

Life at Unity

January 21, 2025



Since 1788...

*United in Christ's love,
we glorify God through worship,
nurture, and service to all people.*

MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Friends,

As winter continues, I wonder what season of life you are in right now. Ecclesiastes 3:1 tells us, "For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven." This means we go through seasons of our lives that are joyful and celebratory, as well as seasons that are grief-filled and painful. We also go through seasons of job transitions, seasons of recovery, seasons of healing, and even seasons of uncertainty and fear. Wherever we might find ourselves in the journeys of our lives, we do not have to walk alone. If you are in a season that is too much to carry on your own, we have Stephen Ministers to journey the way with you.

Stephen Ministers are trained volunteers who can give you one on one, confidential care when you need it most. Sometimes even if we have wonderful family members and friends around us, it helps to have someone to talk to who is there simply to listen and care for you. Someone who is outside of your regular circle of peers that you can reflect with. Galatians 6:2 says, "Bear one another's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ." This is the call of the Stephen Minister, to help bear the burdens of others when they are too heavy to bear alone.

Here at Unity, we have a thriving Stephen Ministry. We first enrolled in the program in 2017, and today we have over 20 Stephen Ministers. **This Sunday, January 26th, at the 11:00 a.m. worship service** we will celebrate the commissioning of six new Stephen Ministers; Lori Glasco, Don Rice, Linda McMullen, Jim Smith, Ted Benfield, and Carol Simon. This new class of Stephen Ministers has trained since September. They have read books, taken weekly classes, engaged in practice care-giving conversations, and examined their own gifts for this ministry. They have answered the call to give care to people around them, and we are so excited that they will be commissioned for this ministry on Sunday.

If you are in a season of your life that might be easier to traverse with someone by your side, perhaps now is the time for you to seek a Stephen Minister. You can contact me directly if you are interested in learning more about this wonderful ministry. Whatever season you find yourself in right now, know that you do not need travel the way alone...God gives us the right people to journey with us.

See you on Sunday!

Molly

mspankler@unityfortmill.org



DR. MATT AND SARAH'S TRIP TO GREECE & TURKEY

On **Sunday, February 9th** after the **11:00 AM** worship service in the Fellowship Hall, Dr. Matt will share about their "Footsteps of Paul" to Greece and Turkey. All are invited to come and hear about some of the places where Paul preached and taught, the context for his letters to the Corinthians and Ephesians, and these spiritual/historical sites today. Are you interested in being a part of a similar trip with your church family? We'll also begin talking about potential spiritual pilgrimage trips for Unity Presbyterian Church to Greece/Turkey; the Holy Land; Scotland; Reformation sites, and more.

The deadline to submit items for the February 4th Newsletter is **Wednesday, January 29th**.

PRAYER CHAIN

Did you know that Unity has an email prayer chain? If you would like to receive prayer concerns or have a concern, please contact Dannie Vaughn at vaughndl@comporium.net.

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Thursday

8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

(Closed on Fridays)

803.547.5543

www.UnityFortMill.org

EARLY FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 -- Zella Couchenour; Jon Hattaway; Pat Proctor
- 2 -- Bob Edwards; Libby Kern; Luca Litrenta; Terra Patterson; Adam G. Smith
- 3 -- Greg Dasher; Roy Mathers; Bob Planitzer; Sue Roberts
- 4 -- Maren Brindisi
- 5 -- Lori Newman
- 6 -- Barnes Louthan; Eli Meyer; Rodman Mowen; Alexander Oppel; Doug Snapp; Noah Threatt
- 7 -- Blake Burrell; Cameron Hollingsworth; Will Rich
- 8 -- Jim Lester; Bob Mobley; Wes Stokes
- 9 -- Joyce Ayers; Reid Bennett; Emma Campbell; Terri Turner; Anne Weeks
- 10 -- Margaret Cameron; Karen Chase; Jim McMullen
- 11 -- Marion Bradner; Keith Griffin; Bill White
- 12 -- Peter Bright; Hayden Hermanns
- 13 -- Judy Long; Lynne Rayl
- 14 -- Hardwick Brooks; Jim Johnstone; Ann Windell; Jackson Windell; John Windell
- 15 -- Brant Poore; Alex Windham

LUNCH BUNCH



Join us on **Wednesday, January 22nd at 12:00 p.m.** for the first Lunch Bunch meeting of 2025! Cassidy Plyler, the Catawba Cultural Center Program Specialist, will be our speaker this month. She will discuss the rich history of the Catawba Nation and their history and struggles. Catawba History 101 explores the rich 6,000-year history of the Catawba Nation. The information included will focus on the constant changes the Catawba Nation has faced since the European explorers made contact with them in 1540. Please bring your salad or sandwich and join us for this very interesting speaker.

Chips, drinks, and desserts are provided.

BLOOD DRIVE

Start out your new year with a donation of blood to the Red Cross. Unity will host a blood drive on **January 28th, 2025 from 2:30-7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.** You can sign up for an appointment on the Red Cross website: <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/find-drive> and look for the date or the location. Donations of blood are needed in our area. Give the gift of life!



Blood Drive Unity Presbyterian Church

Fellowship Hall
303 Tom Hall Street
Fort Mill, SC 29716

**Tuesday, January 28, 2025
2:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.**



JOIN MESSY MOTHERHOOD

Both Messy Motherhood groups will resume **the week of January 26th** and will read the All-Church Read book, *Hope: A User's Manual* by Rev. MaryAnn McKibben Dana. Both groups meet on Zoom at 7:30, one group on Tuesdays and one group on Wednesdays. There are a couple of openings in each group. Please email Kathryn McGregor at KMcGregor@UnityFortMill.org if you are interested in joining one of the groups and let her know which day works for you.



ATTENTION GRANDPARENTS!



Are you a grandparent who treasures the privilege of holding your grandchildren in your heart and prayers - not just in times of trouble, but every single day? Join us as we come together to celebrate, uplift, and support the next generation through the power of prayer.

The Grandparents' Prayer Group has a new meeting time and warmly welcomes new participants! Starting this month, we will meet on the last Thursday of each month at 10:00 in

the Heritage Room. **Our next gathering will be Thursday, January 30th.**

Let's build a legacy of prayer together.

PEANUT BUTTER & JELLY SUNDAY

Sunday, February 2nd, is Peanut Butter & Jelly Sunday. Please bring your donations of food and supplies for the Fort Mill Care Center and deposit them in the collection box in the Narthex on Sunday or any time you are at church. Current needs at the Care Center include jelly, syrup, pasta sauce, rice (one pound bags), salt & pepper, applesauce, personal hygiene items, laundry detergent, and cleaning products. You can also drop off donations, including any refrigerated items, directly at the Fort Mill Care Center. They are open MWF 9:00 AM to noon and Tuesday from 5 to 7 PM. Please have them weigh the donation and please send an Email with the total weight to Larry Terrell at larry.terrell@sbcglobal.net. Last month we collected 610 lbs. Thank you for generously supporting our neighbors in need.



SAVE THE DATE FOR MDSF!



Women of Unity will host our annual **Mother Daughter Sister Friend Luncheon on March 23, 2025**. Our theme this year is "Learning to Share Our Stories" with Rev. Julie Hester. We are people formed by stories - the stories we've heard and lived through, the stories we tell ourselves, and the stories we tell together. Join us as we explore how the spiritual practice of writing can help us understand and share our stories as part of God's beloved community. We'll listen, learn, write, and share around our small group tables. No writing experience is needed, and grammar and spelling don't count! If you can talk, you can write. We'll do some of both together.

More details coming soon! Event Co-Chairs are Karen Compton Fuqua (kfuqua@comporium.net) and Stephanie Faherty.

HOW TO SAVE YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

New Year's Resolutions broken already? It's so tempting to make goals to suddenly stop a bad habit and begin a good one.

Have you noticed that improving your lifestyle takes time? Gradual changes are easier to adhere to and obtain permanent changes. Give yourself a break. God does. Don't give up...amend your goals to smaller and realistic adjustments. The Health Ministries Team is rooting for you.

STAY IN TOUCH

Whether you are looking for a specific activity or the latest news and information on children, youth, and adults, visit us at . . .

Website: www.UnityFortMill.org

Instagram: [@UnityFortMill](https://www.instagram.com/UnityFortMill)

Facebook: [@UnityFortMill](https://www.facebook.com/UnityFortMill)

Be sure to "like" our page.



STEPHEN
MINISTRY

MY STEPHEN MINISTER
WAS PATIENT, LOVING
AND ACCEPTING.

That is the type of thing we hear
about Stephen Ministers!

If you are dealing with any kind
of difficulty, if you are
struggling with faith questions
or doubts, if you are wondering
whether you are a worthy
person, then I encourage you to
consider getting a Stephen
Minister.

It just might be that God
already has a special one picked
out just for you!

To find out more about Stephen
Ministry and how you or
someone you know could be
matched with a Stephen
Minister, contact one of our
referral coordinators, Susan
Mobley or Dave Johnson, via
email at
Stephenministryreferrals@unityfortmill.org (you will be called
back quickly) or call a pastor at
the church office - 803-547-
5543.

With your approval a Stephen
Minister will be prayerfully
assigned to you!

For more information on
“What’s Happening” at
Unity, please visit...
[www.unityfortmill.org/
whats-happening/](http://www.unityfortmill.org/whats-happening/)

UNITY PRESCHOOL UPDATE

It has been a joyful and exciting year at Unity Preschool. We began our school year in September with 57 children in five classes. We ended 2024 with a beautiful Christmas program in the Sanctuary. We are grateful to teach these beautiful children that God’s love is always with us.



UNITY PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION

Unity Preschool registration for the 2025-2026 school year is now open. Please visit the Unity Preschool website (www.unitypreschool.org) for important dates, forms, tour information, and details. **Registration forms for new students are due Monday, January 27th.** Please e-mail Linda Bunge (preschoolatunity@gmail.com) if you have any questions.

HOW CAN I HELP UNITY PRESCHOOL?

***Monetary Donation:** Make a monetary gift to support our programming. Your donations will be divided between our Playground Fund and our Scholarship Fund. The Playground Fund will be used to design and build an improved playground space in the fenced wooded park area. The Scholarship Fund was established for current preschool families to use for tuition when they face unexpected financial hardships. Please donate online to "Preschool" (include “Fundraiser” in the Notes) or make checks payable to "Unity Preschool" with "Fundraiser" on the memo line. You may mail checks or drop them in the church mailbox, church office, or Sunday offering plate.

***Amazon Wish List:** You can also help by purchasing one of the items on the Unity Preschool Amazon Wish List. These are items that we will use throughout the year in the Preschool. As you can imagine our craft and supply bins need replenishing throughout the year. https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1AODLHWQMIRP6?ref=wl_share

***Volunteer:** Sign up to volunteer as a classroom volunteer or a behind-the-scenes volunteer.

***Share the News:** Encourage your friends and family to attend Unity Preschool. Thank you in advance for your support of Unity Preschool and our programs.

YOUTH OUTREACH AT DEFEND THE FATHERLESS



Unity Youth engaged in a meaningful outreach project with our partners at Defend the Fatherless! Our middle and high schoolers enjoyed gathering together to join in God's work of compassion and justice. We also had the chance to learn more about Defend the Fatherless and their work to reduce the burdens of foster and adoptive families in our community.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR 2025 CHILDREN'S MINISTRY SUMMER CAMPS:

VBS & Mission Camp – June 9-12, ages 4 – Completed 3rd Grade (VBS), Completed 4th and 5th Grades (Mission Camp) – Registration opens March 10

Grands Camp – July 23-25, Ages 4 -5th grade with a Grandparent or Surrogate Grandparent – Registration opens April 7

UNITY CHILDREN'S CHOIRS

The next session of Children's Choir begins on February 2nd. Cherub Choir (children who turned 4 by September 1, 2024 through first grade) will meet from 2:00-2:45 in the handbell room, and the Covenant Choir (grades 2-5) meets from 3:00-3:45 in the choir room. Parents, please register any children singing for the first time this school year using the QR code (returning singers do not need to register again). Contact Margaret Monroe at mmonroe@UnityFortMill.org or 547-5543 with any questions. Come make a joyful noise!



UNITY YOUTH HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO HEAR FREDDIE SHERRILL'S FAITH STORY!

Freddie Sherrill, the set-up and event coordinator at Myers Park Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, has faced countless setbacks and obstacles in his life. However, his powerful faith story is one of hope, resilience, and abounding grace. Freddie's story has been featured in [USA Today](#), the [Washington Post](#), and [The Today Show](#). We are so grateful for the opportunity to meet Freddie in person and learn about the countless ways that God has been at work in Freddie's life.



ALL YOUTH ARE INVITED TO REGISTER FOR HOMEBOUND MEMBER VISITS



Our middle and high school youth will break into small groups to visit with homebound members of our congregation in their homes on **Sunday, February 2nd from 4:00-5:30 p.m.** This will be a meaningful opportunity to share stories and gain insight from older members of our church community. **Registration is required for this event and is [available here](#).**

SIGN UP TO BE AN ACOLYTE!



Calling all Unity students 4th grade and higher to be a part of the Acolyte Ministry at Unity! Acolytes are a very important part of our worship services each week by carrying the light of Christ into the sanctuary at the beginning of worship. After the service, the acolytes extinguish the candles and carry the light of Christ out of the sanctuary and into the world. Acolytes are needed for both the 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services. The upcoming acolyte schedule will be for the period March through June, 2025

If you are interested in participating in the worship service by being an acolyte, please join me for an acolyte training session to sign up and learn more about this ministry. Training sessions can be arranged after school, on Saturdays, on Sunday afternoons, or on school holidays. The session takes place in the narthex and the sanctuary and should last about 30 minutes. A parent is required to attend to provide the information necessary to make a schedule and to hear the details of the program.

Please contact Jessie Little at jmlittle@comporium.net if your child(ren) are interested in participating as an acolyte in order to set up a training day and time that is convenient for you.

SUNDAY MORNING FAITH FORMATION

Come grow in your faith

**SUNDAY
MORNING
FAITH
FORMATION**
10:00 AM



CHILDREN

Birth-3 years - Rooms S103 & S104
4K/Kindergarten - Room M203
1st/2nd grade - Room M205
3rd - 5th grade - Room M208

YOUTH

6th & 7th grade - Room M106
Confirmation - Room M107 & Fellowship Hall
High School - Room M108

ADULTS

As a Child - Room M312
Faith Connections - Historic Sanctuary
Fellowship - Room M201
Gospel of Matthew - Room M210
Unity - Room M102



CWS BLANKETS +



"From something as simple as a blanket, amazing things can happen" - Church World Service

On **Sunday, February 16th**, Unity will again accept donations to purchase blankets for CWS-Blanket Sunday. A donation of \$10 will purchase a blanket that will be distributed to those facing a difficult time. The blanket will remind them that they are not alone.

Through the CWS Blanket program, you can share compassion in a practical way with neighbors near and far facing hard times. Donation envelopes will be in pews.

"And don't forget to do good and share with those in need." Hebrews 13:16

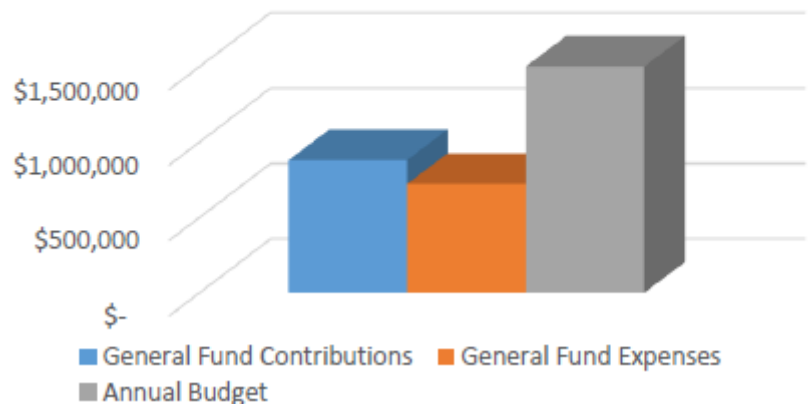
2024-2025 BUDGET UPDATE

	December 2024	Jul 1, 2024 through Dec 31, 2024	% of Annual Budget	5-Year Average
General Fund Contributions	\$ 225,826	\$ 879,205	53.7%	\$ 826,799
General Fund Expenses	131,145	720,996	44.1%	666,791
Annual Budget		1,636,321	100.0%	1,519,243

Current Status of the 2010 Sanctuary Building Debt

Balance, December 31, 2024	\$ 376,200
Projected Balloon Payment Due, 6/5/2027	\$ 206,000

Contributions & Expenses July - December Compared with the Annual Budget



Unity Presbyterian Church
303 Tom Hall Street
PO Box 1267
Fort Mill, SC 29716-1267

www.UnityFortMill.org

JOIN US SUNDAY

8:45 a.m.
In-Person/Livestream
Worship

11:00 a.m.
In-Person/Livestream
Worship

**Share Your
Tithes and Offerings
Online**



Return Service Requested

Thank you for supporting God's ministry through Unity Presbyterian Church.