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THE CONNECTION

March 31, 2024

Celebrating Women's History Month

Submitted by Nancy Whittle, Chair Racial Justice Action Team

In 1956, General Conference approved the full ordination of women (after voting it down at every General Conference for 100 years). Rev. Patricia Parrish told me that she had a copy of her grandfather's *Book of Discipline* from 1956 and she has that section underlined.

Thanks to Rev. Diana Westerkam for the following firsts after the vote for full ordination, as we honor these women:

- 1967: Anne Porter Brown becomes the General Secretary of the Board of Global Ministries and the first woman to hold an official, major leadership position in any mainline Christian denomination.
- 1970: Sheila Rogers becomes the first woman ordained Deacon in the SC Conference.
- 1972: General Conference creates the Commission on the Role and Status of Women.
- 1974: Vivian McFadden becomes the first woman to be ordained elder in the SC Conference.
- 1980: Majorie Matthews becomes the first woman to be elected to the Office of Bishop in any major Christian denomination.
- 1986: Gloria Davis becomes the first woman appointed as a District Superintendent in the SC Conference.
- 2004: Mary Virginia Taylor becomes the first woman to be appointed to serve as resident Bishop of the SC Annual Conference.

As I was thinking about Women's History Month, I thought about the seven women ministers who have served at Washington St. UMC and how we can honor them. I asked church members to reflect on what each minister's ministry meant to WSUMC and to them personally. In the following pages, we honor these special women and the dates they served:



Annie Porter Brown



Sheila Rogers



Marjorie Matthews



Mary Virginia Taylor

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SAVE THE DATE!
COLUMBIA COLLEGE DAY
IS APRIL 21 AT WSUMC!

Rev. Becky Shirley, Senior Pastor, 2021 – present

Written by: Lee Smith

Certainly, there are a ton of other wonderful traits we can mention: she's very Christ-centered, as evidenced by her intentional approach to her devotional life. Next, just about anyone who has a one-on-one conversation with her in a private setting knows what a focused listener she is. Do I even need to mention "Spirit-filled preacher" and the way she uses scripture and personal experience or illustrations to drive home a point? Then for some, it's her ability to coach up a staff-person or a volunteer while dealing with a new task. Finally, Becky is a relationship builder, reliably demonstrating to us the importance of taking just a few extra minutes to establish common ground and interest.

Of course all those things help define Becky Shirley.

But I suggest an even greater aspect of her character – her gift of being a collaborative problem solver. This is a trait so needed in these difficult days, whether at a global level, or community, or denominational, or interpersonal level. As united as we may feel at Washington Street, there are always challenges, even for a 221 year-old mother church that's still making disciples for the transformation of the world. It's Becky's gift – using those traits listed earlier – as she leads folks to work together ... that just might become her most important legacy.



Patricia Parrish: First woman appointed to WSUMC as Senior Pastor, 2016-2021

Written by: Nancy Whittle

I was so pleased a woman was appointed to serve as Senior Pastor and I just knew she would be special. The Church approved the Renewal 2020 plan the year before her appointment, and we looked to the future with hope. Patricia embraced the plan with ideas and a new structure for the ministry teams. Little did we know then that the church would face two challenging events in the next few years. Patricia led us through those dark days with hope, grace, kindness, and action. The 2019 General Conference voted to keep the harmful LGBTQIA+ language in the *Book of Discipline*. My first reaction was to leave the church because the decision was so hurtful. She comforted me and other members even though she was hurting too. She responded quickly to the media and formed a General Conference Response team that led to the church becoming a Reconciling Church in the summer of 2019. There were different opinions and pain for all. She actively listened to and respected all sides. Her calm and peaceful demeanor and willingness to listen kept peace in the congregation during the discernment process.

A year later, the church shut down due to COVID. Again, Patricia took quick action to lead us in on-line worship and kept Sunday school classes and small groups going through taping and zoom. With the help of Alston, Jane, Lynn, Grant, Rick, Louis and choir members, we had on-line services that had beautiful images, music, and powerful sermons that were so meaningful to me. She even spearheaded the outdoor services that came later. I can imagine what a toll these events had on her, yet you would not know it. She always had a smile and a twinkle in her eyes as she thought about ways to move forward. I once heard Patricia say that the seeds we sow now will bloom and we will see the fruit of our work, and we are! Patricia, thank you my friend for your dedication to justice, love, worship, and so much more! It would take many pages to write it all down.



Gifts

(as of 3-28-24)

IN MEMORY OF RON QUINN

to the Soup Cellar

Given by Donna Richardson

IN MEMORY OF RON QUINN

to the Soup Cellar

Given by Teresa & Mark Poole

IN MEMORY OF RON QUINN

to the Soup Cellar

Given by Syble & Maurice Jones

IN HONOR OF DAVID TURNER

to the Music Ministry

Given by Chip Williams

IN HONOR OF ANN JESSUP & LICIA JACKSON

to Tabitha's Table

Given by Heidi Conte

**DID YOU LOSE SOMETHING?
CHECK THE LOST & FOUND
LOCATED IN THE CHURCH
VOLUNTEER OFFICE**

Rev. Alston Lippert, Associate Minister for Nurture and Discipleship Development, 2017-present

Written by Deborah Rowe

Much of the success of our church's welcoming and caring reputation starts with our Associate Pastor, Rev. Alston Lippert. Every Sunday morning, she is in the hallway ready to give a hug to our membership and to say welcome to our guests. She continues to emulate Jesus' practice of caring for others by visiting the sick and home-bound, providing communion, offering words of encouragement and reminding us of God's presence in our lives even during personal challenges. She brings the words of Christ alive through small group studies and sermons. She stands for Social Justice leading our congregation through difficult conversations and sets an example for standing up for basic human rights for all of God's people. I am privileged to be able to call her my friend, my confidant and my pastor. She is a blessing to our church, our congregation and to me personally.



Rev. Susan Culler, Director of Outreach, 2015-2016

Written by Andrea McAtee

Neal and I started attending services at WSUMC during a period of transition in our lives. We had both attended church only sporadically as adults. Our former colleague, Dr. Don Fowler, had told me, years before, what a special place WSUMC is and I was grateful to know where to go when I felt the call, at my grandmother's funeral, to start going to church again. Our first child, Lucy, was born soon after we started visiting and Lucas joined our family two years later. These were joyful but exhausting years, and we were not particularly regular about our church attendance. We enjoyed coming to services but appreciated the low-pressure welcome of church members and leadership. Eventually, though, one staff member went out of her way to chat with us every time she saw us. Rev. Susan Culler was Director of Outreach at the time and her gentle warm spirit drew us in. With a quiet voice and kind thoughtful eyes, she drew us to become disciples of Christ. She led a class on what it meant to be a Methodist that met for several weeks, and her discussion helped us understand and become more comfortable with making the commitment to become members of the church and for me to publicly confess Jesus Christ as my Savior. Susan did not have a long tenure at our church, but I will be forever grateful that she was there at the right time for us.



"HOW DO I?" TECHNOLOGY WORKSHOPS



The Communications and Technology team will be offering three Sunday workshops for both Android and Apple users on Sunday, April 14 & April 28. If you are interested in one of these workshops, contact Jane Peterson at jane@wsmethodist.org, call the front office (803-256-2417), or sign up on the sheet in the back hallway near Threatt Hall.

The classes will begin immediately after church in the John Harper Classroom (Android) and Wesley Room (Apple). Tell us the type of phone (Android or Apple) and your email address when you sign up. Topics include: phone security, dual authentication, updating your phone, password management, security options, identifying scams in emails and texts, and more!

Classes will not be longer than 30 minutes in length. A team member will contact you and confirm a daytime. We will be offering advanced classes in the near future.

Rev. Evelyn Middleton, Associate Pastor, 2008-2012

Written by Lynn Shirley

My years of knowing Evelyn (since 2008) have been one of a consistent perception of her and the practice of her beliefs. Typically Southern; gentle, quiet, polite, and respectful ... at least on the outside. The core of her being however, is one that stands up for the marginalized, speaks for those without voices in the room, acts without drawing attention to herself and without expectation of acknowledgement.

I once heard a sermon where the pastor preached on “bulldog faith” – where you grab hold of what you believe and don’t let go. Rev. Middleton has never been shy about sugar-coating what she had to say from the pulpit. That was always so refreshing. This bulldog metaphor fits Evelyn perfectly; holding on to what she believes and acting on it in all the ways she can.



Rev. Diana Westerkam, Associate Pastor, 1992-2008

Written by Kimberly McAlister and Eva Nance

We first met Diana in 1992 when she became one of our ministers at WSUMC. Her soft-spoken nature and small physical stature didn’t prepare us, or Washington Street, for the powerful and long-lasting influence she would have on our lives and on the life of this church. Diana’s wisdom and strength, her loving and gentle ways, her calmness in the face of any chaos, are all hallmarks of her ministry at WS.

Some of our special memories from Diana’s ministry years at WS include her deeply meaningful sermons, her eloquent and beautiful prayers (which we’ve encouraged her to compile in a book!), challenging and enlightening Bible studies, the Walks through Holy Week (bringing the story alive for the children of WSUMC), Easter morning butterfly releases (how did the timing always work out?), and stories and laughter shared over many meals. Her impact on our faith journeys is second only to that of our mothers, as she consistently models



a life based on Jesus’s radical teachings about love, compassion, acceptance, and forgiveness. Our lives continue to be blessed by Diana’s presence in them; as a pastor, a teacher, and a very dear friend.

Rev. Toni White, first woman minister appointed to WSUMC, 1977-1981

Written by Malissa Burnette

In 1977 Toni White came to WSUMC as Minister of Education and Outreach and to show boys and girls that ---yes --- girls can be really good ministers. All eyes were on Toni for her first sermon; she did not disappoint. She even survived the old ladies scolding her for wearing open-toed shoes beneath her vestments. (The scolding had no effect.)

Toni had a gift for speaking the right words at the right moment. Even beyond her years employed by WS, she has been called upon to preach, funeralize, comfort, teach and pray for our members.

Toni has long worked for equality and social justice. I recall her calming presence during a nighttime vigil for the Equal Rights Amendment in the early 1980s when we were threatened with violence. Toni, always a healer, never hesitates to bring food or visit the hospital when called. As members of an informal women's group sometimes referred to as "The Cult," Toni and I have been connected for over 40 years. I am lucky indeed to call her my friend.



Many thanks to Lee Smith, Deborah Rowe, Andrea McAtee, Lynn Shirley, Kimberly McAlister, Eva Nance and Malissa Burnette for these powerful and moving descriptions of these beautiful, trailblazing women. Most still attend WSUMC on a regular basis. Rev. Patricia Parrish is retired and living in Lake Junalaska. Rev. Susan Culler is the senior Pastor at Whaley St. UMC in Columbia. Also, thanks to Mike and Charlotte Broome for sharing resources.

It was a joy pulling this article together. -- Nancy Whittle

"On behalf of the Reconciling Next Team, I would like to thank all the clergy, members at WSUMC, and friends of WSUMC who read and recorded a devotional taken from Suzanne DeWitt Hall's text, "Transfigured: A 40-day journey through scripture for gender-queer and transgender people" during Lent. Thank you all for the timely and important public witness you shared. I would also like to say a special thank you to Jane Peterson who managed all the logistics of this video project."—Jim Lane, RNT Chair

Walking Tour of Church Well Attended

The Daytrippers participated in a walking tour of our church, led by Dr. Mike Broome on March 6. The group enjoyed hearing about the history of WSUMC, its buildings, grounds, and cemeteries, along with stories about how the church was burned down during the Civil War by Sherman's troops. The group toured numerous areas of the church as Dr. Broome explained the history. We appreciate the time and talents of our church historian and his team!



Above: Dr. Mike Broome opens the tour in the sanctuary; Left: the group tours the Museum & Archives on the third floor.

If you are a parent current or former student, faculty, or staff member of Columbia College, please contact Janet Cotter at jac4744@aol.com. We want to include you in our celebration of WSUMC'S connection and history with the college. Also, make plans to join us for worship and a special reception following worship on April 21st as we welcome President and Mrs. Dozier to WSUMC.

Prayer List

Betsy Alexander	Karen Horne
Ann Bell	Lisa Johnson
Mickey Bell	Jean Kanes
John Benfield	Beverly McClanahan
Ron Bowden	Paul McClanahan
Sue Dillon	Sharon McCullough
Mickey Epting	Ellen Parker
Nancy Epting	Shawn Powers
Carl Evans	Genie Quinn
Pat Griffin	Peggy Ward
Betsy Halloren	Nancy Williams
Rev. Paul Harmon	Our homebound



String Time Duo—Concert for Ukraine Fundraiser Successful

We're overjoyed to announce that our recent fundraiser concert, featuring the captivating melodies of the String Time Duo, was an astounding success! With the support of over 75 enthusiastic and generous individuals, we came together for an unforgettable evening of music and heartfelt stories from Marina Alexander and Angelina Reed, the brilliant minds behind String Time Duo.

But the excitement doesn't end there! Thanks to the incredible generosity of our attendees, we're thrilled to share that we've raised over \$7,000 for the people of Ukraine. This substantial sum will be split evenly between UMCOR and Ukrainian Patriot, a 501c3 humanitarian organization with roots right here in Columbia. Thank you to all of our volunteers

A heartfelt thank you goes out to Dr. Ute for spearheading this monumental effort, and to all the dedicated volunteers who worked tirelessly to make this event a reality. Your unwavering commitment to humanitarian causes shines brightly through moments like these.

Let's continue spreading love, hope, and support to those who need it most. Together, we're making a difference!



April Birthdays

April 1

Heidi Conte
John Beerman

April 2

Jaya Ruffin
Debra Schooler

April 3

Kathi Knight

April 4

Kathryn Powers

April 6

David Hefelfinger
Nancy Higgins

April 7

Ellis Hall
Darby Waund
John Holladay
Cheryl Evans

April 8

Emily Caskey
Vivian Akre
Will McCook
Sara Styles

April 9

Mindy Gibson
John Owen
Amanda Fargher
Karen Basso

April 10

Winn Rogers
Katie Bond

April 11

Ava Jackson
Suzanne Joye

April 14

Melanie Dobson

April 15

Jackson Case
Ed Fisher

April 16

Martha Boynton
Elizabeth Aravena

April 18

Law Powers
Jan Jenkins

April 19

Phoebe Fargher

April 20

Celia Price

April 21

Laura Hogan
David Turner

April 23

David Horton
Kirby Leitner

April 25

Debbie Edens

April 26

Alan-Jon Zupan

April 27

Jane Peterson
Evan Hefelfinger
Pamela Boulware

April 28

Michael Broome

April 30

Tom Nance

Sunday School Updates

ALL CLASSES WILL MEET IN THREATT HALL FOR THE EASTER BREAKFAST AT 9:45 AM

• **The Aldersgate Class:** The class continues to watch the Netflix Series *The Chosen: Season One*. We will watch various episodes and then have a discussion regarding those scenes. Come join us for a donut, coffee and lively discussions regarding this series and the depictions of the various events as depicted in the Gospels. 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, March 31, the class will attend the potluck Easter brunch, starting at 9:45 am in Threatt Hall. Next Sunday, we will return to our book, *The Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory: American Evangelicals in an Age of Extremism*. Tom Wall will lead a discussion of Chapter Six. Class members who join from home use FreeConferenceCall and should call in between 9:50 and 10:00 am. 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 is discussing lessons based on Rev. Becky's sermon series. The lesson will be held the week following the sermon so the conversation responds to that particular sermon. The class will participate in the Easter Breakfast on the 31st. On April 7, we will discuss "Why Is Jesus Special?" 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 continues to partner with Solomon's Porch. If interested, please get in touch with Lee Haynes at lelandhaynesjr@gmail.com or Sylvia Stevens at sylviasaudersstevens@gmail.com.

• **The Open Door Class:** The Open Door Class will join others in Threatt Hall for the Easter Potluck Breakfast on Easter Sunday. We will continue studying *Meeting Jesus at the Table* by Cynthia Campbell and Christine Coy Fohr on April 7. Visitors are always welcome! The class meets in person on the third floor and via Zoom each week. For the Zoom link information, contact Ann Jessup at jessup.ann@gmail.com.

• **The Paul Harmon Class:** The class will join others for the Easter Potluck Brunch. Then we look forward to continuing Mike Broome's lessons entitled "Reflections on Religion and Contemporary Southern Literature." Visitors are always welcome! If you have questions, please contact Sally Mings at sallymmings@gmail.com.

• **Solomon's Porch:** Solomon's Porch will join others for the Easter Potluck Brunch. They will continue with their in-depth study of the Book of Genesis on April 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.

WSUMC Makes Plans for General Conference

As we have been hearing for months now, United Methodists from around the world will gather in Charlotte, NC, April 23-May 3 for the postponed 2020 General Conference. As this significant event, postponed due to COVID-19, approaches, United Methodist congregations must prepare thoughtfully and prayerfully.

To help us all become informed about the significance of General Conference decisions, we are setting up a special page on the church website (wsmethodist.org) that includes information about General Conference including links to proposed legislation and the names and email addresses of SC delegates. There will also be a link on the page to the March 17th presentation on General Conference given at WSUMC by retired Bishop Ken Carder and a short video explaining what General Conference is and why it is important. This page should be live no later than April 5th at wsmethodist.org/gc.

Knowing that legislation passed in previous General Conferences and proposed legislation in front of this year's Conference has caused divisions and pain in our church and caused members to leave the United Methodist Church, we are called not just to be informed about the proposed

legislation, but to also commit ourselves to times of intentional prayer and listening. To that end, from March 30 through April 22, The SC Conference Bishop, L. Jonathan Holston, and members of the South Carolina Conference Delegation to General Conference will share a video prayer at 8:24 p.m. These 24 days of prayer will be posted via Facebook (@scumc), Instagram (@umcsc), and X (@umcsc), and by email to all who are signed up to receive conference news emails. They will also be posted on the conference website (umcsc.org). These moments of prayer will be focused on praying for the church and specifically for groups of people who have been preparing for General Conference and who will participate in the discussions and voting.

Beginning on Sunday, April 7th through Sunday, June 23, immediately following each Sunday's worship service, we will open Christ Chapel for personal sharing and prayer. Some of the ordained clergy in our congregation will be available in the chapel each week to listen and pray with persons from noon-12:45. Individual prayer guides will also be available for those who wish to simply sit in the chapel and engage in a time of personal prayer.

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS & EVENTS

Subject to change

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

SUNDAY, MARCH 31

9:30-10:30 am | Choir Rehearsal | Sanctuary
9:45-10:40 am | Easter Potluck Breakfast | Threatt Hall
11:00 am-12:00 pm | Worship Service | Sanctuary & livestream

MONDAY, APRIL 1

WSUMC Offices Closed
11:30-12:30 pm | Welcome Table Easter Monday Soup Cellar Lunch | Threatt Hall

TUESDAY, APRIL 2

10:00 - 11:00 am | Circle 6 | John Harper Classroom
11:30 am-12:30 pm | Soup Cellar Serving | Soup Cellar
1:30-2:30 pm | NA Meeting | Soup Cellar*
6:00- 7:00 pm | Reconciling Next Team | Zoom
6:00-9:00 pm | Palmetto Mastersingers | Choir Room*

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3

11:30 am-12:30 pm | Soup Cellar Serving | Soup Cellar
1:30-2:30 pm | NA Meeting | Soup Cellar*
6:30-7:30 pm | Choir Practice | Choir Room

THURSDAY, APRIL 4

11:30 am-12:30 pm | Soup Cellar Serving | Soup Cellar
1:30-2:30 pm | NA Meeting | Soup Cellar*
6:15-9:00 pm | Palmetto Chamber Orchestra | Choir Room*

FRIDAY, APRIL 5

11:30 am-12:30 pm | Soup Cellar Serving | Soup Cellar
1:30-2:30 pm | NA Meeting | Soup Cellar*

SATURDAY, APRIL 6

10:30 am-12:30 pm | Papa Tank | Threatt Hall*

SUNDAY, APRIL 7

9:00-10:00 am Ecuador Mission Trip Team Meeting | John Harper Classroom
9:30-10:30 am | Choir Rehearsal | Sanctuary
11:00 am-12:00 pm | Worship Service | Sanctuary & livestream
5:15-7:30 pm | Disciple Group | John Harper Classroom

MONDAY, APRIL 8

11:30 am-12:30 pm | Soup Cellar Serving | Soup Cellar
1:30-2:30 pm | NA Meeting | Soup Cellar*
6:30-7:30 pm | Circle 9 | Open Door Classroom

TUESDAY, APRIL 9

10:00-11:00 am | Program Staff Meeting | Becky's Office

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*
6:30-7:30 pm | Charles Pfeifer Circle | Wesley Room

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10

11:30 am-12:30 pm | Soup Cellar Serving | Soup Cellar
1:30-2:30 pm | NA Meeting | Soup Cellar*
6:30-7:30 pm | Choir Practice | Choir Room

THURSDAY, APRIL 11

10:30-11:30 am | Tai-Chi | Joy Classroom*
11:30 am-12:30 pm | Soup Cellar Serving | Soup Cellar
1:30-2:30 pm | NA Meeting | Soup Cellar*
5:30-6:30 pm | Circle 2 | Wesley Room
6:15-9:00 pm | Palmetto Chamber Orchestra | Choir Room*

FRIDAY, APRIL 12

11:30 am-12:30 pm | Soup Cellar Serving | Soup Cellar
1:30-2:30 pm | NA Meeting | Soup Cellar*

SUNDAY, APRIL 14

9:30-10:30 am | Choir Rehearsal | Sanctuary
11:00 am-12:00 pm | Worship Service | Sanctuary & livestream
12:00-12:40 pm | Personal Prayer and Sharing | Chapel
12:15-12:45 pm | Communications and Tech Workshop | John Harper & Wesley Room
5:15-7:30 pm | Disciple Group | John Harper Classroom

MONDAY, APRIL 15

11:30 am-12:30 pm | Soup Cellar Serving | Soup Cellar
1:30-2:30 pm | NA Meeting | Soup Cellar*

TUESDAY, APRIL 16

