



**saalem**  
United Methodist Church

**May 2020**

**Sunday School: 9:30 am**

**Sunday Morning Worship: 10:30 am**

# Salem's Story

## Lessons Learned

The church website was recently hacked. As a result, the persons that hacked it made use of my picture and the email address set up by the church for me. They sent out emails to some of our church members. Fortunately, that email address was not widely used and the number of individuals that received the nefarious emails were few.

They made a heartfelt appeal for you all to come to the financial aid of "some women in the church that were undergoing cancer treatments". All you had to do to help these poor dear individuals was to purchase gift cards and send me the numbers. To add to the sincerity factor, they sent a picture of me and my wife (stolen from the website) and signed off as "Pastor Gary".

This was all a hoax. It was a convincing hoax. It started out saying that I needed to ask a favor of you and to please email me. Once you responded to that, they asked for the favor of pre-paid cards to be purchased and then to send "me" the numbers of the back. It's a very sophisticated process. Some responded. Out of the goodness of their heart and out of the desire to help those in need, they dropped everything and responded by purchasing the cards. I am touched by that trust in me and in the desire to help. It's admirable. It truly is. However, in this instance we all got used, you, me and the church.

So just a few words of warning for the days ahead. First, don't trust me so much. Some of you have heard me say, "Never give the preacher money he is not allowed to spend on himself". I mean that! Not just about me but about any pastor, anywhere, at any time. All money that is to be used by the church for its ministry should go to and through the church financial process ... and not by way of the pastor. To send me (or any one) funds that do not go through the transparency of the church finance system is to trust me too much. Let me assure you that there are no financial emergencies that the church (or I on the church's behalf) will be responding to that require immediate cash on hand. Any request for immediate availability of funds is not legitimate. Approach it with suspicion. Even on personal matters. A few years ago, someone I know was taken by an email from a local "police department" stating that her son was due to be arrested unless a fine was paid immediately by pre-paid card. She lost \$5,000 on that scam. Approach any immediate need for untraceable cash with suspicion.

Here is my promise to you for the days ahead:

\*I will not send personal email or text requests for money. It simply will not happen. You may find a request, with my name, in a letter through the U. S. Post or in the newsletter. If that happens it will be accompanied by a Salem committee chair person's name. It will be in regard to a committee that has made the decision to fund something. The request will not come from me alone.

\*I will not send an email or a text to any one person asking for funds. If I ever ask for funds in any way whatsoever it will be with the instructions to forward those funds to the church; either through the offering plate, by mail or electronically by way of the church's on-line giving process (that is controlled by someone other than me).

\*I will not ask you to send funds because I am "too busy" to handle it. There are other staff persons that I will go to first. After all, they share the responsibility of ready availability with me. It's part of what we do when we sign on to work for a church.

As a way of closing, I want to thank those of you that were willing to make a response. How kind you are. You teach us to lead with our hearts.

I want to thank those that let me know quickly that they had gotten the email. You helped stop someone else from responding and being taken advantage of. You, too, have a heart for looking out for others by raising the alarm.

I want to thank those of you that are too crafty to be taken in by this. We may need you on the Finance Committee. Okay, I'm kidding about that. But your crusty old hearts teach us something about what Christ means when he says we should be 'wise as serpents'. As such we do our ministry with a care and concern for the resources that God has entrusted to us.

To paraphrase Paul when he speaks about spiritual gifts, "we each have or own thing to work with...it takes us all giving what we can."

With affection for you all,

Gary D. Phillips

## Summer Plans

The summer is coming up soon and while there are many ideas and plans in the works, much of it is dependent on what we are able to do. I am looking at Green River Day, Carowinds, cookouts at the Church, water days/nights and more. Once we know what we can do and when, I will set it up. We will also plan to have a Breakfast Get Together each week. We will plan to meet at a different place and eat and fellowship together. Look out for more details as they are able to be made.

## Create Your Own Youth Group

Summer is here and that means its time to start thinking about Youth group for next year. I am issuing a challenge to ALL Youth. Create your Own Youth group Meeting!!!! Here are the guidelines: 1) Keep it to one hour; 2) Remember Group Dynamics; 3) Remember what resources we have or have access to.

I will collect them and will integrate them into the regular schedule next year. I will also get you involved in the set up, etc. Make sure to include a scripture you want the devotion to cover as well as a theme.

This is your chance to take the next step in making the Youth group more of YOUR group. Take the challenge; Have Fun; Create something you cant wait to present and invite friends to. get them to me by July 15!!

## Church Project

### *God Moments with the People of Salem*

We have all had one of those moments in our lives. It is that time where we either feel the presence of God so strongly with us or something happens that you know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that it is God involved in it.

We want to take these stories and create a book full of them. What we would like each story to include is:

Title

Scripture relating to the story

Detail story

Closing Prayer

Question for readers to think about and respond to relating to your God moment

Please write these and turn them in by May 31 to [jimmagann@gmail.com](mailto:jimmagann@gmail.com). We will then work to create and publish the book and have to sell by Homecoming Sunday next September. The funds raised by selling them will go towards the Youth Foreign Mission trip next Spring. Any questions, please contact Jim Magann or John Goodale.





## The UMC Market

The UMC Market is a website that helps you organize your shopping and give back to the church just by doing your normal shopping. The Market has over 50 stores that give cash back to the church when you shop online. Here are some simple steps for how to begin shopping with UMC Market.

Go to [umcmarket.org](http://umcmarket.org)

Sign up on the top grey bar by entering your email and creating a password. Once you have done this it will ask you where you live (i.e. United States, South Carolina, then Irmo) Whether or not you live in Irmo, the Church is located in Irmo so therefore you must select Irmo or Salem will not come up when selecting your church. Once you select Irmo the next drop down arrow will have churches in Irmo, select Salem.

Once you have done this you can begin shopping. Look through the stores and find one that you wish to shop at, and click on its logo.

Once you have done so it will redirect you to another page on the UMC Market website, click on the red shop now button. This will redirect you to a transition page where the logo of the business and their donation rate will show up, click the red "click to continue" button at the top.

The page will then automatically redirect to the store's website, then you can continue shopping like normal.

You must always begin shopping through the UMC Market website in order for the donations to come to the church, the normal websites will not have this feature and the church will not receive the donations from your shopping.

This does NOT require you to add any money to your purchase, it donates money from what you spent when shopping, it will NOT change the amount you pay in check-out. This is simply a donation of revenue from the businesses themselves based on your shopping.

Happy Shopping!

Please prayerfully consider giving to Salem United Methodist Church through our eGiving program. Scan the QR code below to be taken to Salem's donation page to present your offering.



You can also visit the link: <https://giving.ncsservices.org/App/Giving/ncs-2365>

## 2020 Graduates

Do you have someone in your family graduating this year? Someone graduating High School, College or other? Salem UMC needs your information. Please contact the church office or email [smethodist@aol.com](mailto:smethodist@aol.com) or [jimmagann@gmail.com](mailto:jimmagann@gmail.com). Let us know where they are graduating from and if they are a High School graduate we would love to know the next step in their journey.

Please let us know all information by Sunday, May 20. Thank you very much!





**salem**  
United Methodist Church

**1321 Salem Church Road  
Irmo, SC 29063**

**Church Office Hours**

Monday - Thursday

8:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon

1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

803-781-1626

website: [salemumcsc.com](http://salemumcsc.com)



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## Notes

Dear Salem United Methodist Church,

Rod and I miss you all and look forward each Sunday for the beautiful service Pastor Gary provides via our computer. We are both fine, a little cabin fever. Our strong faith will see this through.

Love in Christ,

Rod and Lois Sheldon