



THE CONNECTION

Jan. 7, 2024

Special Reading to be Held Jan. 14th in Christ Chapel

The Racial Justice Action Team is excited to host a reading of MLK's Letter from the Birmingham jail on Sunday, January 14, at 9:45 am in Christ Chapel. WSUMC member, Cody Lidge will perform the reading in order to remember and honor the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "Letter from Birmingham Jail" is a profound and eloquent defense of nonviolent resistance to racism and injustice. Written in April 1963 during his incarceration, King responded to a group of white clergymen who criticized the timing and methods of the civil rights protests. In the letter, King masterfully articulated the moral imperative for confronting racial inequality, drawing on his deep understanding of Christian ethics and principles of justice. He emphasized the urgency of the struggle for civil rights and argued that waiting for a more convenient time would only perpetuate injustice. The letter not only addressed the specific context of Birmingham, but also became a timeless and influential piece of literature, showcasing King's intellectual prowess and unwavering commitment to the principles of equality and justice.



But the judgment of God is upon the church as never before. If the church of today does not recapture the sacrificial spirit of the early church, it will lose its authentic ring, forfeit the loyalty of millions, and be dismissed as an irrelevant social club with no meaning for the twentieth century.

I meet young people every day whose disappointment with the church has risen to outright disgust.

—From Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Letter from Birmingham Jail, April, 1963

"Moms Demand Action Advocacy Day" is Set to Begin at Washington Street UMC on January 10th.

"Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America" is a national volunteer organization of women and men working to end gun violence. You've likely seen the red T-shirts worn by Moms Demand Action members, signifying their solidarity in addressing the violence caused by irresponsible gun use. The Midlands Moms Demand Action group meets at Washington Street UMC once a month, with the Racial Justice Action Team serving as WS's liaison to this organization.

Some Moms Demand Action members/volunteers are more intimately connected to the issue of gun violence, with some

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SPECIAL INSERT: Sowing to the Spirit

being survivors themselves, and others having lost loved ones to gun violence. Many of us are deeply disturbed by the less-than-strict gun laws in the United States and South Carolina. While the organization supports responsible gun ownership, it is outraged by the ongoing turmoil caused by guns in society and the despair and loss of life resulting from the irresponsible use of guns.

You have an opportunity to make a difference. This coming Wednesday, January 10, is the SC Moms Demand Action Advocacy Day. Moms Demand Action members and other concerned South Carolina citizens will meet at our church to learn about the upcoming bills we support or oppose. We will then walk together to the State House, where we will stand against dangerous gun policies like permitless carry and advocate for common-sense gun laws to make our communities safer. Come walk with us the half-mile to the south steps of the State House, where we will gather for a group photo and a press conference before entering the building in small groups to speak to legislators. Please put on a red T-shirt and join us! In numbers, we can make a difference as we talk to legislators about the need for their vote for gun safety.

To RSVP and/or learn more about Advocacy Day, visit tinyurl.com/SCMomsAdvDay2024.

Advocacy Day Schedule:

Wednesday, Jan. 10th
 8:30-9:15 am Sign-in WSUMC
 9:15-10:30 am Orientation and training at WSUMC
 10:30 am Gather outside the church for a walk to the State House (0.5 mile)
 11:15 am Group photo on the south steps of the State House
 11:30 am Press conference on the south steps of the State House
 11:30 am-2:00 pm Meet with SC Senators and Representatives
 2:00 pm Senate in session

Sunday School Updates

• **The Aldersgate Class** The Aldersgate Class will start a 6-week lesson plan based on the PBS series "How Jesus Became Christ." This thought-provoking series includes video segments from the series, and later discussions led by Dr. Charles Bryan. Come join us for a cup of coffee, pastry, and lively discussions. This series will begin on January 7, and should run through February 11. All are welcome! If you have any questions, please call David A. Anderson at 803-318-8821 or email him at danderson@richardsonplowden.com.

• **The Dawsey Class:** This Sunday, January 7, class president Caroline Seigler will lead a discussion of the framework and material the class will use going forward. What we do on Sunday, Jan. 14, will be determined by what happens on January 7. The class starts at 10:00 am. Class members who join from home will use FreeConferenceCall and should call in between 9:50 and 10:00 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 Caroline Seigler at caroline.seigler@gmail.com.

• **The Grace Class:** The class will continue its study of the "Work of the People" series on January 7. Christine Hait will lead "The God that is Coming." On Jan. 14, the class will meet in the Chapel for the reading of MLK's Letter from the Birmingham Jail. Join us in person on the third floor, or contact Jim Lane at jlane@columbiasc.edu for the Zoom link. We gather Sunday mornings at 9:45 am for fellowship, and at 10:00 am for spiritual reflection.

• **The John Harper Class:** The John Harper class discusses lessons from *Adult Bible Studies* published by Cokesbury. For more

information, contact Tracy Powers at tjpowers65@gmail.com or meet with us in the classroom on the first floor by the elevator.

• **The Joy Class:** The Joy Class is continuing to partner with Solomon's Porch. If interested, please contact Lee Haynes at lelandhaynesjr@gmail.com or Sylvia Stevens at sylviasaudersstevens@gmail.com.

• **The Open Door Class:** The Open Door Class will finish our study of *When God Comes Down* this Sunday. On Jan. 14, we will begin a new study—*Never Quit* by Mark Ballenger. This study is based on the parable of the persistent widow from Luke, Chapter 8. Visitors are always welcome! The class meets in person on the third floor and via Zoom each week. For Zoom link information, contact Ann Jessup at jessup.ann@gmail.com.

• **The Paul Harmon Class:** For the month of January, the Paul Harmon Class will be reading and discussing *The First Christmas, What the Gospels Really Teach About Jesus' Birth*, by Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan. The book delves into how Jesus' birth stories "touch the deepest of human yearnings: for light in the darkness, for the fulfillment of our hopes, for a different kind of world." Visitors are always welcome to the class. If you have questions, please contact Suzanne Joye at sjoye@sc.rr.com.

• **Solomon's Porch:** Solomon's Porch will begin an in-depth study of the Book of Genesis on Sunday, Jan. 7. Anyone interested is welcome to join in. The class meets on the second floor and is led by Rev. Adrienne Fink. For more information, contact Adrienne at ajhamm@umcsc.org.

Circle of Welcome

Our Circle of Welcome team has been matched with a refugee family of five arriving from Burma in January! We've created a sign-up for new items they will need when they move here. Donations should be placed in the Missions Garden by January 14th. Monetary donations through the church are welcome. You may visit wsmethodist.org/giving to donate online. Note "COW" or "Circle of Welcome" in the memo section.

The family will also need furniture when they move into their permanent home. If you have used furniture to donate, don't hesitate to get in touch with Andrea McAtee at acmcaatee21@gmail.com, Anne Sinclair at asinclair1@bellsouth.net or Kay Ayers kayayers@aol.com. Please keep this family in your prayers as they go through their travel and transition. You can sign up online at www.signupgenius.com/go/5080F4CABA929A6FC1-46891933-wsumc

Gifts

(as of 1-3-24)

IN MEMORY OF DOT & DUNK SULLIVAN
to the Soup Cellar
Given by Eddie Sullivan

IN MEMORY OF GEORGE T. WILLIAMS
to WSUMC
Given by Ed McClain

IN MEMORY OF GEORGE T. WILLIAMS
to WSUMC
Given by Sam Waldrep

IN MEMORY OF DAVID BYRUM
to the Soup Cellar
Given by Emalyn Johnson

IN MEMORY OF DAVID BYRUM
to the Soup Cellar
Given by Lisa Smith

IN MEMORY OF DAVID BYRUM
to the Soup Cellar
Given by Ed McClain

IN MEMORY OF DAVID BYRUM
to the Soup Cellar
Given by Sam Waldrep

IN MEMORY OF DAVID BYRUM
to WSUMC
Given by Virginia Vaughan

IN MEMORY OF DAVID BYRUM
to WSUMC
Given by Robin & David Anderson

IN MEMORY OF MARY SUTHERLAND
to WSUMC
Given by Virginia Vaughan

IN MEMORY OF MARY SUTHERLAND
to WSUMC
Given by Robin & David Anderson

IN MEMORY OF CAROL REIS
to WSUMC
Given by Donna Bryan

IN MEMORY OF JOBY ROBINSON
to WSUMC
Given by Donna Bryan

IN MEMORY OF KATHY HANDEL
to WSUMC
Given by Donna Bryan

IN MEMORY OF SARAH THREATT
to WSUMC
Given by Donna Bryan

IN HONOR OF JOHN HOLLADAY
to WSUMC
Given by Donna Bryan

IN HONOR OF SUSAN & RICK UMBACH
to WSUMC
Given by Cynthia Mills

IN HONOR OF SUSAN & RICK UMBACH
to WSUMC
Given by Emily Mills

IN MEMORY OF MARY SUTHERLAND
to WSUMC
Given by Holly R. Moore

IN MEMORY OF MARY SUTHERLAND
to the Foundation
Given by Leslie & David Lockwood

**IN HONOR OF THE TRINITY EPISCOPAL
SOUP CELLAR VOLUNTEERS**
to the Soup Cellar
Given by Ruth Tibshirany

IN MEMORY OF DAVID WHALEN
to WSUMC
Given by Mary & Lanneau Lide

IN MEMORY OF GEORGE T. WILLIAMS
to WSUMC
Given by Mary & Lanneau Lide

IN HONOR OF KATHY WRIGHT
to WSUMC
Given by Mary & Lanneau Lide

IN HONOR OF CATHY HOOKER
to WSUMC
Given by Mary & Lanneau Lide

IN HONOR OF ELEANORE LANGLEY
to WSUMC
Given by Mary & Lanneau Lide

IN HONOR OF TOMMY BETENBAUGH
to WSUMC
Given by Mary & Lanneau Lide

IN MEMORY OF MARY SUTHERLAND
to the Foundation
Given by Connie & Glen Thompson

IN MEMORY OF DAVID BYRUM
to the Soup Cellar
Given by Judy & Hugh Pennell

IN MEMORY OF DAVID BYRUM
to the Soup Cellar
Given by Wanda & Rex Meade

IN MEMORY OF MARY SUTHERLAND
to the Foundation
Given by Georgia & Joey Vickers

IN MEMORY OF DAVID BYRUM
to the Soup Cellar
Given by Woodeane B. Smith
& Ray Smith

IN MEMORY OF MARY SUTHERLAND
to the Foundation
Given by Peggy Weston

IN MEMORY OF BESSIE BAGWELL
to WSUMC
Given by Peggy Weston

IN MEMORY OF MARY SUTHERLAND
to the Foundation
Given by Wendy & Joe Clark

IN MEMORY OF MARY SUTHERLAND
to the Foundation
Given by Anne Sinclair &
Julian Ruffin

IN MEMORY OF DAVID BYRUM
to the Soup Cellar
Given by Anne Sinclair &
Julian Ruffin

IN MEMORY OF MARY SUTHERLAND
to the Foundation
Given by Ned Self

IN HONOR OF REV. BECKY SHIRLEY
to WSUMC
Given by Janelle Rivers

IN HONOR OF REV. ALSTON LIPPERT
to WSUMC
Given by Janelle Rivers

**IN HONOR OF CRAIG, WENDY, ELLA
& ANNA BELL**
to WSUMC
Given by Ann & Mickey Bell

Prayer List

Betsy Alexander	Lisa Johnson
Karen Basso	Jean Kanes
Ann Bell	Martha Helen King
Mickey Bell	Beverly McClanahan
Ron Bowden	Paul McClanahan
Mickey Epting	Sharon McCullough
Nancy Epting	Shawn Powers
Carl Evans	Genie Quinn
Pat Griffin	Tara Spires
Betsy Halloren	Peggy Ward
Rev. Paul Harmon	Nancy Williams
Karen Horne	Our homebound

January Birthdays

Jan. 2

Leon Davis
Mickey Epting

Jan. 4

R. Stewart Bond

Jan. 5

Pam Jenkins
Michah Sonjor

Jan. 6

Harriett Davis

Jan. 8

Betty Bowers

Jan. 12

Jim Ward
Scarlett Hall

Jan. 13

G. Larry Railey
Carl Evans

Jan. 14

Trisha Britt
David Nelson

Jan. 15

Charles Bryan

Jan. 16

Adrienne Fink

Jan. 17

Jacob Schatz

Jan. 20

Hamilton Matthews

Jan. 22

Jim Tuell

Jan. 23

Jamie Sanders

Jan. 24

Pete Liggett

Jan. 25

Beth Cooper Kelly

Jan. 26

Becky Shirley
Lynn Shirley
Sylvia Saunders Stevens
Carole McConkey

Jan. 27

Mary Watson Edmonds
Thomas Lide

Bill Westerkam

Linda Reardon

Jan. 29

Jennifer Laughlin

Jan. 30

Eugenia Beach

Jan. 31

Susan Brown

WSUMC Meetings & Events

Subject to change

*denotes non-member event; blue type indicates WSUMC events or meetings. Child Dev. Ctr. events are in bold italic.

MONDAY, JANUARY 8

11:30 am-12:30 pm | Soup Cellar Serving | Soup Cellar

1:30-2:30 pm | NA Meeting | Soup Cellar*

6:00-8:30 pm | UWF | John Harper Classroom

6:30-7:30 pm | Circle 9 | Open Door Classroom

TUESDAY, JANUARY 9

11:30 am-12:30 pm | Soup Cellar Serving | Soup Cellar

1:30-2:30 pm | NA Meeting | Soup Cellar*

6:00-9:00 pm | Palmetto Mastersingers | Choir Room*

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10

11:30 am-12:30 pm | Soup Cellar Serving | Soup Cellar

1:30-2:30 pm | NA Meeting | Soup Cellar*

8:00-11:00 am | Moms Demand Action

Advocacy Day | Threatt Hall & Off Campus*

6:30-7:30 pm | Choir Practice | Choir Room

CHECK OUT THE MOST UP-TO-DATE CALENDAR IN REALM® CONNECT

Special Meeting on Faith and Dealing with a Chronic, Incurable Disease

The Columbia Parkinson's Group will hold a special meeting on Sunday, Jan. 28 at 3:00 pm in the auditorium at the Lexington Medical Center Park 1, located at 2728 Sunset Blvd., West Columbia, SC 29169.

The Reverend Doug Graul will be leading this special meeting and the discussion on faith and suffering with a chronic disease.

In this session, the group will explore the biblical witness that does not deny suffering, but seeks to bear witness to the presence of God through our weaknesses.

The Reverend Doug Graul is a native of the City of Fairfax, VA. He holds a B.S. in Political Science from James Madison University and a Master of Divinity from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary. Father Doug was Ordained by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in 1995. He has served parishes in South Carolina in Peak, Spring Hill, Columbia, and Irmo. He has also worked as a chaplain in assisted living and hospice settings.

Father Doug began his time at St. Francis Of Assisi Episcopal Church in Irmo, SC as a supply celebrant and is now honored to be called as the Vicar of the Mission.

For more information, contact the Columbia Parkinson's Support Group at (803) 335-4247 or email contact@columbiaparkinsonsupportgroup.org. Visit the website at columbiaparkinsonsupportgroup.org.



A New Worship Experience In Christ Chapel

Third Thursday of each month from 11:00-11:30 a.m., beginning January 18th

A place of worship — no matter the faith or denomination — should be a community where people can experience God's presence, be assured that God cares about them and where they know they are seen, heard, valued and not alone. It is a place where people can be reminded that they were created in God's image and that they are loved. Unfortunately, the way traditional services of worship are structured, including its length, often makes persons who are living with physical and/or mental challenges like dementia, autism, and anxiety, feel isolated and out of place. Recognizing this reality, Rev. Becky, Rev. Alston and members of the WSUMC worship team are opening the doors of Christ Chapel on the 3rd Thursday of each month and inviting everyone, but especially persons living with dementia, autism or other challenges along with their care partners to join us for a uniquely designed 30 minute service of worship. The service will be filled mostly with hymns, but will also include an interactive "Jesus story" and communion. If this sounds appealing to you, please join us. We're calling the service "The WELL", because our heart's desire is for this to be a time of Worship-Encouragement-Laughter and Love.

connectional giving makes a difference

South Carolina Conference

Conference Benevolences

\$2,339,964 (2023) | \$2,083,451 (2024)

Nurture and outreach arm of our Annual Conference. Largest portion supports congregational specialists and the administration and programs of Connectional Ministries, as well as the Board of Ordained Ministry, Archives and History, Cabinet emergency fund, the South Carolina United Methodist Advocate and the Episcopal residence.

Retiree Health/Transition/Contingency

\$800,000 (2023) | \$200,000 (2024)

Provides subsidy for health insurance premiums for retired clergy, and grant funds for those in significant transitions, such as disability.

District Superintendent Compensation

\$1,292,176 (2023) | \$1,292,176 (2024)

Provides salary of \$107,681 for each of the 12 superintendents.

Equitable Compensation Fund

\$565,000 (2023) | \$365,000 (2024)

Helps pay salaries of pastors serving churches that are not able to meet the minimum standards set by the Annual Conference. Also provides primary support for new church start pastors.

Conference Pass-Through to Affiliates

Senior College Scholarships

\$950,000 (2023) | \$850,000 (2024)

Helps provide quality education in a Christian setting for students at Claflin University and Columbia and Wofford colleges; 1/3 of total receipts goes to each institution.

Spartanburg Methodist College

\$588,018 (2023) | \$488,000 (2024)

Support fund for the college, providing academic programs, work-study opportunities and programs for those with special academic needs.

District Administration

\$821,822 (2023) | \$746,822 (2024)

Provides for district office operations, secretary's salary, District Connectional Ministries, institutional share of the superintendent's pension and insurance, continuing education and travel.

Conference Administration

\$1,647,514 (2023) | \$1,435,814 (2024)

Covers expenses of the Annual Conference session, the Journal, conference secretary, treasurer's office, clergy services coordinator, other administrative expenses.

Congregational Development

\$955,708 (2023) | \$855,000 (2024)

Assists in the purchase of land for new church sites, helps newly organized churches and assists in revitalization programs for existing churches.

Campus Ministry

\$672,729 (2023) | \$600,000 (2024)

Supports full-time campus ministries in Charleston, Clemson, Columbia, Greenville, Orangeburg and Rock Hill, and part-time ministers in Florence and Greenwood.

Methodist Homes Resident Assistance

\$400,000 (2023) | \$375,000 (2024)

Supports residents of three retirement communities around the conference

Camps & Retreat Ministries

\$319,800 (2023) | \$284,000 (2024)

Provides for the development, operations and maintenance of facilities operated by South Carolina Camps & Retreat Ministries across the conference.

General & Jurisdictional

World Service

\$2,176,172 (2023) | \$1,849,746 (2024)

Lifeline of our connection. Supports the programs, resources and materials of the general boards and agencies at home and around the world.

Episcopal Fund

\$644,453 (2023) | \$547,785 (2024)

Funds our share of support for all active and retired bishops (salary, housing, travel, pensions, office expenses).

General Conference Administration

\$258,403 (2023) | \$219,643 (2024)

Covers expenses of the General Conference, Judicial Council, other General Church administrative agencies.

Ministerial Education

\$735,010 (2023) | \$624,759 (2024)

75% of receipts support United Methodist seminaries and 25% remains in South Carolina for scholarships and grants to seminary students.

Interdenominational Cooperation Fund

\$57,483 (2023) | \$48,861 (2024)

Supports church activities in mission with other Christian communions (the World and National Councils of Churches and the Consultation on Church Union).

Black College Fund

\$293,189 (2023) | \$249,211 (2024)

Support for 10 historically black United Methodist colleges (including Claflin University) and one medical school in the United States.

Africa University Fund

\$65,614 (2023) | \$55,772 (2024)

Continues development of the United Methodist university in Zimbabwe.

Jurisdiction Mission/Ministry

\$29,328 (2023) | \$29,328 (2024)

Covers expenses of Jurisdictional Conference, missions, programs and administration of the SEJ.

What is connectional giving?

The main way United Methodists support the ministries of the church is through our apportioned funds, a method of giving that proportionally allocates the church-wide budget to conferences and local churches.

sowing to the spirit

Galatians 6:8

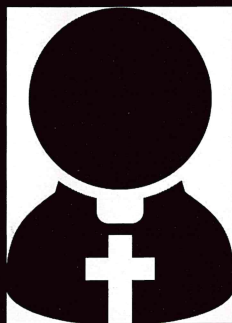


how apportionment giving connects us and sustains us

A PDF version of this publication can be downloaded at umcsc.org/treasurer.

how apportionments are calculated

Apportionments are calculated from Statistical Table 2 for each church in the conference. These amounts are collected in January. We refer to the total of the selected lines as “Net Funds.” They include:



Total base compensation paid to the pastor, associate pastors and deacons (Table 2, Line 41)



Total paid to/for pastor, associates and deacons for housing & utilities and/or housing in lieu of parsonage, and for accountable reimbursements and other non-accountable cash allowances (Table 2, Lines 42-44)



Total paid in salary and benefits for all other church staff, including diaconal ministers (Table 2, Line 45)



Total spent for local church programs and other operating expenses (Table 2, Lines 46-47)

Conference-calculated adjustments for housing in lieu of parsonage and equitable compensation

Net funds for the year

Important points

- The placing of actual expenses on Table 2 is very important
- An expense should only be reported once on Table 2
- Church spending on capital additions/improvements, debt repayments, direct billing and missions does not factor into the apportionment calculation if reported on the correct lines
- Membership is not considered when calculating apportionments
- Once apportionments are set, they cannot be changed. Apportionments are set shortly before they are published.

HOW APPORTIONMENTS ARE CALCULATED

My church's average net funds

Sum of all churches' average net funds

X Conference budget

= My church's apportionment

Once these are added for each church, we allocate apportionments based on a weighted two-year average. So the 2024 apportionment calculation will be calculated with an average based on the amounts reported in 2022 and 2021.

For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. — Galatians 6:8

where our apportionments go



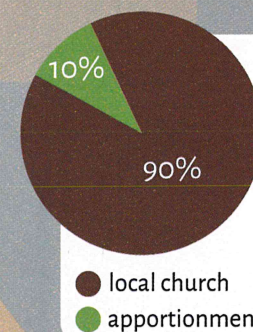
Here in the South Carolina Conference – at the local church, district and conference levels – we are constantly seeking a more excellent way to become better equipped for ministry in the midst of the changing realities of our culture.

We know that we can do so much more together as The United Methodist Church than we could ever do as individuals or congregations. When we consolidate our resources through apportionments, we share our gifts in a way that makes real what would otherwise be impossible.

Through this connectional giving, we respond to disasters near and far. We support young people through United Methodist colleges, campus ministries and Africa University. We support the global Abundant Health initiative that seeks to impact the lives of children around the world so they might claim Jesus' promise of abundant life.

This kingdom-building work is why we pledge to support the church's ministry through our prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness. We commit ourselves to being the hands and feet of Jesus.

apportionment giving = tithing



Apportionments as percent of church annual budget revenue
Represents 2024 apportionment budget (\$13.9m) as a percentage of 2022 amounts received by local churches (\$137.2m) for their operating budget. Separated churches not included.

We make disciples, train leaders, and create new places for new people. We address the needs of children and those who live in poverty.

It is good to remember that the point of our apportionment giving is never the money. It is about faithfully sharing in being a part of the Body of Christ – doing Christ's work.

For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. — Galatians 6:8