

ST. PAUL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The Goodnews Letter

October 2023

A ‘Catholic Spirit’ in United Methodism

Those who are called Methodist or Wesleyan may be familiar with John Wesley’s sermon “Catholic Spirit” from 1750. This was one of Wesley’s well-known sermons which was republished in 1755 and 1770. Wesley strongly supported his own theological conviction and upheld that he believed that the most scriptural and apostolic form of church government was the episcopal model found in the Church of England. However, as one who strongly supported his convictions as a priest, he promoted in his preaching and life, unity among Christians. Wesley used the term “Catholic Spirit” to preach on universal love in Christ Jesus. Wesley urged the early Methodists to not let differences of opinion on the practice of the sacraments, order of worship, and church government divide them from other Christians in their parishes.

According to Wesley, he asked in his sermon “Though we can’t think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart, though we are not of one opinion?” Wesley’s sermon focused on calling for all his listeners in the congregation to model the story of Jehonadab and Jehu from 2 Kings 10:15. Both were from different backgrounds and upbringings. However, Jehu asked Jehonadab “Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart? and Jehonadab answered, it is if it be, give me thine hand.” For Wesley, he viewed this biblical passage as a beautiful example of what happens when two people put aside their differences and acknowledge the love of God that unites them in their hearts.

Richard Heitzenrater and Albert Outler observe in *John Wesley’s Sermon: An Anthology*, this sermon serves as “Wesley’s most important contribution to the cause of Christian unity and to the requisite spirit in which that cause may be served.” The “Catholic Spirit” or universal love has been seen in the relationships formed throughout the history of South Carolina Methodism.

In 1845, Bishop William Capers and a delegation from South Carolina attended the Louisville Convention that created the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The creation of a new denomination was the result of the events at the 1844 General Conference. James O. Andrew, a former member of the South Carolina Conference, was asked to resign as a bishop for owning a slave. The General Conference voted 110 to sixty-eight to call for Andrew to resign as bishop. Following the end of the General Conference, a plan was proposed for the development of a new southern denomination.

The Southern and Northern Church reunited in 1939 along with the merger of the Methodist Protestant Church. Although both church bodies were reunited, it was at the expense of African American Methodists who were placed in the segregated Central Conference. 29 years after the reunion of the churches, the United Methodist Church was formed which dismantled the Central Conference in the denomination and in our conference in 1972.

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As I reflect on the current state of the United Methodist Church, our Conference, and on the 113 churches that have left our connection, I cannot help but think about the events that have taken place in our past in former divisions and unifications. In the events leading to the reunification of the northern and southern church, there was a pastor and lay person somewhere that formed a relationship with pastors and laity from the other denomination. Although they had a difference of theological and moral opinions in their day and age, the relationships formed between the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church were used by God's love to create Christian unity. However, there was much debate in South Carolina on the topic of unity and in the Central Conference. According to *A history of South Carolina United Methodism (1985)*, the plan for merger in 1939 passed in both the 1866 Conference and the 1785 Conference with "the hope that such an arrangement was but a step on the way to a genuinely inclusive church in the future."

Twenty-nine years later, the hope for a genuinely inclusive church for black and white Methodist was fulfilled with the dismantling of the Central Conference and uniting the South Carolina 1866 and 1785 Conference in 1972. There were South Carolina pastors and laity somewhere in the state who formed a relationship with Methodist across different racial context, who had different forms of worship, who had different preaching styles, who thought differently about the world as they did. However, God worked through their formed relationships. Both A. McKay Brabham and Warren M. Jenkins worked to publish histories that educated the churches on black Methodism's history in the state. In the time leading up to the 1972 merger, both conference bodies "began to hold joint pastor's schools and leadership training enterprises." The 'Catholic Spirit' or 'universal love' that Wesley preached was being embodied in the relationships formed between the 1866 and 1785 Conference. In the relationships, pastors and laity from the black and white churches saw in one another that they may not have thought alike, but they desired to love the Lord Jesus Christ and God's people equally. Each gave each other's hand and together we have strived to love God and God's people as United Methodist in South Carolina for over the past 50 years.

As I consider our current state of the church, I ask myself the question, what does it look like to embody a Catholic Spirit between United Methodist Churches that choose to stay with the conference and congregations who have discerned to go a different path? If your congregation is in the same community with a congregation that has left the connection, what does it look like to continue to form and foster relationships with these churches? Regardless of a congregation's denominational affiliation, we all live in the same community and strive to love the Lord Jesus Christ and God's people. Regardless if you are United Methodist, Global Methodist, Independent, African Methodist Episcopal, Baptist, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, or Catholic, we all experience the same issues in our community- food insecurity, transportation needs, economic depression, etc. As our history shows us, forming relationships with other Christians out of genuine love has been a place where God has chosen to enact wonders and miracles in our midst that we could never dream or imagine.

-Rev. Joseph D. Kovas

ST. PAUL UMC VOLUNTEERS

Acolytes

10/01 David Ignaffo
10/08 Lauren Akins
10/15 Zoey Hall
10/22 Vivianna Ignaffo
10/29 David Ignaffo

Communion Preparation

Ann Akins

Lay Servants

10/01 Melinda Brinkley
10/08 Rev. Joseph D. Kovas
10/15 Jimmy Brinkley
10/22 Charles Goodman, Sr.
10/29 Charlie Wyont

Nursery Volunteers

10/01 Kathy Moore & April Ramos
10/08 Melinda Brinkley & Destiny Ramos
10/15 Toby James & Amanda Kirkland
10/22 Eirene Ferguson & Minnie Goodman
10/29 Christy Boatright & Kathy Moore

Offering Accountants

Janice Watkins & Minnie Goodman

Lay Servant Substitute: Jennifer Akins

If you are unable to serve on the Sunday you are scheduled for, please find a replacement and contact the church office.



St. Paul UMC is scheduled to load the ACTS food distribution truck on the 4th Thursday of the month.

ACTS Food Distribution
Friday, October 27, 2023
8:30 AM
New Ellenton Civic Center

OCTOBER 2023

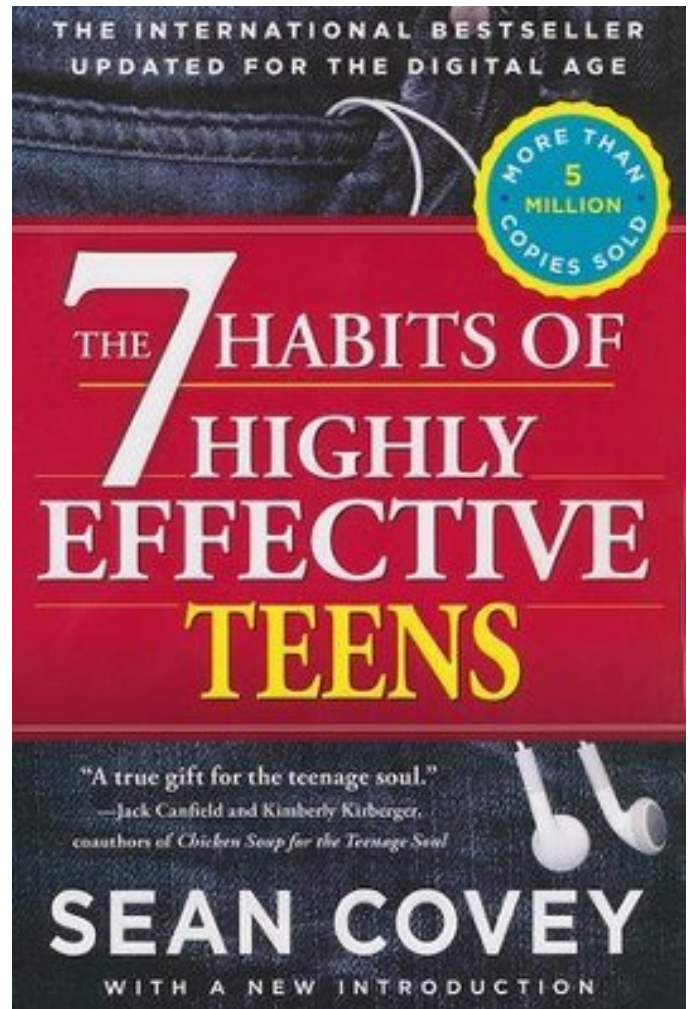
ST. PAUL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
 600 Main Street South
 New Ellenton, SC 29809

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10:30 AM Worship World Communion Sunday 5 PM-MYF-FLC	2	3	4	5	6 Nicholas Clevenger Wendy Stephens (B)	7
8 10:30 AM Worship 5 PM-MYF-FLC	9 Landon Gustafson (B)	10	11	12	13 Eric Brinkley (B) Anthony Harris (B)	14
15 10:30 AM Worship NO MYF tonight Amber & Zack Temple (A) Lyle Usry (B)	16 Karen & Kevin Ignaffo (A) Lauren Akins (B)	17 Jimmy Brinkley (B) Shelly James (B)	18	19	20	21 Time: TBD-MYF trip to Spartanburg Methodist College
22 10:30 AM Worship 5 PM-MYF-FLC	23	24 Lance Goodman (B)	25	26	27 8:30 AM-ACTS Food Distribution Judy Dudley (B)	28 Slate Summer (B)
29 10:30 AM Worship 5 PM-MYF-FLC	30	31 Halloween Cortney & Anthony Harris (A) Jack Moorer (B)				

ST. PAUL MYF

All youth are invited to join us on Sunday nights at 5:00 PM in the Family Life Center for a time of fellowship, prayer and study.

Our fall semester book is *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens* by Sean Covey.



Save the Date!

October 21, 2023

St. Paul MYF will be traveling to Spartanburg Methodist College for their Open House weekend.

Students will have the opportunity to attend the South Carolina Methodist Historical Society

Fall Meeting

and receive a tour of the college campus.

RSVP to Rev. Kovas by Sunday, October 15.



ST. PAUL

United Methodist Church

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On Facebook at

facebook.com/umcne



Special Guest Speaker

Come Join Us as We Welcome
Mr. Heyward Barnwell
to St. Paul's Pulpit
on Sunday, October 8, 2023.

Mr. Barnwell is a member of Wesley UMC of Aiken, SC.

He serves Wesley as their Lay Leader, he is a Certified Lay Servant, and the church's Finance Chairperson. He is a dedicated worker who has worked with numerous community organizations in Aiken County.



Springs Methodist - New Ellenton

First Worship Service Held:

Sunday, September 1, 1953

Church Building Dedicated:

Sunday, September 29, 1953