

# Life at Unity

April 08, 2026



## MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Friends,

As I write this letter to you, we are in the midst of Holy Week. There are important steps yet to take on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday before we reach the joy of Easter morning. But by the time you read this letter, all that will be behind us. The pressures for life to get back to “normal” or for the joys of Easter to be overwhelmed by the wonders of Spring Break will be great.

So, I was thinking about the persistence of resurrection and the new life God unleashed in the world on that first Easter day. And I was reminded of a poem by the Rev. Dr. J. Barrie Shepherd, written after weeding his front lawn in Wooster, OH one sunny Easter Sunday afternoon:

### Hope Weed

Our Christian symbols seem, at times, not quite appropriate to the meaning that they bear. For instance, take the Easter lily, white and fragile sign of resurrection. Rare, its graceful silent trumpet greets the light of March or April only under glare of florists' lamps, unnaturally bright. You never find them in the open air before July. A better flower for Easter Day would be, as every angry gardener knows, the dandelion, seeded by the gay abandoned wind that, as it listeth, blows. No matter how we weed out every stray, digging as deep, the root still deeper goes. And when, at last, we quit and go away the rain falls, and a host of fresh bright foes stands resurrected, and the garden glows.

Despite my allergy to the pollen of lilies (a big thank you to all those who look out for me and remove the pollen stamens before the lilies are placed in the sanctuary), I am not sure I am quite ready to recommend we replace our Easter Sunday lilies with dandelions! But there is still something there. A hope that cannot be extinguished, no matter how hard we try. New life keeps springing up and the garden glows.

I see that hope springing up all around us at Unity Presbyterian Church. Can you see it too?

God bless,  
Matt

*Since 1788... United in Christ's love, we glorify God through worship, nurture, and service to all people.*

The deadline to submit items for the April 21st, 2026 Newsletter is Wednesday, April 15th, 2026.

**Please welcome the following new members received by session on March 23rd:**

Don & Kim Dracon

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

### 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](https://www.instagram.com/UnityFortMill)

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

Be sure to “like” our page.

## LATE APRIL BIRTHDAYS

16 -- Mary Anderson; 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; Joey Spinetto

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; Eli Hutson; John McManus

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 Hill; Jeff Smith

28 -- Phillip Carter; Susie Hinton; Nolan Kaskowicz; Kacey McCormack

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

30 -- Abby Kate Hulbert; Courtney Matinata; Sandy Schumacher

## SUGGESTIONS FOR ELDERS AND DEACONS

Unity's Nominating Committee was elected on March 29th and will soon begin prayerfully considering those who might be called to serve as deacons and elders beginning in January 2027 for a three-year term, and a youth deacon and youth elder to each serve a one-year term. The committee requests that you prayerfully submit names for consideration to serve as deacons and elders. These officers will serve as loving ministers and spiritual leaders for our congregation. In addition to their names, please describe the spiritual gifts and other characteristics that led you to nominate these individuals to serve. Names for consideration can be shared with Krista Renken, chair or sent by email to [Nominations@UnityFortMill.org](mailto:Nominations@UnityFortMill.org) and will be **received until Thursday, April 30th**.

## JOIN OUR MINISTRY TEAM - COORDINATOR OF CONGREGATIONAL LIFE AND ENGAGEMENT

Do you love Unity Presbyterian Church? Do you enjoy helping others find places to learn, grow, delight, and serve? Are you organized and dedicated? Is God calling you or someone you know to join our ministry team? In response to our growing congregation and new Strategic Mission Pathway to "Cultivate Belonging and Commitment," Unity Presbyterian Church is seeking a **Coordinator for Congregational Life and Engagement**. This will be a part-time, 20-hour per week position. In collaboration with the Hospitality and Evangelism Ministry Team, the Fellowship Ministry Team, and the Health Ministry Team, the Coordinator will oversee Unity Presbyterian Church's ministries of helping those seeking a church home become new members and faithful followers of Jesus Christ; congregational fellowship and joy; nurturing health and wholeness in body and spirit; and other ways to deepen relationships and connections with Christ and one another. For more information and/or to apply, contact Dr. Matt Rich - [mrich@unityfortmill.org](mailto:mrich@unityfortmill.org).

## MOLLY SPANGLER'S NEW HOURS

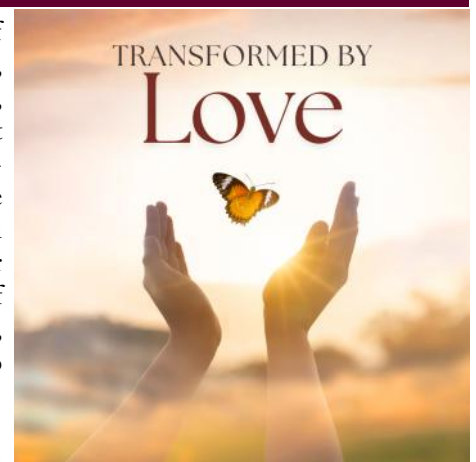
Thank you to the entire congregation for approving my adjusted terms of call at the congregational meeting on March 29th. I am grateful that with the Spirit's help I am able to continue this call to ministry here with you all, as well as my call to my family at home. I will begin May 1st at  $\frac{3}{4}$  time, meaning instead of 40 hours a week, I will be working closer to 30 hours a week. Sundays will be much the same for my time, but during the week I will leave the office closer to 2:00 p.m. each day. Thank you all for supporting me in making these adjustments. I look forward to this next season of ministry with you all.

## STEWARDSHIP 2026—THANK YOU!

Thank You to everyone who returned their Pledges of Time, Talents, and Treasures on Commitment Sunday, March 22nd! It was truly a wonderful Sunday of joy, gratitude, generosity, and celebration. Over the next few weeks we will be reconciling the proposed 2026 – 2027 budget against projected giving for the period. We will also be sharing your time & talent interests with ministry team leaders to finalize our program plans for the next year. We have received 231 commitments of time and talent and 222 financial pledges from adults, children, and youth totaling \$1,153,557, which is 63% of our projected 2026-2027 budget of \$1,840,904.

If you have not sent in your Stewardship information for the upcoming program year, you can mail it, drop it in the locked mailbox on the drive by the Historic Sanctuary, leave it in the offering plate next week, or log into REALM and choose "Serving" and "Giving" to submit your choices online.

Additional forms can be printed from the Stewardship tab on Unity's website <https://unityfortmill.org/give/stewardship/> and are available in the cart located in the Narthex.



## LUNCH BUNCH—APRIL 22ND



Dr. Josh Morris will be our speaker this month on **Wednesday, April 22nd at 12:00 noon**. His topic of discussion will be his experience, working with people with moral injury and trauma. Dr. Morris is an ordained minister with the United Church of Christ and a Board-Certified Chaplain through the Association of Board-Certified Chaplains. Most recently, he has served as Assistant Director of Spiritual Services at Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City. He also has 15 years of experience as an Army chaplain in the United States Army Reserves. Please join us for this insightful presentation. Don't forget your sandwich or salad! As

always, drinks, chips, and desserts are provided. See you there!

## MEN'S BREAKFAST

The next Men's Ministry Breakfast will be on **Tuesday, April 14th, at 8:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall**. Everyone attending is encouraged to wear or bring something representative of their favorite hobby.



## RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

Mark your calendar for **Tuesday, April 14th**, as we will be hosting a blood drive in the **Fellowship Hall from 2:30-7:00 p.m.** To make an appointment or for more information, please call 1-800-REDCROSS or visit [www.RedCrossBlood.org](http://www.RedCrossBlood.org) and enter Sponsor code "Unity". Help hope bloom this spring! Give Blood.



## SAVE THE DATE FOR HEARTSAVER CPR!

The spring class will be held on **Saturday, May 2nd**. Taught by instructors from Innovative Solutions, this American Heart Association class covers hands-on compressions, use of the AEDs on our campus, and choking in infants, children and adults. We will **begin at 9:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall**, and finish around noon. Cost for the class is \$50.00 (cash) at the door per Innovative Solutions. Come join us for this life-saving class.

## HOSPITALITY AND EVANGELISM

**CONNECTIONS CLASS**- If you are curious about membership or have decided this is the time to join Unity, please join us for a Connections Class, **beginning Sunday, April 19th and continuing Sunday, April 26th**. Members of the H&E team will welcome you to the **Fellowship Hall at 10:00 a.m.** The class will give you a brief overview of the many opportunities to participate in the life of Unity, a little introduction to our history, an opportunity to meet a few staff members, and ask any questions you may have about the church and our beliefs.



**CAMPUS TOUR:** Regardless of how long you've been attending Unity, members of the H&E team will be guiding a tour of the church buildings, on **Sunday, May 3rd**. The tour will start in the **Fellowship Hall at 10:00 a.m.**

## SUICIDE RECOGNITION AND RESPONSE TRAINING

Consider attending this two-hour class on **Sunday, April 12 from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall**. Registration is required: <https://onrealm.org/unityfortmill/PublicRegistrations/Event?linkString=MjcxMTliZjEtNWZmZS00Njk0LTkzZTMtYjQwMzAxNGNjNzZk>. The class is free; however, donations will be accepted. Class size is limited to 30 participants. Just like CPR, this **QPR** suicide training, which is short for **Question, Persuade, and Refer**, is an emergency response to someone in crisis.

What you will learn:

- How to Question, Persuade and Refer someone who may be suicidal.
- How to get help for yourself or learn more about preventing suicide.
- The common causes of suicidal behavior.
- How to get help for someone in crisis.

## 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)

## WAX MUSEUM PLANNING BEGINS SUNDAY, APRIL 12TH

Children in 3rd-5th grades, if you have not been participating in faith formation at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings, join us beginning this Sunday, April 12th in Room M208 for four weeks while we prepare for our third annual wax museum. This is a fun and interactive way to learn more about someone in the Bible as you prepare to share their story during the Wax Museum for the congregation. The Wax Museum will be held at 10:00 a.m. on May 10th. All 3rd-5th graders are invited to participate, so join us April 12th, 19th, 26th, and May 3rd to research a child in the Bible and practice your presentation.



## YOUTH AND ADULT SHEPHERDS ARE NEEDED FOR VBS

Vacation Bible School will be held Monday, June 15th - Thursday, June 18th from 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. for children in Rising 4K-4th grade. This year's theme is Snowball Mountain Challenge: Find Your Strength in God. Adults as well as Middle and High School youth are needed to serve as shepherds, and youth recreation assistants are also needed. Shepherds work in pairs and oversee a group of children for the week, walking them to each station and assisting the station leaders in the activities by participating with the children. No prep is required ahead of time. Recreation assistants serve with a Recreation teacher to help run games during each recreation block. **Sign up now to serve** and help us make this summer the best VBS ever: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E4AA9AF22A4FE3-62333984-vbs2026#/>.



## REGISTER FOR GC'S SPRING COOKOUT!

## REGISTER FOR GRANDS CAMP!

**GC's Spring  
COOKOUT  
&  
5<sup>th</sup> Grade Celebration**

Springfield Pavilion  
Sunday, April 26, 5:00-6:30 p.m.  
All current GC's (4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> graders) invited!

We will eat dinner, play games, and recognize all of our 5<sup>th</sup> graders leaving children's ministry this summer and moving to youth group in the fall.

Our current 3<sup>rd</sup> graders who will be moving up to GCs in the fall are invited to join us for this fun event to see what GCs is all about.

**Register on Realm by April 14!**

**GRANDS  
camp  
2026**

**JULY 21 - 23**

- crafts
- Legos
- games
- mission projects
- stories

Grandparents and grandchildren ages 4 - 5<sup>th</sup> grade

**Register on Realm by May 1<sup>st</sup>**

## DEDICATORY PIANO CONCERT – MAY 3RD AT 2:00 PM

Dedicatory Piano Concert – May 3rd at 2:00 p.m.

"Sing to God a new song; play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts."

Psalm 33:3

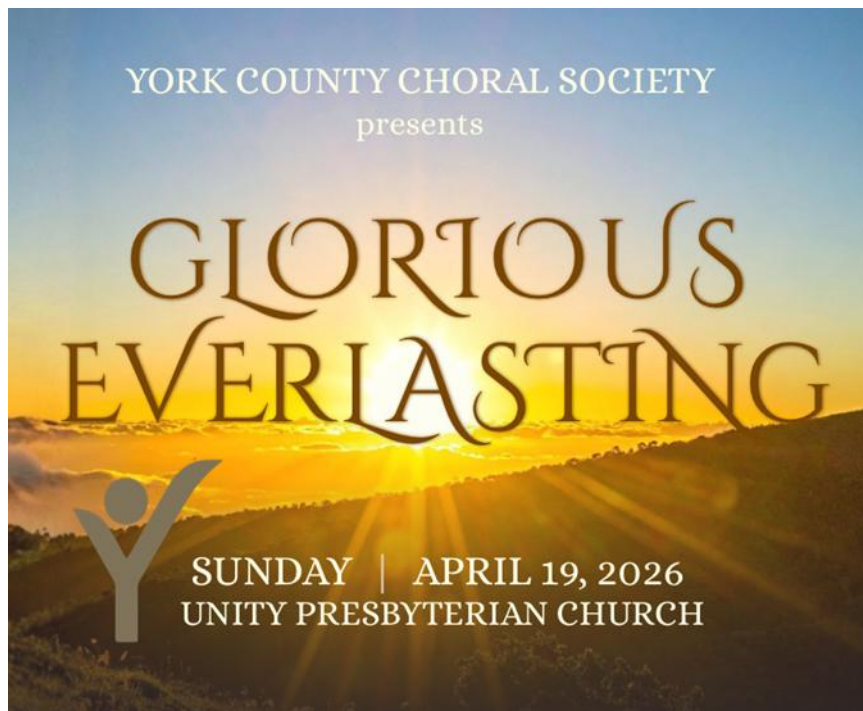
Please join us for a special dedicatory concert celebrating our beautiful new sanctuary piano on **Sunday, May 3rd at 2:00 p.m.** This free concert is open to all. The gift of our new Steinway Model B grand piano has already enriched our worship services and music ministry in meaningful ways. We invite you to gather with us as we dedicate this instrument to the glory of God through a concert by pianist Lawrence Quinnett.

Dr. Lawrence Quinnett is an active concert pianist who has performed recitals, conducted master classes, and adjudicated competitions in the Caribbean, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Quinnett has several competition successes to his credit, including first prize in the 2013 Doctoral Concerto Competition at Florida State University, the 2011 FSU Chapman Competition, the 2008 South Carolina Music Teachers' Association Young Artist Piano Competition, and the 2006 Southeastern College Piano Competition.

Quinnett presently teaches as Department Chair and Associate Professor of Piano and Music Theory at Livingstone College, where he maintains a small studio of select students. His students have received various awards and recognition in competitions, MTNA piano festivals, and Royal Conservatory of Music assessments. Quinnett was voted a "Top Piano Teacher" by Steinway & Sons in 2023.



## YORK COUNTY CHORAL SOCIETY—APRIL 19TH AT 4:00 PM



On **Sunday, April 19th at 4:00 p.m.**, Unity will host a performance by the York County Choral Society, led by co-artistic directors Dr. Randy Imler and Elizabeth Mixon. The choir will present a program entitled "Glorious Everlasting," featuring the music of Handel, Vaughan Williams, Gjeilo, Dawson, Forrest, Victoria and more! Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$10 for seniors, and \$5 for students. **Tickets may be purchased online at [www.yorkcountychoralsociety.org](http://www.yorkcountychoralsociety.org). No tickets will be sold at the door.**

**THERE IS STILL TIME TO BE A PART OF OUR GO-MAKE-A-DIFFERENCE DAY ON APRIL 18TH!**

If you are interested in participating in our annual all church day of service, but missed the registration deadline, please reach out to Molly Spangler at [mbspangler@unityfortmill.org](mailto:mbspangler@unityfortmill.org). We still have plenty of space for you to come share a day of service with us. Hope to see you there!



**STEPHEN MINISTRY—SOMETIMES IT’S HARD TO ASK FOR HELP**



We’re brought up to be strong, self-sufficient, independent people. We tend to think that if we ask for help, it is a sign of weakness. We try to keep our struggles hidden, stuffed deep inside. However, that’s not God’s plan. Galatians 6:2 says, “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” God wants us to care for others—and allow others to care for us in our time of need.

If you’re sad or struggling inside, don’t suffer alone. Ask for help. Our Stephen Ministers are ready to listen, care, encourage, pray, and help you through a tough time. (It’s confidential too!) Find out more about Stephen Ministry by talking with one of our referral coordinators, Susan Mobley or Dave Johnson, via email at [Stephenministryreferrals@unityfortmill.org](mailto:Stephenministryreferrals@unityfortmill.org) or call Rev. Molly Spangler at the church office - 803-547-5543.

**2026 SANCTUARY FLOWERS SIGN UP**

Would you like to honor a family member, friend, or a special group of people? Placing fresh flowers in the sanctuary to the glory of God is a perfect way to remember and celebrate a special person/s or occasion in your life.

Dates for 2026 are available on Sign-Up Genius for reserving a Sunday to place flowers in the sanctuary. You may visit <https://bit.ly/2026-Flower-Calendar> and complete the steps for selecting your choice of Sunday(s). All instructions are included. If you have questions, please contact Michaela Braswell at [mbraswell@UnityFortMill.org](mailto:mbraswell@UnityFortMill.org) or 803-547-5543 ext. 130).

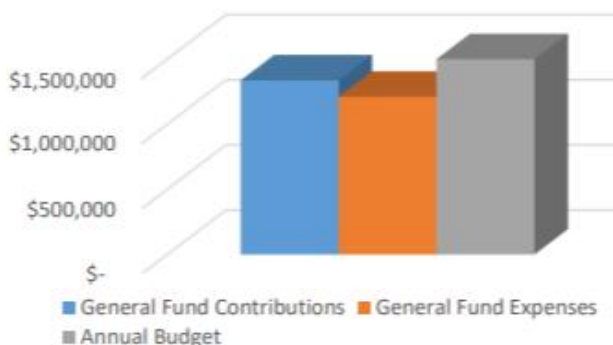
Early sign-up is recommended to ensure the Sunday of your choice.

“We are all flowers in God’s Garden.” - Karen Sweeney-Ryall



**YEAR TO DATE 2025-2026 BUDGET**

Year to Date Contributions & Expenses Compared with the Annual Budget



	March 2026	July 2025 through Mar 2026	% of Annual Budget	5-Year Average
General Fund Contributions	\$ 138,184	\$ 1,336,831	78.4%	\$1,177,116
General Fund Expenses	122,420	1,211,069	71.0%	1,109,096
Annual Budget		1,705,640	100.0%	1,569,561

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

## DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know, like all entities, Unity pays fees for collecting certain donations?

- **Cash & Checks** are handled in-house and **do not have fees** associated with depositing them.
- **Online giving initiated through your financial institution do not have fees** associated with depositing them.
- **Automatic Bank Draft** where you provide Unity's financial office with your bank's routing and account number, and we pull the donation monthly or quarterly. There is a small batch fee that when spread over many donations is **pennies for each donation**.
- **Online Giving initiated through Unity's Realm** system carries **both a transaction fee** for each transaction **and a processing fee** as a percentage of the transaction.

## CHANGE TO REALM ONLINE GIVING— WHERE DID THE PROCESSING COST OFFSET GO?

How would you like to give, Pamela?

Contribute an extra \$10.00 to help offset processing costs.

Checking \*\*\*

Checking \*\*\*\*

EFT

New Payment Method

*Your extra contributions to offset online giving processing costs help to reduce our budget spending. In a recent software update, Realm moved the option to include the cost at the top of the payment method page.*

## BETHELWOODS & BOWTIES

BETHELWOODS CAMP AND CONFERENCE CENTER

Proudly Presents Our Second Annual

*Bethelwoods*



*Bowties*

MAY 2, 2026

HORTON LODGE

922 WEST MT. GALLANT ROAD, YORK, SC

6PM to 11PM

TOP SHELF BOURBON | LOCAL BREWERY  
CURATED MENU | DANCING  
SILENT AUCTION

PURCHASE TABLES  
AND TICKETS



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.