



MONTHLY

May 2023

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From the Pastor

I was reluctant to share this picture with you here because it is simply too much, too harsh, and too heartbreaking. Kevin Carter took this Pulitzer Prize winning photograph of a Sudanese girl in 1994. It deeply affected many people. The small girl was starving and had collapsed as she struggled on the way to a feeding center. In the photograph, a vulture can be seen crouching just behind the small girl as if it is waiting for her to die.



The photograph was first published in the *New York Times*. This led to many people challenging Carter's ethics with questions along the line of: "How could he not help?" The photograph is troubling because it depicts a reality that people would rather bury than suffer the expense of changing. As the Gospel of John reminds us, "Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil."¹ The aftermath of this photo is equally troubling as Carter's guilt cut his own life short. He eventually chased the bird away, but merely watched as the little girl continued her struggle.

When I see this picture, I see an apt analogy for the human condition without Christ. I see a world of people haunted by the powers of Sin and Death. I am reminded of the story of Cain in the book of the *Holy Bible* we know as "Genesis." It is a word borrowed from Latin and Greek meaning "generation" and "beginning." "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."² It is a book of poetry, analogy, history, and warning. It tells us that God spoke everything into being. It tells us an origin story for both life and death. It tells a story of how Sin entered into the world, and Death followed through Sin.³ It then shows us how Sin and Death have been seeking to consume us ever since. So, God says to Cain:

"If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it."⁴

I think Peter had this word to Cain in mind when he wrote: "Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour."⁵

In this 50-day season of celebration of his resurrection that we call "Easter," the Church of Jesus Christ has good news for all who feel haunted, abused, served up on a platter of dust, and devoured by the powers of Sin and Death. Jesus has taken Sin upon himself and put it to death on the cross. Jesus has kicked Death in the teeth. If my analogy is fair, then Jesus has done what Kevin Carter could not. Jesus has stepped in and helped where no one else could help. Jesus has mastered sin, where Cain could not. He has destroyed the specter of Death, wringing the head off the vulture.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ means that New Creation has begun. The world does not have to be as it is. People do not have to compete for resources which give life—which seems so often to result in the misery or deaths of others. The Risen Lord, Christ Jesus, stands ready to freely give life to all who will receive it. He has defeated the vulture who lay at our door seeking to devour us all. He makes it possible for us to see one another with compassion rather than seeing one another as competitors for limited life. He makes it possible for us to pick one another up and share one another's burdens. Indeed, Paul says that in doing so we fulfill the law of Christ.⁶

Here's the question that this iconic and historic photograph brings to mind for me, "Will we who are the Church of Christ Jesus simply watch as the little girl, emblematic of the human condition under the burden of sin, continues to struggle for life; or, will we tell her that Jesus has defeated our oppressor and bring her to his table where she can be fed to overflowing, where her cup can run over, where she can be freed from the gaze of Death, and receive life which is abundant and eternal?"

Continued on next page...

From the Pastor (continued)

Kevin Carter is said to have waited 20 minutes for the vulture to spread its wings, presumably to make the photograph more dramatic. Will we watch and do nothing, for our own gain? Will we live as if “You only live once” is true, meaning that Jesus is dead and there is no resurrection? Will we ignore the suffering of our community and world as we cling to our own prosperity? Or will we embrace the inconvenience of service, ignore the cost to fame, fortune, or even our own ability to survive; and then, trusting that the promise of resurrection is certain, pick that little girl up? Will we act by telling the world of the victory of Jesus? Will we live as if the promise of resurrection is true? Will we be so bold in our belief in the Risen Christ that we, by his amazing grace, become empowered and enabled to live this life in service to others instead of ourselves?

Christ is Risen,

Pastor Davis

Notes:

¹ John 3:19

² Genesis 1:1 NIV

³ Romans 5:12

⁴ Genesis 4:7 NIV

⁵ 1 Peter 5:8 NIV

⁶ Galatians 6:2 NIV

GOT
QUESTIONS?
Come ask our pastor. Thursdays @ 7 pm

Our Prayer List Please remember the people below in your prayers. This list is in continuous rotation, if you do not see your loved one on this list please call the church office and update us on their health.

Blane Brown	Hattie Furse	
Isabelle Brown	Kathy Gatlin	Linda Liscio
Steve Brunson	Family of Barbara Girard	Judy Masters
Chuck Buddin	Bruce Gottheiner	Nick Meistrell
Paul Butler	Michael Hendricks	Henry McFadden
Ann Cutter	Mike Horan	Tim Russ
Matthew David	Paulette Jackson	Janet Sexton
June Davis	Dora Jennings	J.B. Sinclair
Alice Dupont	Spencer Jordan	Wayne Vincent
Claire Eadon	Lamar Kennedy	Alice Whitehead
Bill Flynt	Jackie Lamb	Rebecca Whitehead
Lindsay Furse	John Lesemann	Karen Wood



Montgomery Ann Rannells
 Born April 22, 2023
 7 pounds 9 oz 20 1/4 inches long
 Proud Parents
 Brady, G.G., & Big Brother Sawyer Rannells
 Proud Grand Parents Robert & Laura Kolb

Please remember to Pray for our members who are living away from home, in the military, or who have limited mobility:

Nancy Andrews	Woody Haynes
Joyce Bowers	Bettye Johnson
Deedee Clark	Kay Kirkpatrick
Rosella Daniels	Margaret Lee
Nita & Liz Denny	Wilson Lepp
Jared Dube`	Neal Mahoney
William Gamble	Joan Odom
Anne Haley	Jean Schmelzle
	Cliff Toner



Attendance	Worship Attendance	FB Live
April 2	9:30 am Sunday School—73 Worship 10:30 am — 105	Views 204
April 9	9:30 am Sunday School—50 Worship 10:30 am — 211	Views 214
April 16	9:30 am Sunday School— 68 Worship 10:30 am — 96	Views 173
April 23	9:30 am Sunday School— 66 Worship 10:30 am — 119	Views 190



2023 Tithes & Offering		
Needed Each Week	\$ 9,773.56	
	Received Weekly	
April 2	\$ 10,424.38	
April 9	\$ 4,354.00	
April 16	\$ 5,558.38	
April 23	\$ 7,359.00	
Total Received	\$ 27,695.76	
Needed Year to Date		\$ 166,150.52
Total Received YTD		\$ 127,117.93
Overage or (Deficit)		(\$ 39,032.59)

All the yellow highlighted days are open for arrangements. If you wish to have flowers on any of these Sunday's please call or email the church office.

2023 Flower Calendar					
May	7	14	21	28	
June	4	11	18	25	
July	2	9	16	23	30
August	6	13	20	27	
September	3	10	17	24	
October	1	8	15	22	29
November	5	12	19	26	
December	3	10	17	24	31

Epworth Children's Home has been a ministry of our church for more than 127 years. They are not an apportioned item by the SC Conference, which means they receive no funding from the conference other than our offerings. They rely heavily on the donations received from our Mother's Day offering to provide direct care for the children residing at Epworth, as well as for the children and families receiving care and support in Epworth's variety of ministries, from the babies in the Family Care Center to the young adults in Independent Living.

When a child is connected with Epworth, they have experienced a great deal of loss. For Epworth, it isn't enough to answer God's call to care for the least of these by simply providing room and board. They go above and beyond offering the children tutoring to get them caught up at school; counseling to help them heal emotionally; quality medical care, knowing that many of the children have never seen a doctor or dentist. Epworth also offers spiritual formation and guidance that encourages true healing through Christ. Epworth Children's Home ensures the children are surrounded by loving Christian adults so they can break the cycle of abuse, neglect, and shame and replace it with a life of self-respect, responsibility, and productivity.

We have a large part in making all this possible for the children. These children come from communities in South Carolina just like ours. They are our neighbors, and we are called to provide for them. We ask you to give generously on SUNDAY MAY 14th and stand with Epworth as they work to break the cycle. Be part of something that lasts – a child's future.



Save the Date!

Vacation Bible School

Grades K5-4th

June 5th—8th

Monday-Thursday

9:00 am to 12:00pm

Inviting all children to come and learn about Jesus.

VBS is filled with bible lessons, crafts, games, music, snacks, science,
and lots of fun!

Pre-register www.manningumc.com

Memorial Gifts:

Kerrie Cribb

Given By:
Stan & Lu Nickell

Honorarium Gifts:

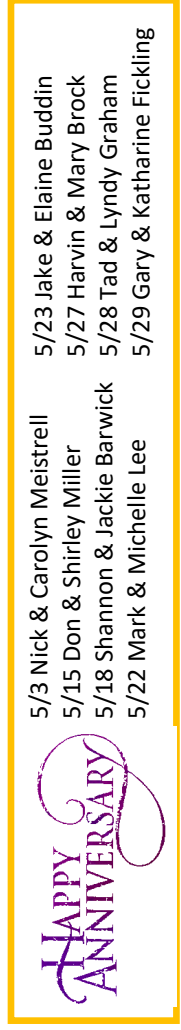
Kelly Gottheiner

given by:
Stan & Lu Nickell

Graduate Sunday: Will be May 7th! There will be a Pot Luck Lunch for the entire congregation after worship. If you would like to bring a side dish, please see Kelly or sign up on the table outside the church office. Also, let Kelly know if your family has any high school, college, or graduate school graduates. We would like to celebrate them.

Vacation Bible School: Save the dates June 5,6,7,8! From 9am to 12 pm. We are in need of volunteers. Please call, text, or come by the office and see me if you would like to help with VBS this year. The children need you!





Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 8-12 MUMC Day School	1 8-12 MUMC Day School	2 8-12 MUMC Day School 3:00 pm CIA	3 8-12 MUMC Day School 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	4 8:00 am National Day of Prayer Breakfast here at MUMC! 8-12 MUMC Day School 5:30 pm Pilot Club (UR)	5 8-12 MUMC Day School	6
7 Graduation Sunday 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Graduation Pot Luck Lunch (all invited)	8 8-12 MUMC Day School 6:30 pm United Meth. Men's Supper	9 8-12 MUMC Day School 12:15 Council On Ministries Meeting 3:00 pm CIA	10 8-12 MUMC Day School 6:00 pm Trustees Meeting	11 8-12 MUMC Day School 2:00 pm Jane Craft Circle	12 8-12 MUMC Day School	13
14 Mother's Day 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 5:30 pm UMYF	15 8-12 MUMC Day School 11 am Prayer Team 6:00 pm Myrtle Strange Circle meeting Fellowship Hall	16 8-12 MUMC Day School 3:00 pm CIA	17 8-12 MUMC Day School 6:00 pm Finance Com. 7:00 Chancel Choir	18 8-12 MUMC Day School	19 8-12 MUMC Day School	20
21 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 5:30 pm UMYF	22 8-12 MUMC Day School	23 8-12 MUMC Day School 3:00 pm CIA 5:15 CIA Skits (All Welcome) Fellowship Hall	24 8-12 MUMC Day School 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	25 8-12 MUMC Day School	26 8-12 Last Day for MUMC Day School	27
28 Confirmation Sunday 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 5:30 pm UMYF	29 Memorial Day Church Office Closed	30 3:00 pm CIA 7:00 pm Stephen Ministry	31 6:30 pm Witness Wednesday Speaker: Gabriel Collier			



5/2 Monika King, Ray Lamothe
5/3 Robert Clark, Kay Young Fox
5/5 Donnie Mahoney, Anders Taylor
5/8 Shayne Stephens, Jr. Bronson Perkins
5/9 Travis Brown

5/14 Michael Burns, Jr.
5/15 Margaret Robertson, Amelia Martin McManus
5/17 Tom Erickson, David Lee, Jr.
5/21 Edna Ellis, Bella Land
5/23 Sara Wells, Susan Drose, Andy Kennedy, John Land V

5/24 Ricky Drose
5/25 Rock Ouzts
5/26 Colleen Kennedy
5/27 Dawn Griffith
5/28 Cathy Gardner

5/3 Nick & Carolyn Meistrell
5/15 Don & Shirley Miller
5/18 Shannon & Jackie Barwick
5/22 Mark & Michelle Lee
5/23 Jake & Elaine Buddin
5/27 Harvin & Mary Brock
5/28 Tad & Lyndy Graham
5/29 Gary & Katharine Fickling

The Back Page May 2023



Don't forget to look for our special rocks around town

