

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

We are grateful to those who have served in the past and are currently serving in the United States military. Please remember to pray for our country and for the following family and friends of Mt. Zion in active military service:



- | | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| John Blaine | John Holmes |
| Amanda Chivers | Joshua Heck |
| Jordan Cox | Christopher Heck |
| Jake Lumsden | Alex Martin |
| Derek McDonald | Kyle Mundell |
| Wayne Smith | Chris Trumbower |
| Josh Trumbower | Travis Wilbanks |
| John Youngblood, Jr. | |

Proverbs 14:34 (RSV) *Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.*



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

Annual Conference Report 2014

The South Carolina Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church was held at the Florence Civic Center in Florence, South Carolina, from June 1-4, 2014. The theme of the conference this year carried last year's theme "A More Excellent Way" by adding "Creating Corridors of Faith, Hope and Love". Bishop Jonathan Holston has a God-sized dream to change the "Corridor of Shame" into the "Corridor of Hope" by combating illiteracy.

The four days were filled with communion, prayer, hymns, fellowship, business of the church and interesting dialogue. There were several highlights for me as a first



The Commissioning of Michael Goldston as a Provisional Elder by our Bishop Jonathan Holston at the SC Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, June 2, 2014.

time attendee. ☺The most impressive was the beautiful Service of Ordination and Commissioning led by Bishop Holston on Monday evening. It is definitely "High-Church" in its elegance and pageantry. I was delighted to be able to witness the commissioning of our new pastor, Michael Goldston. ☺Volunteering in the packing of 65,000 books was fulfilling work. There were six volunteers at each table, and I learned from a local principal (who was a lay delegate) about the positive effects that these books were going to have on the students in her school. (You will hear more about that at a later date!) ☺Lastly, what I viewed at the Mission Fair was an eye opener. There were 34 Mission Projects on display exhibiting wonderful ideas about helping the poor in their communities, especially the children.

Continued on page 2

Annual Report (continued from page 1)

I could write a whole report about the sermons I heard that inspired me, especially the Bible Studies of Dr. Robin Dease (Superintendent, Hartsville District) and the sermon that Bishop Larry Goodpaster (Bishop of the Western North Carolina Annual Conference) gave at the Ordination and Commissioning Service.

The business of the church was not without debate, which made it more than interesting. We voted “Yeah” and “Nay” and then by the counting of upraised hands when necessary, which gives one an overwhelming sense of the convictions held by the delegates.

Budget:

The delegates passed a \$16.71 million budget for the SCUMC in 2015, which is a very slight increase—0.6 percent—from the \$16.6 million budget passed last year.

✿ An increase of \$50,000 in additional funding for Equitable Compensation will go to the establishment of new faith communities for unchurched persons.

✿The budget reflects a change in the way apportionments are calculated. Rather than a four-year average of net funds across all SC Methodist churches, a two-year average will be used. It will be fairer to have apportionment calculations more current, up-to-date, and relevant to each church’s financial giving.

✿Staying in debt is crippling to a church so a voluntary **Direct Billing Forgiveness Plan** was adopted for those churches that are unable to meet their apportionments. The provisional plan will begin in the fall with a permanent plan offered in the first portion of 2015.

✿The United Methodist Relief Center (UMRC) which went bankrupt in 2014 owes \$193,456.17 to the SC Conference. Monies from the sale of the Asbury Clark property will be used to cover this debt.

Pensions and Health Benefits

✿The conference will see an increase of 5.5% in health benefit premiums despite the high loss ratio the conference experienced in 2013. They were expecting a much higher increase of around 16.5%.

✿The conference is shifting from a five-tier insurance premium to a three-tier one, covering Participant Only (\$225/month cost), Participant Plus One (spouse or child, \$470/month) and Participant Plus Family (\$622/month).

✿The church cost for 2015 insurance will be **uniform for all churches** with eligible clergy (a flat \$823/month cost), instead of tiered, which will make transitions smoother for churches when pastors move mid-year from one church to another,

Continued on page 3

Church in Mission



Salkehatchie Summer Service is a pioneering servant ministry at selected sites in South Carolina involving high school and college age youth, adult community leaders and persons of different cultures in upgrading housing, motivating community cooperative efforts by helping persons to help themselves, and providing all participants with opportunities for personal growth and service.

This program of the South Carolina Conference Board of Global Ministries consists of over fifty work camps for United Methodist Youth in South Carolina. Participants must be at least 14 years old by the beginning of the camp they attend. Adult leaders are also needed to offer guidance and support. Camps are offered from May through August. During the week participants physically improve homes of needy families and reach out to these families and one another in friendship.

During the week of July 4th, the Foothills Salkehatchie group was active in the Central area. Campers worked on a house on Brock Street just up from the parsonage, helping our neighbor in need. Hosted by Pendleton UMC, Mt. Zion provided a spaghetti supper at Pendleton UMC for approximately 145 on June 30th. Thanks to Elizabeth Bowman and her “crew”, including Rev. Goldston, for preparing and serving, and also to all those who provided the food items and/or funds to help purchase them.

Health Kits for UMCOR

Mt. Zion’s UMW is focusing on one mission project for the summer months. Health kits are used by UMCOR (The United Methodist Committee on Relief) for distribution in the United States and throughout the world. They help sustain everyday life for people in a time of crisis and give access to needed essential supplies. The kits are easy to do and are not that costly. The UMW welcomes anyone; man, woman, and child to participate in this very worthwhile project. We will collect the kits **through September 7th**. Instructions and the list of items to include can be found in the last issue (May-June) of *The Grapevine*.



Church Family,

Thank you to everyone for making our graduation a special day at church and for the pizza and desserts.

Love always, Haley Lee

Million Book Effort collects 312,000+ books

Thanks to everyone who donated books for the Million Book Effort (MBE) at Mt. Zion. Our total was 83. The books are already being distributed to schools, agencies and tutoring and enrichment centers.

Now that the 2014 Annual Conference is over, organizers are urging United Methodists not to stop literacy efforts, but to move on to the next step in the program: helping kids connect with the books in a meaningful way.

Tutors and volunteer readers are needed in schools, pre-schools and after-school/enrichment programs across the state. Churches and individuals are encouraged to form partnerships with schools and local agencies that promote literacy. Visit www.umcsc.org for more information.

(copied from the [South Carolina United Methodist Advocate](#), July 2014.)

when a pastor gets married and the premium rises, or when a pastor's family grows with their first child. In the past, some churches were unable to pay the higher insurance costs and would only accept a pastor who was single even though the conference wanted to appoint a married pastor. It will lower our cost to insure the Goldston family in 2015.

Resolutions

✪ Stemming from the tragedy at Sandy Hook, the ***Resolution on Gun Violence*** encourages the SC Conference to change the focus and raise awareness of gun violence in our society as well as promote responsible gun ownership and educating the public. ✪ ***A Resolution to Support our Neighbors: The Need for Services to Individuals with Mental Illness in the South Carolina Department of Corrections***, stems from an order issued on January 2, 2014 by SC Circuit Court Judge J. Michael Baxley after a six week trial finding that the SC Department of Corrections is failing to provide adequate mental health services to the men and women in its custody. His ruling can be found as a link in the article [“When Good People Do Nothing: The Appalling Story of South Carolina’s Prisons”](#) by Andrew Cohen. The resolution was passed by an overwhelming acclamation.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Chandler, Lay Delegate



Save the date!

Saturday, July 26th at the home of John and Kristine Reeves, 457 Wood St., Central. All youth invited. Swimming at 3:00 p.m. and a cookout at 5:00 p.m. Watch the church bulletin for details closer to the date.



Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays in July: Tyler Ferguson (1), Vicki Miesbauer (2), Les Jones (8), Sam Blackman (9), Wes Witcher (9), Libba Carson (11), Braelin Cumbie (14), Paige Evatt (19), Sonny Sims (20), Tommy Still (24), Nelson Rice (27), Ann Wilbanks (28), Al Cumbie (30), Sharon Chandler (31).

Birthdays in August: Joey Parsons (6), Sherrie Youngblood (6), Kyle Owens (7), Amy Evans (9), 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), Christine McAlister (23), Chandler Coffman (31).

Anniversaries in July: Dick & Helen Singleton (2), Kris & Elizabeth Bowman (13), Tommy & Kathy Still (21), Charles & Pam Baker (22).

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

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Drew and Ashley Gelder! Daughter Holly has a new sister. Lucy Grace was born on May 23rd.



Congratulations also go to Ginger Wilbanks Allen who was honored during "Ginger Allen Day" at Daniel High School on May 27th. Ginger is the daughter of Clarence and the late Ella Wilbanks, and wife of Trent Allen. Their son, Jeremy, is currently teaching English in Kurashiki, Okayama Prefecture, Japan. He will be there for up to fourteen months. Please remember him in your prayers.

sent to Mt. Zion as my first appointment. Bishop Goodpaster, who preached the service told the new elders, "You must be out of your minds," for going into ministry at this time of falling memberships and shrinking budgets for the church. He then proclaimed that all Christians must be out of our minds so that we may have the mind of Christ, as Paul writes in Philippians. Annual Conference reminded me again and again that Methodists across our state seek the mind of Christ by supporting foreign missionaries, theological education, college Wesley Foundations, new mission congregations in SC, Salkehatchie home repairs, books for children, and hundreds of other mission efforts sustained by apportionment giving. The mission and ministry described at Annual Conference filled me with great hope for the Church. When we proclaim the death and resurrection of Christ by giving our children in baptism to be raised as Christian in a new family, by eating bread and drinking the fruit of the vine as nourishment for our souls, by teaching and proclaiming the word, by caring for each other when we are in need, the Holy Spirit lives in us, giving us the mind of Christ and joining us to Christians across our state and across the world who follow God in mission in the world.

Ever since I discerned my calling in the Wesley Foundation at UVA, God has been preparing me to lead you in God's mission and ministry in our community. God taught me the power of the Holy Spirit to touch and change people's lives through my worship leadership in music and drama ministry. God honed my leadership and administration skills as an aircraft commander and division officer in the Navy. God deepened my faith, my biblical literacy, and my theology in seminary. God strengthened my compassion and ability to listen in hospital chaplaincy and my three years of internship at Platt Springs UMC. God filled me with passion for community empowerment and solidarity with those who are poor and suffering. In all of this, the power of Jesus Christ worked by the Holy Spirit to transform me into God's minister and your pastor.

I enjoy playing golf, guitar, and harmonica (not all at the same time). I love Saints football, Murrell's Inlet, and dancing with my daughter. God has given me prayer, community, time with the scripture, my family, a few hobbies, and time by the sea to sustain me as your pastor. Please pray for me, as I will be praying for you, as we start this journey together. By the power of the Holy Spirit, it will be long and fruitful.

WELCOME!!



FROM THE PASTOR:

Anna and I are excited to begin this new chapter in our lives as part of the family at Mt. Zion, Central. We are beginning to learn your stories and the story of this community in Christ. I will share some of our family story. I grew up in Aiken, South Carolina where I attended St. John's United Methodist Church. I graduated from the University of Virginia with a degree in Foreign Affairs and served as an officer and helicopter pilot in the US Navy for 9 years. During that time, I served two deployments to the Middle East in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. I was stationed in Pensacola, FL; San Diego, CA; Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii; and New Orleans, LA. While in New Orleans, I received a Masters in History from Tulane University.

Anna and I married in 2008. Anna grew up in Greenville, SC at First Baptist. She graduated from Furman University with a BA in Sociology and headed to Charleston, where she earned her Doctorate of Dental Medicine at the Medical University of South Carolina. We lived in New Orleans for three years. Anna is a dentist and has worked in general and pediatric practices. She is currently taking some time off as we settle into life in Central. Anna plans to open a dental practice in Greenville in 2015. Anna enjoys music, traveling, reading, and Saints football. We have one daughter, Mary Grace, and are expecting another child in January. Mary Grace will be two in September and enjoys dancing, singing, swimming, playing outside, and watching football.

On May 24, I graduated from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia with a Masters in Divinity. On June 2, I was commissioned at the South Carolina United Methodist Annual Conference by Bishop Holston and
continued on page 7...

Work at the parsonage: The Parsonage Committee and the men of the church worked hard to prepare the parsonage for the new minister and family. A new furnace and air system was installed and works much better than the old, worn out one. New light fixtures and fans were installed. They worked on plumbing and installed the basement bathroom mirror, hardware, etc. The family room received a fresh coat of paint as well as some spot painting throughout the house. There was a lot of cleaning inside and out. Carpets were cleaned and the house was set up for the new family.

Thanks to the following hard working members of Mt Zion: Ginger Allen, Charles Baker, David Bullock, Elaine Bullock, Ben Bullock, Jerry Chandler, Miriam Coffman, Benji Cumbie, Drew Gelder, Steve Lee, Lane Miller, and Eileen Nonnenberg.

Work outside the parsonage has also occurred with more "clean-up" expected this summer. Two huge stumps in the front yard were ground in the spring, reports the Grounds Committee. They are very happy with the current landscaper, Low Bucks Lawn Care in Easley, who does both the parsonage and church grounds.



To the Mt. Zion family,

We wish to express our deepest thanks to all who have expressed to us, over the last several months, your appreciation of us through cards, emails, Facebook messages, letters and conversations. It has been a real blessing to us. And thank you for your many gifts in various forms which have helped us through this transition of packing and moving. We will always hold you dear in our hearts and we pray that God will lift you up as you lift him up and be his witnesses - here, there and everywhere.

Grace and Peace in Christ,

Jim and Heather Elder
138 Scottish Ave.
Simpsonville, SC 29680

Chair of Grounds Committee, Mary Handegan and husband, Terry, Chairman of the Staff-Parrish Relations Committee with Rev. and Mrs. Elder at the church dinner, June 22.

