



Jeff's Journal

Unwrapping the Significance of Advent: A Season of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love

As we approach "the most wonderful time of the year", we are reminded that Advent is more than just a countdown to Christmas. It is a season rich in meaning; a time when we intentionally prepare our hearts for the celebration of the birth of our Savior. Let us delve into the significance of Advent, understanding the deeper meanings that make this season so special.

Hope: A Beacon in the Darkness

Advent begins with the theme of hope, symbolized by the lighting of the first candle, often referred to as the "Hope Candle." In a world that sometimes feels overshadowed by darkness, Advent invites us to embrace the hope that Christ's coming brings. It reminds us that no matter how challenging our circumstances may be, there is a light that shines brightly, guiding us through the shadows.

Peace: Ready the Way of the Lord

The second candle, representing peace, symbolizes the importance of getting our hearts ready for the arrival of Christ. Just as John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus, Advent calls us to reflect on our lives, repent, and make room for the transformative power of Christ, the Prince of Peace. It's a season to declutter our hearts, bringing peace to our souls, making space for the true meaning of Christmas.

Joy: Rejoicing in the Promise Fulfilled

As we progress through Advent, the third candle, the "Joy Candle," is lit. This symbolizes the joy that fills our hearts as we draw nearer to the fulfillment of God's promise—the birth of Jesus. Despite the challenges and uncertainties we may face, Advent calls us to rejoice in the assurance that God's promises are true and trustworthy.

Love: The Greatest Gift of All

Finally, the fourth candle, often referred to as the "Love Candle," represents the culmination of the Advent journey. It is a reminder that the ultimate expression of God's love is found in the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ. As we approach Christmas Day, let us reflect on the boundless love God has bestowed upon us and share that love with others.

In the midst of the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, Advent provides a sacred space for reflection, anticipation, and celebration. It invites us to go beyond the glittering decorations and festive gatherings, encouraging us to focus on the true reason for our joy—the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

May this Advent season be a time of renewed hope, intentional preparation, overflowing joy, and boundless love for each and every one of us.

Blessings for the Advent Journey!

Pastor Jeff

Children's News

December 3rd:

Kid's Worship:
10:30 A.M. - 11:30 A.M.
Quest:
4:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.



December 10th:

****Last Day for Kid's Worship
& Quest until the New Year****

Kid's Worship:
10:30 A.M. - 11:30 A.M.
Quest:
Christmas Movie Party
featuring
Dr. Seuss' The Grinch
3:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.

****Quest and Kid's Worship
Will Return January 7, 2024****

Salem UMC Chancel Choir Presents



**A "Bluegrass Inspired"
Christmas Cantata**

**December 10th, 10:30am
Salem UMC, Irmo SC**



SALEM YOUTH

Youth News

Dec. 2

The Living Christmas Story at
UnionUMC 5:30 - 9:00pm

Dec. 3

Youth Group caroling
and visit with
Sharon Green 5:00 - 6:30pm

Dec. 9

Habitat Playhouse
Project 8:00am -
4:00 pm

Dec. 10

Youth Hawaiian Luau
Christmas Party
6:00p.m. - 7:30p.m.

**There will be NO YOUTH
GROUP Dec. 17, 24 or 31. We
will return on Jan. 6 at
5:00p.m.**

Salem Missions Team Christmas Project

This year the Salem UMC Missions Team has chosen to support the Midlands Orphan Relief Organization for Christmas. This Organization provides support services and aid to meet the needs of children identified as at-risk or suffering from abandonment, abuse and/or neglect. Their Christmas Project is called "Midlands Orphan Relief Stocking Drive". How this will work is you will select a stocking from the tree, or basket, in the Welcome Center and Narthex. In that stocking is a tag with a gender, age and item list to purchase. You will purchase what is on that list and return it to the church in the same area that you got the stocking by no later than **Sunday, December 10**. Please do not wrap the presents and also do not stress about sizes as the items will be given to the right children. Please do not purchase toys or games, etc. The Missions Committee thanks everyone for joining in this project for this year.



World Thank Celebration

The United Women in Faith had a good attendance last month to hear from the guest speaker Paul Cumbers from Lighthouse for Life (lighthouseforlife.org) an organization dedicated to fighting human trafficking. Thanks to all that attended this event.



Congratulations!

to **Kaitlyn and Patrick Garrison**
on the birth of their son

Miller James Garrison

born October 23rd

Proud Salem grandparents are **Mike and Janet Haas**.



Congratulations!

to **Kayla and Cody Miller**
on the birth of their daughter

Julia Nichole Miller

born November 13th

Proud Salem grandparents are **Dave & Lorri Evans**.

ALS 5K Walk

I was blown away with all the support and love shown at the ALS walk I love you all.

Sharon Greene

Thank you to everyone that attended the memorial service, expressed condolences, sent cards, emails and flowers for Mother. She truly loved Salem and the friends she made here. Each time we spoke with her she asked how everyone was doing and wanted to know the latest goings on. We miss her but know she's home with Jesus.

Randy & Natalie Hilliard and fami-

Faith Circle will meet on Monday, December 5th at 5:00 at Walmart in the middle entrance that says Home & Living to shop for "Families helping Families", then we will meet back in the fellowship hall at church (approximately at 6:15 - 6:30) to wrap gifts and eat together. For further details contact Millie Fore 803-920-5261.



2024 Flower Calendar

The 2024 Flower Calendar has been placed in the Welcome Center. Cost is **\$96 for two** arrangements and is a thoughtful way to honor or memorialize someone special. The arrangements are yours to take following the service. If you would like to donate the flowers, they will be arranged into several different vases to be delivered to shut-ins and the sick. ***Please help support the church in this meaningful manner.***



OASIS

Join us for our Tacky Christmas party on Tuesday, December 12 at 11:30! Come dressed in your tacky attire and enjoy a catered meal from Tim Scott's catering consisting of Tuscan chicken, bowtie pasta, salad and a dessert! The cost of the meal will be \$10 and it's important to **RSVP by Thursday, December 7th**. You can RSVP by calling the church office or by contacting Tina Overton. Come join us for the festive event and bring a friend!

Thank you, OASIS, for your generous giving of \$486 collected at our Thanksgiving luncheon for the benefit of Sharing God's Love Food Bank! Your contributions will go a long way in providing meals to those in need during this Holiday season.

Christmas Eve Service



We hope you will plan to join us on **December 24th at 5:30 pm** for our **Christmas Eve Service**. Please bring any family members that may be visiting with you as we will share in the sacrament of Holy Communion and celebrate the birth of our Savior.



Congratulations

to

Norma Sessions and Bishop Ken Carder
who were married on Friday, November 18th.



Craft Bazaar

We are planning to have the Bazaar this year on **December 9th** and we hope everyone puts this date on their calendar to come shop. The time of the event is **9 - 2**. We look forward to seeing you there!

If you or someone you know is interested in setting up a table please contact Millie Fore 920-5261 or Sandra Durst 600-6206 for more information.

Salem Morning Circle

will meet for Christmas Luncheon at Roxanne's Market restaurant on December 6, 2023, at 11:30 AM.



Memorials & Honorarium

Building Fund

In Loving Memory of Danny Bollinger by
Paul & Cheryl (Weed) Lundy

In Loving Memory of Mary Catherine
Bickley Erskine by
Salem United Women in Faith

In Loving Memory of Leroy Gibson by
Salem OASIS
Pathfinders Sunday School Class

In Loving Memory of Susan Gillespie by
Dan & Carla Jennings
David & Martina Thomas

In Loving Memory of Ruth Hilliard by
Carolyn Gilbert
Randy & Natalie Hilliard
Sheryl Hobbs
Jim & Marie Lewis
Don & Miriam Lovett
Tommy & Allison McLendon
Pathfinders Sunday School Class
Salem United Women in Faith

In Honor of Sharon Greene by
Patty Bagwell Kilpatrick

Cemetery Fund

In Honor of Anita Weed's 91st birthday by
Ron & Deborah Joye

Epworth Fund

In Loving Memory of Barbara Thomas by
Leslie Stiffler

General Fund

In Loving Memory of Danny Bollinger by
Ron & Deborah Joye

In Loving Memory of Beverly Bouknight by
Ron & Deborah Joye

In Loving Memory of Rev. Don Cavin by
Ron & Deborah Joye
Larry & June Salters

In Loving Memory of Leroy Gibson by
Larry & June Salters

In Loving Memory of Donald Grooms by
Ron & Deborah Joye

In Loving Memory of Ruth Hilliard by
Larry & June Salters
Steve & Mary George Smith

In Loving Memory of Daisy Massey by
Ron & Deborah Joye

In Loving Memory of Barbara Thomas by
Ron & Deborah Joye

Music Fund

Salem Choir, Ringers and Church family

Worship/Christmas Tree Fund

In Loving Memory of Carl & Margie Weed by
Weed, Jennings & Joye,
grandchildren & great grandchildren



December



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Sanctuary reserved 1-3
3 Seekers Class Fellowship Hall 11:30-1:00 Sanctuary reserved 4:30- 8:00	4 Faith Circle @ 5:00 Walmart	5	6 Salem Morning Circle 11:30 @ Roxanne's Market Blood Drive 12-4	7 LMA Mtg 6:30	8 Set-up for Bazaar	9 Bazaar 9-2
10 Cantata	11 Girl Scouts 6:00	12 OASIS 11:30	13 Newsletter deadline	14	15	16 Nurses Honor Guard 10:00
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 Christmas Eve Service 5:30	25 Merry Christmas!	26	27	28	29	30
31 New Year's Eve	Office Closed for week of Christmas					

Notes:

Sundays

9:30 Sunday School
10:30 Worship Service
4:00 Quest
5:00 Youth Group

Weekdays

7:00 PM Wednesday
7:00 AM Wednesday
7:00 PM Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday

Choir
AA
AA





salem
United Methodist Church

1321 Salem Church Road
Irmo, SC 29063



Worship Hours

Sunday School: 9:30 am
Worship: 10:30 am



Church Office Hours

Monday - Thursday
8:30-12:00 1:00-3:30
803-781-1626
E-mail: smethodist@aol.com
website: salemumcsc.com
CCLI #1562077

OUR MINISTRY TEAM

Jeff Childress — Pastor
William Byrd — Pianist
P. J. Garrett — Director of Children's Ministries
Sarah E. High — Director of Music Ministries
Angie Lain — Director of Accounting
Miriam Y. Lovett — Organist
Jim Magann — Coordinator of Children/Youth
and Missions Ministries
Tina Overton — Director of Creative Ministries
Dustin Tanner — Coordinator of A/V Tech and Communications
Marie Wicker — Administrative Coordinator

Newsletter Information

If you would like to receive this newsletter by e-mail, or if you have questions, comments, or articles for the newsletter, please send an e-mail or call the church. Anyone who would like to submit an article or item for the **January** newsletter should do so by **December 13th**.

AA

AA meets at 7:00 pm every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday evening. They also meet every Wednesday morning at 7:00 am, here at Salem UMC.

Ushers Needed

This is an important ministry in our church and volunteers are needed. Ushers play a vital role in the life of Salem United Methodist Church by welcoming members and newcomers, as well as performing their important part in the worship service. You will enjoy this gratifying ministry experience, usually one to two months each year. There will be a sign-up sheet in the Welcome Center if you are interested in serving as an usher, or contact the church office at 803-781-1626.

E-Giving

Please prayerfully consider giving to Salem United Methodist Church through our e-Giving 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>

Al-Anon

Al-Anon, a 12-step group for families and friends, meets on Tuesdays at noon at Chapin CCC (formerly Chapin UMC). Call 803-465-1609 if you have questions.

Follow us on Instagram and Facebook (salemumcofirmo) weekly for Pastor Jeff's *Wednesday in the Word*. It's a great mid-week encouragement to get you through the rest of your week until we meet again on Sunday.