

Open Hearts

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

2703 Augusta Street
Greenville, SC 29605



Ministry Newsletter

JANUARY 2024

OPEN HEARTS

OPEN MINDS

OPEN DOORS

Beloved Church,

As we approach the end of the year, I want to celebrate how far we've come together, especially as it relates to our membership. We have grown our membership roll over 60% in 5 months, thanks be to God!

Membership demonstrates a wholehearted commitment and dedication to our relationship to God through the United Methodist Church and it shows in the ways we are living out our membership at Open Hearts UMC.

In January, we will turn our attention to the membership vows that we make to God and fellow believers, to start the new year with intentionality and renewed commitment. Check out what's in store in January 2024:

Sermon Series: "Membership Matters"

Join us in Covenant Renewal Service, hear from special guest preacher Jana Clack, renew our membership vows, and witness baptism.

Book Study: "Being United Methodist Christians"

The Seekers Sunday School class will be hosting a six week study during Sunday School using Andy Langford's book "Being United Methodist Christians." Class will be held in TAG Room from January 7 to February 11, and is open to anyone who is interested. Participants are asked to secure their own book.

If you are interested in becoming a member, January will be a wonderful time for you to join us! If you have questions about membership or want to know more about our church family, please reach out to me. I'd love to tell you more about our wonderful church.

Your Partner in Ministry,
Rev Karen Jones

REMINDERS

What to expect on Sunday, December 24

As you make your plans for Sunday, December 24, please consider the following:

- 9:45 am Sunday School will be combined in Trinity Hall for CommUNITY Coffee for children, youth, the new Young Adult class, and anyone without a Sunday School class. There will be refreshments and activities for all ages.
- 11:00 am worship will be a regular Sunday Advent service.
- 5:00 pm worship will be our only Christmas Eve service, which will include Communion and candle-lighting. This is a family-friendly service, and we invite all infants and children to help us celebrate the incarnation through baby Jesus.

Year-End Giving

All donations received during the 11:00 am services, through December 31st (or postmarked by the end of this day), will be counted as 2023 contributions. Anyone wishing to gift stock to Open Hearts UMC for 2023, please go to our website for Stock Donation instructions and the Stock Gift form to complete,

[Click Here](#)

Thanks for remembering our church in your annual giving.

Nametags

If you have not ordered your nametag yet, you may click here to go to our Realm account, where you can both order and pay for them. Nametags are \$8.50 each. You can also use the QR code (below), which will take you to the Realm account. You can also order through the handout provided in your bulletin. Our initial order will be placed on December 18th.

[Click here](#)

or



Orders received after December 17th may be ordered through Realm or the church office, and will be ordered in late January 2024. Subsequent orders will be as needed.

Ministry Spotlight

Trustees/Property Team

The primary function of the Trustees/Property team is to be Christian stewards of the overall facilities God has entrusted to our congregation. This includes the supervision, oversight, maintenance, and care of all real property and equipment used by our congregation so all ministries can be effective. The trustees team includes Roy Williams (Chairman), Sam Cely, Joan Gaulden, Coleman Shouse, Scott Powell, Chris Youngblood, Steve Anderson, and the Reverend Karen Jones. This team meets monthly to discuss current needs and also to develop and analyze future needs of our church facilities. The team is also responsible for developing a budget for our church properties.

A list of initial needs identified by the team is as follows: (items with * are completed):

- Repair and replace steps along Country Club Drive (*)
- Church interior walk-through and selection of standard paint palette (*)
- Church boiler repair (*)
- Identify and improve lighting where needed
- Parking lot evaluation for future growth needs
- Trinity Hall HVAC issue
- Electrical system evaluation and repairs
- Work with SCUMC regarding insurance for our facilities
- Development of an Architectural Master Plan

The Architectural Master Plan is to provide a guide for future growth and development of our buildings/site. The plan is based on Leadership's vision, programming needs (children/youth/adults), future use of space, and assessment of mechanical as well as plumbing and electrical systems. Needs will be prioritized based on funds available.

Looking Back



United Ministries – A

Wonderful Ministry Partner

This year the Open Hearts Sunday School Class participated in the United Ministries Giving Tree program. The class collectively provided holiday gifts for a family of five who have been participating in United Ministries Front Porch Housing program and will soon move into their own home. In addition, they provided loads of gifts for the organization's Santa Shoppe, which allows the children in families participating in United Ministries programs to choose gifts for their parents or caregivers. The class also provided \$300.00 for the staff to be able to cover last-minute shopping needs.

The Open Hearts Sunday School Class discovered that the United Ministries holiday giving program was meticulously organized. They received a list of practical needs for each family member, including their sizes and color preferences, making shopping or online ordering easy. They also purchased items such as mugs, journals, caps, and lotions for the Santa Shoppe, which enables children to experience the joy of giving to their loved ones. United Ministries even allows families to choose whether to pick up wrapped presents or to receive supplies to wrap the gifts themselves.

The SHARE Team has chosen United Ministries as one of our ministry partners for its holistic, transformative, and empowering work to enable adults and children in our



Advent Supper

We had a lovely time kicking off our Advent season with our church family dinner and craft night! We decorated our tree, shared a delicious meal, made advent wreaths, Charlie Brown Christmas trees, and ornaments, and collected coats for our winter coat drive. Huge thank you to all who made the evening possible and joined us. Happy Advent Season!



Love Feast

We had over 70 people participate in our Moravian Love Feast on Sunday evening, December 17th. We shared in the lighting of the Advent Wreath, the singing of Christmas carols, the reading of the Christmas story, sharing in a meal of Moravian

community to thrive. We will be publicizing ways to get involved with United Ministries throughout the coming year.

buns and sweet coffee, and a candle lighting. The biggest thank you to all our volunteers and servers who helped create such a special service!



Childrens' Coats Christmas Ministry Event Blessing of the Coats

On Sunday, December 10th we were joined by Rev. Alfred Johnson from Church Without Walls to bless the coats and pants collected by our congregation. This clothing drive was a coordinated effort with Church Without Walls and several other churches and organizations in the community to serve those in need by collecting winter coats and pants for children as well as toys. In total, Open Hearts collected 76 winter coats and 55 pairs of jeans to be donated to children in need this winter. The distribution took place at Grove Road Elementary School on Saturday morning, December 16th. We had 12 members of our congregation join to help set up and organize clothing, toys, other essentials, and more before hundreds of families (over 590 students with an additional 170 parents and siblings) arrived to receive the generous donations from the community. We also had a craft table for children to make handmade ornaments and Charlie Brown Christmas Trees.





BLOOD DRIVE

THANK YOU to the 23 blood donors and volunteers who participated in our blood drive on December third. Partnering with our local blood supplier, The Blood Connection (TBC), our members and neighbors helped us collect 18 units of blood, saving up to 54 lives in our community!

In addition to saving lives, we received TBC Rewards points for hosting four blood drives in 2023 where we collected over 70 units of blood. These TBC rewards points were redeemed to purchase three items from our Open Hearts Amazon wish list: a top notch paper cutter (our church office staff says a huge “thank you”!), a large directional sign, and stepping stones for the children’s ministry.

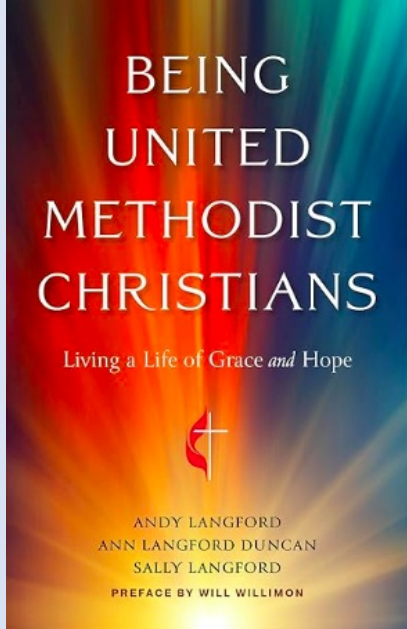
Partnering with The Blood Connection is a “win-win” for our community and for our church! Please mark your calendars for our next blood drives on February 11th and May 5th.

LOOKING AHEAD

Special Sunday School Class

Beginning on Sunday, January 7, 2024, The Seekers Sunday School Class will begin a six-week study on United Methodism. **Everyone** is invited to participate in this study, which will be in room C10, beginning at 9:45 am.

We will read and discuss, *Being United Methodist Christians: Living a Life of Grace and Hope*. The authors are Andy Langford, Ann Langford Duncan and Sally Langford. The Langfords are United Methodist pastors in North Carolina. Ann Duncan is a United



Methodist pastor serving in California. The Preface is by Will Willimon.

The 126-page book is divided into six chapters. The first three chapters review the biblical and historical foundations of the church. The last three chapters detail our beliefs, spiritual lives and service to God and neighbor. The book also includes reference material that will help individuals who are considering membership.

Books are available in paperback and kindle format, and may be ordered from Amazon (Kindle \$9.99 and Paperback \$16.99) or Abingdon Press: (Sale \$12.99). The ISBN (International Standard Book Number) is 978-

1-7910-3214-2.

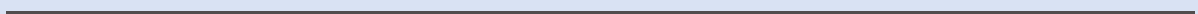
Questions should be directed to Dottie Pittman.

Leadership Team Update

In order to keep all members informed, beginning in January, updates on discussions and decisions by the Leadership Team will be regularly posted on both the upstairs and downstairs bulletin boards (near main office)

CDC Advisory Committee Established

At the end of the 2023-2024 school year, the Child Development Center at Open Hearts UMC will no longer be operated by Buncombe Street Methodist Church. In order to continue offering this ministry and service to Greenville families, we have created a CDC Advisory Board to discover the best ministry partner who can operate the CDC here and facilitate the smoothest transition from one CDC operator to another. The Advisory Board includes church staff and members as well as parents and community members, each of whom have unique experience and perspective to offer. The board members are as follows: Kathy McKinney (chair), Rev. Karen Jones, Jana Clack, Rachel Wynia, Ben Hepner, Covington Carson, Bobby Vine, Bruce Brown, Sandra Welch, Linda Sarratt, and Lynne Shackelford. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Rev. Karen Jones at karen.jones@fellowshipumcsc.org.





[Website](http://fellowshipumcsc.org) : fellowshipumcsc.org



Open Hearts United Methodist Church | 2703 Augusta Street, Greenville, SC 29605

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