

Together in Mission and Ministry

News from the Greenwood District

LOVE NOTES

LIVING STONES



Rev. Dr. Stephen L. Love
District Superintendent

4 Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and 5 like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6 For it stands in scripture: "See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." 7 To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner," 8 and "A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. 9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. 10 Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

1 Peter 2:2-10

Throughout my childhood I would often have reminders of the importance of prayer, faith, and developing a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. There were things that were happening in our community and world that seem to test the faith of the believer.

Injustices were evident and not much positive progress was made to bring about change. However with all of this I had the exposure of

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May 2023
Volume 11, Issue 4

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- May Clergy Meeting & Sending Forth
- Safe Sanctuaries Information
- Foster Grandparent Program

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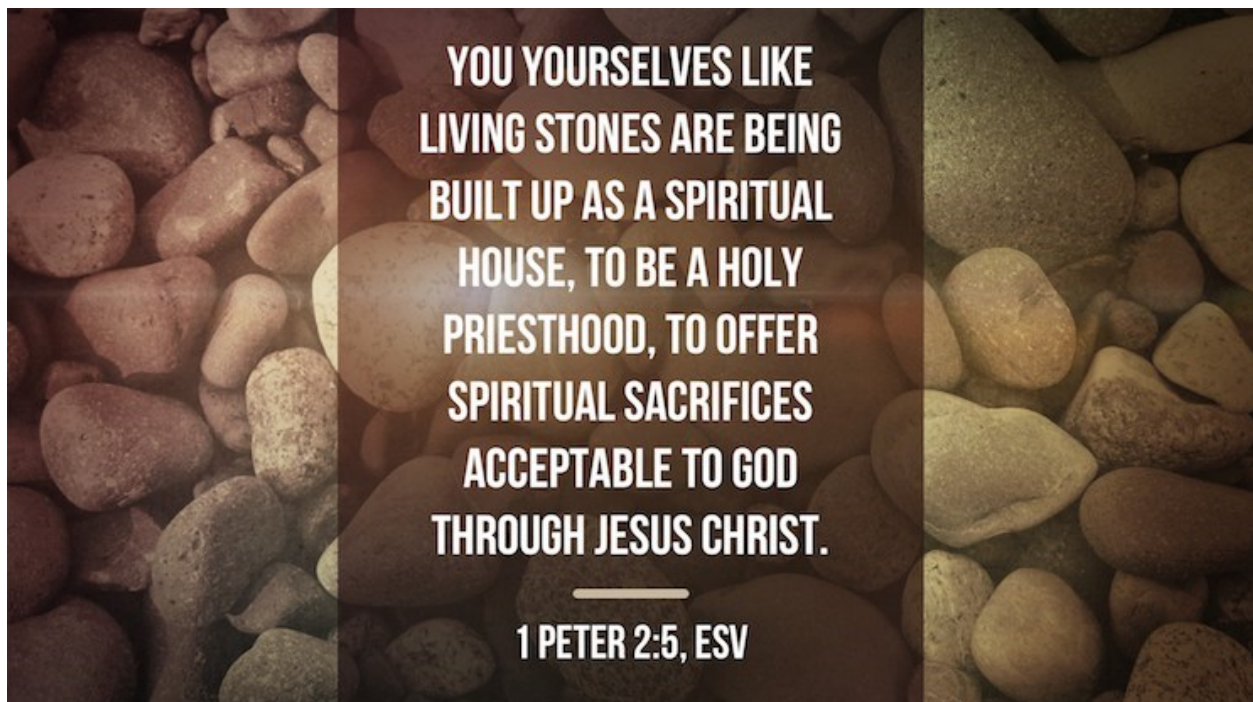
positive Christian witness to draw upon to help me process. Now I have my personal journey of faith to draw upon with testimonies of my own that reassure me of God's grace. Our times are in God's hands and we have the living stone, who is Jesus Christ. We are named in this passage as believers and called to be living stones offering ourselves to be built into a spiritual house acceptable to God. We have been chosen as God's own people. We have received God's mercy. The question that we must consider is what we will do with our opportunity to be like Jesus, and be a living stone that becomes a faithful witness of Jesus Christ to the world. Our Annual Conference is in a few weeks. There has been a lot of prayer and hard work in put into preparing for our first in-person gathering as an annual conference since 2019. We are in a great position to be faithful in our witness as we gather as the body of Christ so that others may be led to a personal relationship with Jesus.

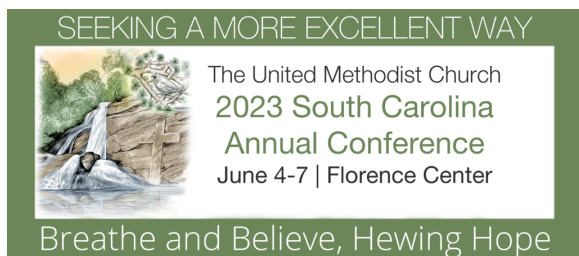
I invite you to join me as we continue to pray for one another as lay and clergy of the United Methodist Church of South Carolina. May we love one another and together as living stones serve as those who have been called out of the darkness into the marvelous light.

Grace and peace,



Rev. Dr. Stephen L. Love
District Superintendent

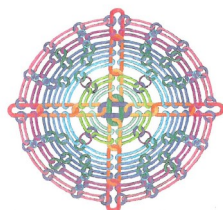




[Check out the Annual Conference information online.](#) Hotels are filling fast!! The preliminary agenda is also available. [Registration is open.](#)

Key reports are available now. View the video report and/or download the printed report.

Notify the district office if you have a change in lay delegate(s). We must submit a change form to ensure proper credentials for your new delegate(s).



Connectional Ministries will meet on **Thursday, May 18, 7:00 p.m.** Meeting details will be sent to all members via email.

Happy Birthday

May 7:	Craig Walters (Darlene Kelley)
May 9:	Becky Pickens (Jerry)
	Karen Brown (Steve)
May 17:	Mitchell Wray (Carol)
May 26:	Byron Smith (Thessa)
May 28:	Amy Freeman (Ken)



May 15—Clergy Meeting and Sending Forth Celebration. **Crossroads UMC**, 1269 McCormick Hwy., Saluda 29138.

Lunch will be provided and we will recognize those pastors moving to new appointments and those pastors who are retiring.

Clergy Meetings are **always** 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

REMINDER: R.S.V.P. by May 10 to make your lunch reservations.



May 9:	Steve and Laura Keck
May 14:	Hank and Ronna Brooks
May 20:	James and Tamra Evans
	Cameron and Sabrina Levi
May 26:	Arthur and Zenovia Gamble



Thank you to those of you who joined us for our Safe Sanctuaries Training on Sunday, April 23. We had a “full house,” if you can say that about an online gathering.

Kudos to our district trainers—Fred Comstock, Rev. Viki Hydrick, David Salter, and Rev. Nona Woodle, and Martha Alewine, district safe sanctuaries coordinator. These trainers will be working with local churches throughout the district to review, revise, or write a safe sanctuaries policy.

A recording of the online training is now available on the Greenwood District webpage in the Safe Sanctuaries section.

[Greenwood District - Safe Sanctuaries Information - South Carolina UMC \(umcsc.org\)](http://umcsc.org)

For additional information, contact Martha Alewine (gwdist@umcsc.org), the District Safe Sanctuaries Coordinator.



Piedmont Agency on Aging

Foster Grandparent Program

Piedmont Agency on Aging is seeking volunteers for its Foster Grandparent Program where volunteers go into schools, Head Start Centers & non-profit centers to assist teachers and help young children in various ways such as help children learn colors and shapes. For older students, Foster Grandparent volunteers help students who may be struggling with math or help them with reading. The Foster Grandparent can help reinforce lessons taught by the teacher and also encourage and praise a student which will help to improve their self-esteem.

Foster Grandparents may receive a **tax-free stipend** for their volunteer service with children. Volunteers serve between 5 to 35 hours per week.

For more information contact contact Don Goforth, Director of the Foster Grandparent Program, at 864-223-0164 or by email at: dgoforth@piedmontaoa.com

The District Office will be closed on May 10. Rev. Love and Martha will be attending the [Building OneSouthCarolina Forum](#) in Columbia. The office will also be closed on May 29 in observance of Memorial Day.

ST. MARK & TRANQUIL UMCS

MISSIONS IN ACTION

On Saturday April 29, 2023, St. Mark UMC in Greenwood along with Tranquil UMC held a Flood/Cleaning Bucket Packing event. The group packed 100 buckets. Some of which will stay in the Greenwood District while others were taken to the Conference or sent to UMCOR.



ERT WORK IN MISSISSIPPI

Rev. Mike Evans, the Greenwood District Disaster Response Coordinator, participated in the Flood Bucket Packing Event hosted by St. Mark and Tranquil UMCs on April 29. *(see page 5)* He was able to share pictures from the latest ERT trip to Mississippi to assist with post-tornado cleanup. One of the sites was basically an empty lot, the site of a church and parsonage. The only thing left was the steps leading to where the sanctuary had been. On another site the team met the family who had lost everything. The team prayed for that family because one of their twin sons perished in the storm. Since there were no homes left to protect in the area where the team was sent, they did a lot of care ministry—helping to rescue beloved photographs and other memorabilia; helping homeowners salvage what they could. The team even helped a woman find her purse that contained all the Social Security cards for her children.

Emergency Response Teams (ERTs) have made recent trips to Florida, Kentucky, Alabama, and Mississippi. Donations to help with these projects can be made through the Conference website (www.umcsc.org) or through the Greenwood District office. Make your check payable to the Greenwood District and mail to PO Box 49968, Greenwood, SC 29649; mark Disaster Response in the item line.



These photos were not taken by any ERT member. They are included here as examples of the devastation in Mississippi from the tornados.