

# Life at Unity

April 01, 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,

On Sunday, April 6th we will celebrate with 13 of Unity's 8th graders as we recognize their public statements of faith on Confirmation Sunday. This Sunday is always one of the highlights of the year for us at Unity and we are blessed once again with an outstanding group of young people in the Confirmation Class.

As we prepare to celebrate with our youth this year, I wanted to share with you an interesting transition that has happened over the last decade or so around confirmation. For many years, Confirmation was understood as when "youth joined the church." Whether they had to memorize the questions and answers to a catechism, attend meetings with the pastor(s), or write their own statements of faith, the end goal was for each young person to "join the church."

Two concerns emerged with viewing confirmation as "joining the church." The first is that it discounts God's claim upon us as children of God in our baptism. The sacrament of beginning and initiation into membership of the church has always been baptism. And as Presbyterians we have been committed to the theology that God calls us and makes us members of the church - the best we can do is respond with faith, gratitude, and praise. So, in a formal sense, we "join the church" in our baptism and then become active members through "confirming" for ourselves the promises of faith someone else made for us at our baptism.

The second concern is that seeing confirmation as how one "joins the church" implies it is the end of the journey. Youth come to the Session meeting, memorize the right answers, and check the box, but there's no need to study, to grow or to learn any more. Institutional survival is ensured because confirmation adds one more name to the church's membership rolls and (hopefully) a new pledge card is turned in, at least for that year.

Recognizing these concerns, Christian educators and pastors have been recasting confirmation in terms of discipleship and mission. Retired PCUSA educator and curriculum writer Mark Hines puts it this way:

"Missional confirmation inspires a missional identity and commissions young people to a missional way of life. It is not about joining the church; it's about joining the missional project initiated by Jesus and entrusted to the church. The missional community affirms each young person as a Spirit-gifted disciple and strengthens them as partners in God's mission to transform the world. Following Jesus' practice, missional confirmation models faith formation as an embodied task — a shared practice within a relationship of trust ... in which the missional imperative is caught more than taught." <https://pres-outlook.org/2023/04/moving-from-membership-confirmation-to-missional-confirmation/>

So, on Confirmation Sunday, we are celebrating not merely new active members of Unity Presbyterian Church; we are celebrating and surrounding with our prayers new disciples of Jesus Christ who are commissioned to be the church in the world, everywhere they go. I know this group, and all of our youth, will lead us toward being more faithful as we join God's work in the world. If only we have the courage and the faith to follow.

See you Sunday! Matt

The [deadline to submit items](#) for the April 15th Newsletter is **Wednesday, April 9th.**

## 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](mailto:vaughndl@comporium.net).

## PLEASE WELCOME THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS RECEIVED BY SESSION 3/24/2025

Tom & Dawn Edwards

Locke Hutson

Evan Hutson

Adam & Brittany Rusch, with their children Sammie & Sylvie

## 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](http://www.UnityFortMill.org)

Instagram: [@UnityFortMill](#)

Facebook: [@UnityFortMill](#)

Be sure to "like" our page.

## LENTEN PRAYER & REFLECTION

### LATE APRIL BIRTHDAYS

16 -- Beth Chuck; Chris Gall;  
Steve Martin; Ron Ringley;  
Mark Wyndham

17 -- Amanda Griffin; Tommy  
Joyner; Phyllis Miller

18 -- Caroline McCann; Jason  
Prescott; William Ross

19 -- Dezi Dezzani; Chuck  
Epps; John Garver; Estie Hice;  
Matt Matinata

20 -- Emily Evans; Ken Hill;  
Greyson Hines; Sabrina Hines;  
Jane Merlo; James Watson;  
Jamie Woodward

21 -- Debbie Butler; Holly  
McKinney

22 -- Patrick Sizemore; John  
Welker; Maggie Wright

23 -- Parker Blake; Brittany  
Hennessy; Hadley Hentschke;  
John McManus; Anna Reigel

24 -- Marcia Hardy; David  
Little; Mike Mix; Christy  
Oltmann; Chase Riddle;  
Elizabeth Watson; Stan Wilson

25 -- Gray Fisher; Camille  
Welfare; James Welfare;  
Meredith Welfare

26 -- Jeff Shouse

27 -- Elizabeth Dennis; Jeff  
Smith

28 -- Phillip Carter; Nolan  
Kaskowicz; Kacey McCormack

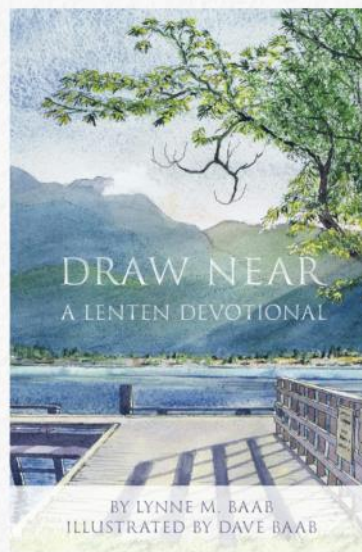
29 -- Teeny Honeycutt; Liam  
Lynch; Don Rice; Ann  
Robinson

30-- Lee Cole; Courtney  
Matinata; Sandy Schumacher

## Lenten Prayer & Reflection

Join us each **Tuesday** during Lent at  
**7:30 am or 12:30 pm**  
in the Historic Sanctuary  
for prayer and quiet reflection.

Come to a brief  
prayer and reflection  
service offered each  
week during Lent  
that will be guided  
by the psalms in that  
week's Lenten  
devotions from  
the *Draw Near*  
devotional.  
Services will last  
no more than  
30 minutes.



No registration is necessary.

## CONNECTIONS CLASS

If you are seeking, or are curious about, membership at Unity Presbyterian Church, the Hospitality & Evangelism Team would like to invite you to attend our next Connections Class. **The second session of this two part class will meet in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday, April 6th, from 10:00 - 10:45 a.m.** Even if you missed the first week, we hope you'll join us for this second session. The class offers an overview of the many opportunities to participate in the life of Unity, a brief introduction to the polity and history of the Presbyterian church, history of Unity Presbyterian Church, and plenty of time for questions and answers. To express interest or ask questions, please contact Cathey Miller ([cat6813@hotmail.com](mailto:cat6813@hotmail.com)).



## PEANUT BUTTER & JELLY SUNDAY



**Sunday, April 6th**, 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 boxed meals (Banquet Homestyle Bakes, Chicken/Tuna Helper, Rice-a-Roni, Taco Kits, Suddenly Pasta Salad), vegetable oil, sugar & brown sugar, ketchup, and mayonnaise. 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](mailto:larry.terrell@sbcglobal.net). Last month we collected 348 lbs., bringing our year-to-date total to 1,368 lbs. Thank you for generously supporting our neighbors in need.

## HOLY WEEK AT UNITY

Our Lenten journey concludes as we arrive in Jerusalem, finding our way at the foot of the cross and the empty tomb: Plan to join us for worship:

- **Palm Sunday, April 13th** - Worship with a Palm Procession, Children's Choir Anthem, and Musical Presentation by the Chancel Choir of the *Seven Last Words of Christ* at 8:45 AM and 11:00 AM
- **Maundy Thursday, April 17th** - Worship with communion at 6:30 PM
- **Good Friday, April 18th** - Joint Worship Service with other Fort Mill Presbyterian Churches at 12:00 PM
- **Easter Sunday, April 20th** - Worship
  - \* **7:00 AM** in the Historic Sanctuary
  - \* **8:45 AM and 11:00 AM**, identical services with special music in the Sanctuary with butterfly release following



## EASTER USHERS/GREETERS NEEDED

Easter is a unique opportunity to serve in ways you may not have done before. Because of the number of services and attendees we anticipate, additional hands are greatly needed to greet, usher, collect offering and assist with parking. Here are the needs for each service:

- Maundy Thursday: 2 greeters/ushers
- Good Friday: 2 greeters/ushers
- Easter Sunday: 7AM - 1 greeter/usher; 8:45 AM and 11AM - 10 greeters/ushers and 3 parking attendants.

If you have questions, wish to serve, or would like to form a group to take on one or more roles, please contact Justin Richardson ([justin.richardson1@gmail.com](mailto:justin.richardson1@gmail.com) or text 980.579.8565) or sign up on Realm.

## THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF CHRIST

Join us **Palm Sunday** for a special presentation of *The Seven Last Words of Christ* by Théodore Dubois. The Chancel Choir will present this moving work at **both worship services on Sunday, April 13th**, featuring soloists from the choir, as well as guest instrumentalists.

Journey with us to the cross to hear Christ's last words, which have been used for centuries by Christians as a way to pray for others, to reflect on their own lives, and to approach the cross of Christ and the empty tomb in a new way.

## GOOD FRIDAY CHOIR

All interested youth and adults are invited to **sing in the choir for our community Good Friday service on April 18th**. The service is at noon, and we will meet at 11:00 a.m. in the choir room to learn the anthem and go over hymns. Please wear all black (or as close to it as you can) and bring a black three-ring binder if you have one. We will be joined by musicians and choir members from other Presbyterian churches. Please contact Margaret Monroe, Director of Music, at [mmonroe@UnityFortMill.org](mailto:mmonroe@UnityFortMill.org) with any questions.

## CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Thursday  
8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
(Closed on Fridays)  
803.547.5543  
[www.UnityFortMill.org](http://www.UnityFortMill.org)



Stephen Ministry is for those who have suffered a loss or who are going through a difficult time, Easter can be a time of painful loneliness and emptiness. If you are smiling on the outside but full of pain on the inside, and the joy of Easter seems far away, help is available.

Our Stephen Ministers are ready to provide confidential, one-to-one Christian care. They will listen, care, encourage, and pray with and for you. Stephen Ministers have been specially trained to meet your emotional and spiritual needs; male Stephen Ministers are always matched with men, and female Stephen Ministers are matched with women.

If you or someone you know is hurting, find out more about Stephen Ministry by talking with one of our referral coordinators, Susan Mobley or Dave Johnson, via email at [Stephenministryreferrals@unityortmill.org](mailto:Stephenministryreferrals@unityortmill.org) or call a pastor at the church office - 803-547-5543.

Our Stephen Ministers are here to care!

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

## 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



## FINDING MY STORY IN THE PSALMS

We often turn to the book of Psalms for spiritual encouragement, for assistance in worshipping God, or as model prayers. But do you see yourself in the Psalms? Do the Psalms tell your story? In this five-week class we'll explore five psalms that are rarely studied but that yield rich insights for answering questions like: *Who am I ... really? Where did I come from? How has God's hand been on my life? Can God ever forgive me for ...? How can I trust God more?* The class will be led by Steve Simon, who is a retired Presbyterian pastor and the author of the book *Holy Walks: Learning and Praying the Psalms*. The Psalms we'll focus on include: Psalm 103 ("Rooted in God's Love"), Psalm 104 ("The Creator of All"), Psalm 105 ("A Faithful God"), Psalm 106 ("An Unfaithful People"), and Psalm 107 ("Tales of God's Deliverance"). As time allows, we'll also examine Psalm 78, psalms of lament, and various other psalms. "Let the one who is wise heed these things and ponder the loving deeds of the Lord" (Ps. 107:43).

This group meets on Thursday evenings, from May 1st-29th, from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. in Room M204.

Register Here: <https://onrealm.org/unityfortmill/PublicRegistrations/Event?linkString=MDFmOWMxZWUxZjg5MC00NGJjLWJmZjMtYjYjYzAxMTlkOTBj>

## SPIRITUAL PILGRIMAGE TO SCOTLAND: SAVE THE DATE

Thank you to all who have expressed interest in taking an international spiritual pilgrimage trip. A trip to Scotland generated the most interest, so plans are underway for a trip **April 17-25, 2026**. Check your calendars and save the dates. Watch for more information soon.

## HMT HEALTH CORNER - JUST TAKE A BREATH

Deep breathing exercises offer numerous benefits, including stress reduction, improved lung function, enhanced focus, improved immune response, lower blood pressure and heart rate, better sleep, reduce sinus congestion, and much more. This is well published in medical journals and many books have been written on the subject. Just five to ten minutes 3-4 times a week will have dramatic results. Do it listening to a talking book or watching the news. Inhale deeply through your nose for 5 seconds, then exhale all the way for 5 seconds through your nose. There are apps on your phone that are subtle and help with your timing. It will take a couple of weeks, but you will start to notice a difference. This is an easy way to a healthier lifestyle.

## SAVE THE DATE FOR CPR!

Innovative Solutions will return to our campus on **Saturday, May 3rd**, to offer certification in Heartsaver CPR through the American Heart Association. The class will **begin at 9:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall** and last approximately 2-1/2 hours. Participants will learn CPR and choking first aid for infants, children and adults. Use of the campus AEDs will also be included. The class fee is \$50.00. Sign-up is required to ensure the correct number of instructors. However, no payment is due until the day of class. Innovative Solutions requests payment in cash. **To register, call the church office at 803-547-5543 or Susan Benfield at 803-984-6100.** Increase your knowledge and ability to respond with confidence! Join us for a few hours. Your knowledge could save a life.



## YOUTH HANDBELLS

All Youth grades 6-12 are invited to participate in a handbell choir just for you! We will **rehearse** after 11:00 worship on the following **Sundays: April 6th, April 13th, April 27th, and May 4th.** We will then **play in worship on Sunday, May 11th** at both services. We'll go over basic note reading and ringing techniques. Please [click here to sign up on REALM](#) to reserve your spot, or contact Margaret Monroe at [mmonroe@UnityFortMill.org](mailto:mmonroe@UnityFortMill.org) or 803-547-5543.



## HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH HURRICANE CLEANUP

Unity High School Youth had a wonderful weekend of service & sabbath in Montreat! We participated in a Hurricane Helene debris cleanup project organized by Friends & Neighbors of Swannanoa. We also enjoyed some hiking, ultimate frisbee, lots of games, and time for deep connection, laughter, and worship. So grateful for these awesome young people and adult leaders!



## MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH SERVICE AFTERNOON AT THE ADULT ENRICHMENT CENTER



Unity Middle School Youth engaged in an afternoon of service with our partners at the Adult Enrichment Center! We had an awesome time learning more about the work that Adult Enrichment Center does to support adults with special and different needs in our community. We also got their vans in top shape with a good car wash!

## TAIZÉ



Our next Taizé service will be **Sunday, May 4th at 5:30 p.m. in the Historic Sanctuary (please note the different time).** A Taizé service is composed of candlelight, Scripture readings, prayer, intervals of silence, and contemplative chants. Join us for a time of quiet centering and meditation.

## CLASSICAL MUSIC CONCERT



Join us for a classical music concert in our sanctuary on **Sunday, April 6th at 4:30 p.m.** The concert will feature music for trumpet, violin, and piano by composers such as Bach, Handel, and Rachmaninoff. Performers are soprano Jennifer Ferreira, trumpeter Keenan Harmon, and pianist Dr. Greg Thompson. The concert is free and open to the public, but donations will be accepted.



**LAST CHANCE TO REGISTER FOR YOUTH SUMMER TRIPS!**

Middle and high school youth are headed on some awesome mission and faith formation trips this summer and we want you to be part of it. High schoolers are heading to Montreat Youth Conference and a Mission Trip at St. Simons Island. Middle schoolers are heading to Massanetta Middle School Conference. **All trip registration closes TODAY April 1st. Register now on Realm!**

**GCS SPRING COOKOUT APRIL 13TH**

All current 3rd, 4th and 5th graders are invited to our GCs Spring Cookout at the Springfield Pavilion on **Sunday, April 13th from 5:00-6:30 p.m.** A special invitation is issued to our current 3rd graders who will be moving up to GCs in the fall. Join us for this fun night out to see what GCs is all about. We will eat dinner, play games, and recognize all of our 5th graders who will be leaving children's ministry this summer and moving to youth group in the fall. **Scan the QR Code to register by April 8th.**



**SHEPHERDS NEEDED FOR VBS**



Vacation Bible School will be held Monday, June 9th - Thursday, June 12th from 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. for children in Rising 4K-4th grade. Mission Camp will be held concurrently for children currently in Rising 5th and 6th grade. This year's theme is "Road Trip: On the Go With God". We are particularly in need of shepherds to work with a partner to walk children from place to place during the morning and help the leaders with their activities. Youth 6th grade and up and adults of all ages can serve as shepherds. Sign up now to volunteer and help us make this summer the best VBS ever!

[https:// www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E4AA9AF22A4FE3-54606563-vbs2025.](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E4AA9AF22A4FE3-54606563-vbs2025)

**EASTER EGG HUNT**



UNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

**JOIN US FOR AN EASTER EGG HUNT!**

**Glow in the Dark Egg Hunt**  
**Friday, April 4**  
**6:45-8:15 pm**  
**For 3rd-5th Graders**

**Traditional Easter Egg Hunt**  
**Saturday, April 5**  
**10:00 am**

**For all ages**

**No registration needed**

Use QR code to register by March 31



## MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR GRANDS CAMP!

Grands Camp will be held this summer **Wednesday, July 23rd – Friday, July 25th**. Grands Camp provides a unique opportunity for intergenerational ministry. Grandparents and grandchildren, ages 4 – 5th grade will enjoy time together through games, crafts, stories, mission projects, LEGOS and more. Up to 2 grandchildren may attend with each grandparent. Have more grandchildren than that? Bring an additional grandparent, either related or surrogate, or contact Kathryn McGregor to find additional surrogate grandparents. Don't have grandparents or grandchildren who can participate with you? Email Kathryn McGregor at [KMcGregor@UnityFortMill.org](mailto:KMcGregor@UnityFortMill.org) to sign up to be a surrogate grandparent or grandchild for another member of our congregation. **Registration opens April 7th.**



## ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

This offering began following World War II when Protestant churches in the United States made appeals for the relief and reconstruction of devastated areas, primarily in Europe and Asia. With the devastation occurring in Ukraine and other countries abroad, as well as the destruction occurring in the United States from severe storms, hurricanes, flooding, and blizzards, assistance continues to be needed. Each gift to OGHS supports efforts to relieve hunger through the Presbyterian Hunger Program, promote development through the Presbyterian Committee on Self-Development of People, and assist in areas of disaster through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. Unity will receive the **ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING** offering on **EASTER SUNDAY, April 20th**. For more information or to give, visit: <https://unityfortmill.org/give/special-offering/>.

## SECOND ANNUAL WAX MUSEUM



Everyone is invited to attend our second annual Wax Museum hosted by the 3rd-5th grade Sunday school class on **Sunday, April 13th at 10:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall**. Come see, hear, and learn from costumed, first-hand accounts of Old Testament Heroes. Refreshments provided in Room M208. This will take the place of all regular Faith Formation classes that morning.

## SECOND HARVEST FOOD DISTRIBUTION EVENT

The Unity Outreach Team is sponsoring a Second Harvest Food Distribution event on **Friday morning, April 25th, 2025, from 8:00 to 11:30 a.m.** All ages are invited to come participate! Please come and help distribute food by parceling and loading food into grocery carts, and placing the food into our guest's cars. Bring any paper or plastic grocery bags that you have available. Volunteers to transport any remaining foods to the Fort Mill Care Center is appreciated, and to help recycle cardboard and shipping pallets. Please call or text Jim Boyd if you have questions (803.984.2277).



## HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT AFFIRMATION OF YORK



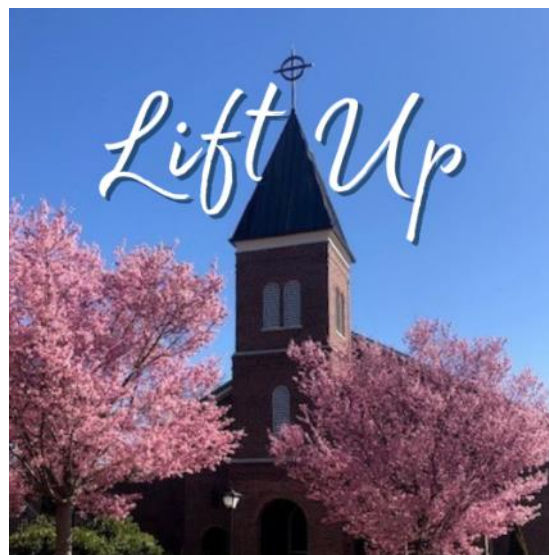
Affirmation of York County is a support group for people who ponder questions of faith and life related to the LGBTQ+ community. This is a safe group for LGBTQ+ people, their parents, family members, and friends who seek understanding and acceptance within their faith communities. People of all faiths are welcome to participate. The group is a confidential and respectful space to seek support and understanding. All who participate are invited to share their stories in a caring atmosphere, or just to come and listen. **Affirmation's next meeting will be Tuesday, April 8th, from 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. at Starbucks, 604 Cherry Road, Rock Hill.** If you have questions, you can reach out to Melissa at [lampytc@gmail.com](mailto:lampytc@gmail.com).

# CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT BENEFITING HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OF YORK COUNTY



The ISACA Charlotte Chapter is hosting a charity golf tournament benefiting Habitat for Humanity of York County on **Monday, May 5th, 2025** at River Hills Country Club in Lake Wylie, SC. This Captain's Choice golf event is raising funds for affordable homeownership construction in York County. Cost is \$175/player or \$700/team. For more information and to register go to: <https://yorkcountyhabitat.org/golftournament>.

## THANK YOU!

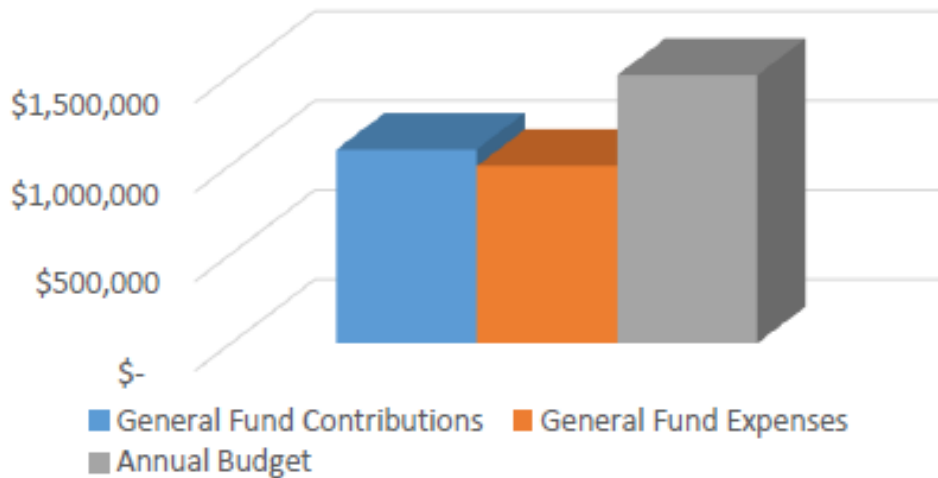


Thank You to everyone who returned their Pledges of Time, Talents, and Treasures on Commitment Sunday, March 30th! It was truly a wonderful Sunday of joy, gratitude, generosity, and celebration. If you missed Commitment Sunday or have not had a chance to turn in your pledges, it is not too late! Please bring your forms to the church office, log into REALM and choosing "Giving" or visit <https://unityfortmill.org/give/stewardship/> as soon as you are able.



## 2024-2025 BUDGET UPDATE

### Contributions & Expenses July - February Compared with the Annual Budget



	February 2025	Jul 1, 2024 through Feb 28, 2025	% of Annual Budget	5-Year Average
General Fund Contributions	\$ 118,513	\$ 1,083,913	66.2%	\$1,010,877
General Fund Expenses	126,213	990,870	60.6%	933,891
Annual Budget		1,636,321	100.0%	1,519,243

#### Current Status of the 2010 Sanctuary Building Debt

Balance, February 28, 2025	\$ 361,800
Projected Balloon Payment Due, 6/5/2027	\$ 202,000

As you contemplate your legacy, please consider including Unity in your estate planning.

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

[www.UnityFortMill.org](http://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*

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