

The Record

News from Epworth Children's Home



Finding her Way: Sara's Story

Many people look back on their teen years as some of the best or worst times of their lives. Those years are filled with finding out who you are, what you love to do, finding and losing friends, growing and learning and changing. It can be a scary and challenging time for everyone. For a lot of the teens at Epworth, moving to a new place with new people and potentially a new school in the midst of these already hard years can be incredibly overwhelming.

Last year, a teen named Sara came to live at Epworth. Sara was incredibly quiet, and kept to herself for the most part when she first arrived. However, Sara was also at the age where you begin to push the limits and boundaries. She had relationships and ties prior to coming to Epworth

with people who did not want what was best for her. As a teen, it was hard for her to realize what was happening and she made some poor decisions under the influence of these relationships.

However, Sara loved living at Epworth. She liked her staff and her cottage mates, and she knew fairly quickly that they truly wanted what was best for her. Her staff saw her potential and encouraged it. They wanted her to succeed, and to be the very best version of herself. They wanted her to grow and thrive and do well in school and in life. Under the leadership and guidance of her cottage staff (and a little tough love), Sara made the difficult decision to cut off the toxic relationships she had been holding on to. It was hard, but it was worth it.

Continued on page 5



Epworth Pride

Summer 2020

A Message from The Rev. John Holler President

A few days ago a teacher from Dreher High School called Epworth and stated that guests were going to be limited to two people per graduate this year at the commencement service. That meant that the crowd of us who usually attend the graduation ceremony could not attend this year. She then asked if she could bring yard signs by and put them in front of the cottages where each Epworth senior lives.

In a few days signs appeared on campus that contained the name of each graduating senior and a congratulatory message from Dreher High School. All of us are inspired and proud as we see the signs as we walk through the campus. Although we can't attend the service, we can still have feelings of pride.

The pride stems from memories of young people who came to our campus alone and apprehensive, and who have overcome obstacles that no child should have to overcome at such a young age. And, in spite of the rutted paths they have traveled, they have prevailed. So, are they ready to go out and conquer the world? Well, not quite. Statistics tell us this is where many youth in care falter, so Epworth has carved out additional paths that lead to successful transitions for new high school graduates who are marching toward adulthood. These next paths may include college, or job certificate programs, encouragement, mentoring, supervised living in a college-like dormitory arrangement, financial aid, nutritious meals served in a family-like environment, career guidance, opportunities for spiritual enrichment, and accountability for behavior and for reaching agreed upon goals. Every year a most interesting and inspiring cycle begins.

As you read this article my hope is that you feel a sense of pride, and are inspired by the accomplishments of the children you have supported and continue to support through prayers, gifts, and volunteer efforts. As part of the Epworth family your efforts help make all of this work. It is truly amazing how all the efforts of literally thousands of individuals come together to produce a young lady who walks out of her cottage one morning and notices a yard sign that reads, "Congratulations Anna! Dreher High School Class of 2020", and as she sees it, and as the big smile grows across her face she softly says, "I made it. Yes!"

Now please allow me to remove my proud Epworth "granddaddy" hat and put on my less emotional administrator hat to say, this has been a most unusual spring at Epworth. The rollercoaster ride of Covid-19 has been difficult for staff and children. We have been blessed as we have endured the highs and lows of the season.

One of the ways this Covid season has effected Epworth is in the area of finances. The most dramatic impact has been in the area of fundraising. All of our traditional spring events were canceled, and the traditional Mother's Day offering in many South Carolina Methodist churches was impaired because corporate worship has been suspended.

As I stated before, Epworth has been blessed through all of this, and we continue to be strong financially, however we are behind in our customary funding by \$174,000 at this point. So, if you happened to find a little green envelope in your Record, I invite you to put a few "make up dollars" in the envelope and send them to Epworth Children's Home.

Foundations for the Future



HISTORY



Roebuck United Methodist Church

“A ‘place’ to worship is important, however, the church are those people who join in a commitment to attend, serve, pray and financially support it. It is true each person has a story. It would be good to take the membership book and record their contribution to the ongoing of this church. Each member makes an impact on the church family.” (Roebuck United Methodist Church History, page 5)

Ruth “Missy” Earnhardt was the historian of Roebuck United Methodist Church and as one of the duties of the position she recorded its rich history beautifully in a twelve page booklet in 2004. Ensuring that the story was published so that generations of church members would know it was important to Missy. She believed that her church story deserved to be preserved as much as she desired for her own family story to be known by all who were called Earnhardt. The incredible life story that connects the two is that of Missy, a genuine Southern Belle who loved the Lord, her family, the church and Christmas.

Missy was born in 1925 in Roebuck, South Carolina to a large family with seven brothers and one sister. She was a young woman to be reckoned with. She found herself working in a man’s world at a young age. Earnhardt Electric, the family business, is where she spent her entire career serving the business until her late 80s. The consummate Christian business woman, she believed in hard work and was a role model for others including her clients. Missy Earnhardt blazed the trails for young women while being the example of a Christian woman and a proper lady.

Missy served her Lord faithfully. She was a leader in Roebuck United Methodist Church having served in many positions including Sunday School teacher, Methodist

Youth Foundation leader, United Methodist Women and church historian. Epworth Children’s Home held a special place in Missy’s heart along with a number of other non-profit organizations. She was generous and believed in serving others, but children’s issues were especially important to her. About 20 years ago, a group of ladies from Roebuck UMC visited Epworth’s campus and this visit is when Missy fell in love with Epworth. The group saw first-hand the happiness on the faces of the children and knew by their smiles that Epworth Children’s Home was a special place doing wonderful things for its residents. Missy was proud that her church supported Epworth annually and at levels higher than larger congregation churches.

The second Saturday in December was a special day for the Earnhardt family and one that was looked forward to all year long. You see, Missy’s love was Christmas. She shared her family home at Christmas with many groups but having her family holiday party was the highlight of her year. She planned all year long, generally buying gifts in the summer and updating the collection of 80 plus crocheted stockings, to ensure that every family member knew how special they were to her. The family party was significant to the Earnhardt family story, one of love, togetherness and sharing memories from generation to generation.

Heaven gained this angel on December 17, 2018, but her legacy continues. Epworth Children’s Home was recently notified of Missy’s ultimate gift made through her estate plans. She planned the ending to her story by helping to ensure the future of Epworth through a planned gift. Missy established a legacy of generosity through her actions and through her gifts of time, talent and financial contributions to help to ensure Epworth’s future. She will be posthumously invited into the Epworth Society of 1896 and her name will be engraved on the society roster.

If you would like more information about planned giving, please call Lisa Livingston Fusco at 803-256-7394 or email lfusco@epworthsc.org.

A Community United in Love



On June 2nd, 2020 at 2:30pm, Epworth's Millwood Campus employees heard several sirens and saw emergency vehicles flying down the street. As people looked out the windows of other buildings around campus, they saw billows of smoke rising from the east side of campus. Upon further investigation it was discovered that the Industrial and Maintenance Building was in flames due to an electrical malfunction in the attic. Thankfully, no one was injured or hurt in the fire. The Maintenance Building is where Epworth stores the supplies for campus and the children in our care. Most of the children who come to Epworth come with very little, so upon arrival they are welcomed with a basket full of things like a pillow, sheets and a comforter, shampoo and conditioner, soap, toothbrush and toothpaste, towels, and other items so that they immediately have something to call their own and begin to feel a sense of home. Losing these items and this building was troubling, especially since supplies were already low to due to COVID-19 pandemic.

However, it is often said that the darkness of night helps the light of morning shine even brighter. From the moment 911 was called, the surrounding community and our Methodist churches have rallied around Epworth and supported us in so many different and amazing ways. The fire department was on the scene immediately, the news stations began sharing the loss and how to help, and churches, neighbors, businesses, schools and people from all over sprang into action. Despite the fact that the economy is hurting, people have given both supplies and dollars. Amazon wish list items were ordered, monetary donations came in, prayers were prayed, and wish list items were dropped off less than 24 hours after the fire. Two days after the fire, the USPS mailman delivered 4 mail trucks full of boxes to Epworth. It was as though every delivered box was a brick and Columbia was laying the foundation and rebuilding what was lost, brick by brick and prayer by prayer.

The kindness and generosity poured out to Epworth is beyond words. This community is not just replacing supplies lost in a fire, but saying to the children of Epworth, "You are worthy, and we are here to make sure you have what you need." Thank you.

For more information on how to give to Epworth during this time, please visit <https://www.epworthchildrenshome.org/support/wish-list/> or give us a call at 803-256-7394.



Foster Parent Appreciation Month

May is Foster Parent Appreciation month, and this year's celebration took a new form during this time of social distancing. Our Epworth Foster Families were asked if they would like to be "adopted" by a nearby church for the month of May. We then connected a nearby church with the family and asked the congregation to do something each week in the month of May to shower the family with love. Churches provided meals, groceries, Mother's Day flowers, and gift cards among other things. In addition, one congregation delivered food boxes with fresh fruits and vegetables and staple goods to a dozen foster families. It was a joy to see churches respond creatively and generously in ways that blessed 24 of our Epworth Foster Families. We hope to expand this opportunity next year!

Thank you to these churches:

Boone Hill UMC (Charleston District)

Buncombe Street UMC (Greenville district)

Cokesbury UMC (Charleston District)

Grace UMC, North Augusta (Greenwood district)

Hope Lutheran Church, Columbia

New Hope UMC, Pomaria (Greenwood district)

St. Andrews Parish UMC (Charleston District)

St. James UMC, Goose Creek (Charleston District)

St. John UMC, Rock Hill (Rock Hill District)

Smyrna UMC, Moncks Corner (Charleston District)

Washington Street UMC (Columbia District)

Wesley UMC, Ladson (Charleston District)



Foster Mom Megan talks about how much she appreciates little things like this from the Epworth community. "I was just blown away by the support from the beginning. " She goes on to say "And then the month of May the fact that [Epworth] partnered with the [local] church and we had a home cooked meal one night, and I've cooked every single night since this virus started. So for them to come and make us a meal and deliver diapers is just so nice. This is all so new to us and to have that extra layer of support and someone to come out and do that for you is so nice and makes you feel appreciated in what you are doing."

Continued from cover

As she moved away from the negative relationships and invested more of herself into Epworth, Sara blossomed. She got a job working with youth over the summer, and she finished her senior year of high school and graduated as an honor roll student. She worked hard and found a new job at a fast food restaurant, where the management was so impressed by her character and work ethic, that they not only promised her job would be waiting on her when they re-opened after COVID-19, but they told her when she turned 18 they would like to promote her to a management position! Sara was moving towards the life she had always wanted for herself.

Sara is humble and sarcastic in the best way. She is a hard worker and once she puts her mind to something, there is no stopping her! She loves

fitness and is always looking for the next adventure. She is headed to college in the fall and wants to be a nurse with a minor in Psychology. Her staff have no doubt that she will be phenomenal at whatever she sets her mind to. She is a saver more than a spender and is currently saving up to buy a car so that she can transport herself to work and college. Sara is a role model for the other girls in the cottage, with her even temperament and quick smile.

Thanks to staff that didn't give up on her and a willingness to accept their love and guidance, Sara turned her life around. Thanks to your support, Epworth is able to help teens like Sara change the trajectory of their lives. Sara is going to make a difference in the world for good, and we can't wait to see it!

Return to Salkehatchie

Salkehatchie is a way of life. Salkehatchie is a love story. Salkehatchie gives us purpose. The summer of 2020 will be remembered in varying ways by all of us, but for many youth and adult volunteers across the Palmetto State, this summer will be a mournful summer due to the unfortunate cancellation of all Salkehatchie camps. With this, please enjoy the collection of life stories, love stories, and stories of purpose submitted by a Salkehatchie Summer Service youth volunteer from Epworth.

Salkehatchie is a summer service program where volunteers spend a week repairing homes for those in the community who have fallen on hard times. Volunteers from my DSS placement participate annually in June and we stay in a local church for a week while donating our time and energy to service. During our Salkehatchie week, we go to a house and complete various renovations, such as fixing the floors, painting the house, or installing a new roof. The homeowners are often in no condition to complete the necessary repairs and this is of no fault to the homeowner, they are often elderly or disabled which won't let them climb on a roof or tear out rotten floors. Salkehatchie means so much to me because it's a chance to give back to my community, honor my faith, and serve others.

My faith has always been my rock in weak times. I have had faith ever since I was a little girl. I have been in foster care since age 13 and the only way I am still getting through it is because of my knowledge that God is giving me the tools I need to grow and succeed. During Salkehatchie, faith is all you have sometimes as the work gets harder and exhaustion sets in. Salkehatchie also serves as a reminder to me of the blessings I enjoy every day. While being in foster care, it is hard sometimes to acknowledge the opportunities I am given and the luxuries I enjoy. When I am at Salkehatchie, I see the realities of a life that most certainly would have been mine had I not been removed from the situation I lived in before foster care. Salkehatchie always brings me closer to God because I see his reflection in the looks on the faces of the home owners and nothing could make me feel better. All the blood, sweat and tears that I put in over the week become worth it.

Salkehatchie is also significant to me because it fostered my passion to help people. I will give someone the clothes off of my back if they asked for them, so being able to share my labor to enrich people's lives is something I love to do. In my first summer at Salkehatchie, I was repainting a wall when the homeowner came in and talked to me. He told me about his life, his military service and his combat injury that left him disabled permanently. He told me that he joined the military because he would rather lose his life than allow his fellow Americans to lose theirs; and he went on to say that he does not regret his service despite the lasting impacts on his life. At that moment, I knew I wanted to live a life serving others.

Salkehatchie is a moving experience for me each summer, and its roots grow deeper in me daily. I strive to live a life of compassion, service, and faith and plan to use these as a foundation when I step out into independence in the coming months. I want to share my God-given talents and make an impact in the lives of others. Salkehatchie has allowed me to see my true purpose and for that, I am forever thankful.

Salkehatchie may be canceled for 2020 but the service of Salkehatchie lives on as we share God's love each and everyday.

Epworth is fortunate to have the ongoing support of the Salkehatchie Board of Trustees, Trenholm Road UMC, Shandon UMC, and Windsor UMC.



Churches that sent volunteer Groups to Epworth in 2019

1. Advent UMC, Simpsonville
2. Aldersgate UMC, Greenville
3. Asbury Memorial UMC, Columbia
4. Ashland UMC, Columbia
5. Awaken Church, Columbia
6. Bethany UMC, Charleston
7. Bethany UMC, Summerville
8. Bethel UMC, Forest Acres
9. Bethlehem/Foster Chapel/Jonesville UMC, Union
10. Bible Way Church, Columbia
11. Boone Hill UMC, Summerville
12. Bowers Chapel UMC, Florence
13. Carteret Street UMC, Beaufort
14. Centenary UMC, Monks Corner
15. Central UMC, Florence
16. Central UMC, Newberry
17. Chapin UMC, Chapin
18. Christ UMC, Bennettsville
19. Church of Columbia, Columbia
20. Church of the Palms UMC, Okatie
21. Cornerstone UMC, Rock Hill
22. Covenant UMC, Greer
23. Eastlake Community Church, Irmo
24. Eastminster Presbyterian Church, Columbia
25. First Presbyterian Church, Columbia
26. First UMC, Bennettsville
27. First UMC, Clover
28. First UMC, Isle of Palms
29. First UMC, Winnsboro
30. Grace UMC, North Augusta
31. Grace Life Church
32. Grover UMC, St George
33. Highland Park UMC, Florence
34. Incarnation Lutheran Church, Columbia
35. Jericho UMC, Cameron
36. John Wesley UMC, Charleston
37. Jordan Charge UMC, Manning
38. Journey UMC, Columbia
39. Knightsville UMC, Summerville
40. Langley UMC, Langley
41. Lebanon UMC,
42. Leesville UMC, Leesville
43. Lexington UMC, Lexington
44. Little River UMC, Little River
45. Lyttleton Street UMC, Camden
46. McCormick UMC
47. Midtown Fellowship Church, Columbia
48. Mt. Hebron UMC, West Columbia
49. Mt. Holly UMC, Rock Hill
50. Mt. Horeb UMC, Lexington
51. Mt. Tabor UMC, Ridgeway
52. Mt. Zion UMC, Sumter
53. New Beginnings UMC, Boiling Springs
54. NewSpring Church, Columbia
55. Northeast UMC, Columbia
56. Philadelphia UMC, Fort Mill
57. Platt Springs UMC, West Columbia
58. Rehoboth UMC, Columbia
59. Riverside Community Church, Columbia
60. Shandon Baptist Church, Columbia
61. Shandon UMC, Columbia
62. Sharon UMC, Greer
63. St. James UMC, Spartanburg
64. St. Johns Episcopal Church, Columbia
65. St. Johns UMC, Aiken
66. St. Johns UMC, Lugoff

67. Summerton UMC, Summerton
68. Trenholm Road UMC, Columbia
69. Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, Columbia
70. Trinity UMC, Blythewood
71. Trinity UMC, Clinton
72. Trinity UMC, Lancaster
73. Trinity/Berea UMC, Clon
74. Union UMC, Irmo
75. United Methodist Men of Columbia
76. Virginia Wingard Memorial UMC, Columbia
77. Washington Street UMC, Columbia
78. Wesley Memorial UMC, Columbia
79. Wightman UMC, Newberry
80. Windsor UMC, Columbia
81. Woodland UMC, Rock Hill

2019 Volunteer Totals

A volunteer unit is an individual or group approved to serve in some capacity on campus.

Total Volunteers on Campus 2383

Total Number of Volunteer Groups 90

Estimated Volunteer Hours Served 14,594.5

Estimated Value of Volunteer Services 248,106.5

2019 Businesses, Schools and Community Volunteer Groups

1. 123! Jump
2. Adams and Reese LLC
3. Airport High School
4. Alpha Psi Lambda of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity
5. American Legion Post 6
6. AmeriCorps Vista
7. Bible Way and Midlands Community Development Corporation
8. Bikers of South Carolina
9. Boy Scouts of America
10. Breakfast Optimist Club of Columbia
11. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of South Carolina
12. Blythewood High School
13. Calison Tighe & Robinson Law Firm
14. Camp Horseshoe
15. Canoeing for Kids
16. Chick-fil-A Columbia, Lexington, and 5 Points
17. Colliers International South Carolina
18. Colonial Life
19. Columbia Ballet School
20. Columbia City Ballet
21. Columbia Classical Ballet
22. Columbia Fireflies
23. Columbia Urban League
24. Columbia Urban League Guild
25. Cub Scout Pack 737
26. Department of Juvenile Justice
27. Edens
28. Elliott Davis
29. Encompass
30. Friends of Epworth
31. Fort Jackson
32. Get Engaged Media
33. Girl Scouts of South Carolina
34. Go Go Lazer Tag
35. Hammond School
36. Heathwood Hall Episcopal School
37. Indah Coffee Company
38. It-ology
39. Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies of Johnson and Johnson
40. Jeep Rogers Family YMCA
41. Junior League of Columbia
42. Kappa Epsilon Psi Military Sorority, Inc.
43. Keenan Suggs/HUB International
44. Lexington High School
45. Lexington Wildlife
46. Lugoff Elgin High School
47. Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary
48. Lowe's
49. Marco's Pizza/JH Development
50. Midlands Technical College
51. Millennial FM 95.9/Glory Communications, Inc.
52. Moe's Columbia
53. Montessori School of Columbia
54. Nelson Mullins
55. Old Republic Title
56. Palmetto A's
57. Palmetto Center for Policy Alternatives
58. Palmetto Mobil Arcade
59. Palmetto Paralegal Association
60. Price Water Cooper Specialist, Columbia
61. Prisma Health
62. Red Bank Elementary School
63. Richland County CASA
64. Richland County Government Office
65. Richland County Sheriff's Department
66. Richland Northeast High School
67. Ridge View High School
68. River Bluff High School
69. Rogers Townsend Attorneys at Law
70. Rolling Jokers Riding Group
71. SASS Defense at USC
72. SCANA Corp Compliance and ASD
73. Scott Hannon Memorial Foundation
74. Smashburger
75. Southern Strutt
76. South Carolina United Methodist Clergy
77. Southeastern Freight Lines
78. Spring Valley High School
79. St. Marks Masonic Lodge
80. Starbucks Roasting Plant
81. United Methodist Credit Union
82. United Methodist Volunteers In Mission Early Response Team
83. United Methodist Church Disaster Recovery Ministries
84. United Way of the Midlands
85. University of South Carolina
86. USC Athletics
87. USC- Alpha Delta Pi Sorority
88. USC- Alpha Gamma Delta Fraternity
89. USC- Chi Omega Sorority
90. USC- Gamma Phi Beta Sorority
91. USC- Kappa Delta Sorority
92. USC- Panhellenic Council
93. USC Men's & Women's Basketball Players and Coaches
94. USC School of Nursing
95. USC School of Social Work
96. Wellcare of South Carolina
97. Young Democrats/Young Republicans
98. Verizon



Epworth
Children's Home

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www.epworthchildrenshome.org

The Rev. John E. Holler, Jr.
President

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**Children's names and pictures have been changed for confidentiality.*

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- ☐ Name Change
- ☐ I receive more than one copy
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☐ Please remove me from the mailing list

The mission of Epworth Children's Home is to serve children, youth and families through caring, safe Christian communities, where hurts are healed; hope is nurtured; and faith in God, self and others is developed.

Thank You for Your Membership In The BISHOP'S COMMITTEE OF 500



Epworth is seeking 500 individuals and families who are interested in improving the lives of South Carolina's children and families through committing \$10,000 or more to advance the mission of Epworth Children's Home. This commitment may be pledged for multiple years.

For additional information, email or call
Lisa Livingston Fusco or John Holler
at (803) 256-7394

lfusco@epworthsc.org or
jholler@epworthsc.org

Every Child is a Miracle, but some miracles need your help.



Congratulations to our 2020 Graduates!

We are celebrating our Graduates from the Epworth Family! We are so proud of their perseverance, hard work and dedication to their education!

Epworth residents graduated from:

Dreher High School

Independent Living clients graduated from:

Rock Hill High School

Midlands Technical College

GED

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