

**Hinton Rural Life Center**  
*Celebrating 60: Embracing Our Roots & Sharing the Fruits*

---

**Reflections . . .**

**March 13, 2021**



**Rev. Jonathan Tompkins**  
Elder, South Carolina Conference  
Lead Pastor, Travelers Rest UMC  
Travelers Rest, South Carolina  
Hinton Ambassador



**HINTON**  
RURAL LIFE  
CENTER

*“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.” Jesus*

-- Matthew 11:28-30, *The Message*

I have joined the Hinton Rural Life Center family only recently, in the past three or so years. I was introduced to Hinton by Rev. Karen Kluever, Hinton’s minister of church relations and development. Before working for Hinton, she and I were ordained together in South Carolina and have been friends since. She made me aware of Hinton and I visited a few times and, lo and behold, she made me a Hinton Ambassador for South Carolina. So now I am privileged to sing the praises of Hinton to my fellow United Methodist clergy in South Carolina.

I have come to Hinton several times now for retreat, using it as a “forced Sabbath time” for myself. I often find it hard to follow God’s command to practice Sabbath when I’m in the middle of my everyday business and busyness. Getting away to Hinton forces me to get out of my routine and to really reflect and rest while I am there.

I took a renewal leave a couple of summers ago—it was the first time in 18 years of ministry that I heard Jesus’ question, “Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion?” and answered YES -- I am tired, worn out, burned out, and need a time of renewal.

I began that leave at Hinton, staying in one of the Hermitage cabins closest to the trail to the mountainside worship area. It was a wonderful way to begin this time of rest. Just sitting and listening to the sounds of the woods on my front porch; hiking up the mountainside trail to the

cross, taking a book with me that I *wanted* to read (not *had* to read); walking down to the lake, sitting and reflecting in the picnic shelter and kayaking on the lake; praying in the Chapel sanctuary, where I could worship without having to lead worship . . . Just being able to be at Hinton and BE was such a wonderful thing for me.

Even though my roots at Hinton are only about three years deep, it's allowed me to put some roots down, and the time of renewal Hinton provides me makes the fruits of my ministry re-grow. I'm glad to say I'm still here! Still in ministry, able to renew and refresh and regrow.

I want to thank Hinton for being one of the places where I can go to get away with Jesus and recover my life.



HINTON  
RURAL LIFE  
CENTER