



# NEWS FROM THE PEWS

“I will Advise You and Watch Over You...” Psalm 32:8 *March Edition*

Dear Aldersgate,

We are having a church-wide informational meeting on Sunday, March 12, 2023 at 12:30 pm. Lunch will be provided. We are making sure that the meal will allow everyone to be present for the meeting. Therefore, we need for you to sign up in advance. Please sign up no later than **Wednesday, March 8, 2023**.

During the information session, we will provide a brief update on opportunities to our share space with others. However, the focus of the discussion will be on the “**Local Church Discernment Process**”. This is the plan that the Trustees of the South Carolina Annual Conference have provided for churches seeking to separate from the United Methodist Church and retain the property.

This plan was published at the end of December 2022 to address congregations that wanted to leave the United Methodist church over the language and upholding of the language regarding homosexuality in *The Book of Discipline (2016)* with amendments and additions from General Conference 2019. This issue has been debated at every General Conference since 1972. Some churches, particularly ones that do not want the language changed have decided it is time to leave and become independent churches or join another denomination.

The South Carolina Conference has determined that the churches seeking to leave do not meet the standards in ¶2553 that was written for churches that cannot accept the language regarding homosexuality. This paragraph is only effective through the end of 2023. The South Carolina Conference is using the process in ¶2549. Therefore, the “Local Church Discernment Process” does not have an end date. Instead, it has a yearly deadline of March 1 in order to be on the agenda for Annual Conference in June of each year. The “Local Church Discernment Process” requires a minimum 30 day discernment period, and the meeting of financial obligations.

We discussed the “Local Church Discernment Plan” and the structure of the United Methodist Church at the Leadership Launch on Saturday, January 21, 2023. The consensus of the leadership was to wait and see what happens because the language in *The Book of Discipline* regarding the church’s stance that homosexuality “is incompatible with Christian teaching” (¶161) and not ordaining ministers who are openly, practicing homosexuals **has not changed**.

Many of you heard about other congregations that were having church conferences in February and voting to leave the United Methodist Church. This process has raised many new questions. Mark Sari and I will explain the process and try to answer your questions during this informational meeting. In order to be able to answer your questions and to present information with supporting sources, we would appreciate questions submitted before the meeting.

If you would like more information about the “Local Discernment Plan” please click [here](#). This document has a link to frequently asked questions is included. The United Methodist Church has collected questions and provides answers in a series called “Is the United Methodist Church Really”. You can access those documents by clicking [here](#). If you do not have digital access to these documents, there are copies in the office.

If you have questions before the informational meeting or cannot attend the meeting, please talk to Mark Sari or to me.

I would also welcome your questions and comments in a Lenten discussion based on “Bless the Lent We Actually Have”. I’ll be in the Parlor at noon on Tuesdays.

Grace and Peace, Laura



**SIGN UP**

**Sunday, March 12th at 12:30PM** Pastor Laura and church council chair, Mark Sari, will host an informational meeting regarding the discernment process from the UMC. Lunch will be provided and all members are welcome to attend. However, **you must be signed up in advance**. Please get in touch with Brooke to sign up or there is a sign up sheet in the Narthex.



The UMM will host a St. Patrick's Day meal on Friday, March 17th at 6:00PM. The menu will be corn beef and cabbage. Please let Brooke know if you'd like to come or sign up in the Narthex.

The UMM will also be hosting a meal for the FireAnts at their game on March 28th. Come out and show the UMM and FireAnts some support.

**BASKET AUCTION**

We're excited to announce our Basket Auction will be **Wednesday, April 5th**. We're seeking out basket donations so if you can or know someone who can, please let Brooke know ASAP. All proceeds from the auction go to our backpack ministry and this is their biggest fundraiser of the year, help us make it a great one.

We hope to see you there.



There are a lot of meetings this month, please watch for any changes/updates about upcoming meetings. There are also a lot of things to sign up for, don't forget!

**OUR PRAYERS:**

- Lynn Boan
- Family of Pat Boozer
- Family of Connie Snow
- Griffin Family
- Scott/Stephanie Smith
- Betty Hodges
- Betty Heacker
- Larry & Garland Nettles
- Allen Prescott
- Gene Hunter
- Ed & Carolyn Hudson
- Everett Burroughs
- Bill Brattain
- (Marsha Witbeck's cousin)
- Bill Fleury
- Rex Riddle
- Sandy Richardson
- Christy Richardson
- Arawana
- Bill Reither
- Sam Crawford
- All Homebound Members

*Please let us know when we need to remove someone from this list.*



The next senior trip for lunch will be Friday, March 24th at 12:00PM. This trip will be to Fatz Café in Camden. There is a sign up sheet in the Narthex or you can contact Brooke to sign up.



Daylight Savings begins Sunday, March 12th. Don't forget to "Spring Ahead"

*thank you*

Mrs. Ann Gerace would like to thank you all for your thoughts, kind words, and prayers during this season. Please continue to pray for Mrs. Ann and for Mr. Carlo as well as they navigate through these tough times.



The next round of bowling will be **Thursday, March 23rd** at 6:30PM. This is open to all our members, come out and have a good time if you're able.



Our next blood drive will be Thursday, March 23rd from 2PM-7PM. Please come and give if you are able or let Dave Gohn know if you would like to help.



Our partners in Christ, Sumter United Ministries, are in great need of help with March shelter meals. We would love to support them this month and provide a meal in addition to what our UMM are already doing. **March 15th** is the day we need to provide a meal and a short devotion. Please contact Brooke ASAP if you can help in anyway with either of these things.



Pastor Laura will continue the sermon series "Bless the Lent We Actually Have" based on resources from Kate Bowler and her team. Tuesday's at noon Pastor Laura invites you to come to the Parlor for a small group discussion on each week's topic. There is also a free study guide that goes along with this, please let Pastor or Brooke know if you'd like a copy of the guide.



9:30 AM Sunday School

10:30 AM Worship

# March 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Disciple Study 9:30A/5:30P  UMM 1PM	2	3	4
5	6 WOW 5:30P	7 Jenky's 10A  Evangelism 5:30P  Worship 6:30P	8 UMM 7A  Disciple Study 9:30A/5:30P	9  Knitters 10A  Adult Ministries 5P	10	11  CPR/  1st Aid Training 9A
12  Discernment Info Meeting 12:30P	13  WOW 5:30P  Finance 6:30P	14  Family Ministries 5:30P	15 UMM 7A  Disciple Study 9:30A/5:30P  Missions 4:30P	16  SPRC 5:30P  Trustees 6:30P	17  St. Patty's Meal 6P	18
19	20 WOW 5:30P  Church Council 6:30P	21  UMW Board 6:30P	22 UMM 7A	23 Knitters 10A  Blood Drive 2P-7P  Bowling 6:30 P	24 12P  Senior Trip  Fatz Café	25
26	27 WOW 5:30P	28 UMM host FireAnt Meal/ Attend Game	29 UMM 7A	30	31	



### Office Details

Hours: 8:00-1:00

*(Emails answered throughout the day)*

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211 Alice Drive

Sumter, SC 29150

### MARCH BIRTHDAYS

2 Mike Quinlan	11 Alan Moore	24 Betty Vannoy
3 Norm Nichol	13 Joe Roberts	24 Rolanda Dani
4 Jason Harding	15 Charlie Bells	25 Garland Nettles
5 Jace Harding	15 Bryan Snow	28 Ruth Johnson
8 Lance Towery	16 Pat Chandler	29 Ed Hudson
9 Courtney Gibbons	20 Jan Levy	30 Bev Beardsley
10 Gene Seiveno	21 Scott Smith	30 Doug Griffin
11 Rudy Miller	22 Shawn White	31 LeeAnna Harding
		31 Peggy Patrick