

THE CONNECTION

Sunday, July 24, 2022

Release of the Next Raggio Report *Washington Street's Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic*

by Christine Hait

The Raggio Report is a media-based historical account of Washington Street United Methodist Church that is updated every two years. It is the result of a gift from church member Mary Raggio, who provided money in her will for a report that would serve two purposes: 1) to update and inform members about key events in the church and 2) to provide for posterity a historical record of the activities of the church.

This Raggio Report reviewing the past two years is special. Whereas earlier Raggio Reports have been broad and wide-ranging in nature, covering various topics, the most recent report focuses on Washington Street's experience of the Covid-19 pandemic, exploring the challenges it created and the innovations it inspired. The voices of key individuals involved in the church's pandemic response come together to tell a coherent narrative about an extraordinary time in the church's history.

The words of Rev. Patricia Parrish, Rev. Alston Lippert, Ricky Rowe, Lee Haynes, and Rev. Becky Shirley paint a



picture of an ever-changing situation that required quick decision making and timely adjustments as the pandemic evolved. As the report makes clear, the leadership at Washington Street prioritized safety while recognizing the need for church members to worship and study, for pastoral care to continue, and for the church's commitments to service and mission to be met.

Of course, even during a pandemic that seemingly unsettled every aspect of life, the rhythms of regular church life, including staff changes continued. The report takes note of the retirement of the church's senior pastor, the appointment of a new senior pastor, and the addition of new staff members during this remarkable two-year period. It highlights Rev. Shirley's reflections on her experience of transitioning away from her previous church and joining Washington Street during the pandemic.

As photographic images throughout the report show, the people pictured may be wearing masks or worshipping in a parking lot, but as in years gone by they are joined together in the Spirit and in their love for each other and their church.

The current members of the Raggio Report Committee are Eleanore Langley, Ed McClain, Christine Hait, and Rev. Becky Shirley. Look for upcoming announcements about opportunities to view the Raggio Report.



Getting to Know—Sarah Quinn Jones

By Fran Zupan



Sarah Quinn Jones' new job as part-time administrative assistant in the Washington Street church office is a homecoming of sorts for her.

Sarah's family joined Washington Street after her younger brother David began volunteering in the Soup Cellar. David and their mother joined the church first. Then the rest of their family followed, one after another. Sarah was in her

30s when she joined. Mike Alexander was her favorite senior pastor, and "he holds a special place in our family," she said.

Sarah's parents are Ron and Genie Quinn. David and his wife Angelica live in Forest Acres. Their son Marcos is a rising sophomore at The Citadel Sarah also has an older brother Eric, a writer living in California.

In 1978, Sarah graduated from Spring Valley High School, where her mother was a teacher. She enrolled in the University of South Carolina but dropped out for a while before graduating in 1985.

During the time Sarah wasn't in school, she worked in photography stores, dreaming of a life as a photographer. When she returned to finish her degree in media arts, she began thinking about a career in film.

After graduation, Sarah became a "movie gypsy," contracting with various production companies to work on sets and props. She worked out of Atlanta, Columbia and Wilmington, N.C.

Among other projects, she worked on "Prince of Tides" starring Barbra Streisand and Nick Nolte, "Separate but Equal," a TV miniseries starring Sidney Poitier as Thurgood Marshal and "A League of Their Own," about the first professional female baseball league, with Geena Davis, Madonna and Tom Hanks. Sarah said sometimes she saw the stars when she was painting or decorating sets, but she always respected their privacy.

While she was working on "Billy Bathgate" in Wilmington, she rented a house on Topsail Island, which she described as a charming town.

"I felt very close to nature and to God there," she said.

Sarah said she enjoyed her time in the movie business, but she felt she had to leave "because of the free-lance nature of it. It was stressful worrying about the next job."

After she stopped working on movies, Sarah held administrative jobs and also taught French at a private preschool in Atlanta.

"The kids were amazing," she said. "Some were like little sponges; they soaked it right up"

Sarah met her husband Dan Jones through mutual friends in 2002. He was doing special props construction and studio management in the movie business. She was 40 and had never married. He was divorced with two sons.

"As we got to know each other, we realized it might be a lifetime thing," she said. The Revs. Mike Alexander and Diana Westerkam married them the next year in the Washington Street sanctuary.

The wedding was in February and the forecast called for cold rain. Much to everyone's surprise it was sunny and 70 degrees that day. The moon that night had two circles around it which Sarah took as God's blessing on their marriage.

Sarah moved back to Columbia four years ago. Both her parents have dementia, and she is grateful that they know who she is and "there are still so many vestiges of who they were.

"They want to live and die in their home, and I am going to try to help them achieve that," she said.

Sarah and her parents read the Upper Room devotionals together. Her dad is able to read the Scripture, and she reads the rest.

At home, Sarah juggles caregivers, cooks, shops, cleans and feeds and walks her "children," two large dogs, Lily, an English Cream Golden Retriever (actually white) and Emmy, a Goldendoodle, a cross between a Golden Retriever and a Standard Poodle. Animal advocacy is a passion of Sarah's. Both her "children" are rescues.

Sarah has been working at Washington Street since June 1. She found the position on the job search engine Indeed. She had been praying about it for a long time, and all of a sudden there it was, she said, acknowledging that it was a "Godwink," a divine coincidence that guides a person's life.

"I love this church because it walks Jesus' walk," she said, mentioning the Soup Cellar, Narcotics Anonymous meetings, racial justice and LGBTQIA rights — the inclusion of all God's children.

Sarah said she loves writing, animal advocacy, yoga and gardening. She has been reconstructing the backyard garden which right now is full of sunflowers, zinnias and dahlias.

"Gardening has really saved me," she said, adding that she photographs her flowers and shares the pictures on social media. Some things come full circle if you wait long enough, she believes. She has finally realized her college-age dream of becoming a "published" photographer.



Sarah and her mother, WSUMC longtime member, Genie Quinn.

Sunday School Updates

• **The Aldersgate Class:** Last week, the class has started a new 8-week study by well-known bible scholars, N.T. Wright and Michael F. Bird. These scholars team up to take you on a tour of the story behind the explosive story of the New Testament. You will discover things you never knew about Jesus' baptism and journey into the wilderness, the meaning behind the parables and miracles, the significance of his death and resurrection, the incredible expansion of the early church into the Greco-Roman world, and how the transforming mission of Jesus can still turn the world upside down today. The sessions include video and the study guide, *The New Testament You Never Knew: Exploring the Context, Purpose, and Meaning of the Story of God*. Come join us for fellowship and an exciting study program. We are located in the Aldersgate Classroom on the 2nd floor of the Education building. For questions call David A. Anderson at 803.318.8821 or danderson@richardsonplowden.com.

• **The Dawsey Class:** This Sunday, July 24, we will continue our study of *Christ in Crisis? Reclaiming Jesus in a Time of Fear, Hate, and Violence*, by Jim Wallis. Jim Seigler will teach Chapter 7, "The Caesar Question." Next Sunday, July 31, John Evans will teach Chapter 8, "The Peacemaker Question." The class will meet by FreeConferenceCall. Class members should call in before 9:15 a.m. but not before 9:05 a.m. The call-in number is 701-802-5115. The access code is 7252934. For more information about the class, contact the class president, Mary Slade, at marydslade4@gmail.com.

• **The Grace Class:** The Grace Class will be doing "topic of choice" with various members leading the class each week through Labor Day. On July 24, Jan Baker will lead the class. Join in person or contact Jim Lane at jlane@columbiasc.edu for the Zoom link to gather Sunday mornings at 9:45 am for fellowship and at 10:00 am for spiritual reflection.

• **The Joy Class:** The lessons are being led by various members and focused on how we can use this season to further our faith journey. Everyone is welcome to join us as we learn together. If you are interested, please contact Lee Haynes at lelandhaynesjr@gmail.com or Sylvia Stevens at sylviasaundersstevens@gmail.com for more information.

• **The Open Door Class:** The class has started a new series: *Taste and See: Discovering God Among Butchers, Bakers and Fresh Food Makers* by Margaret Feinberg. All are welcome to join. The class meets both in-person and via Zoom each week. For Zoom link information, contact Ann Jessup at jessup.ann@gmail.com.

• **The Paul Harmon Class:** The Paul Harmon Class will resume meeting on August 7. We are looking forward to Randy Elswick's lesson on Hope. All are welcome. If you have questions, please contact Suzanne Joye at sjoye@sc.rr.com.

• **The John Harper Class:** is studying the Gospels using Cokesbury Adult Sunday School materials. All are welcome. Contact Tracy Powers at tjpowers65@gmail.com.

• **The WSUMC Youth Class:** There will be no class on July 24. For more information, contact Mackin Wall at mackin@wsmethodist.org.

ATTENDANCE (as of 7-19-22):

July 17: 132 (in-person); 90 (online) = 222

July 10: 123 (in-person); 434 (online) = 557

July 3: 74 (in-person); 122 (online) = 194

June 26: 96 (in-person); 101 (online) = 197

GIVING YEAR-TO-DATE (as of 7-19-22):

Not available for this issue

Gifts



**IN HONOR OF THE FREE
LITTLE HYGIENE PANTRY**
to the Little Hygiene Pantry
Given by Susan Brown

**IN MEMORY OF JOHN
KINSELLA**
to the Soup Cellar
Given by Melinda Gibson &
Melanie Johnson

IN MEMORY OF ROY R. SUTHERLAND, JR.
to the Soup Cellar
Given by Lynda & John Galloway

PRAYER LIST

The Prayer Team wants you to know that you can email us with any prayer concerns any time. Please email wsumcprayers@gmail.com.

Martha Boynton
David Byrum
Heidi Conte
Mickey Epting
Rev. Paul Harmon
Bud Harrelson
Karen Horne
Lisa Johnson
Debby Joyner
Rev. Judy King
Martha Helen King
Mike LeFever

Paul McClanahan
David Middleton
Genie & Ron Quinn
Frances "Tut" Robertson
Rick Rowe
Boyd Saunders
Stephanie Saunders
Sarah Threatt
Edee Vaughan
Jim Ward
Our homebound

Sunday Dinner Team Receives \$5,000 Grant

Congratulations to the Sunday Dinner Team who were awarded a \$5,000 grant to fund our "Sunday Dinners" for 2022-23 from Richland County.

Based on the success of the Easter Monday lunch, the team has decided to make a few changes to when and how they will continue their mission to bring food and other necessities to those less fortunate in our neighborhood.

The first meal will take place on Saturday, August 27, from 8:30-10:30 am in Threatt Hall. We will be serving a special breakfast for our clients, as well as continuing such services as free haircuts, and blood pressure and diabetic checks through the Free Medical Clinic.

A big thank you to Mackin Wall for writing and submitting the grant for the team. Keep an eye out for a call for volunteers to help set up and serve, as well as donating donuts or muffins for the event.

The team is planning two more feeding events before the first of the year: a lunch on Monday, Oct. 17; and another breakfast event on Saturday, Dec. 3.

For more information, contact Lee Haynes at

August Birthdays

August 1

Lydia Conte
Michael Harmon
Happy Henry
Donna McMenemy

August 2

R E L Freeman
Robert Horton

August 3

Pato Araven
August 4
Michele Gasque
Joe Clark
Wyatt Rowe
Addy Lee

August 5

Karen Horne
Riggs Rogers

August 6

Marcia Lane
Dottie Webber

August 8

Garry Stevens
Graham Cooper

August 10

Kelly McCook

August 12

Neal Woods
Ed McClain
Mary Sutherland

August 13

Buzzy Deas
Debbie Teague
Jeanie Sullivan

August 14

Peggy Rumpel

August 15

Nicole Stalvey

August 16

Shelley Stafford
Izzy Oehler

August 17

Allen Rutter

August 18

Kathy Rogers
Madison Matthews

August 19

Richard Shirley
Dawn McCullough
Allyn Anderson

August 20

Jim Lane

August 21

Kathleen Burbage
Rebecca Rosen
Alma Louise Aravena

August 24

Nancy Holmes

August 26

Charles Garren
Dale Harsey

August 30

Steve Fertick

August 31

Laurely Nance

Happy Birthday

Gracious Goodness Stocked

Our Gracious Goodness freezer is freshly stocked with homemade meals. The Gracious Goodness food ministry was created in 2014 to supply meals to members who are ill or experiencing a crisis. Meals are usually prepared by members in the church kitchen. During the pandemic meals were cooked at home. We hope to be cooking again in the kitchen soon. Please contact Rev. Alston at alflippert@umcsc.org or Rev. Becky at rjshirley@umcsc.org if you know someone who could use a meal.



Children's Sunday School is in session!



Attention parents & grandparents!

Children's Sunday school is held each Sunday from 10:00 am to 10:45 am. We would love to have your little ones join us!

Anyone wishing to join a rotation to teach Children's Sunday School (once every 4-6 weeks) should contact Mackin Wall at mackin@wsmethodist.org

Nursery is available for infants to 3 years.



Thanks to everyone who was able to make it to our well-wishing gathering for member Dale Harsey, and to all of you who were able to contribute to Dale's moving fund. As Christine Hait said "this should get you to Texarkana!" Given Dale's route, more likely to Lake Charles, LA. Your generosity will allow Dale to start with \$800 more in the travel fund than he otherwise would.

Also a BIG THANK YOU to Christine Hait who organized the event and to she and others (Deborah Rowe and Lois Ann Tuell) who provided food, drink and setups.