

St. Peter AME Church Newsletter

The Informer

August 18, 2013

Pastor's Corner

Meet Reverend Wanda Y. Rapley Reverend Rapley's Message

Reverend Wanda Y. Rapley is a native of Abbeville, South Carolina and a 1984 graduate of Abbeville High School. She earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice from the University of South Carolina in 1988, a Masters of Education Degree in Counseling from Clemson University in 1995, and a Masters of Divinity Degree from Erskine Theological Seminary in 2005.

Reverend Rapley was appointed pastor of St. Peter AME Church on November 11, 2012. Prior to coming to St. Peter, she served as the pastor of Pine Grove AME Church in Plum Branch, South Carolina. Mulberry AME Church in Abbeville, South Carolina, and Mt. Pisgah AME Church in Greenwood, South Carolina. As a leader, Reverend Rapley believes in equipping the body of Christ spiritually, physically, emotionally and economically.

Reverend Rapley is the daughter of Mr. Franklin D. Rapley and the late Sister Fannie Burton Rapley. Reverend Rapley has one daughter, Waneisha Aull.

Reverend Rapley is a born-again believer who believes she was called and chosen by God to minister unto His people. She stands on the following scripture "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain" (Psalm 127:1).

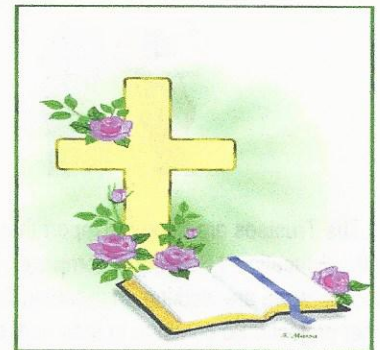
Dear Church Family,

I give thanks and praise unto our God for our journey of Christian Discipleship. I am reminded of what Jesus asked Peter in John 21:15 "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs". As we continue to read verses 16 and 17 of this particular passage we see that Jesus told him to "tend my sheep" and "feed my sheep." This year our focus is on "feeding the lambs" that God's word will continue to strengthen us as we share His word with those that are lost.

Our vision does not end with just "feeding the lamb" but our vision is three-fold: ministering to the lost, nurturing and ministering to the saved. We shall work to close the back door which means that we do not just want new members but we want to make disciples that will work to make other disciples of Christ (Matthew 28:19-20).

I am excited and grateful for the opportunity to serve as the pastor of St. Peter and pray that we will accept the challenge of spreading God's Word that others will continue to come to Christ, Grow in Christ and feel good about the church we belong to as followers of Christ.

Reverend Wanda Y. Rapley, Pastor



Church Calendar

Senior Citizens Day
Saturday, August 17, 2013
10:30 AM

146th Church Anniversary
Sunday, August 18, 2013
10:00 AM

Hook-Washington & Willis-Amaker Family Reunion
Sunday, September 1, 2013

Family and Friends Day
Sunday, September 15, 2013

Annual Hat Contest
Sunday, October 20, 2013

Church School: Sundays, 9:00 AM

Worship Services: Sundays, 10:00 AM

Bible Study: Wednesdays, 6:00 PM

New Members Class: Tuesdays, 9:00 AM/6:00 PM

The Amen Corner

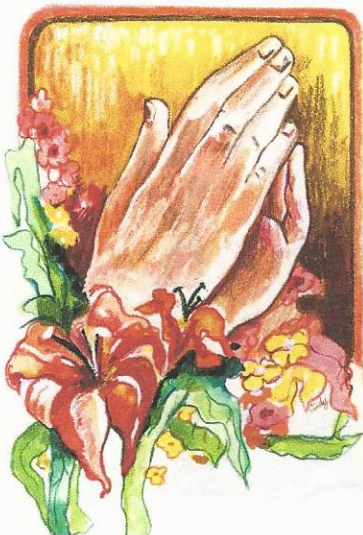
"Applying Your Talents in the Church"
by Reverend Wanda Rapley

The renowned psychologist, William James, once said, "Impression without expression leads to depression." Church members who do little more than occupy a pew on Sunday morning are not usually enthusiastic about their religion.

Many churches suffer from two groups of members called the willing and the able. What this means is those who are willing are not always able, and those who are

able are not always willing to volunteer their time and talents by working somewhere in the church.

Every member of the Christian Church should feel a special sense of service to do something for the cause of CHRIST. We have tools we will be sharing to help you identify the skills, talents, and gifts that God has given you for the building of His Kingdom. One of these tools is the Spiritual Gift Assessment. You are encouraged to volunteer your time and talent with St. Peter AME Church.



Trustees' Corner

Air Conditioner in Educational Building
Paid For"

by Sister Ruby Stewart



The Trustees are happy to report that the air conditioner in the Educational Building is completely paid for. Thank God! Now we are working on repairing the windows and other projects. So continue to pray and support us.

We are in need of volunteers to help cut grass and keep the graveyard clean. Please contact one of the Trustees if you are willing to help.

In addition, if you see any problems around the church, please report it to one of the Trustees. May God continue to bless, guide, and guard each of us so we can do the work of the Lord.

The members of the St. Peter Trustee Board are Curtis Harley, Isadore Harley, Jr., Willie Harley, Leroy Jones, Cecil Knotts, Troy Moore (Junior Trustee), Bernice Pinckney, and Ruby Stewart.

Church Sexton's Corner



"Keeping St. Peter AME Church Clean and Tidy"
by Sister Bernice Pinckney

As church sexton it is my responsibility to keep St. Peter AME Church and the Educational Building clean and tidy. I have chosen to donate canned goods with monies I am paid for the cleaning of our church.

I would like to say a special "Thank You" to Brother Isadore Harley for your diligent assistance in helping me with my duties as church sexton. God Bless all our church members for what you do to keep our church clean and tidy.

Stewards' Corner

"Stewards: Serving the Overall Needs of the Church"
by Sister Gloria Moore

"We wait in hope for the Lord; he is our help and our shield. In Him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name. May your unfailing love rest upon us, O Lord, even as we put our hope in you." Psalm 33:20-22

We are trusting in God and in Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour to continue to lead and bless us throughout this conference year. Our Steward Board members are praying to be the spiritual leaders of the church. As Stewards, our desire is to serve and comfort the distressed and the needy.

We, the St. Peter AME Church Stewards, are responsible for the overall needs of the local church to include finances, the pastor, and the general welfare of its members. The stewards assist Pastor Rapley in delivering communion to the sick and shut-in members of the church.

It is our prayer as St. Peter AME Stewards that we continue to see a steady increase in our overall church attendance. As believers and followers of Christ the St. Peter AME Stewards continue pressing toward our goal of being a 100% tithing church. Our stewards have established themselves as Worship Leaders for our devotional worship service at St. Peter AME Church.

Our Pastor, Rev. Wanda Rapley, is the Chairperson of our Steward Board. The other members of the St. Peter AME Steward Board are: Brother Londrae Knotts, Brother Christopher Harley, Brother Gerod Scott, Sister Teretha Mitchell, Sister Nanette Sabb, and Sister Gloria Moore.



Male Chorus's Corner

"Male Chorus Still Holding on to God's Unchanging Hands"
by Brother Christopher Harley



In 1996, Brother Nathaniel Heatley organized the St. Peter AME Church Male Chorus. We started out with just seven members. For the first few years most of the men were working on the weekends and found it hard to travel and visit other churches, but Brother Christopher Harley and his brother, Walter Harley, were able to travel and would go to churches and represent St. Peter.

In 2001, we had our first program under the leadership of Rev. J. Arthur McDonald. Through the years, we have had our ups and downs but with the help of our God, we are still holding on to His unchanging Hands. We salute the following members of the Male Chorus: Brothers Christopher Harley, Walter Harley, Isadore Harley, Jr. Londrae Knotts, Calvin Harley, Cedric Harley, Desmond Harley, James E. Harley, and Michael Buckson.

"Offering Encouragement Through Songs"
by Brother Michael Buckson

We are living in a time when all of us are challenged in life at one time or another. The writer of James, Chapter 1, Verse 2, teaches us that if it is not "if" we fall into temptations or challenges, but "when." It is appointed that we all will have our moments in this life and these moments will be designed just for us and us alone. When these times come, we, the Male Chorus of St. Peter AME Church would like to offer encouragement found in the words of a song.

We've all had tears and sorrows, hopes for tomorrow, times when we didn't know right from wrong. But in every situation, God gives blessed consolation to let us know our trials come to make us strong.

So learn to thank God for your mountains. Learn to thank Him for your valleys. Thank God for the storms He's brought us through. For if we never had a problem, we would never know that God can solve them. We'd never know what faith in God can do. So through it all, yes, through it all. We need to learn to trust in Jesus; we need to learn to trust in God. Yes, through it all, yes through it all, we need to learn to depend on God's Word!
Be Blessed!

Church Musician's Corner

"Thanks for Making Me Feel Welcome"
by Brother Reginald Jennings



Greetings! Allow me a few minutes to introduce myself. My name is Reginald Jennings, and I am one of your recently appointed church musicians for St. Peter AME Church. Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to serve you and God.

I look forward to working with you for many more years to come. I thank you for making me and my family feel ever so welcome. I am also glad to know that I have had the opportunity to establish rapport with quite a few of you some years ago either as a former classmate or former instructor.

Deaconesses' Corner

"Women Consecrated to the Office of Deaconess"
by Sister Mary Y. Harley



God Is Love!

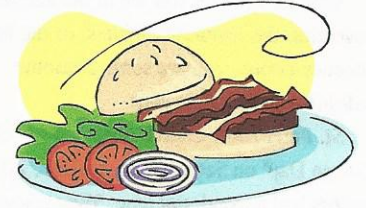
On November 11, 1990, the following women in good standing at St. Peter AME Church, North, SC, were consecrated to the office of Deaconess in the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Sister Willa Dean Baxter
The Late Sister Idella Harley
Sister Mary Y. Harley
The Late Sister Gracie Knotts
The Late Sister Vertell Lykes
Sister Bernice Pinckney

Beloved let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. 1 John 4:7

Culinary Committee's Corner

"Culinary Committee Accepting Donations"
by Sister Bernice Pinckney



To the Wonderful Outstanding Members of the Culinary Committee and Volunteers: As Co-Captain, I would like to thank you kindly for your monetary & food donations, your time, your professionalism, your commitment and your heart-felt kindness you have extended to all who enter the doors of St. Peter A.M.E. Church.

Anyone who would like to donate canned goods or make monetary donations, please feel free to make your donations to Rev. Wanda Rapley, Culinary Committee Co-Captain, or me. Again, we thank you.

Pastoral Care Corner

"Our Steps Are Ordered"
by Sister Zareatha Harley



Motto: Psalm 27 -The lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear. The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid.

Our steps are ordered in the name of Jesus. May God's blessings fall upon us.

Seniors' Corner

"Age Is More a Feeling Than a Number"
by Sister Cherry McLeod



Seniors, whether you are in the Sensational Seventies, the Exquisite Eighties, or the New Nineties Group, you are some awesome individuals! God Bless you!

St. Peter AME Church observed its "Senior Citizen Day" on Saturday, August 17, 2013. Our seniors had a wonderful time. They enjoyed themselves and we enjoyed them. Just being among them is a blessing.

Seniors, don't say you're old! You're not! Don't you know that seventy is the new fifty? Eighty is the new sixty? And ninety is the new seventy? Having lived many years, seniors have EXPERIENCE! We all know that EXPERIENCE is often the best teacher. Seniors know first-hand what it's like to live through tragedies and triumphs, times of war and peace, both personally and as a member of society. They are a living testament that people survive through the good and bad. They are very wise. St. Peter A.M.E. Church Seniors are regarded as being our role models---they should be the groups that the younger crowd is proud to emulate.

We can find many positive references to age in the Bible:

"And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments ... I will lengthen thy days. 1 Kings 3:14

"Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Exodus 20:12

Abraham lived 175 years (Genesis 25:7, 8).

Isaac lived to be 180 (Genesis 35:28).

Jacob lived to 130 years of age (Genesis 47:8, 9).

Moses was 120 (Deuteronomy 34:7).

Joshua lived to be 110 (Joshua 24:29).

When I say that age is more of a feeling than a number, I am inspired by my grandmother, Annie B. Colter, who is 102 years old and is doing well. The only medication she takes is for arthritis. God is good! She enjoys going to church, reading the newspapers, and completing find-a-word puzzle books. And just as we all do, she loves the Lord.

Education Corner

"A Stress-Free Morning Routine
for Back to School"
by Sister Rhonda Williams
and Sister Shonda Backmon



"John, let's go! I'm ready to take you to school. I'm going to be late for work."

"Mom, but I'm not ready. I'm looking for my favorite Laker's cap."

"Did you finish your math homework?"

"No, I thought Dad was going to help me after the basketball game last night."

"Let's go! I'm leaving with or without you!"

I hope your mornings do not sound like that above. There is a key to having a stress-free morning routine. You must remember that a routine must be followed consistently. Where there is no consistency, there is chaos.

Here are some helpful tips to a stress free morning routine:

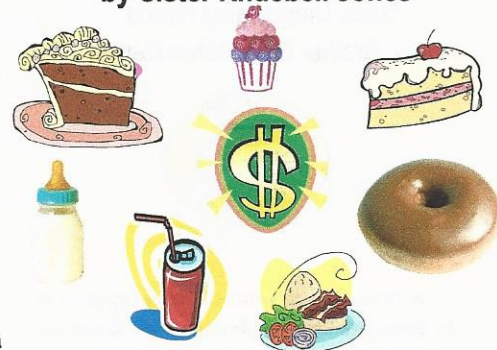
- Check all homework the night before.
- Select clothes and accessories the night before to avoid wasting time deciding on what to wear in the morning.
- Parents should give their child(ren) an appropriate bedtime and wake time.
- Before bed be sure all lunches are made and backpacks have all materials.
- Both parents should delegate responsibility to avoid parent burnout and to ensure the morning routine will be a smooth transition.

Remember, you are the parent; you set the tone for the morning routine. Follow these simple steps and I promise you will have a peaceful morning.



Church Pews Corner

"Fundraisers Yield Funds for
New Church Pews"
by Sister Rhuebelle Jones



As Chairperson for the Church Pews, I am proud of the hard work our church members did in order for us to have new church pews.

After the late Sister Gracie Knotts and I worked together on fundraisers to get new carpet, another fundraising project was started to get stain-glassed windows. Each family worked together raising money to sponsor stained-glassed windows in memory of loved ones.

After finishing those projects, it was decided to use the same concept and ask each family to pay for a pew. Everyone agreed and went to work on fundraiser after fundraiser.

We started out selling soft drinks. Next we sold dinners. Then we had a baby contest. After that, we sold air fresheners and then doughnuts. We also had a bake sale.

We started our pew fundraising journey in 2000, and in 2012, under the leadership of Reverend Sylvester Morton, we were determined to get our pews. When Reverend Morton was no longer able to serve as our pastor, our Presiding Elder Barbara Chisholm came in, and under her leadership, we were able to raise the balance of the money needed for the pews, and in August 2012 we were sitting on our brand new cushioned pews. To God Be the Glory!!



Church Anniversary Corner

"Enlarging Our Vision for the 21st Century"

by Delphine H. Scott



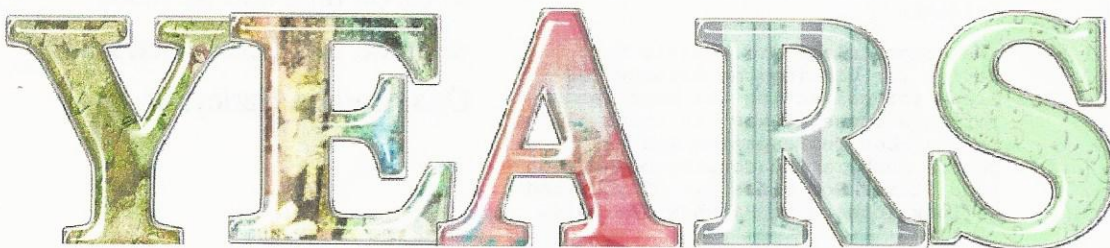
On Sunday, August 18, 2013, St. Peter AME Church will be celebrating its 146th anniversary. St. Peter AME Church was founded in 1867 in a bush harbor. Destroyed twice, once by storm and once by fire, our church was rebuilt. St. Peter's third and current church was completed in 1965.

After a fellowship hall was added to the church in the late 1990s, additional renovations took place in 2004 to expand the front and rear entrances, enlarge restrooms, improve lighting fixtures, and to make the church building handicap accessible. The church's steeple, removed from the church in 2004, was replaced in 2012. Our church pews have improved from wooden benches in years past to comfortable, cushioned pews. As we celebrated our 145th church anniversary on August 19, 2012, we sat on beautiful, brand new pews and pulpit chairs.

Last year the five sets of twins in the church were featured as they all served as our anniversary program participants. This year we are featuring as program participants the members of the former Musical Choir. Our Musical Choir was founded by Brother Hamp Harley, Jr. We thank him and our advisors, the late Sister Idella Hook Harley, Sister Ann Harley Jenkins, and Sister Margaret Jones who encouraged us through the years to honor and praise God through songs.

Each year we celebrate our church anniversary, we ask church members to give the equivalent in finances. On this 146th Church Anniversary, we are asking each member to pay \$146.00 to represent each year the church has been in existence.

At our last 145th Church Anniversary celebration, we vowed to "Enlarge Our Vision" as challenged in the same sermon by Presiding Elder Barbara Chisolm. We are happy to have accomplished several of the goals set and to be working towards obtaining others. We once again have a church newsletter, a new church website, an ongoing membership campaign, and a developing church directory. We are "enlarging our vision."



Favorite Memories of the Past Corner

Favorite Church Memories of the Past

My favorite **MEMORY**

My favorite memory is when my grandmother, Vernell Hook Mintz, was living. She would sit right by the choir, and when we were a little too talkative, she would give us "the eye" like "Talk again." We thought that was so funny.

Submitted by Sister Carol Mintz

My favorite memory is Children's Day Programs and feeding people from the back of our cars. Anonymous

My favorite memory is coming to St. Peter as a young girl to "Children's Day" and eating my Aunt Pearl Harley's cake and pie and hearing Uncle Isadore Harley line those hymns.

Submitted by Sister Betty Jo Jones

My favorite memory is singing on the youth choir and hearing my cousin, Tanya Mintz, leading the song "Running for My Life."

Submitted by Brother Stephon M. Scott

My favorite memory is Big Meeting Sundays after church drinking Uncle Doe's (Isadore Harley) lemonade and eating all the good food out of everyone's trunk.

Submitted by Sister Beverly Mintz Wright

My favorite memory is when we all come together and have Family and Friends' Day. Sometimes we went on field trips. That is my favorite memory.

Submitted by Miss Dwayna Scott

My favorite memory is Children's Day and Easter Sunday when we had to stand in front of the congregation to say our speech and at Christmastime when we were scared of Santa Claus.

Submitted by Dianne Mintz Hook and Carolyn Mintz Wright

My favorite memory is the Usher Board lining up on the back wall to sing

"See How Far Am I from My Lord," and Mr. Jake Heatley started the song with "I looked down the line and I wonder," and the choir look to their left down the line and sang, "Wonder." That was a priceless moment for me.

Submitted by Lucretia White Brown

My favorite memory is hearing and listening to my father, Isadore Harley, Sr. and Uncle Bub, (Hamp Harley Sr.) sing Zion songs. My Uncle Bub would look toward heaven and call Him by His name.

Submitted by Isabella Harley Way

Medical Advice Corner

"Helpful Tips to Lower Your Risk of Having
Respiratory Problems"

by Sister Isabella Harley Way,
Respiratory Care Practitioner



Respiratory Therapy specializes in diseases of the lungs. Some of the diseases that are treated are asthma, chronic obstructive lung disease, RSV, emphysema, and bronchitis.

The duties of a respiratory therapist are to perform patient assessments, arterial blood gases, pulmonary function studies, air way management, mechanical ventilation, oxygen therapy, and pulmonary therapeutics.

Helpful tips to help improve or lower your risk of having respiratory problems are:

- Eat a nutritional diet
- Increase protein and lower carbohydrates
- Eat several small meals
- Snack each day
- Stop smoking
- Exercise
- Take breathing treatments
- Drink plenty of water
- Get plenty of rest

Rainbow Tea Corner

"Fifth Annual Rainbow Tea
Celebrates the
Colors of the Rainbow"
by Sister Effie Crum



On Sunday, July 21, 2013, our St. Peter AME Church family celebrated the colors of the rainbow by having our fifth annual Rainbow Tea. Our fellowship hall was decorated with tables adorned with the colors orange, yellow, blue, green and purple. Rainbow Tea Captains and their teams prepared and decorated their tables with delicious entrees as well as a variety of fruits, vegetables, desserts, and beverages matching their chosen color of the rainbow. There was tasty and eye-appealing food on every table.

While we were able to satisfy our hunger and quench our thirst, we did not forget the reason we were all assembled. We came together to honor the spiritual and biblical reasons behind the colors of the rainbow and to celebrate the creation of the rainbow by God.

The color Purple in the rainbow represents closeness to God and royalty. The color Blue in the rainbow is for the heavens and spirituality. The color Green represents nature, health, and being reborn. The color Yellow represents wisdom and clarity. The color Orange is for creativity, and the color red represents the blood of Christ.

This year's rainbow tea featured the color Orange to honor the memory of The Late Sister Lugenia Braxton who helped introduce the Rainbow Tea idea to our church. We thank Sister Braxton for providing us with the information about what the colors represent. We have used her information every year. We also thank Sister Clara Mae Ziegler who also gave us ideas on how to have a successful rainbow tea. For the last four years my table color was Red to honor Sister Ziegler who always had a Red table. We thank you, Sister Ziegler.

We congratulate Mrs. Jessie Mae Harley for winning the Rainbow Tea Crown for collecting the most funds for this cause. I want to thank all the Rainbow Tea captains and all church members who donated money and food items. God Bless all of you, and we look forward to Rainbow Tea 2014.

"I Remember Daddy" Corner

"Remembering My Father,
Isadore Harley, Sr.
by Brother Isadore Harley, Jr.



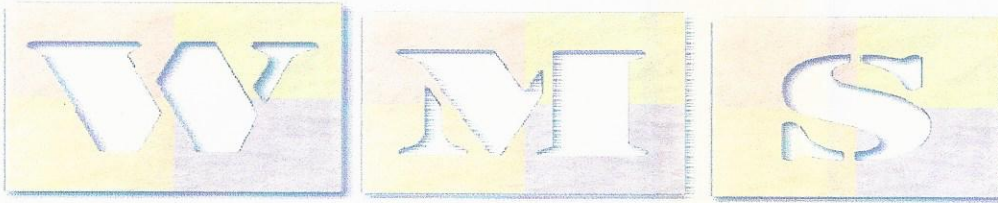
Isadore Harley Sr. loved St. Peter AME Church. He was the first sexton for many years, and he would let the people and the kids know not to put any food, paper, or gum on the seats.

He was also the leader of the choir, and he served as trustee/steward. As trustee he checked on his members. If they needed a ride to the doctor, he would take them.

He was also an on-time person. During revival he was on time. When it was time to go back to the visiting churches, he would be the first one there before any members. If you were riding with him, you had to be on time and be ready when he got there. That's our Dad, Isadore Harley, Sr.

Women's Missionary Society Corner

"The Purpose of the Women's Missionary Society"
by Sister Sylvia K. Harley



The Women Missionary Society (WMS) was formed for Christians to reach out and touch the lives of many people by carrying out missions and providing leadership. The WMS Ministry was designed to help strengthened the faith of Christians and to help them continue the ministry of Jesus Christ through service and witnessing.

As missionaries we are called to:

- Build Christian relationships through love and inspiration.
- Maintain Christian connections through fellowship and prayer.
- Develop visionary leadership through support and encouragement.
- Serve and meet the needs of people.
- Address concerns of the world by spreading God's Gospel through ministry.

The Framework of Ministry for Jesus Christ Through WMS include:

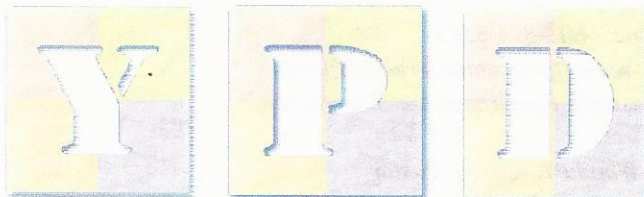
- Promoting Christian Education Through Mentoring
- Ministering to the Sick-and-Shut In, Poverty-Strickened, and the Hungry
- Supporting the Elderly And Disabled
- Providing Service through Community Outreach
- Ministering to Children Services
- Organizing Charitable Activities
- Support of Various Social Events, Fundraisers, Local/Global Services
- Attending Conference Meetings.

The WMS helps the YPD children to guide them toward knowing and accepting Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior through training, Christian fellowship, and serving the community.

The Women's Missionary Society and the YPD of St. Peter AME Church have participated in the following:

- March Of Dimes Campaign
- WMS Red Dress Campaign/Heart Disease
- Wateree Area YPD/Angels In White
- Calendar Tea
- Orangeburg Area Black History Celebration

"We Cannot Fulfill God's Purpose without Being Disciples Ourselves"



Choirs' Corner "Favorite Songs of the Past"



Do you remember the church members or choir leaders who sang the favorite songs of the past listed below? If so, test your memory and write down your answers on the lines provided under the song. As you write the name of our deceased loved ones, please say a silent prayer in honor of their memory.

1. Call Him By His Name

2. We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder

3. This Little Light of Mine

4. Welcome Home

5. Together Let Us Sweetly Live

6. Better Days Are Coming By and By

7. Somewhere to Lay My Head

8. I Trust In God

9. Everybody's Gonna Make You Welcome

10. Lord, I Know You Been So Good



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