



**DEACON CONSECRATED AT MT. PISGAH DEC. 2** — Mt. Pisgah celebrated Sunday, December 2, 2018, as Deacon Robin Cogan, a daughter of the congregation, was consecrated into the ministry of word and service. Deacon Robin will serve at Mt. Pisgah. Shown above, from left to right, are: Reverend Timothy Smith—Bishop of the NC Lutheran Synod, Reverend Beth Kearney, Reverend Tom Cogan, Deacon Robin Cogan, Deacon Wendy Roberts, Wayne Wilson, and Reverend Michael Stone, Pastor of Mt. Pisgah Lutheran Church in Bethlehem.

## South Carolina teacher with local roots receives Excellence Award

According to Marian Wright Edelman, founder of the Children's Defense Fund (CDF), "education is for improving the lives of others and for leaving your community and world better than you found it." That is exactly what first-year Biology teacher Emily Sandifer does every day for her students at West Ashley High School. Sandifer, a graduate of the College of Charleston where she was a double major in Biology and Secondary Education, recently received the Guiding Light of Excellence Award from Charleston County School District's (CCSD) Office of Teacher Effectiveness (OTE) for her dedication to her students and all of her hard work.

"Ms. Sandifer was chosen to receive this award because of her positive energy and growth mindset," said Christy McLean, a Teacher Effectiveness Specialist with the Office of Teacher Effectiveness. "She is reflective and works to strengthen her teaching practice daily."

The Guiding Light of Excellence Award is new this year and has special meaning for the OTE. Their theme this year is a lighthouse, which they use on everything they do with first-year induction teachers. The idea came to them because CCSD is on the coast and because they like to think of teachers as guiding lights or beacons for their students.

The Office of Teacher Effectiveness works with all of the induction teachers within CCSD to help guide and support them during their first years as a teacher. Recent statistics show that within the first five years of teaching up to 50 percent of new teachers leave the profession entirely.

Through trial and error the OTE has learned that by having a strong mentor, being given opportunities to network, and with the support of their administration, teachers feel supported and are encouraged which truly makes a difference. One of their goals this year is to make the time to recognize those teachers whose work truly stands out. Sandifer is the first teacher at West Ashley High to receive this award.

Sandifer became a teacher by what some might call an act of fate. She had long promised herself that she would not go into the teaching profession; that is until she began volunteering with a local organization that worked with at-risk kids. "For many years of my life people suggested that I would be a good teacher but I always swore that I would never go into the teaching profession," said Sandifer. "During college I mentored at-risk youth at Metanoia and my time spent with them made me realize teaching really was my calling."



**SANDIFER HONORED** — Emily Sandifer (second from left) was surprised during her 2nd period class by West Ashley High Associate Principal Nick Reece, Science Department Chair Katie Mullock, and OTE evaluator Christy McLean with the Guiding Light of Excellence Award. "It felt really good to be recognized for what I've been working so hard at for the past four months," said Sandifer. "Oftentimes you only get to interact with administrators or other instructors when something is wrong or needs improvement."

During her time in school, Sandifer says she had a number of great teachers but there were three who had a strong impact on her. In high school, Sandifer was inspired by her Biology teacher, Joshua Williamson, which is one of the reasons she decided to study the subject in college.

Another teacher who came to mind was an exceptional first-year Algebra teacher Sandifer had back in high school, Payton Payne, noting that much of the teaching style she employs today is modeled after Payne's example. More recently, she was influenced by College of Charleston professor, Dr. Meta Van Sickle, whom she says served as a mentor her during her time there.

While being recognized and appreciated at the district level is quite an honor, it is another thing entirely when those you work with every day appreciate all that you do as well. "Emily has been working exceptionally hard and is doing a fantastic job," said Science Department Chair Katie Mullock. "I think she is very deserving of recognition so that she realizes that her efforts are not going unnoticed."

West Ashley High Associate Principal Nick Reece echoed those same

attributes, "Emily has done a great job in her first year teaching at West Ashley High. She is a very knowledgeable and hard-working teacher and has done a remarkable job creating positive relationships with her students. Emily has a bright future as an educator ahead of her, and we look forward to seeing her growth and development as a teacher at West Ashley High."

Despite studying for four or more years to become an educator, a teacher's first year is oftentimes where the real learning happens. That first year is full of numerous realizations and countless lessons learned; many of which cannot be taught but are learned by doing.

"Students know how they learn best so actively seeking student input is one of the most important aspects of teaching, which is not necessarily something they teach you when you're in school," said Sandifer. "It is really important to value their input and to give the kids room to think. As a teacher you have to sit down and shut your mouth sometimes. They need time to process things and figure it out on their own. They need to be able to take ownership of their learning."

## Sandifer earns double Bachelors Degrees in at College of Charleston

Emily Virginia Sandifer earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology and Bachelor of Science degree in Secondary Education, as well as graduating magna cum laude, from The College of Charleston this spring.

These degrees were bestowed upon Sandifer on May 12, 2018.

After graduation, Sandifer accepted a position as a biology teacher at West Ashley High School, in Charleston County, SC.

Emily is the daughter of Michael and Ginny Harrison of Taylorsville and Eric and Donna Sandifer of Bethlehem.



EMILY SANDIFER

## Pairings set for Dick's Sporting Goods Classic Tourney

The Hickory Metro Sports Commission has announced the pairings for the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Dick's Sporting Goods Classic Tournament scheduled for Thursday, December 27<sup>th</sup> thru Saturday, December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The tournament will feature the men's and women's teams from eight area high schools competing in the three day event.

In the Men's bracket, Maiden will be the #1 Seed. Hickory will be #2 and Newton-Conover is #3. The #4 Seed will be Alexander Central followed by #5 Bunker Hill, #6 St. Stephens, #7 Fred T. Foard and #8 South Caldwell. The first men's game is scheduled to tip-off at 11:30 am on Thursday, December 27<sup>th</sup> between #2 Hickory and #7 Fred T. Foard.

On the Women's side, Bunker Hill will be the #1 Seed. St. Stephens will be #2 and Hickory is #3. The #4 Seed will be Fred T. Foard followed by #5 Newton-Conover, #6 South Caldwell, #7 Alexander Central and #8 Maiden. The first women's contest will tip-off at 10:00 am on Thursday, December 27<sup>th</sup> between #2 St. Stephens and #7 Alexander Central.

The Dick's Sporting Goods Classic has been well known throughout the region and the state of North Carolina as the premier holiday high school event for over 30 years. The Hickory Metro Sports Commission serves as the host organization for the event and distributes the gate receipts among the participating schools. Following the 2017 event, each participating high school received a donation of more than \$3,000 for their athletic programs.

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### DAILY SPECIALS

<p align="center"><b>MONDAY</b> Kids Night <b>\$.99 Buffet</b> <small>Kids 11 &amp; under, with purchase of a drink</small></p>	<p align="center"><b>TUESDAY</b> Senior Day <b>\$1.00 Off Buffet</b> <small>Includes drink, 60 &amp; over</small></p>
<p align="center"><b>WEDNESDAY</b> Wing Night <b>\$10.99</b> <small>4:00 until 9:00 PM</small></p>	<p align="center"><b>THURSDAY</b> Fundraiser Night <small>Supporting local community organizations by donating 10% of food sales generated on the organizations behalf.</small></p>

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# Behold the Miracle

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**Dec. 23 - Christmas Worship Service - 10:45**  
**Choir Cantata - "The Greatest Story Ever Told" - 6:00 PM**  
**Sunday School Christmas Celebration - 7:00 PM**

**Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve**  
**Carols & Candles Service - 8:30 PM**

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