

# The PRESSbyterian

June 2011

## Dates to Remember

**June 6-10:** VBS  
**June 12:** Officer Installation  
**June 19-25:** Montreat Confer.  
**June 26:** Peru Mission Trip  
Commissioning  
**July 2-9:** Peru Mission Trip  
**July 10-15:** Youth Mission Trip

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## From the Pastor

Friends,

Many of you have many questions and rightly so. On May 11, 2011, the PCUSA, our denomination, accepted a significant change to its constitutional standards governing who is eligible for ordination as ministers, elders and deacons. This change, known as Amendment 10-A, removes the standard requiring fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman and chastity in singleness. The effect of the new language opens the possibility that persons in same-gender relationships can be considered for ordination as ministers, elders and deacons.

Since May 11<sup>th</sup>, many have asked what we as a church are going to do and, although they have not directly asked me, have asked where I stand on this issue. Allow me to be direct. I believe 2 Timothy 3:16-17 when Paul states, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." I believe Scripture is the living, inspired word of God, providing guidance as the rule for faith and life and is our guide for becoming and being a disciple of Jesus Christ. Scripture attests to the incarnate Word of God, Jesus Christ, the One whom all must hear, trust, and obey. As such, I believe the Bible when it speaks against homosexuality, do not support the practice of homosexuality, and do not support the ordination of practicing homosexuals to the office of minister, elder or deacon.

Now permit me to be direct again. First Presbyterian Orangeburg is like no other. We are a strong church. This church is a body of believers that deeply cares for, nurtures, loves one another, and above all desires to seek His will. As just one such example, many of you have experienced an outpouring of love when you have been sick. Because of you, the people of God, the love of Jesus Christ is shown. As such, we recognize that all are sinners, that we all fall short of the glory of God and that we only live by His grace. No sin is lifted higher than another. We come to church to fellowship and encourage each other, to learn about Jesus Christ and live according to His way. As a result, everyone and anyone is welcome in a Christian Church and First Presbyterian is no exception. As long as people wish to seek the savior Jesus Christ, all are welcome.

Your Session has been working hard on this issue and I point you to the Session's article in this Pressbyterian newsletter for more information. Take the time to read it. It details the history of this issue, the new language that will be adopted, the implications of this adoption and what your Session is doing in response. The Session has also unanimously agreed that we will not make a quick, rash or emotional decision but will devote the proper time and effort necessary in understanding and educating the congregation on this complex issue, its implications and options. We recognize this will take time. It may take a year or more. The Session and I only ask that we remain faithful, pray for God's guidance and direction, and adopt the biblical virtue of patience as the Session provides more information in the coming weeks.

In the holy and immutable name of Jesus Christ,  
Jud

Church Office  
Congregational Care  
Prayer Chain  
534-0088

Church/Fellowship Hall  
533-1235

FAX  
534-1242

[www.1stpresbyterian.org](http://www.1stpresbyterian.org)

## Youth News!!

May 8 was Youth Sunday at First Presbyterian, and it was a wonderful event. I am so proud of our young people for leading worship and sharing their talents with the congregation.

We celebrated the year on May 15 with our Parent/Youth Supper. This was a time for us to reflect on the year and also a time to thank the parents for their support of the youth program. We are also very thankful for our youth advisors for all of their hard work. The advisors include: Lacey Borgstedt, Cindy Clark, Jimmy Guthrie, Marty Journey, Evelyn McCully, Chalmers Mikell, Leslie Robertson, Preston Walter, and Stacy Walter. Their dedication is vital to our youth program, and we appreciate all they do for us.

There are many summer activities planned for the youth and children, and I am in the process of finalizing the calendars. Please check the church's website, Facebook page, and the bulletin for information. I'll also be sending out a calendar in the mail.

Sarah Coggins



June 5 - August 21

The nursery and 2 and 3 year old classes remain the same. Rising 5k through rising 5<sup>th</sup> grade will meet in the old 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade room at the end of the lower floor of the fellowship hall. Rising 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades will meet in the house next door to the church office. The rising 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades will also meet in the house next door to the church office.

ADULT classes. Some classes have joined together and are studying "Questions Presbyterians Ask." If your class is interested in joining them, please contact Sherrill Newnan, 531-5822.

## Vacation Bible School

June 6-10



Get ready! Vacation Bible School is almost here! VBS will be held June 6-10, and Camp Bethelwoods is providing a special program for those children who are rising 5K – 6<sup>th</sup> grade. The camp will last from 9:00 a.m. until

3:00 p.m. The cost is \$15, and this includes lunch and snacks. We will also have a fun program designed for 2-4 year olds, *who are members of First Presbyterian*. Their activities will last from 9:00 a.m. until 12 p.m., and there is no cost. Sign up forms are available on the church website and can also be found in the pews. Join us at camp for a fun-filled week of learning about Jesus, playing games, making crafts, singing, and having fun with your friends!

Contact Sarah Coggins ([scoggins@1stpresbyterian.org](mailto:scoggins@1stpresbyterian.org)/534-0088) with questions.

Sarah Coggins

## A Big New York Thank-You!

Mark and I want to thank you for the New York City trip you gave me for twenty years of service at First Presbyterian. We took our trip April 28 through May 2, and we had a wonderful time! The highlight for both of us was *Phantom of the Opera*. We also loved *Lion King*, and we hope to go back to see more shows soon.

Since Mark had never been to New York, we made many tourist stops, including the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, the Empire State Building, Central Park, Times Square, and Rockefeller Center. Of course we also enjoyed seeing many beautiful churches and cathedrals. Visiting Ground Zero was quite a unique experience. We were there just two days before the death of Osama Bin Laden.

We stayed in the beautiful Warwick Hotel at the corner of West 54<sup>th</sup> and Avenue of the Americas. We could not have asked for a more ideal location. The weather was sunny and mild most of the time, and we were able to walk everywhere.

Thank you again for your kindness and generosity. You are a one-of-a-kind congregation, and it has been an honor to be a part of this loving church family for twenty years.

Sylvia Trimmier

# Christian Education

If you have accepted the challenge to learn and find the books of the Bible, we now know the Old Testament. So, we begin the New Testament by learning and finding 9 books: Matthew–Galatians.

## ODDS and ENDS

**Towels.** Graduates at Sioux Falls University in S. Dakota receive their diplomas from the President and a towel from the dean of the chapel. The towel is a reminder to go into the world and serve others as Jesus did. Envision a towel in your hand as you leave worship. How would that towel change your actions?

**Guest Rooms.** Is Christ in your clean guest room as a guest in your life? Or is He in your entire house - whatever shape it is in? God is not our guest. He is the Master and so our entire house should be His to occupy. Is your home ready and welcoming?

**Spiritual Weeds.** Are the spiritual weeds - deceitfulness of riches and the lures of pleasure - suffocating you? We cannot escape their seeds as we all live in a sinful world. However, we can stop them from taking root and growing by using the resources God provides for us in the Scriptures and living in “faith, goodness, perseverance, godliness and love.” 2 Peter 1:5-7

**Unchristian,** a book based on research questioning why some nonbelievers do not like believers. Do you have any idea what their primary answer was? Attitude. It is the unbelievers’ perception that believers are “unloving, harsh, and hypocritical” toward them. That made me stop and think about what I may be doing to give someone the idea that I was putting them down. 1 John tells us what the con-

trast between believers and unbelievers should be. Nonbelievers practice sin, hate others and abide in death. Believers keep themselves from sin, love others and abide in life eternal. So the question is---Am I displaying this love from God or am I being judgmental? We all know kindness and compassion lead more people to Christ than proclamation alone.

## DO YOU SEE GOD IN THE SMALL STUFF?

It is easy to look at creation and see God. It is easy to see God in the big stuff but what about the little stuff? For example,

- the smile from a stranger when you are discouraged;
- the meal brought to you when you really needed it;
- the card that came at just the right time;
- the visit or call.

Coincidence or Providence? I think it is God. When I get just the devotional I need on a certain day knowing it was written and printed maybe even years ago, I know that it is God. Let’s practice looking for God in everything. God blesses each of us in so many ways each day. Let’s look for ways to give Him the credit and thanks. God is good and we need to let people know it.

And finally, in these times of change in our denomination and as we seek God’s will for our future, we absolutely must act on what we already know - the Great Commission.

Kaye Borgstedt

## Pentecost Offering

This annual offering of the PCUSA will be received on Pentecost Sunday, June 12. Our congregation keeps 40 percent for programs that benefit children at risk. The General Assembly divides the remaining 60 percent between ministries with youth and young adults (50 percent) and children-at-risk ministries (10 percent.)

## Officer Installation

June 12, 2011

### Deacons

Michelle Arant  
Lisa Boltin  
Cindy Clark  
Bob Crane  
Ann Edwards  
Sandy Price

### Elders

Phyllis Buie  
Jack Johnson  
Sherry Newnam  
Geb Runager  
Bert Shuler  
John Shuler

# Local and Foreign Mission News

## Medical Benevolence Foundation

Partnering with healing ministries around the world in Christ's name.

Since 1963 Medical Benevolence Foundation (MBF) has worked to provide hope and healing to those most in need. Working with international church partners, MBF supports their healing ministries, hospitals, and clinics throughout the world. In a year of hard economic times, those in need suffer the most. Yet even as MBF tightened its belt it was simultaneously able to expand services. MBF is grateful for the generous gifts from individuals, churches, groups, and organizations that make this possible.

Good Shepherd Hospital (IMCK) in the Democratic Republic of Congo is one of First Presbyterian's Faith Promise Missions through MBF. Projects from 2010 at Good Shepherd Hospital included: community dentistry project, visitors' center repairs, personnel restructuring, charity care, nursing scholarships, widow support project, operational costs and a grant for construction of an advanced level nursing school complex. Larry and Inga Sthresley are the onsite mission workers.

MBF helps to support hospitals and clinics that serve the poor in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This provides medicines, equipment, maternity care, income and food generating gardens and indigenous healthcare training.

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## Faith Promise 2011

Pledges have reached **\$21,125** on our way to the \$40,000 goal for our "over and above" missions program. Please keep Faith Promise and our missionaries in your thoughts and prayers this year.



## Edisto Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity was founded in 1976 by Millard Fuller along with his wife, Linda. Habitat is a partnership founded on common ground—bridging theological differences by putting love into action. Everyone can use the hammer as an instrument to manifest God's love. Founder, Millard Fuller, called this concept "the theology of the hammer." "We may disagree on all sorts of other things," said Fuller, "but we can agree on the idea of building homes with God's people in need, and in doing so using biblical economics: no profit and no interest."

Habitat's ministry is based on the conviction that to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ, we must love and care for one another. Our love must not be words only - it must be true love, which shows itself in action. Habitat provides an opportunity for people to put their faith and love into action.

Worldwide Habitat has helped build over 400,000 decent, affordable houses and served more than 2 million people. Right here in Orangeburg Edisto Habitat has been active and will complete their 54th house in mid June for families in our community. Each new Habitat homeowner is presented a Bible at their house dedication along with the blessings of the volunteers who worked to complete the home.

First Presbyterian supports Edisto Habitat for Humanity financially through our annual Local Mission budget but there are still opportunities for you to offer support such as individual financial donations, volunteering at build sites, donation of time and items to the Habitat Home Store, and through prayer.

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## Additional Need

Many of you heard Elizabeth (Liz) Codington speak at GTF this winter. We were all so impressed and taken by her faith and mission as she serves our Lord in **Albania** with Christar Mission. Liz let us know that her financial support has fallen short this year and she would welcome our support through prayers as well as financial gifts.

Christar  
P.O. Box 850357  
Richardson, TX 75085-0357

# Help For Our Peruvian Neighbors

Wednesday, June 22

Have you ever wished you could go on a mission trip but cannot? Well, now you can. You can participate with those who are going to Peru and not even leave Orangeburg. How, you may ask? Well, if you wish to bring something from the following list or make a contribution for Spanish language VBS, or just join in the fellowship, bring your contribution to the Centre on **Wednesday, June 22**, from 6:00-7:00 p.m., where we will have refreshments, fellowship, and pack "goodie bags" for our folks to take to Peru. If you cannot attend on June 22 and would like to be involved, a basket will be in the Centre for collecting the supplies.

Things that are needed are: small stuffed animals are appreciated the most (check Dollar Tree); washcloths; crayons; lollipops with handles; tooth brushes; band aids; small toothpaste; combs; gallon ziplocs and Susie Dempsey needs quart ziplocs. Remember these things have to be carried by our missionaries on the plane.

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## Lunch With The Pastor at the Oaks

June 14, 2011 ❖ Methodist Oaks Dining Room

Lunch is at 11:30. Tickets may be purchased at the desk in the reception area. Call Judy Shroads, 268-9714, if you are able to come.

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## Flower Calendar

Our sanctuary flower calendar has open dates on August 14 and August 28. If you wish to place flowers in the sanctuary on one of these Sundays, please call Katherine Patterson (536-5340).

# June G.T.F.

- June 1** Ice Cream Social (6:00 p.m.)
- June 8** Supper and program presented by our VBS volunteers (6:00-7:30 p.m.)
- June 15** Refreshments and Bible Study (6:00-7:00 p.m.)
- June 22** Refreshments and local foreign missions - see announcement on this page (6:00-7:00 p.m.)
- June 29** Refreshments and Bible Study (6:00-7:00)

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## June Birthdays

- |                       |                        |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 6/01 Hugh Smith       | 6/17 Sam Roberts       |
| Will Hutto            | 6/18 Shirley Meredith  |
| 6/02 Ren Albergotti   | 6/19 Shawn Boltin      |
| 6/03 Jimmie Paul      | 6/20 Bette Bronson     |
| Lillian Whalen        | 6/21 Cal Bruner        |
| 6/05 Martin Gilchrist | Anne Griffin Patterson |
| Lyn Byrd              | 6/22 Bill Cuttino      |
| 6/06 Raymond Murphy   | "Sug" Hill             |
| Joel Cannon           | Cody Roberts           |
| 6/07 Vivienne Hutto   | 6/23 Herb Bradley      |
| 6/08 Jamie Smith      | Sherry Johnson         |
| 6/09 Lauren Arant     | Beth Rickenbaker       |
| 6/10 Haigler Bozardt  | 6/24 Eva Baroody       |
| 6/13 Wright Smith     | 6/25 Gail Tourville    |
| 6/14 Reuben Ridgeway  | 6/27 Kathy Johnson     |
| 6/15 Blake Boltin     | Vicky Strickland       |
| Morgan Gue            | Clay Price             |
| 6/16 Lessie Lee       | 6/29 Rob Roberts       |
|                       | 6/30 Davin Johnson     |

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## Community of Character

June: Punctuality

# Notes of Thanks

► To all of our wonderful friends at First Presbyterian,  
 Even though it has been five months since Harold left us, you continue to give us your love and support and our family sincerely appreciates all of your kindness.

Harold loved each and everyone of you, and can't you imagine how happy he must be in Heaven with God and all of our family and friends?

Even though we miss him terribly, we know that he appreciates all your kindness, as we do. And, I'll bet he's saying, "Hurry up and join me family and friends. It's wonderful up here."

Most sincerereky,  
 Omega and Family

► God bless you, church family, for your caring outreach to my mother and me over the past several weeks. Your prayers, concern, cards, calls and food have been wonderfully uplifting and so appreciated. Mom is slowly regaining her strength and is so thankful for the love of Christ clearly shown through you.

With Love and Gratitude,  
 Bonnie Keeney

► Dear Church members,  
 I want to thank everyone who took part in making the National Day of Prayer a success. I'm sure you all felt the presence of God as you took time to pray. We need so much more of this. A special thanks to Dwight and Kaye for all the effort they put into the special day.

Carol Ware  
 National Day of Prayer Team

# 2011 High School Graduates

Erin Buie  
 Aaron Bruner  
 Kate Edwards



S.T.E.P.S Review, Renew and Inspire is the theme for the program on Aug. 27, 2011 at Mount Pleasant Presbyterian church. We will pay early registration fees for Sunday School teachers and youth advisors and can take the bus if 15 people go.

Did you know you could have meaningful family devotions in five minutes? For more information, call the Christian Education office (534-0088, ext. 108).

# Memorials

# PRESSbyterian Deadline

**Given in memory of:**

Mrs. Anna Maria Whalen  
 Mr. Russell Turner  
 Dr. Max Culp

**July/August Issue:** June 15, 2011

Please note that the July/August issue will be mailed the last week of June. The next newsletter will not be received in homes until the last week of August. Please plan accordingly when submitting articles.

**Given by:**

Mrs. Frances Lytch	Mr. and Mrs. James Turner
Mrs. Nancy Hudson	Mrs. Peggy Crocker
Mrs. Jewell Booth	John Knox Sunday School Class

## Children's Church and Nursery Schedules

	<b>Nursery</b>	<b>Two-to-Four Year-Olds</b>	<b>Children's Church</b>
■ 6/05	Margaret and Riley Frierson	Janet Brailsford and Matt Coggiins	Wallace and Harry Mims
■ 6/12	Morgan Clark	Laura and John Kammerer	Margi Albergotti and Lexa Johnson
■ 6/19	Debbie Gramling	Ashton and Thomas Gue	Craig and Bonnie Cook
■ 6/26	Sarah Paige Bozardt	Amy and Michael Delaney	Marty and Edde Journey

***PLEASE take the time to read this very important letter from your Session!***

Dear First Presbyterian Congregation:

You have probably read or heard that our denomination, the Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA), has adopted a significant change in the constitutional standards that govern who may be eligible to be ordained as pastors, elders, and deacons. This critical change in standards will open the door to the ordaining of sexually active heterosexual men and women who are not joined in marriage, as well as sexually active male and female homosexuals.

**History of the Issue**

Since the PCUSA's adoption of the "Definitive Guidance" of 1978, there has been a great deal of confusion and uncertainty in the PCUSA regarding sexuality, marriage, and ordination. The 1978 statement declared that: *"Persons who manifest homosexual behavior must be treated with the profound respect and pastoral tenderness due all people of God. There can be no place within the Christian faith for the response to homosexual persons of mingled contempt, hatred, and fear...."*<sup>1</sup>

Our denomination has always understood that church officers are called to exemplify obedience to Christ by a higher standard than other members of the body. We have understood that among those higher standards for pastors, elders and deacons, is the commandment which says "you shall not commit adultery" (Exodus 20.14). Historically, our denomination has heard this as a clear, straightforward requirement that limits sexual activity solely to the confines of heterosexual marriage. It is a standard that is intended to apply to all Christians, and most especially to those who lead other Christians by their example of faithful obedience.

In 1996, it became clear that our culture's confusion about sexual permissiveness was creeping into our denomination's understanding of biblical teaching. Clergy sexual misconduct became an increasingly serious problem for the Church, and homosexual behavior "came out of the closet" in our culture. The assumption of a small and vocal group of activists was that any form of sexual expression should at least be permissible, if not enthusiastically endorsed. Clearly, this activist position was at odds with straightforward and unambiguous biblical teaching.

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<sup>1</sup> Although this statement was adopted by the General Assembly of the old United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, it has the force of a statement adopted by the present PC(USA), according to Article 1.9 of the Articles of Agreement which rejoined as one body, the PCUS and the UPCUSA.

The result was that the PCUSA adopted what came to be known as the “Fidelity and Chastity” standard in the Church’s constitution, as paragraph G-6.0106b. That paragraph read in part *“Those who are called to office in the church are to lead a life in obedience to Scripture and in conformity to the historic confessional standards of the church. Among these standards is the requirement to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman, or chastity in singleness.”* Within weeks of its adoption, the “Fidelity and Chastity” standard came under intense criticism and repeated efforts to revise it, rephrase it, or remove it altogether. The assaults have continued since.

In July 2010, the General Assembly, our highest governing body, met for our bi-annual conference. At that assembly, a proposal was passed to replace the current language of G-6.0106b with new language. As of May 10, 2011, our denominational voting, by all of the Presbyteries in the PCUSA, reached a majority in favor of removing the requirement of “Fidelity and/or Chastity” from our denominational ordination standards. The new language takes effect on July 11, 2011. The new standards will now read: *“Standards for ordained service reflect the church’s desire to submit joyfully to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life (G-1.0000). The governing body responsible for ordination and/or installation (G.14.0240; G-14.0450) shall examine each candidate’s calling, gifts, preparation, and suitability for the responsibilities of office. The examination shall include, but not be limited to, a determination of the candidate’s ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.4003). Governing bodies shall be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying standards to individual candidates.”*

### **Implications of the new language**

The new language leaves open the possibility that the traditional, historic understanding of “Fidelity and Chastity” may or may not be used as a standard for ordination. The new language does not mandate that practicing homosexuals be ordained but that churches and presbyteries have the option. This means that ordination standards for clergy will differ from presbytery to presbytery. It also means that ordination standards for the offices of elder and deacon will differ from church to church.

For our church, the Session is responsible for the examination, installation and ordination of elders and deacons. The Session is also responsible for interviewing, examining and issuing a “call” to pastors. Although the Presbytery is ultimately responsible for the theological examination and discipline of ministers, our church would not have to accept a homosexual minister even if the Presbytery authorized one. This means that sexual orientation is a valid question when our church selects officers for the office of elder, deacon and minister. In short, nothing has changed for us.

In accord with our Church's Confessions, we believe that the human sinfulness which Paul describes in Romans 1:18-32 finds expression in all of our relationships with one another, whether they are sexual in nature or not. We also believe that: "*The relationship between man and woman exemplifies in a basic way God's ordering of the interpersonal life for which he created mankind. Anarchy in sexual relationships is a symptom of man's alienation from God, his neighbor, and himself.*"<sup>2</sup> Further, we believe that: "*The church comes under the judgment of God and invites rejection by man when it fails to lead men and women into the full meaning of life together, or withholds the compassion of Christ from those caught in the moral confusion of our time.*"<sup>3</sup>

### **What your Session has done and is currently doing**

In March 2011, your Session voted and unanimously declared its opposition to changing the ordination standards in preparation for the Presbytery vote that also happened in March. Although our Session vote does not influence a Presbytery vote, our Presbytery voted in opposition to changing the standards.

On May 11, 2011, the Session approved the creation of a task force consisting of five elders (John Shuler, Geb Runager, Sherry Newnam, David Gillespie, Martin Gilchrist) to make recommendations to the Session in understanding the issue, its implications, our options and how to best facilitate the education and discussion of this issue among the congregation. This will take some time. The Session has also stated that the communication will be transparent, informed and factual to the congregation. We will not abide in conjecture but will seek to keep everyone informed.

In the days to come, it is likely that there will be continuing media coverage about this issue. You will no doubt hear of PCUSA congregations threatening to pull out of the denomination. You will also no doubt hear about a number of congregations who believe that this step will serve and glorify God, better than ever before. Please remember, regardless of your personal point of view, that ALL sinners – including us – are welcome in our church. We are a community of grace and we will continue to point people to the Good News of forgiveness, love and new life in Christ, as we live into repentance of our sin. Without question, Jesus welcomed all sinners to come to Him and be given new life. By the grace of God, we will continue to be faithful servants of Jesus Christ. We simply ask that you continue to be faithful and pray as we all seek God's will.

The Session  
First Presbyterian Church  
Orangeburg, South Carolina

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<sup>2</sup> *Book of Confessions*, Confession of 1967.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

**First Presbyterian Church**

650 Summers Avenue  
Orangeburg, SC 29115

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**I WILL SING ALOUD  
OF YOUR STEADFAST LOVE  
IN THE MORNING.**

PSALM 59:16



June 2011