

# God's Love In Action

**GLIA: the essential element, or glue,  
which connects the tissue found in the nerve centers of the body**

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**Trinity United Methodist Church, 1201 Mohawk Drive, West Columbia, SC 29169**

**Pastor:** *John Jordan*

**Office Manager:** *Jackie Eitel*

**Music Director:** *Christopher A. McCroskey*

**Office Hours:** 8:30 - 4:30 M-F

**Sunday School** 9:45 a.m.

**Worship Service** 11:00 a.m.

The mission of Trinity United Methodist Church is to:  
**To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.**

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**JULY 2023**

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## Lay Member Report from 2023 Annual Conference

The 2023 Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church was held at the Florence Center on June 4-7. The gathering had not taken place in person since 2019 in Greenville so everyone was very excited to be together.

Marie Stiles, Trinity's Lay Member, attended the entire conference. Jeanette Hornsby, Alternate Lay Member, attended the New Lay Member Orientation and the Monday opening Worship Service. The opening Worship Service featured Bishop L. Jonathan Holston as worship leader and a combined choir from Highland Park UMC Chancel Choir of Florence and St. John's UMC, Aiken. All the worship services were both inspirational and entertaining and by far the best part of the conference.

Business sessions were held each day at which time conference leaders reported on their 2023 accomplishments and budgets for 2024. The head of the Council on Finance and Administration gave a very detailed report and emphasized the council's efforts to keep the operating expenses and apportionment budgets lower than in 2023 in order to not burden the churches who were remaining in the United Methodist denomination (113 churches are disaffiliating).

The General Conference of the United Methodist Church will be held April 23-May 3, 2024, at the Charlotte Convention Center in Charlotte, NC. Delegates from South Carolina were selected at the 2019 Annual Conference.

Marie Stiles said, "I am honored to have been selected to represent the lay members of Trinity UMC – West Columbia at the 2023 Annual Conference and will answer questions about the proceedings as I am able." Any member of the United Methodist Church may attend future conferences. The 2024 Annual Conference will be held June 9-12 at the TD Convention Center in Greenville.



**Tuesday, July 18  
11 a.m.**

The Grief Support Group will meet on Tuesday, July 18, at 11 a.m. in the Conference Room.



**Sunday, July 23**

Taste of Trinity, our church-wide covered dish luncheon, will be held on Sunday, July 23. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to share great food and great fellowship!



The Church Council will meet on July 23 immediately following a Taste of Trinity.



Mildred Perry  
Wayne & Charlie Hooker



Dear Trinity Family,

I want to thank everyone for their prayers for Al Dekle, my sister's friend. Al has made a remarkable recovery from a cardiac arrest event and open heart surgery. Prayers certainly played a part in God's healing.

God bless,  
Charlie Hooker



Interested in finding out more and joining a T.a.G group?  
Contact Pastor John. We are trying to start another group to meet during the day. This group focuses on growing our spiritual lives and helping each other go on to perfection.



Each month we highlight the birthdays of those who are turning 85 or older. The following has a birthdays in July:

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Some people have expressed a desire to learn about the United Methodist Church: its history, doctrine, and polity. I am working on a study with a particular focus on Wesleyan theology. Look out for further information.

**July 1**

Marilyn Lloyd  
1162 Gunter Circle  
West Columbia, SC 29169

# John's Jotting

## *Annual Conference 2023*

Annual Conference is usually an enjoyable time for me. Yes, we do some boring church business, but there is much more. United Methodists from all parts of South Carolina and all races come together. We see friends and colleagues. We worship together. We fellowship together between sessions. We meet new friends. We experience the unity of the Church.

This could have been especially true this year, being the first in-person conference since 2019, but an underlying tension marred this Conference. The question on everyone's mind was, "Which churches are leaving the Conference?" Usually, when clergy asks each other if they are leaving or staying it means, "Are you changing churches?" This year that question inferred, "Are you leaving the conference? Is your church staying or leaving?"

I asked one friend if her church was staying or leaving. She replied that they were leaving and she was staying with them. Immediately, there was an awkward feeling of something coming between us. This was a friend that I had several classes with in Seminary. We had traveled to Israel together. We were commissioned and went through the residency group together. Our joy in seeing each other for the first time in years turned to sadness as we realized we were going different ways.

The tension did not turn to anger, but sadness. The list of the disaffiliating churches was distributed before lunch before the trustee's report. As part of the trustee's report, the conference chancellor went over the development of the disaffiliation process and reviewed the process. The dean of the cabinet confirmed that all the district superintendents were involved and confirmed that each church followed the discernment process. A motion was made and approved that the names of the churches be read aloud. A moment of silence and a prayer by Bishop Holston preceded the vote to allow the 113 churches to leave the conference. An overwhelming majority approved the disaffiliation of these churches. A tomb-like silence filled the auditorium. Bishop Holston wept as he prayed for the church. He had worked so hard to maintain conference unity.

After the vote, some spoke thanking Bishop Holston and the cabinet for developing a process for the least painful separation. The question arose, "Could churches that disaffiliated return to the conference?" The cabinet is working on a process of reaffiliation.

Being a lifelong United Methodist, I always took pride in the diversity and unity of the denomination. Watching the splitting of the church was heartbreaking. It felt like saying goodbye to a friend who was moving far away. There were no winners.

However, there was much to celebrate at Annual Conference. Churches paid 89% of apportionments. A \$95,000,000 budget was passed. This budget was reduced by 15% from the previous year to account for the loss of apportionments from disaffiliating churches. New leaders of Epworth Children's Home and Claflin University were introduced. The ministries of United Methodists throughout the state, nation, and the world were celebrated. As part of the connection, Trinity has some ownership in these ministries. Twelve Full Elders and one Full Deacon were ordained. Five were commissioned as Provisional Elders and two as Provisional Deacons. Twenty-two were licensed as Local Pastors.

The worship services were uplifting as Bishop Holston and the other preachers focused on hope and moving forward. I share this hope. Though the next few years remain uncertain with possibly more disaffiliations, the United Methodist Church in South Carolina remains strong. The United Methodist Church in South Carolina is making and growing disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Shalom,

John