



Saint Paul United Methodist Church
1320 Fernwood-Glendale Road
Spartanburg, SC 29307

Non-Profit
Organization
US Postage Paid
Spartanburg, SC
Permit No. 33

e-mail churchsecretary@stpumc.org

voice (864) 582-4040
Sunday Service at 10:00 A.M.

The Epistle

News For The Weeks Of
March 6, 13, 20 & 27, 2023

www.stpumc.org **web**

(864) 583-0850 **fax**

Return Services Requested

The Pastor's Pen:

It hardly seems possible that it is time to write another article for the newsletter, but Lisa keeps insisting that I give her something to put on the front page and won't leave me alone about it. Have you ever had a boss like that? Anyway, the other day I found myself humming a Christmas carol, while at the same time I was thinking about services for Lent. My mind is still clinging to Christmas, but Lent is just around the corner.

By now you are still finding those one or two Christmas decorations that have eluded your efforts thus far, opening those credit card bills that still have Christmas charges on them, shaking your head over tax forms, breaking those New Year's resolutions, and at least once a week writing 2022. One question that has probably crossed your mind: Is 2023 going to be better than 2022? Or 2021? At least we can be sure it will be better than 2020!!! Not being a psychic, I can't answer whether it will be better or not, but I have some thoughts on the matter. Rather, Jesus has some thoughts.

"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? . . . Indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you as well."

Powerful words. I am reminded of the song Bobby McFerrin recorded years ago, "Don't Worry, Be Happy". It was that simple, he said, just don't worry and you will be happy. Somehow that doesn't seem to work too well. In the first place, not worrying isn't easy. And, secondly, as I'm sure you have, I've learned that the absence of worry does not equal the presence of happiness.

Jesus, too, tells us not to worry. But He doesn't just tell us that by not worrying we will be happy. Instead, He tells us *how* to be happy. "Strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness." You may know it better as: "Seek ye first . . . and all these things shall be added unto you." Our worry comes from our fear and uncertainty about the future. We don't know what is going to happen. Jesus tells us to replace that fear with anticipation and hope and a diligent search for God's kingdom. One way of looking at it is that instead of wondering what bad things *might* happen, we are to be striving to *make* good things happen. If we are building in the kingdom of God, the collapse of the world around us will be seen from a new perspective. If "our hope is built on nothing less, than Jesus' blood and righteousness," then it cannot fall.

Each new year brings new challenges, new difficulties, new opportunities, new celebrations. As we go through this year I won't tell you not to worry. Instead, I will encourage you to seek the kingdom of God as you have never done so before. As you seek the kingdom, as you go looking to serve God, you just may discover that on your quest your constant companions are hope and joy, peace and love. Seek God, be happy!

God's blessings be upon you,



Jeremy

March 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
5 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship Service 1:00 Pickleball for Members 4:45 Youth United 6:00 UMM Meet Phil Womble	6 Henry Purdy Beth Hudson	7 6:30 6-week Lenten Study Madelynn Purdy	8 6:30 Choir Rehearsal	9 Guy Davis Suzanne Mauldin	10 Lydia Vereen	11 Linda Hamel Ed Lamb
12 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship Service ~11:15 Blood Pressure checks 1:00 Pickleball for Members 4:45 Youth United DAYLIGHT SAVINGS begins	13 12:00 Elsie Greer Circle Neth Nettles	14 11:30 49ers 6:30 6-week Lenten Study	15 10:00 Anne Ratliff Circle 6:30 Choir Rehearsal	16 Ted Fansher Ann Jackson	17 10:00 Threads of Agape ST. PATRICK'S DAY	18 Janet Wilson
19 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship Service 1:00 Pickleball for Members 4:45 Youth United Jane May	20 10:00 Blanche Greer Circle	21 6:30 6-week Lenten Study	22 6:30 Choir Rehearsal	23 NEWSLETTER deadline Betty Doyle	24 Deb Schumann	25 Ted Fansher Ann Jackson
26 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship Service 1:00 Pickleball for Members 4:45 Youth United	27 Austin Birch	28 6:30 6-week Lenten Study	29 6:30 Choir Rehearsal Ellie Smith	30 Julie Smith Karen Moyer	31	4 10:00 Threads of Agape Lydia Vereen

Our Ash Wednesday Service will be at 6:00pm on Wednesday, February 22nd (please note: earlier time than previous services).

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent, a time when many Christians prepare for Easter by observing a period of fasting, repentance, moderation and spiritual discipline.

During Ash Wednesday service, the minister lightly rubs the sign of the cross with ashes onto the foreheads of worshipers. Historically, ashes signified purification and sorrow for sins. We hope you'll begin the Lenten Season with us and join us for our Ash Wednesday Service.



Our 6-week Lenten Study, Finding Jesus in the Psalms - A Lenten Journey, begins on Tuesday, February 28th, at 6:30pm in Room 103.

*If you would like to put church-related information in the Newsletter, please send an email with your "blurb" to churchsecretary@stpumc.org before the Newsletter deadline date. Thank you!

Financials & Attendance

	Jan. 29	Feb. 5	Feb. 12
Received	\$4,973	\$9,247	\$5,395
Non-Contributed	\$0	\$3.75	\$132
Restricted	\$101	\$284	\$9
Total	\$5,074	\$9,534.75	\$5,536
Sunday School	51	42	42
Worship Service	109	108	97

Altar & Narthex Flowers



Altar Flowers are given on March 5th for the Glory of God by Lillian Hudson in honor of daughter, Beth Hudson's, birthday.

Altar Flowers are given on March 19th for the Glory of God by A.D. and Johnsie Page in memory of their son, Andy's, birthday.

Narthex Flowers are given on March 19th for the Glory of God by A.D. and Johnsie Page in honor of their 65th Anniversary.

Altar Flowers: If you would like to Honor or Remember someone special by arranging for flowers to be placed on the Altar, the following dates are still available to sign-up:

March 12 & 26, May 21 & 28, July 30, September 3, October 1, 15 & 22, November 19

Please email or call Lisa Müller or Wanda Steele with both your request and the dedication to put in the bulletin.

The Board Of Trustees will hold their next meeting on Tuesday, February 21st at 6:30pm in Room 104. If you're a member, please plan to attend. Thank you.

Our Altar Guild is having a meeting on Monday, February 27th at 6:00pm in Room 103. Please be sure to attend if you're on the Altar Guild. If you're interested in seeing what it's all about, join us at the meeting and see if this is something you're interested in helping with. We'd love to have some new members!

The Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) will meet at 6:30pm on Monday, February 27th in Room 104. All members, please make arrangements to attend. Thank you!