



SHOUT OUT

COMMUNICATIONS

Millie Johnson

The website has had some recent additions and developments: a Pastoral Care form & Staff On Call listing; a Mulberry Scholarships page that includes information about our three scholarships as well as application forms; and we are currently updating the current CCM landing page and developing more pages to help raise CCM's online profile.

We're also working on developing more spaces and opportunities for online engagement and community-building. We've seen a rise in visitors whose churches have disaffiliated and who are looking for a new UMC church, but are not from the Macon area and so are not able to regularly worship with us in person (as well as our members who are homebound or otherwise unable to participate in person). One of the ways we've already begun creating these spaces is the several recent book studies that have been hybrid, with people participating both in person and over Zoom.

CONGREGATIONAL CARE **Barbara Henley**

Funerals have been our focus it seems this month. We have also had several dinners in the fellowship hall. Really, things have been going very smoothly.

RENOVATION COMMITTEE

Russ Barber

The restoration of the Parlor, the Music Practice Room, and the electrical equipment room is virtually complete. Physical rebuilding is done. Furnishings are in. Donated artwork is hung. Insurance and other receipts to date total \$743,987. Expenditures to date total \$688,409. The separate bank account contains \$55,578. Please see our more detailed report attached. Hanover Insurance Co. still owes the church \$40,299. We have one, known bill to be paid, for \$16,671, when repair treatments of the Dunlap paintings are complete. Ultimately, Hanover will pay, and unused funds will be repaid to the Endowment.

MACON OUTREACH AT MULBERRY

Ed Powell

Year end financials reflect Outreach in a slight deficit for 2022; however, no immediate worries about adequate funding. The Outreach Advisory Board has reviewed potential facility and operations updates for 2023 and is seeking grant funding to make the changes possible. The Board has also reviewed and approved our 2023 Operating Budget.

March 20, 2023
Church Council Reports

CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR

Hunter Godsey

As Church Administrator, my principal goals are to keep our facilities functioning as well as possible, triaging repair issues, keep the buildings as attractive as possible, and providing clear reporting and management of the church's finances. It is a privilege to work on these tasks and I will share briefly some recent activities/projects: 1) Last month, we were made aware of a water leak downstairs in Macon Outreach; just today, the workers finally discovered where the water was coming from deep within the walls in the basement. From the looks of it, it has been leaking for a while. We are now working on a plan to get it corrected, which is very good news! 2) We have upgraded our magnetic locks on the main doors at the Atrium to bolster security at this entrance. 3) We recently finished the installation of 5 new security cameras in key areas around the perimeter of the church to help us with some security concerns. 4) All the flood lights in the parking lot have been upgraded and four new outdoor flood lights were added in key areas around the building to increase visibility and deter vagrancy. 5) We are in the process of seeking a new tenant for our properties at 770/764 Walnut Street and have engaged the services of a leasing/management agency. 6) We are meeting with several local professionals to help us consider options for the use of the building at 230 New Street. 7) With facilities of this size, we are continually working with our HVAC contractors to keep the heating and cooling units operating well.

The main challenges I face as Church Administrator are keeping the facilities looking nice and operating well. Other than the beautiful renovation we recently completed on the Parlor and the Choir Room, our buildings have experienced a lot of (normal) wear and tear since the big renovation/expansion more than 20 years ago. It is a challenge to stay on top of it and requires the staff to do "triaging" of maintenance/repair needs. We strive to focus our resources/time on the most pressing/critical areas first.

Let's dream together on what steps the church might want to do to "freshen up" our buildings (especially in those areas that have a lot of use) that haven't been updated since the big renovation 20+ years ago.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Onna Pollard

Weekly mailers to our homebound have been going well. Because the current budget is not sufficient for monthly gifts to them, I would like to request a larger budget. Many of them have been life long members that have donated to the church for a long time. I request that we give back with a higher budget to allow us to show them that they are not forgotten and that we still think of them (budget proposal pending).

YOUTH MINISTRIES

Emerson Toles

We recently took a trip down to Theatre Macon downtown and watched "Freaky Friday" and followed that with dinner at YourPie. We had an amazing turnout with some new faces as well! We struggle with our numbers. Sometimes we will have 12 people; other times we will have 2. The solution could be mainly focusing on the individual and consistently keeping in touch with the youth. A lot of the inconsistency is cyclical; if one person decides not to come, then their friend won't come, etc.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Vaughan Smith

Final report for year ending 2022, with lower deficit than budgeted. Issues with our aging building: basement water leak, lighting, old phone system fire suppression system. Committee is working with Hunter and Trustees to address these issues.

ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Rev. Payton Stone

In January and February, I successfully visited the majority of our shut-ins and homebound members who are currently open to pastoral visits. When visiting, I brought communion, which is always a joy for our members who can't make it to worship in person anymore. January and February featured significant pastoral care needs, as I responded to four deaths in the congregations and many other medical needs (surgeries, emergency room visits, hospitalizations, etc). Ted and I coordinated our first three funerals together, all of which were received well by the families.

Our young adult small group continues to grow (and I will let Spencer detail more about that), and we have welcomed two new members (completely new to Mulberry). We have especially enjoyed our lenten common devotional and the discussions it has afforded us!

Our second Sunday Serve for 3/12 is shaping up well, and the church's giving allowed us to stretch our goal from 125 hygiene kits to 200! We will have a great time putting them together and praying over them before we send them to UMCOR, who will distribute them around the globe.

I am excited about our upcoming Holy Week midday worship services! I have worked with Ted and Zach to craft orders of worship and am excited to serve alongside our five wonderful guest preachers.

And lastly, I am excited about our upcoming G2G trip happening October 20-22, as the church will return to the Hinton Rural Life Center for a weekend trip. We will work all day Saturday and Sunday morning, enjoying a similar experience to Mulberry's past trips to Hinton. Millie and I are working at the present moment to gather initial interest for the trip so that we can let Hinton know our group size. As we get closer to the summer, our staff will make decisions about transportation and other logistics.

STAFF-PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Cindy Jarrard

SPRC met on January 25th and welcomed Ashley Carroll, Carol Stalvey, and Jenny Walker as new committee members. Beth Smith as lay leader is joining us as well as Gail Springstead, lay member to annual conference. Dr. Goshorn introduced the general duties of SPRC as dictated by the Book of Discipline as well as detailing the clergy appointment process and the role of SPRC. Dr. Goshorn and Rev. Stone both indicated that they wanted to remain in their respective positions for the upcoming appointment cycle and the committee unanimously and joyfully voted to recommend the reappointment of both. In the upcoming year, SPRC will be focusing on the role of support for the Mulberry staff and as a result each SPRC member was assigned a staff member/Clergy and a month in which to spotlight that particular person. Many thanks to our "recording secretary", Spencer Smith, who very eloquently pulls together all of our thoughts and actions in our meeting minutes.

YOUNG ADULTS

Spencer Smith

The newly formed young adult small group meets every week on Tuesday. Participation has increased in recent weeks. Our group is discussing the current Lent devotional.

HISTORICAL ROOM

Carolyn Kennedy Dominy

I submitted pictures of Mulberry as requested to the Macon Bicentennial Committee along with a narrative for each picture. Later I then went to a recording studio and read the narratives for the pictures that will be shown at a later date to the public. I also have received five inquiries from outsiders to research and verify that relatives or friends were or have ever been members of Mulberry St. UMC, and I was able to help each of them with an answer.

The biggest issue in the Historical room is lack of space. I am planning to remove several family Bibles from the shelves in the workroom and then take to the genealogical room at Washington Library for storage. When I took this job as church historian, the then historian, Ann Henry, cautioned me not to accept any more family Bibles because of lack of storage and did advise me that if needed the Washington Library's genealogical room would be best place for them.

The Historical Room has some \$4,000 to \$5,000 dollars in a special reserved account of Mulberry. We are in a position that we do not need to request a budget amount from the financial committee at this time.

FAMILY MINISTRIES

Elisa Reece, Mary Charles Dunn, Clare Rauls

Current Events

Children - 10+ strong (Sunday Morning/Sunday Night Activities)

Children - 18 attended (Sunday Kidz for Christ Fun Day @ SkyZone) 11 kids & 7 adults

Youth - 12+ strong (Sunday Morning/Sunday Night Activities)

Youth - 12 attended ("Freaky Friday: The Musical" & dinner downtown) 10 youth & 2 adults

Youth (Ella Magda) - Presented a Mission Moment @ 11am service

New Youth Family joined the church - Heacox Family

Family Ministry Chili Cook-Off - (90+ attended)

Family Ministry Prayer Bead Experience - (72+ attended)

Future Events

Kidz & Youth Palm Processional on Palm Sunday @ 11am

Community Easter Egg Hunt - 4/8/23 (Coleman Hill) 11am -1pm

Easter Butterfly Release - 4/9/23 (Courtyard) 10:00 am

End of School Kidz & Youth Extravaganza - 5/7/23 (Water Wars)

Full Kidz/Youth Summer Activity Schedule (see handouts)

Children (VBS - June 19-23)

Youth & Children Great Days of Service (Local Mulberry Missions - June 26 -27)

Youth (Summer Mission Trip - July 17-21) Savannah

A challenge after COVID is constancy. Our strategy in both groups to address this is building personal relationships and engaging activities. We will continue to be involved by recruiting volunteers within the age-level groups on a regular basis, for special events, and activities, or to provide snack suppers or donations for specific trips. One of the major events we have planned is a summer mission trip in Savannah/Tybee Island. The budget and revenue projections are summarized below:

\$4000 - Total cost of Youth Summer Mission Trip (\$400 x 10) or less per person if more than 10 attend

\$2250 - Youth pays \$225 (\$225 x10)

\$500 - Car Wash Fund Raiser? Possibly something else?

\$500 - Church Family Sponsorships (10 X\$50) or more \$

\$750 - Church Budget - The Family Ministries Council will ask the Finance Committee to approve a budget amendment to cover this expense and to approve the youth fundraiser(s).

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Bill Stemberge

The Trustees met on February 13, in the church conference room.

Hunter and Ted will meet with Fickling and Company to inquire about listing the Walnut Street property. Hunter and Ted will meet with NewTown Macon CEO Josh Rogers about possibly utilizing the New Street property for apartments, which are greatly needed in downtown Macon.

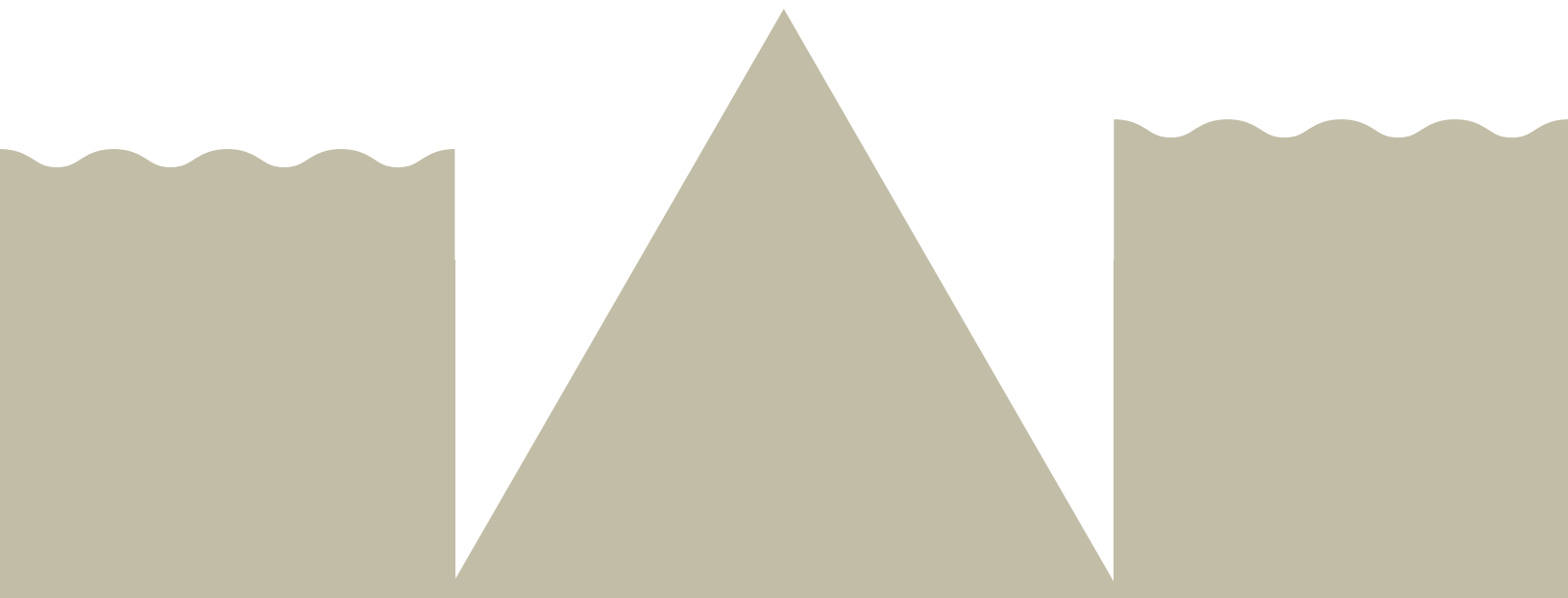
Waverly Golson has done extensive work regarding the Willis Lane properties and gave a detailed report. He has made inquiry to several neighboring property owners, and there is little or no interest by them in acquiring those properties. Waverly has additional inquiries he will make.

The committee voted to approve the transfer of the \$3600 realized from the sale of the Rose Hill cemetery plots into the endowment fund.

Kerri Fickling, Hunter, and others will investigate sources for repair of the tower bell in addition to the current vendor.

Ted raised an additional item of New Business. The Children's Church is experiencing a financial shortfall due to declining enrollment and a shortage of teachers. Following extensive discussion, the Trustees voted to lend the Children's Church \$50,000, with the understanding that Children's Church officials will provide a business plan with projected income and enrollment and a repayment schedule.

On February 28, the Finance Committee sent a request that the Trustees approve the transfer of \$100,265.36 for 2022 and \$9,340.88 from the Endowment to clear deficits from those years. It was noted that these amounts are less than what was projected in the 2022 budget. Voting by email, the trustees approved this transfer request.





PRESS RELEASE

Downtown Early Child Learning Center Names New Director

Macon -- The Board of Directors for The Children's Center at Mulberry is pleased to announce that Erin Darley will join its talented staff as Director on April 5, 2023. First hired as a classroom teacher and Assistant Director in 2007 when it opened, Erin led CCM as Director from 2008 to 2017 before moving on to work in other early child care learning positions. Most recently Erin has worked as a Quality Rated assessor for the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning where she has expanded her deep knowledge of and appreciation for standards of excellence in early education for children.

"The Children's Center at Mulberry is invested in the success of our children and their families, and that starts at the top with our staff," said Christi James, Chairman of the Board of Managers. "We are grateful to Tshanghi Corey, who as our Interim Director stood in the gap to give us the flexibility to undertake a thorough search for a new director. Ms. T built on the solid foundation of CCM in her tenure, and we are poised for great things under Erin's direction, especially as we enter a post-COVID environment and recruit the best and brightest early learning staff in central Georgia to support the families who entrust their young learners with us."

"I am thrilled to be returning to The Children's Center at Mulberry and to Mulberry Street United Methodist Church, a church that has always had a special place in my heart," added Erin. "I look forward to getting to know the Center's children and their families and working with the teachers and administrators as well as church staff to maintain the high standards for which the Center is known."

"Our CCM children and staff are such a joy!" shared Rev. Dr. Ted Goshorn, Senior Pastor of Mulberry Street United Methodist Church. "I have the pleasure of hearing them play through my office window daily: the joyful sounds of children creating, learning, and growing. CCM is a vital part of our ministry to share the heart of God from the heart of downtown Macon. Erin Darley, as our new director, will bring a wealth of experience and wisdom, serving as a faithful ministry partner with the church. We at Mulberry Street UMC welcome her and pray for her and the Center as they begin this next chapter."

###

About The Children's Center at Mulberry:

Located in Downtown Macon on Mulberry Street United Methodist Church's historic campus, The Children's Center at Mulberry is a fully licensed, independent, faith-based early childcare learning center for ages 6 weeks through 4 years old. We are committed to nurturing the whole child in preparation for success in elementary school and beyond. The Children's Center at Mulberry has been fully accredited for many years, including by the National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC). This distinction ensures that our school exceeds merely minimal qualifications and meets the highest standards of childhood education. The Children's Center at Mulberry is a 501c(3) nonprofit institution, supported by grants and charitable contributions of generous donors over and above tuition received from our families. Charitable gifts enable The Children's Center at Mulberry to provide educational programs, resources, and the highest quality learning environment as well as ongoing professional development and competitive compensation for our top-notch teaching staff. To learn more about how we are positively impacting families and preparing their children for future success in elementary school and beyond, please visit our website at www.mulberrymethodist.org/ministries/the-childrens-center or find us on Facebook.