

SUNRISE CHURCH | JULY 2026

# The Beacon

Thank  
you

On March 1st, 2026, Sunrise celebrated thirty-one years with Rev. Dr. Vance Polley as our beloved Pastor, Teacher, and enthusiastic friend. In remembrance of this landmark, Sunrise gave Vance an engraved leather album filled with photos, newspaper articles, and personal individual notes of deep gratitude and affection from the congregation. We look forward to many more years of trying to keep up with you. Thank you Vance.



On the Sunday of the Memorial Day Weekend, I introduced a book to the congregation on the opening sentence of the second paragraph of the Declaration of Independence. The book's title describes the nature of this iconic sentence as ***The Greatest Sentence Ever Written***. The author delves into the meaning and significance of each word and phrase. It is a wonderful reminder that as a country, we are defined by the incredible ideas and spirit contained in that single sentence.

*We hold these truths to be self-evident, 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.*

This sentence has defined our national heritage in a unique way. We are a people bound together by the ideals set forth in this single sentence. The opening phrase sets the context: *We hold these truths to be self-evident* . . . The following truths will define who we aspire to be as a new nation.

What follows is remarkable and truly inspirational. The affirmation that we are all created equal. This statement differentiates our approach to government. We will no longer be *subjects*, but now *citizens* with rights that are inherent and *unalienable*. The source of these rights is our *Creator*. The *divine right of kings* has been transferred to all citizens.

One of the themes identified in this profound sentence is an underlying affirmation of the *common good*. The Declaration of Independence was not a theoretical statement; it was a call to action. The opening paragraph makes this clear.

*When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.*

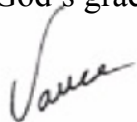
Less familiar will be a litany of specific complaints and charges against the British monarch. Those who signed this *declaration* knew that were placing their lives, their property, and their families in peril.

The closing phrase is both inspirational and aspirational. It has come to define how we understand our national heritage as the right of everyone to *Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness*.

June into July we have been celebrating of the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. On Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, we hosted a special concert in our sanctuary. The Sullivan's Island Club presented *Life, Liberty and Pursuit of Happiness*, a tracing in music and stories of our founding principles from the African-American, Native-American and Appalachian cultures during the Revolutionary War. It was a phenomenal concert! The interconnection of the musical traditions was truly inspiring!

As we recognize this milestone in our country's history, it is important for us to remember what has set us apart as a nation from other countries. The *greatest sentence ever written* defined our founding with its unique idea that inspires us 250 years later. I invite you to honor this important anniversary with a deep appreciation for our national heritage.

In God's grace,



# Thank you for your generous contribution to the Remembrance Garden...

- In memory of Bobbie Mariam given by Neila Cary
- In memory of Dick Blanchard and Niel Crocker given by Roberta and family

## Hands of Christ Distribution Schedule

Sunrise has been a member of the Hands of Christ's Presbytery-wide project since 2004. We believe that education is the key to the success of individuals and communities. The program seeks to assist children in economic need as they begin the new school year with some of the necessary tools for success, regardless of their faith background. Since 2003, Hands of Christ have served over 69,000 individuals by providing clothing and school supplies just prior to the start of the school year.

| <i>2026 Back To School Distribution Schedule</i> |                                  |                           |                     |                       |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Date                                             | Distribution Center              | Address                   | Location            | Time                  |
| 7/25 Sat                                         | Aimwell Presbyterian Church      | 8925 Charleston Highway   | Colleton County     | 10:00 am - 12:00 noon |
| 7/29 Wed                                         | Edisto Presbyterian Church       | 1890 Cypress Bottom Road  | Edisto Island       | 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm     |
| 7/31 Fri                                         | Zion Olivet Presbyterian Church  | 3347 Rivers Ave.          | North Charleston    | 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm     |
| 8/1 Sat                                          | Zion Olivet Presbyterian Church  | 3347 Rivers Ave.          | North Charleston    | 9:30 am - 12:30 pm    |
| 8/1 Sat                                          | St. James Presbyterian Church    | 1314 Sessionville Road    | James Island        | 10:00 am - 1:00 pm    |
| 8/1 Sat                                          | Hebron Zion Presbyterian Church  | 2915 Bohicket Road        | Johns Island        | 10:00 am - 12:00 noon |
| 8/1 Sat                                          | Second Presbyterian Church       | 342 Meeting Street        | Downtown Charleston | 10:00am to 1:00pm     |
| 8/2 Sun                                          | Summerville Presbyterian Church  | 407 S Laurel Street       | Summerville         | 3:00 pm - 5:30 pm     |
| 8/3 Mon                                          | Yeamans Park Presbyterian Church | 5931 North Murray Drive   | Hanahan             | 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm     |
| 8/7 Fri                                          | Westminster Presbyterian Church  | 1157 Sam Rittenberg Blvd. | West Ashley         | 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm     |
| 8/8 Sat                                          | Westminster Presbyterian Church  | 1157 Sam Rittenberg Blvd. | West Ashley         | 10:00 am - 12:00 noon |

## Sunrise Columbarium & Memorial Garden



The decision to purchase a niche begins with the decision to be cremated. If you have questions about cremation from either a personal or religious perspective, Vance is available to talk with you and help answer your questions.

Information about purchasing a niche or memorial plaque is available on the church website at [www.oursunrise.org](http://www.oursunrise.org), at the church office or by contacting Ralph Byers at [ralphbyers@gmail.com](mailto:ralphbyers@gmail.com) or at (917) 273-6173. Memorial gifts and donations may be made to the Columbarium Fund for the perpetual care of the columbarium and garden. Gifts and donations will be recognized in the Beacon.



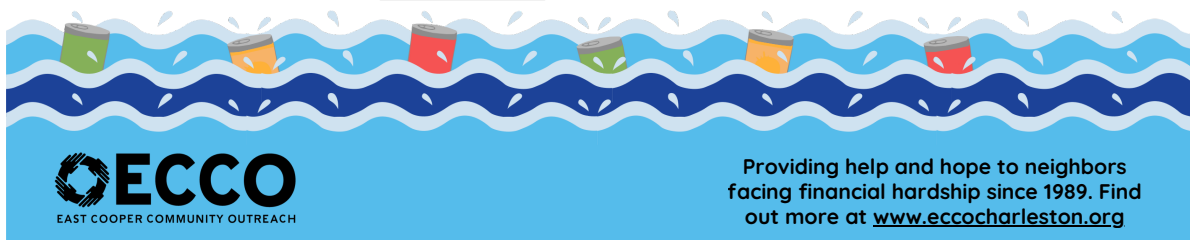
Sunrise Presbyterian  
by July 19

### Needed Items

- Pancake Mix/Syrup
- Canned Tomatoes
- Canned Chili
- Canned Beef Stew
- Hamburger Helper
- Canned Fruit
- Canned Soup
- Deodorant
- Toilet Paper/Paper Towels
- Laundry Detergent



Scan here to donate or  
shop ECCO's Amazon  
Wishlist online!



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## College Aged Youth Group Update

The youth group recently went on a kayak and paddle board adventure behind the Isle of Palms. We had great attendance and a wonderful time. There was even a competition to see who could knock the other paddler off. Suffice it to say.... I did not win! If you have any high school or college age kids or grandchildren, please let them know we meet Thursdays at 7:00 and would love to have them visit. ~ Vic

# July at Sunrise

**Growing Faith's** next meeting will be on July 12 at 9 am in the Middle School Youth Group room. Any older elementary & middle school students (4th - 8th grade) are invited to join us!

**The Adult Sunday School** class will begin a new Bible study in June using the book *Out of the Depths: The Psalms Speak for us Today*. This book offers a fresh reading of the Psalms and examines their enduring relevance to today's theological issues. The class meets weekly in the library at 9:00 a.m. There is a video conference option via google meet. ~ Vance

**Middle School Youth Group** (6th-8th grade) meets Sundays at 10:30 am and will also meet July 12 & 26 from 4:30 - 6:30 pm at Sunrise Church. This month's meetings will include dinner, games, and a group devotional. If you have any questions, please reach out to Breezy at [breezy@oursunrise.org](mailto:breezy@oursunrise.org) or (843) 860-9581.

**Our college-age group** meets on Thursday evenings at Sunrise through the summer at 7:00 p.m. for Bible study, a meal, and then finishing the evening with a game like Uno. This youth group is a continuation of our Senior High group from last year under the leadership of Harrison & Ritchie.

**The Women's Morning Bible Study** is on summer break and will resume in September. Have a wonderful summer and we'll see you in the Fall!

**The Women's Evening Bible Study** will meet July 21st at 5:30 pm using the book *Esther: Daring Faith for Such a Time as This*. In this 7-session study, author Kelly Minter invites you into the daring faith modeled by Esther and her cousin Mordecai—a faith developed over time, rooted in the goodness of God, lived out through extraordinary circumstances, and used to change the world. New members are always welcome. ~ Caroline

**Cents-Ability** is collected the 2nd Sunday of each month. Thanks to you, donations have been made to Neighbors Together, East Cooper Meals on Wheels, and East Cooper Community Outreach. Please continue to give at least two cents per person per meal in the bowl in the Narthex. This simple act is an expression of thanksgiving for what we have received.

Start off your Tuesdays with the **Jerry Dillon Men's Prayer Breakfast** at 8:00 am in the Fellowship Hall. Enjoy great food, fellowship, and a devotion.

# July 2026

| Sun                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Mon | Tue                                                           | Wed                                                       | Thu                                                                                                                            | Fri                                                                      | Sat                                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| 28<br>8:45am - Choir Practice<br>9am - Adult Sunday School<br>9am - Fellowship (Fellowship Hall)<br>10am - Family Service<br>10am - Worship Service<br>10:40am - Middle School Youth<br>4:30pm - Middle School Youth         | 29  | 30<br>8am - Men's Breakfast                                   | 1<br>10am - AA Meeting                                    | 2<br>5:30pm - Agape Do Karate<br>7pm - College Youth Group                                                                     | 3<br>Independence Day (substitute)<br>10:30am - Bridge - Fellowship Hall | 4<br>Independence Day<br>8am - Golf Cart Parade |
| 5<br>Communion & Family Service<br>8:45am - Choir Practice<br>9am - Adult Sunday School<br>9am - Fellowship (Fellowship Hall)<br>10am - Family Service<br>10am - Worship Service<br>10:40am - Middle School Youth            | 6   | 7<br>8am - Men's Breakfast                                    | 8<br>10am - AA Meeting                                    | 9<br>5:30pm - Agape Do Karate<br>7pm - College Youth Group                                                                     | 10<br>10:30am - Bridge - Fellowship Hall                                 | 11                                              |
| 12<br>Cents-Ability<br>8:45am - Choir Practice<br>9am - Adult Sunday School<br>9am - Fellowship (Fellowship Hall)<br>9am - Growing Faith<br>10am - Family Service<br>10am - Worship Service<br>10:40am - Middle School Youth | 13  | 14<br>8am - Men's Breakfast<br>10am - Women's Morning Bible   | 15<br>10am - AA Meeting<br>1pm - Stephen Ministry Meeting | 16<br>9am - Mt Pleasant Lutheran<br>5:30pm - Agape Do Karate<br>6pm - Battery Gadsden - Sanctuary<br>7pm - College Youth Group | 17<br>10:30am - Bridge - Fellowship Hall                                 | 18                                              |
| 19<br>8:45am - Choir Practice<br>9am - Adult Sunday School<br>9am - Fellowship (Fellowship Hall)<br>9am - Growing Faith - Family<br>10am - Family Service<br>10am - Worship Service<br>10:40am - Middle School Youth         | 20  | 21<br>8am - Men's Breakfast<br>5:30pm - Women's Evening Bible | 22<br>10am - AA Meeting                                   | 23<br>5:30pm - Agape Do Karate<br>7pm - College Youth Group                                                                    | 24<br>10:30am - Bridge - Fellowship Hall                                 | 25<br>Wedding                                   |
| 26<br>8:45am - Choir Practice<br>9am - Adult Sunday School<br>9am - Fellowship (Fellowship Hall)<br>10am - Family Service<br>10am - Worship Service<br>10:40am - Middle School Youth<br>4:30pm - Middle School Youth         | 27  | 28<br>8am - Men's Breakfast                                   | 29<br>10am - AA Meeting                                   | 30<br>5:30pm - Agape Do Karate<br>7pm - College Youth Group                                                                    | 31<br>10:30am - Bridge - Fellowship Hall                                 | 1                                               |

# July Birthdays

|                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Paige Hauff         | 17 Ryan Allard        |
| 2 Kevin Locke         | 18 Julie Heaton       |
| 3 Clyde Timmons       | 18 Ida Havelka        |
| 3 Roxie Ciesar        | 18 Barbara McKnight   |
| 5 Yana Mersereau      | 19 Billie McRae       |
| 7 Ella Hurst          | 21 Rob Hauff          |
| 7 Neal Alexander      | 21 Mike Schaffer      |
| 9 William Kitchin     | 22 Helen Panitt       |
| 9 Jordan Guss         | 23 Margaret Stapleton |
| 9 Dave Ochiltree      | 24 Wendy McClary      |
| 10 Reece Campbell     | 24 Robert Kitchin     |
| 11 Pat Benzien        | 24 Robert Stapleton   |
| 12 Teresa Shackelford | 25 Edie Rockwell      |
| 12 Mark Plecity       | 25 Bonnie Hancock     |
| 12 Chris Hill         | 25 Mary Frazier       |
| 13 Brett Wermuth      | 29 Olivia Conner      |
| 15 Bill Dickinson     | 29 Daphne Byers       |
| 15 Ben Dickinson      | 30 Carole Heathcock   |
| 15 Waites White       | 31 Reagan Terry       |

**Church Office Hours:**

8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
Monday through Friday

Phone: (843) 883-3888

[www.oursunrise.org](http://www.oursunrise.org)

## Sunrise Staff

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