



## ***SOPC Leaflet, Wednesday, February 4, 2026***



- 1: Mary Dempster & Lorie McGraw
- 10: Mary Johnson
- 12: Rich Allen
- 14: Ira Leon
- 15: Mark Johnson
- 16: Amy Schwartz
- 17: Andy Robosky
- 21: Ellis Robinson
- 27: Kris Dempster & Monroe Swearingen

- **THIS Sunday, 2/8/26, we will have a Congregational Meeting after worship for the purposes of: 1. Electing a nominating committee for 2026; 2. Presenting the 2025 SOPC Annual Report; 3. Presenting the 2026 Church Budget. Please make every effort to attend.**
- **February Devotion from Rev. Dr. Danny Murphy:**

### ***Held By His Love***

**“For I am sure that neither death nor life... nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”**

**- Romans 8:38-39 (NIV)**

**Hello Seven Oaks Presbyterian Church,**

**There are days we feel loved, and days we feel like love has left the room.**

**Some mornings you wake up steady, prayerful, full of confidence in God’s nearness. Other mornings, you wake up with yesterday’s shame still on your skin. The tone of a conversation. The ache of a setback. The quiet fear that you’ve disappointed God one too many times. And somewhere in that fog, a question whispers: Is God still holding onto me?**

**We know the right answer. We can quote it. We can sing it.**

**But the heart still wonders: What happens when I’m not okay? When I’m not strong? When I’m not consistent?**

**Romans 8 doesn’t pretend we’re immune to pain, doubt, or spiritual warfare. Paul names the very things that make love feel fragile—death and life, the pressures of the present, the fear of the future, powers seen and unseen. He doesn’t minimize them. He lists them as if he’s adding them up, then draws a line below them and writes: none of it can sever you from Christ’s love.**

**That means God's love isn't a Valentine's sentiment—beautiful for a moment, gone when the mood changes. It's covenant love: steady when you're unsteady, pursuing when you're weary, and sanctifying as it holds you.**

**So how do we receive that kind of love, and then reflect it in February, when the world often treats love like a mood, a spark, or a transaction?**

**Here's a simple framework for covenant love:**

**First, receive God's love as a sure thing, not a shifting feeling.**

**Paul begins with, "I am sure..." Not "I feel it today." Not "I had a great worship set." Not "my week is going well."**

**Christian assurance isn't built on perfect days; it's built on a perfect Savior.**

**When your feelings say, God must be far, Romans 8 says, Christ is near. When shame says, You're disqualified, Romans 8 says, You're held. When the enemy says, You're finished, Romans 8 says, Nothing can separate you.**

**Practice: When you feel distance, don't chase a feeling, cling to a promise. Whisper it out loud if you have to: "Nothing can separate me." Let truth lead your emotions, not the other way around.**

**Second, learn the difference between separation and sanctification.**

**Some believers confuse God's discipline with God's departure. But if you are in Christ, God doesn't leave when God corrects; God loves you through your growth. Now, covenant love doesn't excuse sin; it cleanses. It doesn't flatter; it transforms. In other words, Christ's love isn't only comforting; it's sanctifying. It refuses to abandon you to what is killing you.**

**So when God convicts you, it's not rejection, it's rescue. When God exposes something in you, it's not condemnation, it's a surgeon's mercy.**

**Ask yourself: What is God confronting right now, not to shame me, but to heal me?**

**Third, let God's pursuing love retrain your reflexes.**

**Covenant love changes what you do automatically. When you know you are unsevered—unshaken—unabandoned—something starts to shift. You don't have to grasp for control. You don't have to perform for acceptance. You don't have to punish yourself to prove you're sorry. You can repent quickly because you're not repenting into uncertainty—you're repenting into love.**

**This is how love becomes a spiritual reflex: you run toward God rather than hide from God.**

**Practice: Make confession normal, not dramatic. Use short, honest prayers: "Jesus, I did it again. I'm coming into the light. Cleanse me. Help me." The door isn't locked. His love isn't on probation.**

**Finally, reflect God's covenant love with steady faithfulness.**

**The world often celebrates love that's loud. Christ forms love that lasts. Covenant love looks like staying gentle when you could retaliate, showing up when it's inconvenient, staying faithful to what you promised, forgiving from a heart that's been forgiven, holding boundaries without losing compassion, choosing purity because you're loved, not to earn love.**

**Challenge for February: Choose one relationship to love with "steadfast consistency." Not big speeches, just small obedience: one word of encouragement, one act of service, one humble apology, one courageous conversation, one kind boundary.**

**Paul's promise isn't poetic optimism; it's blood-bought reality. Nothing can separate you from God's love "in Christ Jesus our Lord." This love isn't floating in the air; it's anchored in a Person. The proof isn't your grip on Jesus, but Jesus' grip on you—sealed at the cross, vindicated in the resurrection, sustained by His intercession, and held—right now—by a love that will not let you go.**

***Prayer: Lord Jesus, forgive me for measuring Your love by my feelings and performance. Help me trust Your promise that nothing can separate me from Your love. Draw me close, keep me tender, hold me steady, and let Your steadfast love flow through me—faithful, pure, patient, and strong. Amen.***

Faithfully yours,  
Dr. Danny C. Murphy  
General Presbyter & Stated Clerk, Trinity Presbytery



Ladies, Join Us for a  
**HEARTS OF LOVE  
LUNCHEON WITH  
DAWN SMITH JORDAN**

...Christian singer, songwriter, author, and speaker!  
There will be a Love Offering for Jordan Ministries.  
<https://www.dawnsmithjordan.com/about>

Saturday, Feb. 14, 2026  
at Noon at  
Seven Oaks  
Presbyterian Church,  
530 St. Andrews Rd., Columbia, SC 29210

**Admission + Meal = \$20/person  
due by Feb. 6, 2026.**

Checks payable to SOPW, with Hearts of Love in Memo line, may be mailed to the church. To pay online, visit <https://onrealm.org/SevenOaksPresby/-/form/give/now>; select *Hearts of Love* from the Fund drop-down menu; and please opt to cover the credit card processing fees when prompted. Cash may be brought to the church office M-Th from 10 am - 2 pm.



**CHANGE OF REGISTRATION DEADLINE:** All ladies and friends are invited to our February 14th PW ladies' retreat which is a luncheon this year featuring Dawn Smith Jordan. Seven Oaks PW is happy to give Dawn this opportunity to share her musical ministry and message to as many as possible! The cost for this event that includes lunch is only \$20. You can RSVP and pay at the table in the narthex after worship this Sunday, 2/8th, at the church office, or through [sopc.net/giving/](https://sopc.net/giving/). Contact Jeanne LeBoeuf for more information. **Here is a link to video on Facebook with Dawn talking about our event:**

<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1BhQ2oNM6P/> . The video is also attached to the email this *Leaflet* was attached to.



# ASH Wednesday

- Because we are in the process of searching for our new pastor at SOPC, we will not have an Ash Wednesday service here this year on 2/18/26. However, we have been invited to participate with Redeemer Lutheran (across the street from our church) and/or McGregor PC toward Irmo on St. Andrews.
  - Redeemer Lutheran will have a drive-thru imposition of ashes and communion from 7:30 – 8:30 am, a 12:15 pm service, and a 7:00 pm service.
  - McGregor PC will have a service at 6:00 pm.



- **Are you like many who are cleaning out their house for the new year?** When you get to your linen closets, please keep in mind that the Hannah Circle is collecting new or gently used linens for Rapid Shelter. They can use twin/full sheets, blankets, pillowcases, towels, etc. There is a box in the church office for donations. Or, you may place them in the large baskets in the narthex on either side of the entrance to the sanctuary, marked "Hannah Circle." Thank you!!
- The next Ladies' Luncheon will be Monday, February 16<sup>th</sup> at noon at LaFogata Mexican Restaurant, 1605 North Lake Drive, Lexington. Please let Margaret Royals know if you plan to attend. [mroyals052@gmail.com](mailto:mroyals052@gmail.com) or 803-608-1434.



- Our next churchwide fellowship luncheon will be NEXT SUNDAY, February 15, after worship in the Fellowship Hall! It will be a special (Italian) Valentine's lunch. The theme will be *Remembering Our Loved Ones*. The menu is salad, pasta, garlic bread, and cheesecake with toppings! Yum!
- If you would like to volunteer in the sanctuary's sound booth occasionally, please contact the church office. Training provided!



- If anyone in our church family would benefit from wheelchair service from the car into worship, we would be happy to assist you! If you know in advance that you will be attending, you may contact the church office, Sharon Watkins (Worship Ministry Committee Chair,) or any of our ushers: Mary Johnson, Ron Kesterson, John Carter, Robert Miller, Kitsie Miller, or Banks Robinson. They will let the appropriate person know to be on the lookout for you on Sunday. If you are not able to call in advance, when you arrive Sunday morning, have whoever is driving you enter the narthex and inform the usher that you are in the parking lot. The usher will then bring a wheelchair out to your car to get you. The usher will also take you out to your car after worship. It is our pleasure to do this!



- **Confirmation** Our 2026 Confirmation Class has begun and is off to a great start! They are studying a *Discipleship* series by Ray Vander Laan and the PC(USA)'s *Big God, Big Questions* curriculum. *Confirmation* is a time for young people to learn about what being a Christian and being a member of a PC(USA) congregation means. Then, they decide for themselves whether they want to publicly declare and demonstrate their personal commitment to Christ and to SOPC by being Confirmed in the Holy Spirit & by officially joining the church. Any adult members who would consider being a mentor to one of our confirmands or who would like to know more about it, please call Julie/Ernie Bussells or Kathy Keane.



- **THIS SUNDAY, February 8th**, we will enjoy 2 special aspects of worship! It will be our annual Scout Sunday, and our youth will collect their annual Souper Bowl of Caring offering of money and/or food for those in need. Our youth will have a Super Bowl Party at the Bussells' house at 5 pm Sunday.

# Let's Tackle Hunger!

February 8, 2026



The Youth and Scouts  
will be collecting  
money &/or canned goods  
after worship at SOPC on  
Sunday, Feb. 8, 2026.

Please help if you are able.



- **ATTENTION ALL BOOK LOVERS!** We have a new list of books to read. Come to our first meeting at Loveland Coffee on the last Thursday in February, 2/26/26, at 3:00 pm. In addition to getting your own list of what we will be reading in 2026-2027, we will discuss The Frozen River by Ariel Lawton. We'd love to see you just to catch up on what you've been doing! Questions? Call or Text Kitsie Miller. 803-463-6958.
- **Our Fellowship and Roads to Faith Adult Sunday School Classes**, who are currently meeting together, are studying a series of lessons by Max Lucado. The title is *They Walked with God: 40 Bible Characters Who Inspire Us*. All adults are invited to join us each Sunday morning at 9:45 in the Fellowship Classroom! We would love to have you!



# Easter Lilies 2026

It is SOPC's tradition to adorn our Sanctuary with lilies for the Easter worship service.

You may purchase a lily to be given in celebration of the resurrection, to the glory of God, and/or in appreciation/memory/honor of a loved one, friend, or church family member.

Names of donors, (unless they wish to remain anonymous,) and those honored will be listed in the bulletin on Easter Sunday, April 5, 2026. You may pick up your lily after worship on Easter Sunday.

Please complete this form and place it with payment in the offering basket or submit it to the church office. Please make checks payable to SOPC with "Easter Lily" in the memo line. If you pay online, please designate it as "Other," type in "Easter Lily," and select the option that covers the church's credit card processing fees.

*The deadline to order is Sunday, March 15, 2026.*

Please print clearly. Write names as you wish them to be listed in the bulletin.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Qty.) Easter Lilies x \$16 each = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total Amount

Donor Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Do You Wish to Remain Anonymous? Yes / No (Circle one.)

Donor Phone # &/or Email: \_\_\_\_\_

- In Appreciation of \_\_\_\_\_
- In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_
- In Honor of \_\_\_\_\_
- To the Glory of God
- In Celebration of the Resurrection

- **A Note of Thanks to Our SOPC Youth Ministry:**  
 “Neighbors and youth play a vital role in supporting one another, especially when their kindness extends throughout streets, neighborhoods, and counties. Seven Oaks Presbyterian Church Youth Group’s thoughtful donations of \$100 to The Door Home, Inc. on 11/30/25 and bags of holiday foods, enabled us to host a Sassy Senior Harvest of Friends Bingo on 11/19/25 for over 25 seniors and volunteers. I would also like to express my heartfelt thanks to your young influencers for generously sharing their time planning, praying, and supporting the Children’s Charrette. Their help in co-leading the Children’s Charette has been invaluable. Every gesture, whether a small step or a financial gift, helps foster a sense of community that supports both children and adults. As we have often discussed, our work is not just about material gifts, but also about the compassion and intention that drive our actions. We are sincerely grateful that you have included us in your outreach and community initiatives. -Stacey F. Atkinson, The Door Home, Inc.”
- **We can train folks so that we can show videos with our Minutes for Missions** before worship. This training with Karl will take several weeks before the desired event, and needs to be scheduled well in advance. Thanks!
- **We’re Collecting:** These items may be placed in the large baskets in the narthex or brought to the church office.
  - **Pop-Tarts, Packs of crackers and bottles of water** for our Blessing Box food pantry. These are favorites of our neighbors in need.
  - **Please save your cans’ pop tops** and bring them to the church office. So far, we have donated 7 gallon-sized Ziploc bags FULL of pop tops to the Ronald McDonald House in Columbia.
- **Save the Date:**
  - **February 14:** Women’s Hearts of Love Luncheon and Concert with Dawn Smith Jordan; Stated Meeting of Trinity Presbytery
  - **March 21:** Trinity Presbytery PW Annual Gathering with Rev. Brooklynn Smith at SOPC
- **If you have information to go out to our church family in the Leaflet and/or bulletin, please get it to Annah by the Tuesday before you would like it to go out. Thanks!**