




Ecclesia

April 2024


FIRST
UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH
SALISBURY, NC
EST. 1783

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Season of the Church Year

April 7

April 14

April 21

April 28

Season of Easter

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YouTube Channel
FUMC Salisbury



Sermon Podcast
Salisbury Sermons



Facebook
@fumcsalisbury
Instagram
@fumcsalisbury



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Re:Marks



What difference does Easter make?

This year, the month of April is squarely within Eastertide, the season between Easter Day and Pentecost. In 2024, those dates are March 31 and May 19, respectively. So, during “the Great Fifty Days” of Easter, let’s think together about the difference Easter makes. What impact does Jesus’ resurrection nearly 2,000 years ago have for us today? Here are at least three ways:

1. Easter gives us a “touchable faith.”

People in different lands and eras have long concocted ideas about the origins of life. Yet we humbly assert that the Lord, the Creator of all that exists, interacted with us: first, through covenant with ancient Israel, and then, through Jesus Christ. Before Christ, faith was more about dutifully following religious practices. During Christ’s earthly ministry, faith was refocused. After Christ, namely after his resurrection, faith became touchable. Remember what happened on Easter with the disciples, and then later in the week with Thomas – the resurrected Christ appeared in the flesh, and showed them the scars from His crucifixion (John 20:19-29). Jesus Christ was and is the tangible reality of God’s love defeating sin, evil, and death. Those first disciples could touch Him!

People today in different lands come up with rationale not to believe in anything. Yet they can look at the Church’s ministry, because at our best we offer a touchable faith.

2. Easter answers the question about life after death.

People in different lands and eras have pondered ideas about what happens after this life. Does life consist only of our flesh and bones? Is there more? Scientific analysis can only go so far. This Easter faith that became touchable now resonates on the inside of our existence, because Jesus Christ, who was dead, was now alive in front of the apostles. The resurrection does not simply give us a good feeling about life after death; the resurrection gives positive testimony about God’s grace. As Peter wrote, by Jesus Christ’s “great mercy, we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (1 Peter 1:3-4).” We now live with Easter answers to those questions.

3. Easter offers perspective on the big mysteries.

People in different lands and eras have pondered the big mysteries about suffering, tragedy, and relationships. And we still do today. With deep gratitude to God’s faithfulness, we are granted perspective on those mysteries. Simple answers elude us, yet the resurrection permits us to see more clearly. God did not allow the devious religious & political leaders, who evidently felt threatened, to have the last word on Jesus with the crucifixion. Through the empty tomb, God found victory then, and God continues to bring good out of bad, healing out of pain, and life out of death. We trust in Jesus, who is seated on the heavenly throne and says, “See, I am making all things new (Revelation 21:5).”

Into these days of April, I hope you prayerfully ask, “What difference does Easter make?” Ask, not from a cynical standpoint, but from a posture of faith seeking understanding. When you do, know that I am asking, too. Let’s think together in these three ways. When we do, in this land and at this time, we will experience a fresh experience of Easter joy.



Mark Conforti

Pastor Mark

First Community Meal of the Season!



APRIL 3

Community Meal

connect with friends, old & new

Fisher Street entrance - 6:00pm

(Next: May 1)

APRIL 17

Fellowship Meal

foster fellowship among church members

Fellowship Hall - 6:00pm

(Next: April 17)

Fellowship Meal Reservations

\$8 per adult, (children & youth eat free)

reservation required by Monday, April 15

reservations and payment can be made online or reserve your spot by calling the church office volunteers, 9am - 3pm (Mon-Thurs).



Visiting Children's & Youth Choir

The Wesley Children's Choir and Youth Choir of Davidson United Methodist Church will be leading worship on Sunday, May 05 at both the 08:30am & 11:00am services. We are excited to welcome these young musicians (from grades 3-12), under the direction of The Rev. Dr. Kevin Turner, Pastor for Music & Worship at Davidson UMC. The choir most recently toured and shared their music in Paducah, KY; St. Louis, MO; and Knoxville, TN last summer.



introducing...



COMING SOON WEDNESDAY MAY 15

FARMER/VENDOR INTEREST MEETING

APRIL 9, 7:00PM

217 SOUTH CHURCH STREET
FISHER STREET LOBBY - DOOR B3

**FIRST MARKET DAY:
MAY 15, 2024**

MARKET RULES, MEMBERSHIP, AND MORE DETAILS TO COME...

Church History

Methodist conferencing began in 1744. John Wesley called together five clergymen to answer three questions: What to teach? How to teach? What to do? They began their deliberations after an extended period of prayer.

In late April and early May 2024, 862 United Methodist delegates from around the globe will gather in Charlotte, NC, to continue this tradition. 55% are from the United States, 32% from Africa, 6% from the Philippines, and 4.6% from Europe. Half are clergy and half are laity. They speak 20 different languages and represent our world's cultural diversity. This year's conference theme comes from Psalm 46:10, "And Know that I am God."

This General Conference follows closely on the heels of church disaffiliations. About 25% of our local churches have left the UMC. Some left to unite with conservative denominations. Some churches joined more progressive denominations, and some became independent. Their exodus means the General Conference must make major cuts in our proposed worldwide budget.

Following Wesley's example, the General Conference will have multiple opportunities for worship and reflection. The delegates are also charged with perfecting our Book of Discipline (BOD) and creating a better church. Proposed changes fall under the general heading of "what to do." Our core theology is restricted and cannot be changed.

Petitions to amend the BOD come from organizations, clergy members, and/or lay members of the UMC. One set of petitions point Methodism in a major new direction.

In the last 50 years, human sexuality has deeply divided our denomination. Faithful Christians do not agree on matters of gender and sexuality. Our diversity leads to different interpretations of Holy Scripture. Prior to 1972, the BOD did not mention homosexuality. Some new petitions propose removing the language that was added at that time, removing all negative references to homosexuality from the BOD. If approved, that would leave the question of affirming individuals of all sexual orientations up to each local church member, congregation, and annual conference.

Another petition would divide the UMC into regions. Each region would have the separate authority to adopt social principles consistent with its cultural norms. The United States would be one of those regions.

Adopting these new petitions would allow the entire denomination to stop arguing about sexual orientation and focus instead on the mission of Christ. Such a change would make room in the UMC for everyone including progressives, moderates, and conservatives. The United Methodist Church has historically encouraged members to "think and let think." We insist on unity around our core doctrines, but we extend liberty and love in matters of faith beyond these essentials.

For the moment, all petitions are only proposals. Delegates will prayerfully consider each one. If approved, establishing regional groupings within the UMC will require a constitutional amendment. Our local church laity and clergy delegates would then vote on that constitutional change at our 2025 Annual Conference.

Methodists are not expected to think alike. We are a big family. Families sometimes disagree. But John Wesley said, "we do not have to think alike. We do have to love alike."

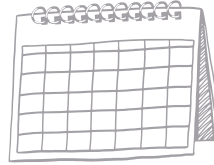
Fred Jordan, *Church Historian*



Youth Ministry

Salisbury Youth 6-12 GRADE MINISTRY

Newsletter



YOUTH GROUP CALENDAR
2023-2024



Graduation Sunday will be May 12. The Scholarship Committee will be conducting interviews on April 18. Contact Kathi Welborn with any questions about the Scholarship Committee!

APRIL

- 7 - YOUTH GROUP
- 14 - YOUTH GROUP
- 21 - YOUTH GROUP
- 28 - no youth group
(long wknd, RSS/GS)

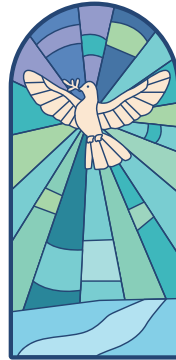
MAY

- 5 - YOUTH GROUP
- 12 - no youth group
(Mother's day)
- 19 - SUMMER
KICKOFF
- 28 - no youth group
(summer)

Pray for our Confirmands

Join me in praying for the youth in our Confirmation Class as they explore and grow in their faith. May 19 is Confirmation Sunday where we will celebrate this growth with them!

Mia, Declan, Dudley, Mason, Gracie, Mason, Raleigh, & Lucas



The Youth Group helped pack Easter Eggs for the Children's Egg Hunt after we tested 16 varieties of jelly beans. Sour Patch Watermelon jelly beans were ranked the highest. Carolina Reaper beans ranked the lowest...



Pastors Mark (FUMC) and Jim (MHUMC) had a great time teaching the confirmands on the topic of worship in the month of March. We're grateful for their leadership in confirmation class, and on Sundays!



Confirmation

Confirmation Classes will be hosted at Milford Hills UMC in April, and FUMC on May 5 & 12.

April						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

May						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Preparing for Camp Discovery

CAMPER APPLICATIONS

60%

WE'VE RECEIVED APPLICATIONS FROM ROCKWELL, GRANITE QUARRY, FAITH CHARTER, WEST ROWAN, AND OVERTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

MENTOR APPLICATIONS

50%

WE'RE HALFWAY THERE TO FINDING OUR MENTORS! MENTORS MUST BE AT LEAST 16 YEARS OLD. APPLICATION AVAILABLE ON THE CHURCH WEBSITE.

FUNDRAISING GOAL

36%

CAMP DISCOVERY COSTS 18-20K - IT'S THE LARGEST SINGLE MONETARY INVESTMENT IN CHILDREN'S MINISTRY WE MAKE EVERY YEAR.



SWIM IN THE LAKE

\$ 500



ONE CAMPER

HIGH ROPES COURSE

\$ 1,000



TWO CAMPERS

CLIMB THE FIRE TOWER

\$ 2,500



FIVE CAMPERS

GIVE THE GIFT OF CAMP

DETAILS ABOUT INDIVIDUAL & CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP BENEFITS AVAILABLE AT FUMCSALISBURY.ORG/CAMP-DISCOVERY



Volunteering at Camp Discovery

VOLUNTEER AT CAMP DISCOVERY

Can't serve a full week of Camp?
We have just the right job for you.

Camper applications are being delivered to guidance counselors & fundraising has begun!

APPLY TO BE A MENTOR

contact Claire Karriker at campdiscoveryfumc@gmail.com

WE NEED HELP WITH :

- Morning Activities
 - 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
- Snack Time
 - 2:30 - 4:00 p.m.
- Evening Activities
 - 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

JOIN US
JUNE 9-14

WANT TO SERVE THE WHOLE DAY? WE HAVE A SPOT FOR YOU.

For more information on how to serve, please email:

CampDiscoveryFUMC@gmail.com

Downtown Events Coming Up

SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 2024



A BENEFIT FOR HAPPY ROOTS

April 20 - Earth Day Jam

The Trustees have approved musicians from the Earth Day Jam - a fundraiser for Happy Roots - to use space in the church building to prepare and a place to store instrument cases. We're looking forward to partnering with the community in this way!

May 18 - Cheerwine Festival

We will sell Cheerwine brownies as a fundraiser for Camp Discovery.

June 22 - Salisbury Pride

The Trustees have approved Salisbury Pride organizers hosting the volunteer check-in table at FUMC

More Upcoming
Downtown Events...



Rowan Helping Ministries This Month

Serving Meals in Jeannie's Kitchen

March: Taffy Jordan & Volunteers
Dinner, April 11 & Breakfast, April 12

May: Discovery Class

Interested in your group serving a meal? Contact Taffy Jordan!

Food Packing

Fourth Wednesdays, during the school year

Next Packing Party:

April 24, 2:00-3:00pm

Interested in coming to a packing party? Contact Jen Fogt!

Donations of Pots & Pans Needed



The Family Crisis Council's local women's shelter has an urgent need for cooking pots and pans. Residents prepare meal at the shelter individually and communally. The present collection needs to be replenished.

If you have an extra pot or pan in usable condition to spare, please consider donating it/them to the shelter. They need usable pots (large and/or small), skillets, soup pots and sauce (pans with or without lids). Also baking dishes, casseroles, cookie sheets, etc. will be put to good use if you have any to spare.

If you find you have something to donate, please contact Taffy Jordan (taffyjordan@bellsouth.net or 704-633-4514). I will pick up and deliver in your name.

Lenten Sermon Series

Seven Deadly Sins
A sermon series through Lent
& continuing after Easter

<i>Pride</i> February 18	<i>Sloth</i> March 10 <i>Rev. David Hollis preaching</i>
<i>Envy</i> February 25 <i>Rev. Beth Crissman preaching</i>	<i>Greed</i> March 17
<i>Anger</i> March 3	<i>Gluttony</i> April 7 <i>Whitney Cassell preaching</i>
	<i>Lust</i> April 14

Landscaping Worker Bees



Almost 10 yards of mulch were spread. Two pickup truck loads of ivy and weeds were pulled and hauled to the dumpster. And the team plans to continue work on the project soon. Thank you to the crew for helping make the landscaping look great before Easter!

Spruce up crew -

Jeff Matthews, Rikki Spencer, John Carnes, Sara Banish, Paul and Helen Leonovich, Mitchell Hagler, Caroline and Dudley Johnsen, and Steve Sherriff



Children's Ministry

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

April 7 April 14
April 21 April 28
10:00 – 10:45 am

Taught by Susan Cooley

Upstairs in Education Building Pastor Mark Conforti will teach a class for the parents in the room next door. Kids will learn music to present in worship on May 12!

THANK YOU

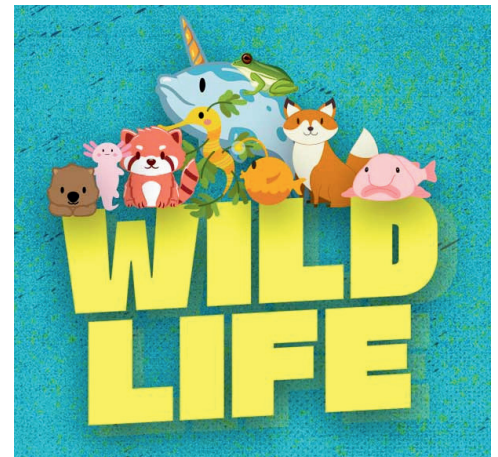


Thank you to everyone who donated candy and plastic eggs; thank you to the Front Desk Volunteers, and Youth Group who packed all of our eggs for Egg My Yard & The Easter Children's Egg Hunt; and also, a special thank you to Caroline & Bob Johnsen, Nancy Schoch, and Stan & Jody Price for delivering eggs ordered through the Egg My Yard fundraiser!

VBS

June 24 - 27

at First United Methodist Church



Vacation Bible School

for children nursery - 5th Grade

Registration Opens Ma

fumcsalisbury.org/vbs



Child Care Programs

Child Development Center

Read Across America

March is a month of literacy celebration across the nation we celebrate Read Across America! This is an annual event that honors Dr. Seuss's birthday and encourages children and adults to pick up a book and dive into the wonderful world of reading. The Child Development Center was excited to join in on the festivities and promote the joy of reading to our students! During this month, we are encouraging parents, grandparents, staff, and community leaders to come and read a book to our students. The children are loving the read alouds and we are excited for more to come. We are also participating in a fun spirit week. We have been dressing up to honor Dr. Seuss and had a big movie day watching, "Horton Hears a Who!"

In the wise words of Dr. Seuss, *"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go."*



After School Child Care

Blessed with a New Refridgator

Hello from the After School Crew! This has been a very exciting month for us. In February, after going to purchase our snacks for the month, we arrived the next Monday to find that our refrigerator had died. Not only did we lose the refrigerator itself, but also components for every day's snacks in the month. We were not sure what we were going to do, the cost was definitely not something we were prepared for. Needless to say, we spread the word of our need, we prayed and the children prayed that we would find a quick solution, and the next day, we had our answer! One of our Board Members, and a member of the church stepped in to take care of our students. A huge thanks to Beverly Leonard for donating a new refrigerator for our program to us. As one of the students said when they saw the new refrigerator, "you see Mr. Scotty, God can do anything if we pray!" Out of the months of babes..



Preparing for General Conference

General Conference info session led by Pastor Mark
April 15, 6:00pm in the Seekers Classroom (B112)

GENERAL CONFERENCE: BY THE NUMBERS

The Postponed 2020
General Conference will
take place April 23-May 3 2024
in Charlotte, North Carolina

133

annual conferences
represented



862 voting delegates,
half clergy and half laypeople

1,099

valid petitions submitted



Delegates:

55.9% from the U.S.
32% from Africa
6% from the Philippines
4.6% from Europe



5 continents represented

26

plenary sessions



18
worship
services



**4 official written
languages:**
English, French,
Kiswahili and
Portuguese



14
legislative
committees

9

special addresses
and celebrations

10 languages spoken
via interpreters on site



Learn more about General Conference at
ResourceUMC.org/UMCGC

...and KNOW that I am GOD

The United Methodist Church General Conference | CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

1 Deneen Jones
Jean Watts

2 Mary Roakes

3 Bruce Kolkebeck

4 Marlene Spencer

5

6 Terri Carnes
Parks Watson
Leah Wyrick

7 Mike Faggart

8 Larry Cordts
Matthew Gouge
Katie Howard
Chloe McGee

9 Alex Basinger
Peggy Feezor
Bill Noell

10 Mark Conforti

11 Ben Mastro

12

13

14 Tim Howard

15 Coleman Emerson
Chris Foote

16

17 Sara Banish

18 Stella Smeltzer

19 Melissa Conrad

20 Mason Potts

21 Tonda Coutu
Jay Duke

22 Spencer Basinger
Evelyn Dymond
Anne Ellis
Emily Hutton

23 Missy Brown
Ryan Disseler

24 Jenny Kribbs
Michael Leonard

25 Sherry Dillard
Riley Peltz

26 Rick Eldridge

27 Ron Gobble
Susan Shumaker

28 Corydon Johnson

29 Marie Leonard-Hampton
Barry Stokes
Anne Wilson

30 Sam Nash



Pray For General Conference

Free Prayer Guide Resource

The Upper Room has prepared a guide to prayer for the days leading up to General Conference. You can download this resource for free by following the QR Code below.

From April 1 to April 23 (the day General Conference begins), there is a brief guided reflection, and a focus for your prayers that day.

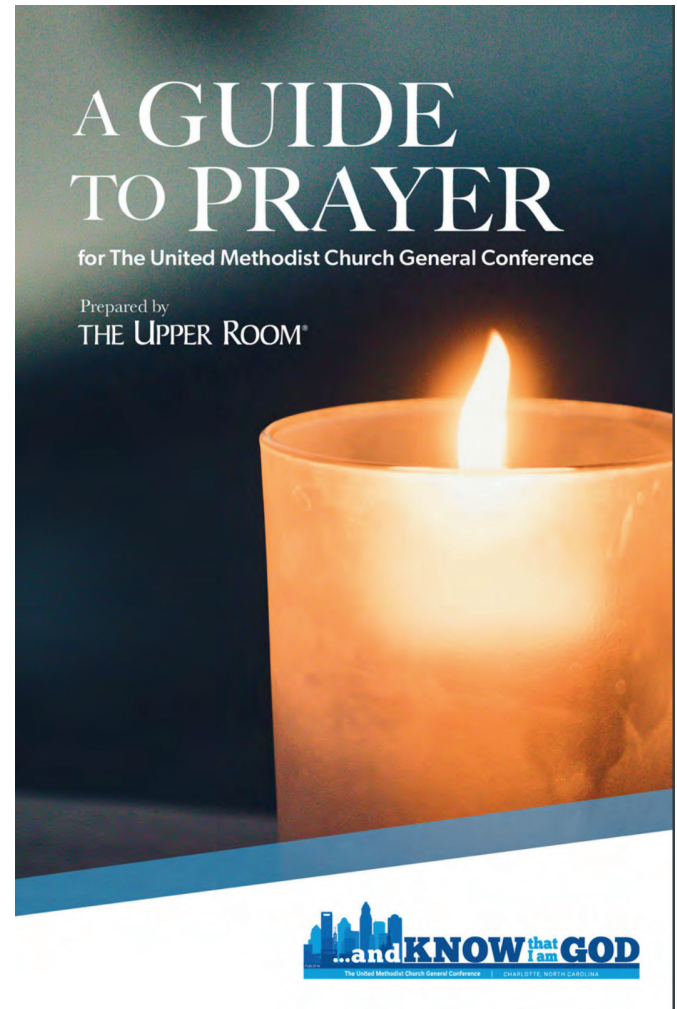
Download A
Guide To Prayer



Join us for a
General Conference info
session led by Pastor Mark
April 15, 6:00pm in the
Seekers Classroom (B112)

Corrections Corner

Finn Bradshaw's birthday was inadvertently left off of the March birthdays list. Finn was born on March 27!



Stay Connected

Do you have an article
for the Ecclesia?

Send them to Jenni@fumcsalisbury.org with
"(Month to be printed) Ecclesia" in the subject line.

Articles should be submitted by the 10th day of
each month for the month following -

*(Example: March articles should
be submitted by February 10).*

Access the Church
Calendar Any Time

Access the church calendar
any time! Just go to
fumcsalisbury.org and look
under the "Connect" tab.
There you can also find a
digital version of the *Ecclesia*.



Directory Updates



Access the online directory anytime by going to fumcsalisbury.ctrn.co, following the link on our website (under 'Connect'), or downloading the Online Member Directory app on your smartphone or tablet. Enter the access code **fumcsalisbury** and your unique username and password.

You can update your information at any time, if you would like assistance in updating your information please contact the church office.

ECCLESIA

NEWSLETTER OF FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



CARE KITS PACKED FOR OUR NEIGHBORS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS. AROUND 70 KITS WERE PACKED BY THE PARTICIPANTS AT CONFIRMATION CAMP AND FUMC YOUTH. KITS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED BY DENNIS RIVERS, HOMELESS LIAISON WITH THE SALISBURY POLICE DEPARTMENT



*making and nurturing
Christian disciples
through the presence
and power of God*

