

# THE HOME PAGE

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## FROM THE PASTOR Stephen Clyborne

### Welcome, Julie

On Monday, February 22, the Earle Street Academy welcomes Julie Branyon as our new Director (see pages 4). Julie is a delightful lady, and comes to us with amazing credentials and impressive experience. We are so excited about the future of our program with Julie as our new Director. Please pray for Julie as she enters this position. Even though she is imminently qualified, this job is quite challenging, demanding, and stressful. She will need our full support and our constant prayers. Please reach out to Julie and do all you can to give her a warm Earle Street welcome.

### Thank you, Mackenzie

As we welcome Julie, we express our heartfelt gratitude to Mackenzie Elliott, who, along with Shanna Johnson, our previous Director, has worked so hard to keep our Academy healthy and vibrant during these unprecedented times. Mackenzie has poured her heart and soul into this position, which was much more than just a job to her. We are so thankful that Mackenzie, Andrew, and Opal plan to stay in our church. Please express your appreciation to her for her devoted service to our Academy and to our church. Mackenzie, we love you and pray for you as you enter a new season of your life.

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If there is anything we have learned over the past year, it is that there are no shortcuts. Some things do not happen overnight. There is a story in the Talmud about a traveler who asks a child, “Is there a shortcut to such and such a village?”

The child wisely answered, “There is a shortcut that is long and a long way that is short.” In Psalm 23, there is a beautiful phrase that we might overlook if we are too familiar with this psalm. It is the phrase that appears in the latter part of verse three. Most of us learned it from the King James Version, which says, “He leadeth me in paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.” Rabbi Harold Kushner says that the Hebrew phrase actually means something more complex and more interesting than the King James Version or any other version might convey. It literally means, “The Shepherd leads me in roundabout ways that end up in the right direction.” I can relate to that. Whether it be on a vacation trip or the journey of life, most of us have had the experience of trying to take a shortcut and finding ourselves entangled in a mess we would have done well to avoid. How often have we said to our doctor, our accountant, our teacher, our insurance agent, or even our minister, “Isn’t there an easier way than this?” And the answer has been virtually the same one as the child gave the traveler: “Yes, there are shortcuts but they will end up being longer, harder, and more expensive in the end.” Sometimes the shortcuts are too easy. They do not challenge us to discover our strengths, and they do not give us enough time to let those strengths emerge. Sometimes the most direct routes in life take us along a highway that may be straight, but barren and stark. Often, the road that is long and winding gives us the beautiful and expansive view that the shortcut would not have provided.

The Gospel of Luke tells us that Jesus “set His face toward Jerusalem” (9:51) where He would suffer, die, and be raised. But He did not get there overnight. Between the time when He set His face toward Jerusalem, and the time He actually arrived there on Palm Sunday, He prepared Himself and His disciples. He worked, He prayed, He taught, He healed, and He warned His followers of what was to come. He did not get to Jerusalem overnight.

So the church takes forty days during the season of Lent to prepare for the celebration of Easter. In order to fully appreciate the joy and celebration of Easter, we have to journey with Jesus through the sorrow, the rejection, and the suffering. We don’t get there overnight. The agony of Good Friday makes the joy of Easter Sunday even more exhilarating.

Someone has said, “Patience with people is love. Patience with God is faith.” Faith is believing in God’s reliability even when the road is long and winding. Faith is believing that sorrow gives way to joy, that the worst thing that happens to us is never the last thing that happens to us. During this season, as we deny ourselves, take up our crosses, and follow Jesus down this long and winding road, we discover that sometimes when God seems to be doing less than we hope, God is always doing more than we know.

## JOIN US IN WORSHIP

**Sunday, February 21**  
*First Sunday in Lent*

**Solo:** *O Love That Will Not Let Me Go* by Janice Hinnant

**Scripture:** Genesis 9:8-17; 1 Peter 3:18-22

**Sermon:** "The Rainbow in the Clouds"  
by Stephen Clyborne

**Sound Technician:** Hunter Freeman

**Video Technician:** Bryan Tankersley

## IN MEMORIAM

**JANE HARRIS**

November 19, 1932 - February 17, 2021

## CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY

**Randy, Miriam, Olivia and Josh Ellenburn and family** in the death of Randy's aunt, Olivia and Josh's aunt, Nora Vinson.

## RECENTLY HOSPITALIZED

Lindsey Keck    Miles Rizzo

## ATTENDANCE REPORT

**Week of February 14, 2021**

**Sunday School Attendance**

|                 |     |
|-----------------|-----|
| On-campus ..... | 97  |
| Virtual.....    | 72  |
| Total.....      | 169 |

**Worship Attendance**

|                 |     |
|-----------------|-----|
| On-campus ..... | 112 |
| Virtual.....    | 196 |
| Total.....      | 308 |

## BUDGET REPORT

**Week of February 14, 2021**

|                                   |           |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| Weekly Budget Requirements.....   | \$27,406  |
| Budget Gifts (this week).....     | \$20,921  |
| Budget Requirements to Date ..... | \$191,842 |
| Budget Gifts to Date .....        | \$150,999 |

## NEW WAYS TO CONNECT

### Chat With Us Live

On Sundays during our livestream, a staff member will now be available in the comment section to chat. From the YouTube app, use your mobile device to send a message just like a text message. We hope this feature will allow those watching online to feel even more connected. Simply let us know you are worshipping with us or if you have a prayer need or concern. Let's remember to use this feature with respect and reverence while we worship together and that chats are visible to everyone.



### Music Monday

Many of you have expressed your desire for more ways to study and worship through music. Beginning this Monday, February 22nd, we will have a new video released each Monday called "Music Monday." You will receive this link through email or you can access the video directly on our YouTube channel or social media pages. This link will offer a few selections from previous worship services and special events. Be on the lookout for this link and share with your friends and family!

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### ASSISTANCE WITH VACCINE REGISTRATION 65+ eligible effective February 8

As the vaccines for Covid-19 have begun to roll out, many individuals are experiencing difficulty in getting registered for an opportunity to receive the vaccine, even though they are in the eligible categories. Do you need assistance or direction in knowing where to begin? Perhaps you don't have a smart phone or device to sign up online or don't know whom or where to call. If you are having difficulty in this area, our Medical Ministry Team would like to assist you.

The current eligibility group, as of February 8, includes individuals who are 65 years old or older. If you are having difficulty getting registered or would like to have someone give you some assistance or direction, please contact Denise Plumblee directly or call the church office. We will gather some preliminary information and then put you in touch with one of the team members who can assist you. Our Medical Ministry Team wants to do everything we can to keep our congregation safe and healthy.

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### INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES

During our winter months there is always the possibility of bad weather. For information on cancellations or delays, call the church office at 233-5332 and dial extension 500. We will have information posted on our website, Facebook and Twitter pages, WYFF-TV and WSPA-TV.



## From the Minister of Administration

Denise Plumblee (ext. 211) – [denise@ESBCgreenville.org](mailto:denise@ESBCgreenville.org)

**“By your words I can see where I’m going; they throw a beam of light on my dark path.”**

Psalm 119:105 *The Message*

Lent is a time of self-examination, a time to confront death and to acknowledge the source of life. Lent is a major penitential season of preparation for Easter. After His transfiguration, Jesus started His journey to the cross. The church does the same during this season of Lent. This season is equal only to Advent in importance in the Christian year.

The season of Lent officially begins forty-six calendar days before Easter Sunday. However, Lent only lasts for forty days as the Sundays in these weeks are not considered a part of the season. The church recognizes Sundays as a day to remember and celebrate the resurrection of Jesus so they are not considered as part of Lent. Therefore, these Sundays are referred to as Sundays in Lent, and not Sundays of Lent. The season of Lent officially begins on Ash Wednesday and concludes on Good Friday. Holy Week, which includes Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, are included in this season.

The period of forty days is connected with many biblical events, but especially with the forty days that Jesus spent in the wilderness preparing for His ministry. Therefore, the forty days of Lent are used as a period of introspection, self-examination and repentance.

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### Lenten Sermon Series *God's Determination to Have a Family*

During the season of Lent, we are confessing our rebelliousness and sinfulness, and at the same time celebrating our faith that God still patiently claims and reclaims us as His children. God goes to great lengths to forgive and restore us, even to the extent of giving His only Son, by whose life, death, and resurrection, we are adopted into God's family.

We invite you to join us each Sunday for our Lenten Sermon Series as we journey together on this Lenten road.

#### **FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT**

February 21, 2021  
“The Rainbow in the Clouds”  
Genesis 9:8-17; 1 Peter 3:18-22

Clouds and rainbows are reminders of the destructive nature of sin and God's determination to redeem a fallen creation. The rainbow is a sign of God's covenant and promise to spare us what we deserve.

When I worked in the financial services industry, protecting the financial data and identities of our banking clients was of utmost importance. As a safeguard in this protection effort, we were forced to change our computer passwords every month. Each new password had to be between eight and twenty characters in length, contain both upper- and lowercase letters, contain at least one number, contain at least one special character and be different from any of our past eleven passwords. While I certainly understood the need for this requirement, it was very difficult to create a new password every month that met this criteria and yet be one that I could remember! That was over ten years ago and passwords are more prevalent and important now than ever. I checked my recent list of passwords (yes, I know having a list is a no-no!) and I have over fifteen passwords for the various places I need to log in.

Recently a member of ESBC shared a devotion with me that has some great insights about creating passwords but more importantly, a great way to remind ourselves that God is with us every day, even here in the digital world. That devotion is below and I hope you find it as beneficial as I did.

#### **A SIMPLE REMINDER**

By Lorna MacIntyre

I was feeling the stress building up at work, and I wasn't handling it very well. It wasn't possible to walk away from the situation, so instead I took a few moments to restart my computer. When the login box appeared, I typed in my user-name. Then I paused and smiled in the middle of a secular workroom as I typed in my password, which reminded me how much Jesus loves me and needs me to be right where I am.

My work password has to include at least eight characters in a combination of upper- and lowercase letters, numbers, and a symbol. I had previously realized that the Bible provides perfect variety for this: book name, chapter number, colon, and verse number. Every morning I start my day with a reminder that God is at the heart of everything I do. When I lose sight of God's presence at work, I restart my computer and have the opportunity to reaffirm that God is with me.

Every month I get to pick a new affirmation to start my day. I take my time over this decision. I even look forward to changing my password! I enjoy this simple way of incorporating God into my digital life.

# From the Minister Of Music and Worship

Janice Hinnant (ext. 202) – [janice@ESBCgreenville.org](mailto:janice@ESBCgreenville.org)

**Preschool Choir, Music Makers, and Young Musicians**—It's not too late to join in!

Wednesday, February 24

- Anytime — Preschool Choir download activities
- 5:15 pm — Music Makers Choir zoom rehearsal with Rosemary Cureton
- 6:00 pm — Young Musicians zoom rehearsal with Debbie Blume

**Youth Choir**—We were missing most all of you last Sunday. If we are going to prepare two pieces for our video, you need to come to rehearsal! I hope to see you this Sunday at 3:30!

**Earle Street Ringers**—Great rehearsals last week! I look forward to seeing you again this Sunday!

# From the Minister To Preschoolers and Children

Karli Selz (ext. 209) – [karli@ESBCgreenville.org](mailto:karli@ESBCgreenville.org)

Earle Street Children go to:  
**CENTRIKID CAMPS**  
July 19 - 23, 2021  
Ridgecrest Conference Center  
Children 2nd - 5th grade  
If you are a parent of a first grader you would like to come to camp, let's chat!  
\$339  
\$60 Nonrefundable deposit due March 1, 2021  
Contact [karli@esbcgreenville.org](mailto:karli@esbcgreenville.org)

## INTERESTED IN GOING TO CAMP?

For more information or to sign up for camp, please contact Karli at [karli@esbcgreenville.org](mailto:karli@esbcgreenville.org) or 233-532, ext. 209.

MEET OUR

*New Director*



**Julie Branyon**

I was born in Greenville, SC and raised in the Pelzer-Williamston area. I am a graduate of Anderson University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education and a graduate of Furman University with a Master of Arts degree in Early Childhood Education. I taught for 15 years in Early Childhood Education programs in Greenville and Anderson and served as an Early Interventionist for children with developmental delays and special needs for 5 years before becoming the Director at Earle Street Academy. I have also written and taught continuing education classes for area preschool programs. I am passionate about early childhood education. I am very excited about the opportunity to lead and work with ESA. I am also looking forward to getting to know all of the children, families, and staff of ESA. I am a member of Whitefield Baptist Church. My husband and I have been married for 16 years and are licensed foster/adoptive parents.

## SUPPORT EARLE STREET ACADEMY WHILE YOU GROCERY SHOP!



### Do you shop at Publix?

It's a great time to help our school while you get your groceries! Our preschool is a participant in the 'Publix Partners.' When you check out, enter your phone number on the keypad and our school will benefit from a percentage of your purchase! If you need help setting up your account, please contact Mackenzie Elliott or contact the church office. Thank you for your continued support of our weekday preschool program!