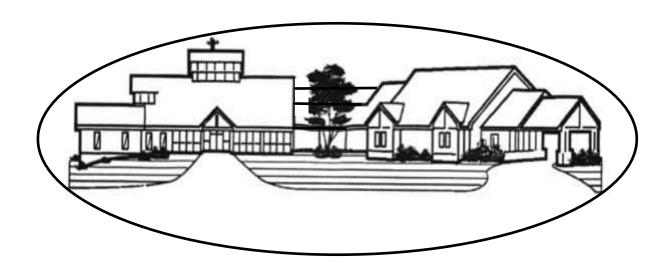
Agapegram September 2025



ETERNAL SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH 220 Carson Road

Seneca, South Carolina 29678

www.eternalshepherd.org

office@eternalshepherd.org

Office: 864-882-3209 or 864-882-5512 Little Lambs Preschool: 864-882-3202



Death Figured Out

Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul.

Matt. 10:28a EHV

We've just witnessed another tragic shooting at a Christian school. It brought to mind a statement of an anonymous reader of Gene Veith's blog that he reposted after a prior church shooting. Is our confidence in Christ and our love for our hurting neighbor strong enough to say what follows?

Dear next mass church murderer,

We'd like you to consider our church as your possible target. ... Understand, (of course you do) that you will very likely die that day as well. ...

And the whole "death" thing raises a very important point. Ours is a Christian church and death is a particular interest of ours. We think we have it figured out. As you enter our sanctuary, you won't be able to help noticing that the most prominent feature displayed there is a large cross — an ancient Roman instrument of execution. It's our teaching that it was a death, the death of God's Son on a cross like that, that frees us from the fear of our own death. Don't misunderstand — we're not seeking death, but we're not fearing it, either. Jesus demonstrated that if we followed Him through our own death, we would then follow Him into resurrection and eternal life. He demonstrated this for us and that demonstration was remarkably well-documented both in the Book He left for us and in the lives of His closest friends and followers, most of whom died rather than deny that Jesus' resurrection had happened. Which to our way of thinking is a very strong endorsement.

Understand that we are not seeking our death. Nor, for that matter, are we seeking yours. To the contrary, our goal is passing out life. "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" is how Jesus said it in John 10:10. The thief referred to here by Jesus turns out to be a very specific thief and it's our concern that you are working for him. We'd rather you come in and work along side us instead. The doors are always open — at least on a Sunday morning. Our weekly service typically ends with the pastor saying something like, "the peace of the Lord be with you always." And that's what we want — for us and for you; peace. Come visit us.

– Reposted by Gene Veith, Patheos blog, Nov. 2017.

Indeed, if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord. So whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. Rom. 14:8 EHV

Pastor David



Join us "Round the Table" for an exciting study of Extra-Ordinary Women as we study "Women of the Bible" by Ann Spangler and Jean Syswerda.

This class will begin on Thurs., Sept. 18th from 3:00 – 4:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall

You may buy the class book on Amazon for \$13.14 (Please note that the book has "A One Year Devotional Study" under the title of the book.)

We also offer this class as a Virtual Study via zoom. For questions or more information contact Margi McLain at (615) 293-2211.



TO THE TENTH GENERATION

Beginning on September 28, 2025 Margi McLain will facilitate a small group Bible Study on Sunday mornings. The group will use "To the Tenth Generation", a book written by Ray and Jani Ortlund as a discussion guide. We will explore how we can experience the greatness that God can accomplish through a Christian family. We will look at the big picture of a Christian family as well as explore practical ideas to enhance marriage, parenting, and grandparenting. Please let Margi know if you would be interested in this 8-10 week study. margimclain@gmail.com (615-293-2211)



Deaconess' Musings Never Me.

"It's not about you."

Words that, while perhaps a bit blunt, are a daily necessity. And in reality...it's quite true.

It's not about me. It's never been about me. It's never going to be about me... or you.

It's all about Jesus.

What does it say that "it's all about Jesus" change for us, in us, and from us?

(I'll give you a hint, but it should be quite obvious.) Only everything changes.

I think, as good Christians within the Lutheran tradition, we are quite confident in saying Jesus did it all for me (or you) and that we bring nothing to the "table" in terms of deserving/earning salvation and forgiveness. On account of Christ's death and resurrection, we now stand fully forgiven and made right in the sight of God our Creator. Eternal life was granted to us through the waters of our baptisms and we now live in the full hope of the world and age to come.

So, what? What's the big deal about all of this?

It's no longer about us (it never was about us to begin with, being dead in our sins and all – Romans 6:23), but about what Jesus did *for* us. And now we live our lives...*for others*.

So, what? What about others?

Your life – actions, words, behaviors – now becomes a witness to the world around you. This world, full of sorrow, pain, brokenness, confusion, anger, apathy, does not know the Jesus that set you free. This world sees no need for the Christ who paid the steep price for its very sin. This world does not understand why. They see evil and call it good. They see the good and call it evil.

But you, dear brother and sister, know why. You have seen the difference Jesus makes. You know and rejoice in the Lord who will one day wipe away every tear and make all things new (Revelation 7:15ff). You rest in the blessed assurance that your sins are forgiven.

Show them. Show the cold, unbelieving world that this Jesus, whom has claimed you and whose name you claim, makes a difference in your life. Show them that this Christ, the God made Man who dared to love the world that He *died* for it. That He did not stay dead, but rose back to life for *them*. Not just you. Not just your family. Not just your church. *For the world*.

It's not about you. And that's ok. It's about Jesus for you and for you to show to the world.

While we yet breathe, we have work to do. Confident in our Savior's saving forgiveness, we turn to a world lost within its own self and proclaim Jesus in our words and in our daily actions.

May it always be all about Jesus and never me...or you. ~Deaconess Holly

One Step Closer Signposts On The Way To Heaven

(Elder's Journey)

Objects in mirror are closer than they appear.

I am sure you have noticed this warning on the Passenger's Mirror. My version: "Heaven is closer than it appears."

Our dear friend lost her husband, unexpectedly.

- "I never knew all the things he did. And, I don't know how to do them."
- Another friend was called to heaven after 5 years of declining health.
- The Left Behind discovered big debt.
- The IRS seized their accounts the week after he died.

What do these have in common?

- One person was ready for Heaven!
- The other was not ready to be Left Behind.

Do you know which remote turns on the TV?

Do you know which button to push to wash your own clothes?

Do you know which "gas" to put in your car?

Do you know how to pay the bills each month?

Do you know your bank accounts and their balances?

Do you have and know your trusted helpers?

Find them BEFORE you need them.

Your pastor
 Your tax accountant

Your estate advisor
 Your handy man

Your financial advisor
 Your grass cutter

Try This: (Don't procrastinate. Mark this as URGENT.)

Trade places with your significant other.

For one day. For one week. For one month.

Pray With Me (cjbluhm@gmail.com):

O God, my time is in your hands. Help me to be ready for Heaven and help me to be ready to be Left Behind. In the midst of uncertainty lead me by your never-failing grace. Walk with me through difficult times; watch over me and give me a spirit of love and compassion.

BE READY

Every day, we are one day closer to Heaven.

Every day, we are one day closer to being Left Behind.



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD NEWS



Did You Know That Eternal Shepherd is Hosting a Virtual Shoebox Packing Party? YES, We are!! From September 1st until November 30th, our goal is to get 25 shoeboxes packed ONLINE. Each online box will cost the packer \$30.00 that is collected at check-out.

Shoebox gifts built online go to the ends of the earth to children in some of the hardest-to-reach places—whether deep jungles, city slums, steep mountainsides, or one of more than 1,000 remote Pacific islands. Many of these areas are resistant to the Gospel, for cultural or religious reasons, and are home to some people who have never heard the Name of Jesus Christ.

When you Build a Shoebox Online, it provides believers in remote regions a creative way to share the Good News in a culturally sensitive manner. Online boxes are carefully prepared, abiding by strict customs regulations to safeguard partners who will deliver the gifts, as well as the boys and girls who receive them. Jesus said, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations" (Matthew 28:19). Help fulfill the Great Commission and take the Gospel to the ends of the earth by building a shoebox online today!

If you would like to help us reach our goal of packing 25 shoeboxes online, please use the link below, or scan the QR Code to open the page for Eternal Shepherd Lutheran Church. All the boxes packed through these links will be added to our shoebox total for the year.

THANK YOU for being a missionary right from your home! Terri Baumann & the OCC Committee

LINK:

https://build-a-shoebox.samaritanspurse.org/view/7e225649-bdb7-4cc5-86e5-d2f4b0e4fcba

QR Code:



The Project Leader Workshop will take place on Friday, September 12, 2025 from 6:30-8:30pm. Dinner in the form of a baked potato bar will be provided. If you'd like to learn more about shoeboxes, please join us!

Thank you from Little Lambs Preschool

Many thanks to some members of the ESLC youth group for their much-appreciated service project of cleaning the large outdoor plastic playground equipment on July 26. Deaconess Holly organized the group who mixed work with fun on both playgrounds. Little Lambs love to you all!

The preschool board and staff thank all the volunteers who helped spread the mulch on the two playgrounds behind the church on August 6. You all did a wonderful job and we appreciate your time and hard work to make these areas safe and usable for the children and adults. An additional thank you goes to Paul Sherman who devotes many hours to the maintenance of the beautiful building and grounds of ESLC!



HONDURAS NEWS

Once again preparations have begun for a mission team from ESLC to travel to Tegucigalpa, Honduras for a week of ministering to and serving the people of that capital city. For those unfamiliar with our ministry there, this is a medical mission with an evangelistic outcome. The team is made up of missionaries from all walks of life, with and without medical backgrounds. There is work for everyone to do during the week there, especially the work of bringing Christ's love to the people of Honduras. Our team is lead by John Cochell who will gladly answer any questions you may have about the trip as will Pastor Ray Ramsburg who is helping John to coordinate the activities. Please let either one of us know if you are interested in being part of this year's mission.

The anticipated cost per missionary is approximately \$1850.00 which is the responsibility of the individual missionary. There are additional costs for supplies and equipment for the ministry which are covered by fund raisers. We anticipate holding our "Helping Hands for Honduras" fund raiser from mid-October to mid-November and will be handing out gardening gloves to be filled with contributions of cash or checks. This will enable us to do the ministries of medical,

dental, optical, pharmacy, water filters, children's ministry, and evangelism that are part of our mission. We purchase items such as eyeglasses, sunglasses, toothbrushes and paste, water filters and what ever else may come up. Stay tuned for more information on how you can help this to be another successful mission, and potential missionaries please let us know of your intent as we have a lot of coordinating to accomplish.

The next meeting of the Honduras team will take place in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday, September 21, 2025 at 12:30pm following the late service.



Dios te bendiga (God Bless You)!

Comfort Dog News

August has been a busy month for Seth and his team but filled with lots of blessings! I wanted to share with you one very special visit we had in the early part of the month. Many of you know that Kathy and Craig Bergeson are involved in the Huntington's Disease Society of America South Carolina Chapter. Huntington's Disease (HD) is a genetic disease that causes nerve cells in the brain to break down, leading to involuntary body movements, personality changes and difficulty thinking. Kathy and Craig have become wonderful advocates of a young man, named Michael, who is in his thirties and has HD. Not only do they support Michael, but they also encourage his family during this challenging time of caring for him. We were happy to visit Michael at Greenville Memorial Hospital (GMH) earlier in July and then were invited to attend his birthday party on August 2 at the hospital.

We thought it was just going to be a simple gathering of a few family members, the Bergeson's and us. When we got there, we entered a small meeting room at GMH not far from Michael's room. Then the Clemson Cheer Team with Tiger Cub, the Neurology staff, friends, family and other supporters of Michael arrived. The small meeting room quickly overflowed with much love, encouragement and birthday wishes for Michael. It brought tears to my eyes to see how much Michael is loved and at the same time realizing what a challenge this disease must be for Michael and his family.

This ministry has been an incredible blessing for me, Rudy and all of Seth's team. When I was told that God, through this ministry, would take me places I may never have gone otherwise, I am brought to tears. Sometimes it is hard, to see people suffering and going through such difficult challenges, but then I think, God who made this beautiful dog, Seth, enabled us to bring a few moments of sunshine, joy, love and happiness to someone's life. And as I always end my articles, I say that whatever we do, "To God be the Glory"!

To God be the Glory, *Kyra Carbone, Top Dog* 864-932-8308



Clemson Cheer Team, Michael's Neurologist, Michael, Tiger Cub and Seth!

MISSION COMMITTEE NEWS

The month of August we were the *Mission of the Month* and set up a display in the Narthex with various pictures/videos on the Narthex Monitor. As you could tell from the display, Eternal Shepherd is very active in Missions and there are opportunities for everyone in our congregation. The display will be moved into the Fellowship Hall before you read this September Agapegram. Two ongoing opportunities are with our Disaster Response Teams and our Ramp Building Team. Ramp Building is basically within Oconee County and Disaster Response is typically within a five hour drive. With Hurricane Helene creating lots of down trees and home damage, our chain saw team has been very busy, and now a new opportunity is available for all:

Henderson County & Hurricane Helene effected area:

The ESLC disaster response reconstruction team has been contacted by the construction team of Habitat for Humanity to assist in construction of homes in the coming months that will be replacing fully destroyed homes for residents from Hurricane Helene. Our group will be traveling on one of the following weeks to work in the construction efforts:

November 10-14

November 17-21

December 1-5

December 8-12

If you would like more information on the above, contact John Beattie (864) 280-5008

For any information on our Mission Committee, please contact me, Lars Helland, at Lars.Helland48@gmail.com or call/text my cell 706-244-4544.

Eternal Shepherd Seneca is certainly Blessed to be a Blessing.

Would like to give a Prayer Shawl to someone you know? They are available NOW!

If you decide to give a prayer shawl, you need to go to the self-serve kiosk in the Fellowship near the closets where a prayer shawl is displayed. Beside the shawl are bins. Two bins contain the completed prayer shawls. Select the one that you think the person would like, record your gift on the log above the bin with your name, the person that will receive the prayer shawl and the date. We request that if you personally present this prayer shawl that you pray with the person. That is all that is required

The Prayer Shawl Ministry asks that the members of the ESLC congregation assist in the distribution of these prayer shawls. You are the eyes and ears of this congregation and you, as individuals, know when someone is hurting and would benefit from this caring gift. Anyone can receive a prayer shawl; they do not need to be a member of ESLC. You do not need to ask anyone for permission to give a prayer shawl.

We have given over 200 prayer shawls. The list of the people who have received them is found behind the sign out sheet.

Please include this ministry in your prayers, praying that there will always be prayer shawls available when they are needed and they are given to the people who will benefit from this caring gift.

If you have any questions or would like to participate in this ministry, please contact Sue Hauser.

Hospitality continues as an important ministry in our church since our church believes that fellowship with other Christians is vital. We always remain committed to our church and are always looking for new members. We are increasingly utilizing this ministry more and more with each



passing day. We would love to have more people involved: This requires as LITTLE or as MUCH as you would like to help with: providing food, set-up, serving and clean-up at certain functions. All these are helpful and needed. If you are interested in joining our ministry, please contact Colleen Hesemann

On Sundays, we are involved with treats for Bible study between 1st. and 2nd. services. This again can be as MUCH or as LITTLE as you want, having the coffee made and any treats that can be homemade, store bought or packaged: Emphasis being put on amount...it need not be large quantities...working with other families is often helpful. If you sign up and are not sure how to proceed, just let Colleen Hesemann know and she will help you learn the ropes (which is not difficult). It will allow you to get to know more people and is great fun. The pumper pots are now color coated...matching color to color and they will work.

Hospitality has worked to "organize" the kitchen. Items have been removed and they are currently in the basement. If you feel that any of these items be returned, please let hospitality know. Many of these items have taken up shelving space and have not been used for the last two years. Included in this is now the "Melamine Dishes".

Thanks to all who do so much to further our "hospitality" ministry. Blessings, Colleen

ON-LINE GIVING Remember you can give on-line. Just go to our church website at www.eternalshepherd.org and click on the On-line Giving bar in the top right corner on the homepage. ~Thank you for your faithful support.



Scrip Cards are available and make great gifts as well as earn money for Eternal Shepherd at the same time.

Please note we have Publix, Ingles, Walmart and Food Lion gift cards available. For orders pick up an order form from the Scrip Box or please contact *Beckie Rau* at (864) 944-6096. After the order is received one of the Scrip ladies will contact you to make arrangements for delivery. Scrip Card Team: *Beckie Rau*, *Libby Dunlap*, *Elisabeth Baker & Sue Hauser*. ~*Thank you for your support*.



<u>DETENTION CENTER MINISTRY</u>: The next prison ministry will be in December at the Oconee County Detention Center in Walhalla. Life Reference Bibles will be handed out on Friday, September 12th. <u>Attention Cookie Bakers</u>: Due to the Memorial Service for Al Johnson, the visit to the Detention Center has been cancelled and NO COOKIES ARE NEEDED THIS



MONTH. Thank you so much for your help and your

support of this ministry. If you are interested in serving our Lord in this important ministry, or have any questions please contact Ann Miller at (864) 637-8353 or asjohn315@gmail.com. ~Thank you

Volunteers Needed for BabyRead

BabyRead desperately needs volunteers to read one-on-one to moms and their babies or toddlers at public venues twice a month for one hour each time.

We currently have 10 new families who are waiting for a volunteer reader. All of our current readers are assigned to other families. To become a BabyRead volunteer, visit www.babyread.org. Please consider serving in this ministry.



FOOD BANK NEWS: Please help us in collecting preferred needed canned, or boxed grocery items each month to help restock the Golden Corner Food Pantry's shelves. September's preferred product is "Canned Vegetables" (Please place your items in the containers marked Food Bank down by the Fellowship Hall). ~Thank you for your generosity and support.



ESLC CARD CART

Come check out our new assortment of cards. If you have a chance, stop by the Card Cart Ministry Display in the Fellowship Hall. You might find a card that is just perfect for someone you know! There is a wide variety for all kinds of occasions and the price is perfect!!! \$.50 for all cards and \$5.00 for a box of 12 found on the bottom of the cart.



Hospitality Happenings for September

9/7 — Rich & Colleen Hesemann & Berniece Richards

9/14 — Tony & Sandy Alford & Mark & Sandy Kunkel

9/21 — Paul & Susan Sherman

9/28 — Jeff & Mary Ann McKay



Hospitality is going full speed. We provide for Memorial Services and Sunday Bible Study. We always remain committed to our church and are always looking for new members. This requires as little or as much as you would like to help with: providing food, set-up, serving and clean-up. All these are helpful and needed.

If you are interested in any of these, please contact me at 864-784-0421 and I will gladly help. ~Colleen Hesemann

September Birthdays

- 1 Kerry Blount Laura Broderdorf
- 2 Jim Clack Katrina Madden Ted Wanthal
- 3 Ann Cochell
- 5 Carl Sitler
- 7 Lisa Hill Joel Wells
- 8 Pat Milz Jerry Seiff
- 9 Pete Thoma
- 10 –Terri Baumann Kenny Bell
- 11 Frank Kieninger
- 14 Juliette Johnsonwall Kaylee Phelan
- 15 Karen Eckersley Scott Krueger
- 16 Mike Scott

- 17 Mags Cox Lucas McKay Evelyn Seigler
- 18 Carrie Haenggi Jeff McKay Phillip Welte
- 19 Judy Hammer Ann Miller
- 20 Chris Christensen
- 21 Linda Overby Scott Robirds
- 22 Katie Getchell
- 23 Keith Phelan
- 24 Jacob Zirbel
- 27 Kayla Fireovid Judy Reese
- 29 Don Del Priore III Aubrey Gemkow Jean Hippchen Hannah Wells
- 30 Kailynne Wood



September Anniversaries

- 1 Guy Loftin & Marla Moseley Kim & Sue Wennerrmark
- 7 Alec & Teresa Todd
- 17 Carl & Katherine Sitler
- 21 Fred & Debbie Bell
- 22 Dave & Mary Compton
- 23 Pete & Laura Thoma
- 24 Tony & Sandy Alford
- 29 Larry & Ann Miller



SPECIAL GIFTS/MEMORIALS

In July the following gifts were given:

The Church Bus Fund received a gift of \$100.00

The Comfort Dog Ministry Fund received gifts of \$330.19

The Disaster Response Team Fund received gifts of \$400.00

The Elders Fund received a gift of \$33.78

The Food Bank Fund received gifts of \$191.63

The Foothills Care Center Baby Bottle Drive received gifts of \$907.80

The General Fund received a gift of \$27.00 from Thrivent Choice, and a gift of \$800.00 from Blessings Shared Grant

The Haiti Missions Fund received gifts of \$350.00

The Little Lambs Preschool Fund received a gift of \$96.71, and a gift of \$150.00 for the LLP C.A.R.E. Scholarship Fund

The Operation Christmas Child Fund received gifts of \$3,413.31

The Safety Committee Fund received a gift of \$48.13

The Youth Fund received gifts of \$509.65 for the National Gathering



Little Lambs Tales

"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity." 1 Timothy 4:12

As I write this article we have finished our first full week of preschool. It has been a good start with only a few tears! Our school is bustling with activity, and we are all so happy to be back in session.

Watching and observing the children, I am once again reminded how even though our preschool children are so young, they set a great example for us on how to live as Christians.

They love one another without bias. They speak words of kindness to one another and encourage us to likewise use encouraging words. As they listen to the Chapel message, they listen with an open heart, trust, and have faith in the message they are hearing.

We are blessed here at Little Lambs Preschool to be using the Concordia Press Curriculum materials which will guide our lessons through the messages we hear during our Chapel time each week. How fortunate to be able to base our academic lessons on our Christian faith. It is such a gift, and we love to share this gift with our beautiful children.

Some dates to keep in mind for September:

- Sept 1 Labor Day (no school)
- September 11 Farm Day
- September 21 Teacher Commissioning 8:30 am service

Please be mindful when driving through the parking lot during our school day and watch your speed! We want to make sure we keep all our Little Lambs safe! Thank you!

As we begin our school year, we ask for your continued prayers for all of us at Little Lambs Preschool. We appreciate all the support you continue to give to us and know that it is because of your support that Little Lambs Preschool continues to thrive!

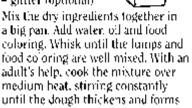


Make Your Own "Clay"

Make one or more of these different types of homemade play dough. (Ask an adult to help.) Think about God and how He loves us, shapes us and molds us. Squeeze, roll and shape the clay into many different and unique shapes.

Salt Dough

- 3 cups of flour
- 1-1/2 cups salt
- 6 teaspoons cream of tartar
- 3 cups of water
- 3-4 tablespoons oil
- food coloring
- glitter (optional)



into a hall. When the dough cools, knead in the glitter. The dough will keep several weeks in plastic containers or bags.

* * *

Rubbery Play Dough

- 2 cups baking soda
- 1-1/2 cups waterI cup cornstarch

In a pan, mix the ingredients with a fork until smooth. With an adult's help, boil the mixture over medium heat until thick. Spoon onto a plate or wax paper, and let coo.

Oatmeal Clay

* * *

- Loup rolled oats
- 2/3 cup flour
- 1/2 cup water
- tood coloring

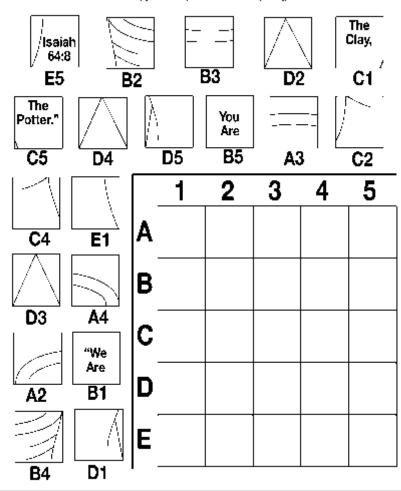
Mix all the ingredients in a large bowl. Add more flour if necessary for the dough to form a lump. Knead the dough on a floured surface until it is smooth. Add food coloring to the water before mixing the dough, or divide into balls and add coloring after mixed and kneaded.



eack to school

It is back to school time! You will continue to learn, grow and change. The Bible tells us that we are like clay and that God is forming as everyday.

Directions: Copy these squares onto the square grid below.



SERVICE TIMES

8:30 a.m. Worship Service (Communion 2nd & 4th Sundays)

9:45 a.m. Sunday School & Adult Bible Study

11:00 a.m. Worship Service (Communion 1st & 3rd Sundays)



Eternal Shepherd Lutheran Church 220 Carson Rd. Seneca, SC 29678

THOSE WHO SERVE

Pastor: David Hammer
Deaconess: Holly Cox
Secretary: Celeste Entrekin
Preschool Director: Gina Cote
Choir Director: Rick Schmidt
Choir Accompanist: Michelle Rowland
Organist: David Phillips

MISSIONARIES

Joanna Johnson, Taiwan Nate Esala, Lutheran Bible Translators David & Dr. Arianna Shirk, Kenya S.E.D. Missionaries to Peru