

St. John's UMC, Aiken Staff Update June 1-June 15, 2020

(Plain text bi-weekly self-assessment from staff; **Bold print from Senior Pastor**)

Tim McClendon – Senior Pastor

I have continued to discuss with lay leadership and staff our plan to reopen August 2 or sooner if the COVID numbers decrease, which they haven't yet. Financially we're doing well and I get many responses from people who are grateful that we are being cautious.

I have attended 2 meetings of our SEED Reopening Task Force, which with Dr. Tiffany's guidance has been beneficial for the whole church. At the last staff meeting the new organizational flowchart and narrative was distributed. Rev. Tresco has composed a letter offering his best wishes to St. John's as he prepares to leave. I have had numerous conversations about worship, administration, and building issues with leaders and staff.

I have had quite a few counseling sessions via phone, one premarital session by zoom, and was able to visit one of our members at ARMC. I try diligently to call and pray with all who are in need. I conducted a Memorial Service for Harriet Shallo on June 7. I teach a zoom Sunday School class each week. During quarantine, the ministries of St. John's have continued thanks to the whole team.

Dean Ray – Facilities Manager

- Education building painting continues
- Met with Christopher last Thursday to learn how to use the alcohol misters. We do have issues to iron out before they can be used in the sanctuary.
- Yvonne & Francis will vacuum the church this Wednesday.
- Working on solving the faith center sprinkler issue. Hopefully, this will be solved Wednesday.
- PO's ongoing
- Meeting the plumber to solve our leak in chapel area Wednesday morning @ 815.
- Meeting electrician to solve an outlet issue in the kitchen on Wednesday morning @ 830.
- Meeting Marty Gillam to discuss Sanctuary Floor issues created by alcohol misters (today @ 400). repair. This should be repaired this week.
- The Faith Center sprinkler leak has been repaired. The system is operating.
- I met the plumber and we have a plan to hopefully solve the chapel leak. This will be a trial and error repair job.
- We have a significant leak in a urinal in the education building upstairs. I turned the water off to the urinal. We will have to turn water off to the building to solve this.
- Marty has a plan to repair the Sanctuary tile.

-Preschool tile work will be completed soon. This is normal school prep work.

-Wood chips will be added within the next few weeks to the playground. I met our landscape contact this week to discuss.

-Our annual elevator inspection was completed on Wednesday. We have several issues to fix. I have talked with Southern Elevator and hope to have someone on site next week.

(Dean's care for our facilities is exceptional. His attitude is just as special. He is on top of things every day, and someone whom we can trust to always get the job done, and done well! Great job!)

Butch Blackwell – Associate Pastor for Nurture

The time of this reporting period has featured a continuation of our plan for maintaining connection of the church and our church family through nurture and pastoral care efforts. The focus of our nurture efforts during this time of adhering to safety and stay at home orders has had a multiple focus as noted in previous reports. The highlights of this reporting period are as shown below:

- I have provided a daily devotional to our church family that will be available via Facebook and e-mail distribution. It is difficult to pin point exactly how many are reading and or receiving the devotional, but we are able to determine that we are sending 362 e-mails per day and seeing roughly 91 reads per day on Facebook.
- Utilization of our Shepherd of Love Ministry has been quite helpful during this time. They not only have maintained their regular average of 40 contacts (now by telephone) per month but have added 16 additional church members to their Shepherding Ministry. They are now averaging 56 per month.
- Our Stephen Ministers continue to offer care to those they have been ministering to. They make their weekly calls by telephone and offer care and encouragement as normal. Our Stephen Ministers meet once every two weeks via a Zoom Call and our Stephen Leaders meet once every two weeks via Zoom Call. We have provided training for telephonic care for our Stephen Ministers via Zoom. We are also in the process of implementing a program for our Stephen Ministers to reach additional church members in need of a Stephen Minister. Our Grief Share Group has been missed by the 24 people that normally attend. I have maintained regular contact with each of them, but there are some that need more frequent attention. I have identified 8 that need weekly care. At least until our Grief Share Group resumes regular meetings, we will have a Stephen Minister assigned to 6 of our participants while I will maintain weekly contact with 2 of those 8.
- My average calls per week have been 36 per week. I have also responded to or forwarded e-mails that are dealing with prayer requests and general questions. The daily average is 9 per day. I have also had the privilege of holding three telephone counseling sessions during this period.
- I officiated a Memorial Service for Robert Wiltze on May 20, 2020.
- In support of Dr. Tim I have started reviewing daily updates from CDC and SCDHEC to help him to keep us aware of trends regarding COVID 19 and how they affect St. John's.

(Butch is steady and has a tremendous heart for people. His calm clear-headedness exhibits wisdom and care. He is a true Nurture Pastor. The daily devotions provide a wonderful way to start the day with God. Great job!)

Becca Hartsell – Director of Communications and Marketing

Over the past 2 weeks I have stayed quite busy. I have kept a detailed log of my activities. As usual, my most prominent task involved creating and distributing the church bulletin and newsletter. This involves communication with the entire staff as well as several volunteers who submit information and proofread. I also spent quite a bit of time updating important information on the website including: updating info regarding the date change of in-person worship, updating worship videos & links, updating program event information, and other necessary maintenance changes. I also updated all of the documents/PDFs with the new information about our reopening and communicated the changes via Facebook, Instagram, and a churchwide email blast. Additionally, I worked with Nancy to compile a list identifying which members do not have emails on file in order to communicate the date change and created a plan to reach those members. I also took part in an Administrative staff member meeting with Nancy, Carolyn, and Juli to train them on using CallingPost as well as to help create the verbiage of the outgoing message regarding the changed in-person worship date. I also worked with Carolyn to fix formatting on Homebound labels, create searches in Realm, and run a list of the deceased UMW members over the past year for Judy Bilyeu. Also, I submitted several PO's and signed checks for Nancy. I continued to manage our social media accounts, interacting with the congregation and community through Facebook and Instagram. I have been posting a #mememondays post each week, which consists of a funny Christian themed meme that people seem to enjoy. I also updated Realm contact info and email preferences at the request of our congregation members.

I spent quite a bit of time collaborating with others, both inside of the St. John's organization and outside, to make progress on several important tasks. I worked with Dr. Tim, Nancy, & Steve Kisner of the Trustees regarding our current Facilities Use Form and potential changes needed following the COVID-19 situation. I also troubleshooted computer connectivity problems with various staff members and, with the assistance of Corsica, helped Rev. Tresco with his computer camera and live-streaming abilities. I was in lengthy communications with our representative at Dell to procure appropriate computer equipment for Rev. Douglas and some updated equipment for Carolyn. I helped Juli by setting up the Father's Day Brunch registration in Realm and creating the accompanying graphics for the website. I worked with the Aiken Standard a lot over the past two weeks rescheduling ad campaigns regarding the date changes as well as creating ads that will run at the end of June. I also worked with ADDA (Aiken Downtown Development) and the Visit Aiken Website to update our worship information (reflecting our new services) as well as our contact info and mission. Lastly, I worked on developing my plan for training Carolyn and a few other willing staff members in preparation for my maternity leave that will begin next month (hopefully).

(Becca does an outstanding job in providing tech support and providing positive marketing for the church. She desires to do the very best that she can do in whatever the task. Great job!)

Nancy Fairgrieve – Director of Finance

Week of 6/1 thru 6/5/2020: On a daily basis I make a trip to the Post Office and pick up any mail received. Put together three spreadsheets for complete explanation on the use of the funds received from the government for the Payroll Protection Plan. Have been working with Becca, Carolyn and Juli with reaching out to members with calling post calls and phone calls regarding updated information on opening of the church. Worked on paying all bills and printing checks for signature from Jean Irwin and Jan Boore. Spent several days trying to contact IRS with regards to obtaining a Confirmation Letter for the Church's EIN number. This form is required to obtain grants for Non-Profit Organizations. After one and a half weeks of trying to get thru we finally have the form in hand. Working on balancing the books for May, 2020.

Week of 6/8/202 thru 6/12/2020: Continued my daily Post Office pick up. Prepared purchase orders for payment. Processed checks for signature with Jean Irwin and Jan Boore. Processed BiWeekly and SemiMonthly payrolls for all employees. Worked on spreadsheet for Payroll Protection Plan Forgiveness Loan. Worked with Joe Lewis to receive help on paperwork for the Forgiveness Loan. We will meet in person next week. Did deposit with Heather Long. Balanced and closed the books for May 2020. Sent reports to MLT Committee, SEED Board Chairperson and Finance Committee Chairperson. Worked with Michelle Pearson on putting together all the necessary paperwork to receive grants she applied for.

(Nancy is the poster-child of a responsible and caring church staff person, and goes above and beyond the call of duty in such a servant-like and humble way. She is so conscientious. Great job!)

Michelle Pearson – S.E.E.D. Preschool Director

Over the past two weeks my primary focus has been on preparing for the re-opening of the SEED program. The Task force met with Dr. John Tiffany in attendance, to offer guidance on ways to meet the CDC recommendations, while running the program logically and safely for the children and staff. The task force will meet again July 7th. I am currently creating written plans for guidance on reopening with the Covid-19. This plan will list the changes to our normal routine and the precautions we are taking to make our program as safe as possible during this pandemic. Nancy Fairgrieve and I attended a meeting at Aiken County Public School District office in hopes of receiving funds from the CARES act. I have completed applications for two other grants as well. I met with the preschool directors from First Baptist Church and First Presbyterian Church to discuss their plans for reopening. I continue to answer emails from parents, enter information into Realm and Quickbooks, update handbooks while trying to find a happy medium for the reopening under the new guidelines.

(Michelle does such fantastic job with the children, teachers, and parents. Our program is second to none. She goes above and beyond the call of duty! Great job!)

Catherine Stapleton Nance – Director of Music

Staff meetings, choir zoom meetings, planning sessions with Greg. Recording sessions with Greg and John Luke; Weekly trips to the church to file music and do planning (as much as possible); Annual conference planning and implementation for July ordination service (postponed now until August 8).

Thanks to all on the committee for continued support, encouragement and understanding.

(This is a very stressful time for all musicians due to COVID restrictions, but Catherine Has constantly been adapting and thinking ahead. She loves music and its vital role in worship. Her life is in her music ministry. Great job!)

Greg Robinson – Media Manager

- The first two weeks of June were spent producing the on-line video services for June 7, June 14 and June 21. I also have much of the production work done for June 28 and July 5 completed.
- In addition, editing for a number of songs that were recorded in the sanctuary was completed.
- The sound system for our upcoming Sunday evening services in the fountain courtyard was completed and checked out. It has the following capabilities:
 - Inputs
 - Two guitars
 - Three wired microphones
 - Two wireless microphones (Tim and Douglas)
 - Audio/video feed from the sanctuary
 - Optional CD player for recorded music
 - Outputs
 - Up to four speakers
 - TV audio and video from the sanctuary
 - FM transmitter (to be picked up Monday afternoon)

The system is completely self-contained in a rolling cabinet.



(Greg is preparing us well for our new and renewed services, and has really poured his heart into making our current online services a wonderful worshipful experience. He has an extremely complicated task in editing all of what everyone sees into a seamless whole. We all are grateful for his extraordinary efforts. Great job!)

Juli Davis - Kitchen Coordinator/New Member Outreach

Planned the menu for the Father's Day meal that we are going to be offering to our congregation. Placed order with US Foods, put away food in the freezers, refrigerators and pantry with Caleb's help. Helped Nancy, Carolyn, and Becca H with the announcement that went out to our congregation pertaining to our opening being pushed back to August. Also began planning out how we can continue to offer meal opportunities during our shut down.

(Juli is constrained by the fact that we're not doing meals or having in-person worship for new members, but she is in every staff meeting and has been practicing with the 9:02 Band every week. She will be planning, and busy enough as Father's Day approaches, and she offers a meal opportunity for families. She is quite an asset. Great job!)

Tresco Shannon – Associate Pastor for Programs

During the past two weeks I have continued to lead a Wednesday evening Bible study on Facebook Live, approving purchase orders, directing our weekly staff meetings and communicating with staff. I have also had a Zoom meeting with the Marion District Superintendent along with the SPPRC Committee of Trinity Conway. I have met with them, in person, this Sunday, June 14. I have now made arrangements, in my office, for Douglas Herlong to be able to move into it. I have made arrangements and met with a moving company in preparations for my move and continue in preparation for that move on the 30th of this month. St. John's continues to be in my thoughts and prayers during this time, I thank you for yours.

(Tresco is nearing the end of his time with us, but is seeking to exhibit care and love for St. John's. I hope that as his time here draws to a close that everyone will be in prayer for his transition to his new parish. God bless him in this new chapter of ministry.)

Carolyn Wall – Office Administrator

Maintaining current Realm records- Updated Realm with new/changed Member information, received via emails, phone calls, death of a member, privacy preference. All of the above are updated several times per week. I've assisted several study groups with information to keep in touch and to maintain communication during this time.

Updating All Saints/ Bereavement records- As information of the death of a member or immediate family member is received I update All of the records.

Prayer list- I prepare the prayer list with notes (as available) to our prayer team. I also communicate prayer needs to staff via emails, phone calls, and staff meeting.

Maintaining office supplies- Ordering and maintaining supplies for each staff member. Lots of projects still going on that require specific items. For instance, more mailing due to our current state of operations. So, staying on top of printer paper, labels, and envelopes of various sizes have been a focus. Staying on top of purchase orders to ensure timely payment for vendors.

Calling Post to Church family- This was a collective effort by Nancy, Becca, Juli and myself. We updated the member list in Realm, and captured the proper information to insure accuracy. We then created a

spreadsheet of this information, and uploaded the list to the Calling post website. Nancy worked with the website to purchase the needed amount of calls. Juli, Becca, and I worked to make sure we communicated the information to the best of our ability. I then executed the call.

Proof reading the Bulletin- Every week.

Mailing the Bulletin and important information to our homebound members- I worked with Rev. Butch to collect a list of our members that are unable to get information via our website/ internet. Becca helped to make the labels for the mail out. I printed, then stuffed, labeled, and mailed the envelopes.

Senior Birthday Card Ministry- I ran the report to collect the Birthdays for our 80-year-old plus members using Realm. Filled out cards, and mailed.

Father's Day Brunch- I assisted with reservations and fielded questions for the Father's Day Brunch.

(Carolyn has a heart for ministry and is a great team player. She is always ready to offer help for any project. She is very much appreciated. Great job!)

Jane Timmerman - 9:02 Band Director and Worship Leader

Susan Lawson-lyrics & backgrounds on screen, recording

Marshall Sanders-sound recorder/mixer & technician

Juli Davis-vocals

Chuck Carver-vocals, keyboard

Earl Melton-vocals, acoustic guitar

Matt Osteen-vocals, acoustic guitar

George Collins-bass

Steve Davis-drums

Alec Krok-vocals, electric & acoustic guitar

Jeff Krok-vocals, electric & acoustic guitar

Dave Cavazos-acoustic guitar

And, Greg Robinson has also been at our recordings. He is the one creating the magic we see every week.

-First, we are a very blessed church family!!!! On the average, I am not able to attend the Monday morning staff meetings, but w/zoom, I can. Listening each week to everyone reporting on their perspective responsibilities is heartwarming as each person discusses how they are taking care of our church family. Thank you all!!!

-And, a very big THANK YOU to Bekah, Amy, and all those that created a beautiful Graduation Sunday!!

-Greg with the help of Frank, installed equipment in the Faith Center so when we return, the services will transition smoothly. Greg, also, gave a little in-service as to how to operate the equipment.

-We meet each week and the band continues to record songs. We discuss the 'sound' of our recordings, and tweak them each recording session. We follow with our 'safety' precautions each week. Juli is our 'temperature checker', as she checks everyone when they walk in.

-I continue to prayerfully plan songs and post them on our worship worksheet. Also, I proofread our CBN weekly. Becca beautifully pulls it all together each week!!!

-Tim, Catherine, & I had conversations about the Patriotic Service. The band is learning a new song for that Sunday.

-Again, we are all so blessed!!

(Jane adds a great spiritual perspective to worship and music. It shows in her ministry through the band, and in her selection of exceptionally appropriate music. Great job!)

Christopher Nash – Organist and Assistant Director of Music

The past two weeks was spent recording more organ solo, organ choir, and piano/organ music for our online ministry. I've received numerous messages from congregation members praising the easy access of the Sunday service, the quality of the video and audio production, the ministry of the Word, and the music ministry. Thanks to Greg, Chuck, 9:02 band, John Luke, Catherine, and our pastoral staff for continuing to fulfill the need for a quality worship service. I've maintained contact with choir members, congregation members, youth, and staff members in order to check up/catch up/and answer any questions or concerns about church and the country in general. There is a deep need for us to continue active individual ministry with many of our retirees, especially widows/widowers and singles.

We have had one choir rehearsal via zoom and another meeting of a portion of the choir in-person with proper social distancing in order to record anthems. I look forward to continuing these meetings and have a strong hope that we will be together soon.

(Christopher has been quite busy, and is very much in tune (pun intended) to his craft and views it as a ministry more than performance. He genuinely cares and that is evident in the creative ways that he engages in his ministry. Great job!)

Heather Long – Director of Children's Ministries

I have continued to host forth and fifth grade Sunday School the last two weeks for Carole Beckum and Sherald Rodgers on Zoom. Attendance has been low due to families traveling for summer vacations.

I have continued to assist Nancy Fairgrieve in the weekly offering count. Nancy and I also discussed plans for our Nursery Staff as we move toward the church reopening. Currently, the plan is to have NO nursery.

I continue to check-in with different families throughout the week. The new Odell Weeks park opened, and I have had the joy of running into several St. John's families. It's nice to see some familiar faces. I have also continued to send birthday cards to our St. John's children.

I continue to backup Becca Hartsell on our Facebook with notifications and messages.

I continue to work with Corsica on my access to the servers while away from the office. After 6 weeks I think we have it resolved.

The coming weeks will intel upcoming planning for the Children's Ministry, such as Backpack Sunday and how that will look. I will also begin training to take on tasks for Becca Hartsell as she prepares for maternity leave.

(Heather's summer ministry plans have changed drastically with no VBS or summer camps. She is making plans for future events and doing her best to connect with our children through Sunday School and other means. She is conscientious. Great job!)

Bekah Muir and Amy Jernigan – Director and Assistant Directors of Student Ministries

Foundation Student Ministries

On Monday, June 1, we attended a zoom meeting hosted by Chris Lynch, director of the South Carolina Ministry for Young People. This meeting included other youth directors around the state. We discussed what reopening may look like and how we can be prepared to start back our ministries.

Spent time doing outreach to youth and families.

Streamed/watched both Aiken High and South Aiken graduations in order to support our graduates and their families.

Attended zoom staff meetings on Monday mornings, gave reports and updates on state of ministry.

Monday-Wednesday (June 8-10)

Planning retreat. We took some focused time to research what we can do to be prepared to safely meet with youth in person, when we are allowed to do so. We found examples of other groups in our area and contacted other ministry leaders to ask about their plans going forward. We planned a tentative schedule of events for the summer and into the month of August.

Education Ministry (Amy)

A few adult Sunday school classes are meeting via Zoom. Adult Curriculum used by Asbury and Fellowship class was made available to teachers per requests.

(Bekah and Amy's summer plans have changed changed dramatically with COVID closures. They are doing what they can by panning with annual conference resources and learning from other youth ministries. They support our youth and their families in heartfelt and appreciated ways. Great job!)