much deeper and personal understanding of what God was doing on Paul's eventual journey to Rome. Follow the dramatic unfolding story of Paul's life through 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans. He spread the gospel, guided and directed the work of local churches, and explained to the wider world who knew nothing of Jesus, just who Jesus is and what he has done.

Age-Level Family Committee is sponsoring a school supply drive for Central Elementary School. A list of appropriate items has been placed in the bulletin and items should be brought to the church by August 16th which is the date for the Blessing of the Backpacks.

Those Who Serve in the Nursery

August:

- 2—Elizabeth Bowman/ Catherine Ferguson
9—Libba Carson/ Vicki Miesbauer
16—Ginger Mullinax/ Isaiah Mullinax
23—Libba Carson/ Randy Martin
30— Karen Smith/ Sheila Malmgren

September:

- 6—Heather Cumbie/ Benji Cumbie
13—Jan Miller/ Jill Sims
20— Libba Carson/ Vicki Miesbauer
27— Sharon Chandler/ Terri Lee



Acolyte

August:

- 2— Isaiah Mullinax
9— Grayson Bowman
16 - Braelin Cumbie
23 - Quint Cumbie
30—Grayson Bowman

September:

- 6— Isaiah Mullinax
13— Braelin Cumbie
20— Quint Cumbie
27— Grayson Bowman

Scripture Reader

- Ansel Miller
Benji Cumbie
John Reeves
Sharon Chandler
Lynn Martin

- Serena Miles
Ansel Miller
Benji Cumbie
John Reeves

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Colossians 3:17



August:

- 2— Communion
- 8 - Pool Party, 3pm; supper at 5pm. Reeves home at 457 Wood St., Central
- 13—Finance Committee meeting, 7pm at the church
- 16—Blessing of the backpacks & school supplies donations due, 11am service
- 30—Tailgate at the parsonage, 5pm. Bring side or dessert

September:

- 6—Men's Club & breakfast, 8:30am at the church. Communion at 11am
- 13—Annual Epworth Work Day Offering, 11am service
- 17 —RAPpers pot-luck lunch and program, noon at the church.
- 19— Anderson District UMW annual meeting at St. Andrews UMC, Easley
- 27—Deadline for submissions for the October/November newsletter

SAVE the DATE:

October 4—CROP Walk

The annual Clemson CROP walk has been scheduled for Sunday October 4th. A portion of the donations from the CROP walk is locally donated to Clemson Community Care. Please mark this day on your calendar. It is usually a beautiful fall afternoon and perfect weather for a walk. If you can't walk, consider sponsoring a walker or being an online walker. On that note, I must add that **our church needs a team captain for this year's Mt. Zion team. The Clemson area CROP committee is also looking for a chairperson to lead this year's walk as well.** All other committees for the walk are in place already and up and running so the Chairperson is needed to pull the working committees together for meetings and to represent our local CROP Walk. If you are interested in either position, please contact Vicki Miesbauer. Thanks.



2nd Quarter (April, May and June) Report:

Contributions Received:	\$36,436.12
Actual Expenses	(43,313.23)
Shortfall to date	(6,877.12)

Finance Committee will meet August 13 at 7:00 PM at the church.
Ansel Miller, Chairman



Best wishes to **Paige Evatt** who just received her CDA (Certified Dental Assistant) degree with Expanded Duty Dental Assisting from Tri-County Technical College. Paige grew up as an active member of Mt. Zion and currently sings in the choir. She is the daughter of Buddy Evatt and Sandra Evatt.



Tyler Ferguson
(left) and **Mason**

Sims, are shown here at the church lunch held in honor of their graduation from high school earlier in the summer. Tyler is Clemson bound where his sister, Katie, is a junior. Mason is off to Southern Wesleyan U.

An update on **Nancy Rice** and **Nelson Rice** who graduated a few years ago, also active members as children and youth, Nancy continues her studies at Greenville Technical College and Nelson has transferred to the Citadel .

“I was thinking about how people seem to read the Bible a whole lot more as they get older; then it dawned on me...they’re cramming for their final exam.”

——George Carlin

From the Trustees:

Accessibility Is Another Word for Hospitality

Mt. Zion United Methodist church was built before accessibility became an important issue. We lack some basic features that allow persons with disabilities to participate fully in our worship services. Even though we have listening aids for the hearing impaired and large print bulletins for those with vision problems, we fall short on providing access for everyone to the chancel, upstairs classrooms and bathrooms.

The Trustees secured an architectural firm to determine the best way to modify the sanctuary to include handicapped access to the chancel, upstairs classrooms and bathrooms. One important consideration was that the design should blend in with our sanctuary. After the first phase of the design, we shared the plans with the entire church and the response was overwhelmingly favorable. The trustees are close to the point of having the architect complete the design so we can obtain cost estimates. There should be minimal disruption to our worship services during construction.

Philippians 4:19 (NIV) says “And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus”. Our church had a need to make all worship open and accessible to everyone. Rosalee McAlister Marshall, daughter of the late Claud and Christine McAlister, wanted to help us improve our church and also honor the memory of her parents. Her parents loved Mt. Zion Church and its memories remained near and dear to them throughout their lives. Rosalee McAlister Marshall made a memorial gift in honor of her parents to Mt. Zion which will be used toward the sanctuary modifications. The McAlister Memorial Fund is an open fund to which anyone may make a donation .

Other projects are being discussed by the trustees, such as the “Back Door Project” and a handicapped accessible bathroom. Please contact Jerry Chandler at jachandler4002@gmail.com or any of the trustees if you have suggestions for future projects.

Trustees are: Jerry Chandler, Al Cumbie, Lane Miller, Jill Sims, Karen Smith, Steve Lee and Virginia Norwood.

1 Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

Mt. Zion United Methodist Church
P.O. Box 186
310 Church Street
Central, South Carolina 29630
Address Correction Requested

Mt. Zion Congregation Welcomes Pastor Gene Aiken and family.



Swimming starts at 3pm, Saturday, **August 8**, with hotdog supper at 5pm. All ages invited. Please sign up through the church office (639-2101) or sign the sheet on the credenza in the sanctuary with number attending and side or dessert you'd like to bring. "Dogs", drinks and pool at the home of John & Kristine Reeves.

Tailgate at the Parsonage

The entire church is invited to join the fun and fellowship with a church-wide tailgate on Sunday, **August 30th**. We will gather at the parsonage at 5:00 PM. The church will provide hamburgers, hot dogs, "fixins", and drinks, Please bring your favorite side or dessert. You can also bring a chair for tailgating outside. We hope you will wear your team's favorite colors as we "kick off" the school year and our fall activities. Hope to see you there

