



# THE CONNECTION

June 9-15, 2019

1401 Washington Street | Columbia, SC 29201 | [wsmethodist.org](http://wsmethodist.org) | 803-256-2417

INVITATION  
TO  
DISCERNMENT

Two morning  
informational  
sessions on the  
Reconciling  
Ministries Network  
will be held at  
10:00 am in the  
Sanctuary:

June 9 & June 23

All are encouraged  
to attend!

## Sessions:

Facilitated by Dr. Melanie Dobson  
All Sessions begin at 4:00 pm in Threatt Hall

June 9  
"BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVES  
ON HOMOSEXUALITY"  
presented by  
Dr. Brian Peterson

June 23  
"THE BOOK OF DISCIPLINE  
OF THE UNITED METHODIST  
CHURCH & Homosexuality"  
presented by  
TBD

June 30  
"HOW DOES WSUMC  
LIVE OUT ITS IDENTITY  
STATEMENT?"  
presented by  
Nancy Whittle

July 14  
"WHAT DOES IT MEAN  
TO BE A MEMBER OF THE  
RECONCILING MINISTRIES  
NETWORK (RMN)?"  
presented by  
Sidney Gatch

## Invitation to Discernment... What Does It All Mean?

The General Conference Response Team (GCRT) was convened by Church Council in April and charged with developing a process for Washington Street UMC (WSUMC) to explore affiliation with Reconciling Ministries Network (RMN).

WSUMC is a congregation that accepts viewpoints of all members on many different social justice issues. Historically, WSUMC's ministries have demonstrated hospitality and love toward people of all backgrounds.

WSUMC's strategic planning process, "Renewal 2020" resulted in a strong set of core values and an identity statement that specifically welcomes people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. This identity statement is a strong affirmation

of our commitment to our journey toward radical hospitality for all people.

There is growing support across our diverse congregation to boldly respond to the 2019 UMC General Conference decision to pass the Traditional Plan, which is viewed as a step backward for our denomination and has deeply hurt the LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersexed, Asexual)+ community.

A Reconciling church affiliates with the RMN, a nonprofit organization that promotes the full inclusion of LGBTQIA+ individuals in the life of the church. More information about RMN can be found in the FAQ section of this recommendation (*see next page*).

The GCRT recommended a facili-

tated discernment process, which was approved by Church Council. The four sessions listed on the front will help to evaluate whether WSUMC is ready to move toward an affiliation with RMN.

This process includes the four congregational sessions in June and July, and an extensive communication plan. While this process will not heal the pain caused by the General Conference decision, it will allow our congregation to more publicly welcome people of all sexual orientations, join a network of like-minded congregations and communities, and take a leadership role among South Carolina United Methodists on this specific social justice issue.

<sup>+</sup>A common acronym for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersexed, Asexual community.



**THE DAWSEY CLASS:** June 9: the class will attend the discussion session on the Reconciling Ministries Network in the sanctuary. June 16: the Rev. Joe Slade will teach Chapter 15, "Two Witnesses to Jesus and Christ," and Chapter 16, "Transformation and Contemplation," from *The Universal Christ: How a Forgotten Reality Can Change Everything We See, Hope For and Believe* by Richard Rohr.

**THE OPEN DOOR CLASS** will wrap up its study on Mark Batterson's *If: Trading Your If Only Regrets for God's What If Possibilities*. This summer, we will walk through *Old Testament Stories from the Backside* by J. Ellsworth Kalas. This book gives a creative telling of Old Testament stories through a different lens, typically through a secondary character.

**THE PAUL HARMON CLASS** is continuing a study of the minor prophets. The study is being led by Rev. Don Britt. All are welcome to join us.

**THE JOY CLASS** will continue studying the Adam Hamilton lesson series - Christianity & World Religions.

## Gifts

IN HONOR OF ASHLEY & EMILY BROWN  
to Epworth Mother's Day  
Eva Nance & Kimberly McAlister

IN MEMORY OF VERA LUPO  
to Washington Street UMC  
Virginia Vaughan

IN MEMORY OF KATHY HANDEL  
to Washington Street UMC  
Virginia Vaughan  
Jeffrey & Louise Handel





# Reconciling Ministries Frequently Asked Questions

## 1. What is Reconciling Ministries Network (RMN)?

► Reconciling Ministries Network is an organization of primarily United Methodist individuals committed to the full participation of LGBTQIA+\* persons in the United Methodist Church (UMC).

## 2. Why is affiliating with RMN important?

► The UMC is the ONLY major protestant religion in the US that continues to single out homosexuality as “incompatible with Christian teaching” and LGBTQIA+ individuals as “less than” other heterosexual members of the denomination. In addition, currently many LGBTQIA+ persons are pondering their futures in the UMC; many have already left.

► The decision of the 2019 General Conference of the UMC does not reflect the love and acceptance Washington Street UMC strives to show all who enter her doors, and causes pain to a targeted group of individuals within and outside our congregation. Affiliating with RMN is one way to show dissent against this decision and align ourselves with like-minded congregations committed to social justice, and to advocate for change within the denomination.

## 3. What are the core principles of RMN?

► RMN is committed to the justice imperative of the Gospel and to grounding its ministries in the Wesleyan practice of personal and social holiness.

► RMN is committed to policy change and the creation of long-term solutions and practices that create full inclusion in the United Methodist Church and our broader society.

► RMN works for full equality in membership, ordination, and marriage for God’s lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender children.

► RMN aspires to fulfill our baptismal covenant to recognize and utilize our privileges to resist oppression in whatever form it presents itself in our movement, church, and world.

► RMN believes that human sexuality is a good gift from God.

► RMN is committed to supporting the integration of healthy, loving expressions of sexuality and spirituality for everyone.

## 4. Is becoming a Reconciling Church the same thing as joining RMN?

► For the purposes of this discussion, the following terms are considered to be synonymous: “Reconciling Church,”

“Reconciling Congregation,” “affiliation with the Reconciling Ministries Network,” and “member of the Reconciling Ministries Network.”

## 5. What is the process to become a Reconciling congregation?

► The simple requirement is a public statement of inclusion that specifically welcomes people of all sexual orientations and gender identities approved by some leadership group within the congregation. This explicit welcome is necessary because our UMC holds official policies that exclude LGBTQIA+ people from the full life of the Church. The statement is all you need to affiliate with RMN, and WSUMC’s Identity Statement (adopted in 2016) will suffice.

► RMN requests that the statement is kept in front of the people routinely.

► RMN suggests that annually your community/congregation celebrates a special Sunday; many recognize their affiliation with RMN the 4th Sunday of January or during June (Pride month).

## 6. How will the decision be reached for WSUMC’s affiliation with RMN?

► The Church Council will ultimately make the decision about whether or not WSUMC should become a member of the Reconciling Ministries Network as a congregation. Church Council will use the results of the discernment process described above to inform this decision.

## 7. Will WSUMC change its name if it affiliates with RMN?

► No. The church name will not change. The name will remain Washington Street United Methodist Church.

## 8. Will affiliation with RMN impact WSUMC’s apportionment in any way?

► No. The amount of apportionments we are assessed or pay will not be impacted if we become a Reconciling Church.

## 9. Does affiliation with RMN change WSUMC’s core values?

► No. WSUMC’s core values will not change based on affiliation with RMN.

## 10. Is there a financial cost to be a Reconciling community or congregation?

► RMN suggests a congregational contribution of \$250 annually, but it is left up to the discretion of the church. Some congregations give more, some give less. These contributions in no way violate *The Book of Discipline*.

*continued*

**11. Is affiliating with RMN against “church law?”**

► No. Official UMC policy bars ordination of gay clergy and bars church agencies from funding “gay” groups that “promote the practice of homosexuality,” but the restrictions do not apply to local churches. In fact, the Social Principles of the UMC specifically encourage ministries with lesbian and gay persons (para. 65G) and advocate for the protection of their civil rights (para. 66H).

**12. Does affiliating with RMN mean we can disregard the rules in The Book of Discipline regarding human sexuality?**

► No, we still abide by the rules of *The Book of Discipline* regarding ordination and marriage, but we will be advocating for change of those rules at the 2020 General Conference and beyond.

**13. WSUMC already has five Reconciling groups. Why do we need this action to become a Reconciling church?**

► By becoming a Reconciling church, WSUMC will publicly identify itself as a congregation that seeks change in *The*

*Book of Discipline* as we continue our historical witness for social justice.

**14. How long has RMN been in existence?**

► At the September 1982 meeting of Affirmation: United Methodists for Lesbian/Gay Concerns in Boston, the idea of “developing a program in which local churches will declare their support for the concerns of lesbians and gay men” is approved at the business session that weekend, thus the beginning of RMN.

**15. How widespread is RMN?**

► Today, there are 1,013 Reconciling communities and congregations, and 40,387 Reconciling individuals. These are located in every state (except Wyoming and North Dakota), the Philippines, and Puerto Rico. In SC, there are nine Reconciling communities: five at WSUMC (Grace Class, Dawsey Class, Active Faith, Toni White Circle, and Circle 9). There are currently no Reconciling congregations in SC.

# We Need You to Volunteer!

*Ushers Needed for the  
7:00 am service!*

*Contact*

*Jerry Watson at  
803-782-1335*

*Volunteers are needed  
for Children's Church*

*Contact*

*Andrea McAtee at  
803-727-9518  
amcatee@gmail.com*



## Active Faith

Active Faith invites the congregation to help fill the Cooperative Ministries Emergency Pantry with the following items: spaghetti sauce and noodles, canned chicken, canned salmon, canned tuna, Vienna sausage, canned sardines, tuna salad, chicken salad, corned beef hash, chili and beans, ravioli, canned spaghetti, jelly, peanut butter, cheese or Ritz® crackers with peanut butter filling, salted peanuts, crackers, canned fruit, canned potatoes, canned diced tomatoes, cereal, quick cooking grits (2 lb size), quick cooking oatmeal, rice (1 or 2 lb bag), packaged instant potatoes, gravy mixes, bottled water, and soups with protein.

We will collect these items in the Missions Garden during the months of June and July. Please consider putting some of these items on your shopping list to donate to someone in need.

"DO ALL THE GOOD YOU CAN,  
BY ALL THE MEANS YOU CAN"



## Help Our Ecuador Mission!

This July, a team from Washington Street UMC will be traveling El Prado and Otavalo, Ecuador for a mission trip. During our time there we will be involved in several projects including construction work, Vacation Bible School, and health and vision screening. The team would like to pass out health kits to each person/family who comes through the clinic and each child we meet in VBS. We are collecting simple items such as toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, toilet paper, paper towels, napkins, pocket tissues, shampoo, condition, washcloths and more to make into kits to hand out. Anything you would be able to find or have donated would be greatly appreciated as we plan to make about 400 health kits.



***"Love is not patronizing and charity isn't about pity, it is about love. Charity and love are the same -- with charity you give love, so don't just give money but reach out your hand instead." — Mother Teresa***

## From The Records & History Committee

### 75 Years Ago

The following entry appeared in the June 11, 1944 church bulletin, five days after the World War II "D-Day" landings:



*"Your minister regrets that he was out of the city last Tuesday [June 6] when so many entered the church for prayer following the invasion news...It is good that our church has such fine leadership among the laity that can respond to such emergencies. You are reminded that there will be many more invasion days and that our prayers must be continuous."*

## Our Leadership

The Reverend Patricia Parrish, Senior Pastor

The Reverend Alston Lippert, Associate Minister for Nurture and Discipleship Development

The Reverend Taylor Pafford, Associate Minister for Children and Family Ministries

Angela Powers, Director of Music

Louis Shirer, Organist

Dr. Richard Frierson, Pianist

Robbie Douglas, Church Business Administrator

Abbie McKenzie, Church Secretary/Administrative Assistant

Jerry Sumpter, Property/Maintenance Supervisor

Felicia Yockel, Director of Child Development Center

Jane Peterson, Communications Specialist

# Getting to Know Shelley Stafford

By Fran Zupan

Shelley Stafford, who coordinates the nursery volunteers at Washington Street, likes being around babies. “You get to know the babies, and then you get to watch them grow up,” she said. Shelley has been nursery coordinator for five or six years, and before that, she was a nursery volunteer.

The nursery always has a paid worker. The United Methodist Church’s Safe Sanctuaries policy requires two adults who are at least 18 in the nursery at all times. Workers and volunteers must undergo a criminal background check and complete the UMC’s Safe Sanctuaries training.

Shelley tries to volunteer in the nursery only once every two months, but it depends on whether one of the other volunteers signs up.

After Shelley joined Washington Street in 1997, she was a youth counselor for 10 years. She also worked with Suzanne Joye teaching Children’s Church to the 4’s and 5’s for about 12 years.

“Between the kids in there and the kids in the youth group, I’ve watched a lot of kids grow up, and now a lot of them are bringing their kids to the nursery, so it’s just full circle,” Shelley said.

When she was a youth counselor, one of her responsibilities was making sure two boys didn’t go up on the roof, she said. Whenever they left the room, she would go stand in the stairwell.

“They were always trying to push the boundaries,” she said. “It kind of became a thing – ‘We have to do this now.’”

Shelley grew up in Seneca, which seemed like the most boring place at the time, she said. “It was a big deal when they got a Burger King.” She and her friends would organize trips to Clemson or Anderson to go to the movies. One person’s parents would take and another’s would pick up.

Shelley’s paternal grandfather was Billy Graham’s first cousin. Her family attended a Baptist church until she was 11, and then they joined the Methodist church. The Baptist church would offer a big prize to whoever brought the most visitors. Even at her young age, that didn’t seem right, Shelley said.

Shelley’s parents divorced when she was 13, and her father moved to Hilton Head. Before spring break, her friends asked if she would like to go to the lake or Myrtle Beach during spring break.

“We have to spend spring break with our dad at the beach,” she told them. Were they jealous? “We tried to make them jealous,” Shelley said.

Shelley, her older brother, and younger sister also spent summers with their dad. When he remarried, she gained two stepsisters, one older, one younger, making her the “quintessential middle child,” Shelley said.

After she graduated from high school, she went to Hilton

Head for the summer and then to her dorm at USC. She earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology in 1995.

After she graduated, she got a job at a law firm as a receptionist and a secretary. She has worked for law firms ever since. Today she is a paralegal at Crowe LaFave, where she works for two attorneys, one who practices primarily law enforcement defense and the other who practices primarily insurance defense.

Shelley said her paralegal training has been “on the job.” As a paralegal, she gets the documents necessary for defending the lawsuit, organizes them and summarizes them to give the attorney an overview. She often is in the initial meeting with the attorney and the client and serves as a contact person if the client cannot get in touch with the attorney.

Shelley currently is juggling around 100 cases. “I have a lot of plates spinning in the air,” she said. Although many cases are settled or receive a directed verdict after the plaintiff presents its case, they still must be ready to present a defense at trial, she said.

When Shelley mentioned her interest in history to church historian Mike Broome, she became a member of the church’s Records and History Committee. She is excited to be working with a subcommittee to revitalize the exhibits in the church museum, located on the third floor she said.

Through doing her genealogy on Ancestry.com, Shelley discovered that she is related to the Civil War diarist Mary Boykin Chesnut of Camden. Chesnut’s uncle by marriage, Thomas Jefferson Withers, was Shelley’s third great uncle.

Now she wants to know more than her ancestors’ names. Many of them fought in the Civil War or the Revolutionary War, and Shelley wants any documentation that would flesh out who they were.

“It’s not just that it’s my family’s history,” she said. “It’s part of history that ties me to history.”

Shelley lives in the Red Bank community with Rocky, her 12-year-old Yorkie.

“My primary hobby is catering to my dog, who thinks he’s in charge, and for the most part, he is,” Shelley said. Rocky wants his breakfast as soon as her alarm goes off.

“He’s totally spoiled, and I take full credit for it,” she said. ❁





# YOUTH & Children's CORNER



*Please join us in praying for the following individuals who will be headed to Salkehatchie Penn Center, Foothills and Black Swamp, and for the families they will be serving through this special ministry. We are so proud of their willingness to serve others as the hands and feet of Christ.*

## PENN CENTER

Susan Caskey, Lydia Conte, Ben Epting, John Epting, Katherine Epting, Maddy Foley, Evan Hefelfinger, Hannah Jessup, Leslie Leitner, Beth Robinson, Marshall Robinson, Campbell Sullivan, Dane Waund & Darby Waund

## FOOTHILLS

Ava Jackson

## BLACK SWAMP

Emily Caskey



# Vacation Bible School

*Ages 3 to rising 6th grade*

## June 24-28

## 8:45-11:45 am

## REGISTER TODAY!

*There is a suggested donation of \$20 to cover supplies, T-shirts & snacks.*



\$20 suggested donation to cover t-shirts & supplies

## DAY CAMP 2019

WHEN: 8:45-11:45 AM | JULY 15-19, 2019  
WHO: AGES 4 TO RISING 6TH GRADE

Register Today!

# CALENDAR OF WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

## JUNE 9-22, 2019

### Sunday, June 9 / Pentecost Sunday

9:00 am	Early Service	Christ Chapel
10:00 am	Informational Session on Reconciling Ministries Network	Sanctuary
11:00 am	Regular Service	Sanctuary
4:00 pm	Discernment Session 1 "Biblical Perspectives on Homosexuality"	Threatt Hall

### Monday, June 10

1:30 pm	NA Meeting	Soup Cellar
5:00 pm	Worship Team Meeting	John Harper Classroom

### Tuesday, June 11

8:00 am	Prayer Group	Wesley Room
1:30 pm	NA Meeting	Soup Cellar
5:30 pm	AVP	Wesley Room
5:30 pm	Firm It Up	Youth Room
6:30 pm	DACS	Conference Room

### Wednesday, June 12

10:45 am	Prayer Group	Holroyd Room
1:30 pm	NA Meeting	Soup Cellar

### Thursday, June 13

7:30 am	CDC Father's Day Drop-In	CDC Workroom
9:30 am	CDC Devotions	Christ Chapel
1:30 pm	NA Meeting	Soup Cellar

### Friday, June 14

1:30 pm	NA Meeting	Soup Cellar
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### Saturday, June 15

3:00 pm	Organ Practice	Sanctuary/Choir Room
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### Sunday, June 16

#### *Father's Day*

9:00 am	Early Service	Christ Chapel
11:00 am	Regular Service	Sanctuary

### Monday, June 17

1:30 pm	NA Meeting	Soup Cellar
4:00 pm	Prisma Hospice Volunteer Summer Social	Threatt Hall
6:00 pm	Sunday Dinner Planning Meeting	Wesley Room

### Tuesday, June 18

8:00 am	Prayer Group	Wesley Room
1:30 pm	NA Meeting	Soup Cellar
5:30 pm	Firm It Up	Youth Room
6:00 pm	POMC	Grace Class
6:30 pm	Domestic Abuse Counseling Services	Conference Rm.

### Wednesday, June 19

1:30 pm	NA Meeting	Soup Cellar
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### Thursday, June 20

9:30 am	CDC Devotions	Christ Chapel
1:30 pm	NA Meeting	Soup Cellar
4:00 pm	Killingsworth Board Meeting	John Harper Classroom

### Friday, June 21

1:30 pm	NA Meeting	Soup Cellar
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### Saturday, June 22

3:00 pm	Organ Practice	Sanctuary/Choir Room
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### Sunday, June 23

9:00 am	Early Service	Christ Chapel
10:00 am	Informational Session on Reconciling Ministries Network	Sanctuary
11:00 am	Regular Service	Sanctuary
4:00 pm	Discernment Session II "The Book of Discipline of the UMC & Homosexuality"	Threatt Hall