



Mission:

We, the congregation, in humble and selfless service to God, will go forth joyfully, empowered and enabled by the Holy Spirit, to seek out, welcome, accept, and nurture persons to become faithful and effective disciples for Jesus Christ.



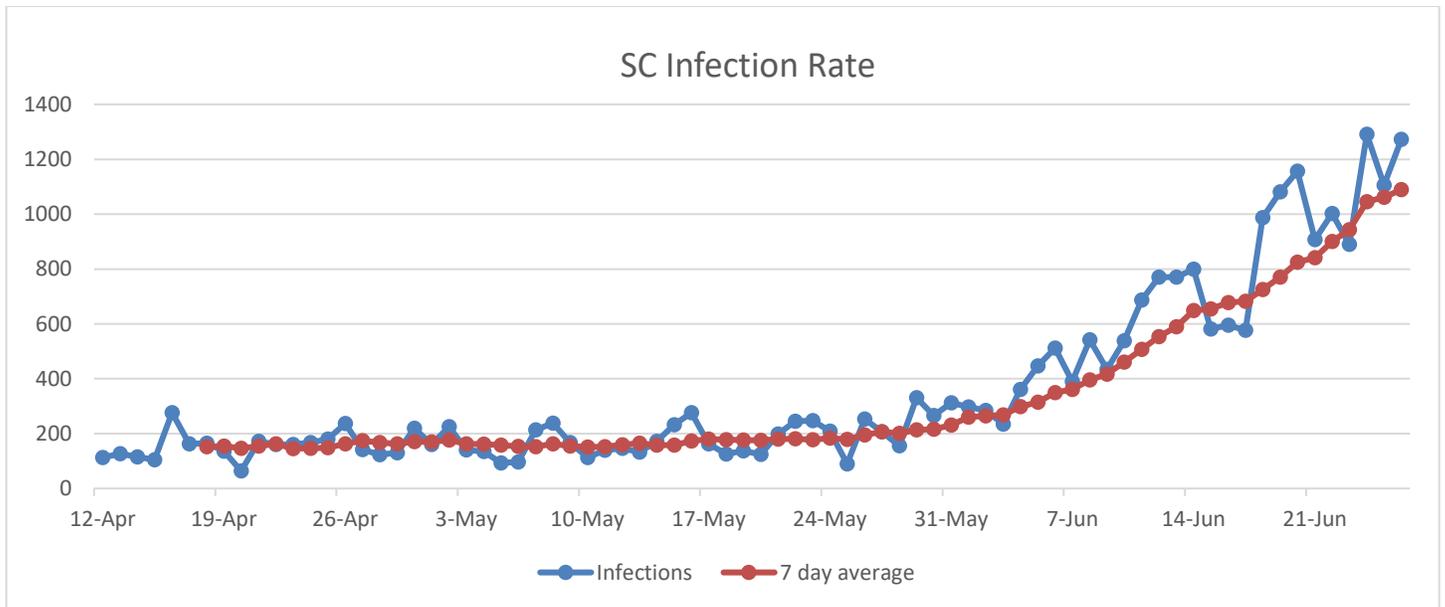
 <p>Thoughts of the PASTOR</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Status of In-Person Worship</p> <p>We had plans in place to begin in-person services during the month of June but had to postpone beginning those services because of the rise in infections in South Carolina. The</p>
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infection rate and percent positive rate continue to go up, so in the interest of our safety and the safety of the community we would have liked to wait until those rates start coming down again before restarting in-person services. Since the numbers keep going up and there seems no end in sight, the Task Force is working on alternate plans to try to make in person worship possible with a minimum of risk.

I know we all long to get together again and see one another. One of the great Methodist hymns, written by Charles Wesley, that is sung at the beginning of every Annual Conference is "And Are We Yet Alive." The opening verse says: "And are we yet alive, and see each other's face? Glory and thanks to Jesus give for his almighty grace!" It expresses that joy when Christians come together in fellowship and worship.

I long for that day too, but right now gathering physically is not safe for us, or for our community. The Coronavirus situation in SC has deteriorated in last several weeks. The 7-day average of new Coronavirus cases each day has gone up from 260 a day on June 1st to 1,089 per day as of the 29th. The graph below shows the number of infections confirmed each day in blue and the 7-day average in red. As you notice the daily reports go up and down because some places do not report their new cases every day, so it is common practice to take the average of the last 7 days to even the numbers out and get a better picture of the actual trajectory of the cases. In short, there are now about 4 times as many people being identified as having the infection each day.

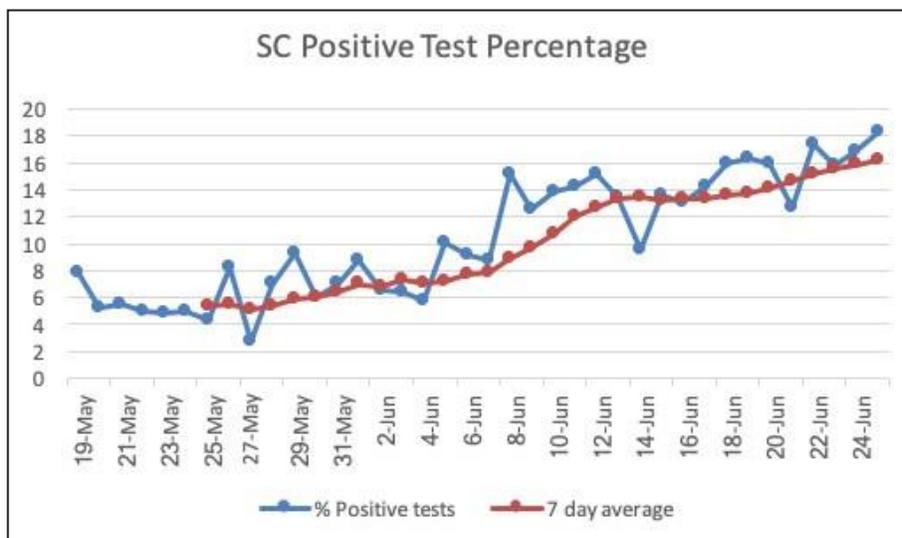
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Some might think that this increase is just due to the increase in testing. That is where the percent positive or “positivity” measure comes in. If the testing is really catching most of the cases, then the positivity will be below 10%. If testing is increasing and positivity is decreasing, then the testing is ahead of the increase in cases, but if positivity is rising while testing is increasing, then the additional tests are not keeping up with the spread of the infections. The way the DHEC website says it:

“When the percent positive is high, it may indicate that there isn't enough testing being performed to capture how much disease is in the community and testing may be focused on people who are more severely ill. When the percent positive is low, it may indicate that more widespread testing is being performed and the percent positive may more accurately reflect how much disease is present in the community.”

As you can see in the graph below the 7-day average for positivity in SC has gone up from 7% on June 1st to 16.2% on June 25th. This is the 3rd highest positivity rate of the 50 states! That means the increase in reported infections in the graph above is just the tip of the iceberg.



The federal guidelines, [Opening Up America Again](#), says that before opening up we should wait until there is a "Downward trajectory of documented cases within a 14-day period -or- Downward trajectory of positive tests as a percent of total tests within a 14-day period."(p. 2) Both measures are still going up. Despite this we are looking for a way to make in-person worship safe and available.

The good news is that the rise does seem to be slowing, so hopefully, if our fellow Sandlappers can act responsibly, a downward trend is coming. We will continue our virtual services, on-line Bible studies, Godly Play stories, and now virtual prayer meetings no matter where we are in the in-person worship. Please continue to stay in touch with each other through phone calls, emails, letters, and cards. Also, please wear a mask in public, do not go out if you do not need to, and most importantly continue to pray for an end to this pandemic.

(A word from the DHEC website.)

How South Carolinians Can Stop the Spread

Evidence is increasing about the high rates of infection in people who do not have symptoms and do not know they are infectious. This places everyone at risk of getting the virus or unknowingly transmitting it to someone else. Steps we can take to protect ourselves and others include:

- Practicing social distancing
- Wearing a mask in public
- Avoiding group gatherings
- Regularly washing your hands
- Staying home if sick



For the latest information related to COVID-19 visit scdhec.gov/COVID-19. Visit scdmh.net for stress, anxiety, and mental health resources from the S.C. Department of Mental Health.

Announcements

Virtual Prayer Meeting

This past month we started Virtual Prayer Meetings each Wednesday at 1 pm. This will be a 40 min. long time of sharing prayer concerns and praying. Please contact me, Pastor Alex (alex@cloverfumc.com), if you want to participate. A meeting ID and password will be sent on Wednesday morning to all who indicate they want to participate. Let us “gather” online to pray.

Upcoming Sermons

July 5: John 8:31-36 "The Truth Will Make You Free" Rev. Alex Stevenson

July 12: Genesis 25:19-34 "Grace and the Dysfunctional Family" Rev. Alex Stevenson

July 19: Lynn Shore-Hollis, Lay Associate

July 26: Matthew 13:44-52 "Old and New" Rev. Alex Stevenson

Faith and Inflection Points

“Inflection point:” it is a point at which something turns around and changes direction, or a turning point. Some have said that our country is at an inflection point, or more simply: things are changing. Change can be difficult, but it is a necessary reality of life. It has been said that change is the one constant in life. Change can also create

anxiety and fear, but we know that God is a rock on which we can stand during the turmoil of the world around us. When the changes in our society and world scare us or make us anxious, we can look to God. Psalm 46:2 says *“Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea.”* Even when it seems the world is falling apart around us; we can trust in the Lord.

In Christianity, we have an idea similar to the idea of inflection point. It is “repentance.” To repent means to turn around, to change direction from serving the world to serving God. The Greek word for repentance is *metanoia*. It comes from two Greek words. *Meta-* which means change, and *nous* which means mind. It literally means a “change of mind,” but it is more than deciding to have tea instead of coffee. *Meta-* is also used in another Greek word you know, metamorphosis, or a change of form. A caterpillar goes through a metamorphosis when it becomes a butterfly. So, this “change of mind” is a radical transformation of the heart and soul, or in our common language a “change of heart.” Paul talked about this transformation in Romans 12:2 *“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.”* When we truly surrender ourselves to God, the Holy Spirit works on our hearts and souls transforming us and giving us a new perspective and knowledge of God!



America is undergoing a transformation of the heart on the issue of racial justice. We began this country on the principle that “All men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.” We have not always lived up to that

ideal, but many have striven towards it. Despite that striving, as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, *“Justice too long delayed is justice denied.”*

As Christians we applaud this change of heart in our society. We rejoice that people are learning to see their fellow humans and acknowledge the injustices of the past and the present. Yet, this inflection point of repentance is also difficult, and in some people, creates anxiety and fear. As people of faith, we know that we can stand on the solid rock of faith in God in the midst of that change. We need to witness to those experiencing fear and anxiety, so that they can experience that transformation of the heart and mind and gain true peace. We need to show them that God can give us the peace, hope, and the strength we all need in changing times. Some find these changes difficult, but the result of this transformation of the heart is that we all “may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.” Let us trust in God to renew our hearts and minds and those of our society and let us be witnesses of faith and love during a changing world.

“You Do Not Walk Alone”

traditional Irish blessing

“May you see God’s light on the path ahead when the road you walk is dark.
May you always hear even in your hour of sorrow the gentle singing of the lark.
When times are hard may hardness never turn your heart to stone.
May you always remember when the shadows fall— You do not walk alone.”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gNCj2KW-JFk>

Peace be with you, Cheri



Quiet As a Church...Mouse

Maybe you are not aware of this special person on our church staff. Just like the saying, “quiet as a church mouse” she is seldom seen but is the invisible one-woman force responsible for cleaning up behind the rest of us before and after a church event.

Tracie Yvette Jackson Kite is second only to Shirley Davis for longevity as our employee at Clover First United Methodist Church. Tracie began taking care of our church on December 1, 2003. (Shirley Davis began in December 1991.)

Tracie was born and bred in our Clover Patch. Her father was Ed Jackson and her mother is Bonnie Coleman. Our faithful member, Ethel Pendleton, is her aunt and Ed’s sister.

When Tracie graduated from Clover High School, she worked in the textile industry in Gastonia at Mitchell Manufacturing. She worked there until she came to our church in 2003. Meanwhile she had become a mom. She had a son Isaac Vess. Being a mother is always a challenge but especially so raising a boy as a single mom.

Tracie set about her work at First United Methodist in a methodical way as Methodists are known to do. Her routine was to dedicate each day of the week to some of her basic chores. For example, on Monday she cleaned the downstairs stairs on the lobby because that is where most people enter the church. This area makes the first impression of our church. On Tuesday she focuses on the bathrooms and windowsills. Wednesday is the day to vacuum. In our regular schedule there are groups meeting in the church on such days like BIG and Scouts. So, cleaning starts over to some extent after the building has been used. Fridays she rechecks everything to have the church ready for the weekend worship services and events.

When there is an event such as a wedding or the United Methodist Men’s breakfast, or the Festival of Tables, Tracie moves and arranges the tables and chairs into their needed places. The Genesis Service requires special arranging for those Sunday mornings worship. Another duty is the sign in front of the church. The message there must be changed weekly by Tracie’s busy hands.

After she settled down in our church with her many duties, she took on the job as a wife again. Tracie and Dale married. Tracie became Mrs. Dale Kite.



Dale has recently had surgery for cancer. His surgery was successful, and he is back at work as a plumber at RBP in York.

By the way that job of raising Isaac turned out good. Isaac finished Clover High School and went on the CCCC in Charlotte. He now works in Charlotte for Siemens on Westinghouse Boulevard running cranes remotely.

Tracie shared a story about a cleaning problem she solved here. When Tracie entered the men’s bathroom to clean, she found a prankster had locked the stalls. Tracie said, “I knew I did not want to crawl under the door to unlock it.”

So, she quickly got a ladder and a broom. She scaled the ladder with the broom... She reached over the stall door with the inverted broom and used its handle to unlock the stall door.

Voila! She could clean it!

Tracie told me she used to be shy but now, “I enjoy meeting everybody and talking to everybody. I enjoy my job.”

When I asked Tracie what task she disliked the most, she popped out, “Ironing!”

She also replied that her favorite responsibility here is, “making sure the church is clean.”

We can enter our church gates with thanksgiving because Tracie Kite has quietly gone about the church making sure it is clean. When we come to worship, we can say, “Thank you for your job well done, Tracie.”

MISSIONS

The Missions Committee supports the Food Project of FUMC. The Food Project provides a bag of groceries the 3rd Saturday of every month to people who come to the church to request/receive this help. The last 4 months have been a little different to say the least with the process. The Food Project has been a drive by process the past 4 months with those helping to wear a mask. In March, there were 76 recipients of the Food Project. In April with the expected need in the community 100 bags were filled and to the helper's disappointment only 54 bags were distributed. In May, 66 bags were distributed and 48 bags in June. The people who have come have been very appreciative for the generosity.

FUMC welcomes monetary donations or donations of food. The food/grocery bags include 1 breakfast item, 2 boxes of Mac & Cheese, 1 bag of dried beans, 1 box of saltine crackers, 1 box of spaghetti, 2 cans of meat, 2 cans of soup, 2 cans of vegetables, 1 can of fruit, 1 jar of spaghetti sauce and 1 jar of peanut butter. We have been fortunate these last few months to include 2-3 rolls of toilet tissue and 1 bottle of juice. There is a suggested weekly list of donations below.

The Missions Committee and the Food Project appreciates all your donations to make this successful by helping the needy in our community.

Suggested Weekly Donations

1st Sunday

Spaghetti - 1 box
Spaghetti sauce - 1 jar/can
Macaroni & Cheese - 2 boxes

2nd Sunday

Breakfast item - 1 box (cereal, grits, oatmeal, or pancake mix)
Canned meats - 2 cans
Canned soup - 2 cans

3rd Sunday

Canned fruit - 1 can
Canned vegetables - 2 cans
Juice - 1 32 oz bottle

4th Sunday

Peanut butter - 1 small jar
Dried beans - 1 (1 lb.) bag
Saltine crackers - 1 box

5th Sunday

Toilet paper



First United Methodist Church

124 Bethel Street
Clover, SC 29710
(803) 222-3496
www.cloverfumc.com



FUMC Staff

Reverend Alex Stevenson, Senior Pastor – alex@cloverfumc.com

Lynn Shore-Hollis, Lay Associate – lshorehollis@cloverfumc.com

Kathy Pryor, Lay Associates – kpryor@cloverfumc.com

Reverend J. Richard Gibson, Pastor Emeritus

Cheri King, Director of Music Ministries – cking@cloverfumc.com

Cathy Allen, BIG/Tweens Coordinator – cmallen217@gmail.com

Christine Payseur, Church Business / Technical Coordinator – cpayseur@cloverfumc.com

Shirley M. Davis, Administrative Assistant / Financial Secretary – sdavis@cloverfumc.com

Nannette Carnes, Organist & Pianist – jncar61@yahoo.com

Tracie Kite, Sexton – kitetracie@hotmail.com

Hope Long, Nursery Care Worker / Coordinator

Windy Bartee, Lay Leader

Ray Reavis, Bob Grindle, Renee Gallien, Sue Gover, Conference Lay Members

Clover FUMC Annual Calendar, Contacts, Holidays in United States Jul 2020 (Eastern Time - New York)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28	29	30	1	2	3	4
			6:30am - Men's Prayer		Church Office Closed Independence Day	Independence Day
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
		7pm - Missions Committee	Tax Day	6:30pm - Finance		8:30am - Food Distribution
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
4pm - Trustees - 104 6pm - UMM - MFC						
26	27	28	29	30	31	
	9:30am - Staff Meeting -					

July Birthdays and Anniversaries

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
5 Ted Bartee Judy Payne	6 Anna Pettus Anniversaries: Bill Archer & Wanda Road	7	8 Jessica Killian	9 Olivia Carricato	10	11
12 Cathy Bell Samantha Clinton	13	14 Tracy Dixon Rhett Hurst Anniversaries: Susie & David Edwards	15	16 Faith Alexander Tom Meyer Ray Reavis	17 Eli Allen Margaret Bowman Mason Bell	18 Judy Bailes Emma Scott Livingston Carmen McCarter June Yarbrough
19 Sara Neil William Vaughn Alma Jewell Anniversaries Heather & Tracy Dixon Chip & Elaine Jones	20 Cheyanna Dann Caylee Millay Anniversaries: Renee & Ken Farris	21 Davis McCarter Sandy Skinnell Anniversaries: Sue & Jim Gover	22 Grayson Hurst Lofton Livingston Walter Thompson Dee Wise Kathy Pryor Lawrence Bartee	23	24 Linda Abernathy Karen Burton Kim Eleazer Jon McClain Beamguard	25
26 Jonathan Ford	27 Brian Maslankowski	28 Scott Adams	29	30 Ray Baker	31 Cody Chambers Taylor Dann	