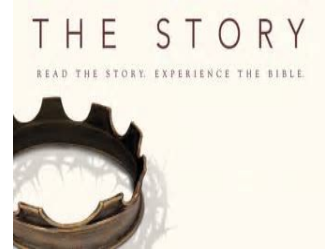




The Good News

Lake Gibson United Methodist Church



Our Vision: To be a joyful church family that is crucial to our community

January 2018

From the Pastor's Heart

A new year has begun – 2018. Many of us are glad 2017 is behind us, yet we don't know what 2018 will bring, other than more change and more turmoil. The first of each year is a time to set goals and make resolutions of how we will change and mature in the coming year.

This question was posed to me recently: "What is the one thing you would desire to see accomplished in your ministry setting in 2018?" These are a few of the things I immediately thought about:

1. To have standing room only at each service
2. To have unity in the church on all things (music, time of service, how to use resources, etc.)
3. To have renovated and updated facilities
4. To have the financial resources in the bank to cover all expenses for the coming year
5. To have the resources, staff, volunteers and facilities to be all things for all people
6. To be known as the church where God makes His presence known every day
7. To have dynamic ministries for all ages, generations and ethnic groups
8. To have a small-group ministry that reaches more people than the church has members
9. To be able to live-stream all services and start sister churches in other places

These were just a few of the thoughts I had, and none of the goals listed are necessarily bad, but then I asked God what He wanted and the question changed a little. The question became: "If I could give you one gift this year, if I could wish one thing for everyone in the congregation, what would it be?"

Here is the answer in my words: **I would like for everyone in the church to know God's love personally, and to love God and their neighbor as God loves us.** The Apostle Paul prayed a similar prayer for the believers that goes like this:

I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Ephesians 3:18-19 (NRSV)

From the Pastor's Heart continued on the next page . . .

From the Pastor's Heart, Continued

If we were so filled with God and His love, would the things listed above along with others not mentioned be accomplished? If we really concentrated on God and grew in God as much as we focus on who wins an election, a ball game, where the best sale is, how to get a promotion, make more money or have more time off – would our lives change? They should.

Once you comprehend God's love for you, He is the only thing that matters. Once you realize the price Jesus paid to ransom you, there is nothing to do but give yourself to Him – completely. This year my prayer for all who may be members, regular attendees and anyone who may step in LGUMC even once this year, is for them to know God's love fully and to allow that love to fill them and spill out of them into the world.

Happy New Year and may God's love abound in your life,

Pastor Steve

A Heart-felt Thank You to the Friendship Sunday School Class

Thank you to everyone for caring so much for myself and my two boys, and for showing us such huge amounts of love and support. It is truly appreciated.

Lauren Rodriguez

Thank You to Audio/Visual Volunteers

Much appreciation to Kristie Summers for being our new computer tech at the 10:30 am service, and to Fay Wright for filling in as needed at the 8:00 am service. And thank you to our "regulars", Don Heishman, Debbie Moore and Michael Moake for their selfless service!

Volunteer Needed to Lead Our Participation in the 2018 CROP Hunger Walk

On Saturday, January 20th, at 10:00 am there will be a short kickoff meeting for organizational recruiters (fund-raisers) to pick up materials. The meeting will be at First Presbyterian Church, 175 Hollingsworth Drive (same location as the walk). I've handled this the last three years, but cannot attend the meeting this year and think it's time to pass the torch. Please call me at 863-984-4564 or 410-790-2662 to volunteer to lead our campaign.

The CROP Hunger Walk will be **Sunday, February 25th**, with registration at 1:00 pm. The walk starts at **1:30 pm** and circles Lake Hollingsworth (3 miles or whatever you feel like walking). CROP Hunger Walks are community-wide events sponsored by Church World Service and organized by religious groups, businesses, schools and others to raise funds to end hunger in the U.S. and around the world.

Participants are asked to raise donations from sponsors and to bring canned or dry goods to donate to a local food pantry. Details of the event are at <https://crophungerwalk.org/lakelandfl>. Teams and individuals can register on-line. We prefer that you donate to the Hunger Walk through Lake Gibson UMC (annotate your offering "Hunger Walk"), so we can track our congregation's missional giving.

Phyllis Kitchens

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Special Monthly Events Calendar for January

(Events that do not occur on a weekly basis, or the first occurrence of a *new* weekly event.)

2018 JANUARY

CALENDAR YEAR CALENDAR MONTH

SUNDAY
RST DAY OF WEEK

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31	01 New Year's Day Office Closed	02 Board of Trustees mtg, 2 pm, Office	03 UMW Ruth Circle mtg, 11 am, FLC	04	05	06 Emmaus Gathering, 5:30 pm, FLC and Sanctuary
07 Middle Eastern Christian Service, 3 pm, Sanctuary (Every Sunday)	08 UMW Heart to Heart mtg, 10:30 am, FLC; UMW Evening Circle, 6:30 pm, Off campus; Staff, Pastor, Parish mtg, 7 pm, FLC	09	10	11 Cub Scout Committee mtg, 7 pm, FLC upstairs	12	13 Lifeline Screening, 8 am to 5 pm, FLC; UMM Breakfast mtg, 9:00 am, FLC
14	15 Finance Com mtg, 7 pm, FLC	16	17	18	19	20 CROP Hunger Walk Kickoff mtg, 10 am, 1st Presby Ch; Dinner and Talent Show, 5 pm, FLC
21 GCD Training (Discipleship), Palm Harbor UMC, 3 - 6 pm	22 UMW Leadership Team mtg, 1 pm, FLC; Worship Com mtg, 7 pm, Sanctuary	23	24	25 ALBOH Board mtg, 4:30 pm, FLC	26	27 Child Protection Class, 10 am, FLC
28 Paraguayan Harpist, 10:30 am (single service)	29 Administrative Council mtg, 7 pm, FLC	30	31	01	02	03

January Weekly Recurring Events (Changes are announced in the Sunday Bulletin)

Sunday

Traditional Worship Service	8:00 am	Sanctuary
Adult Sunday school classes	9:15 - 10:15 am	FLC
Kidtricity Children's Ministry	9:15 - 10:15 am	FLC
Contemporary Worship Service	10:30 am	Sanctuary
Children's Ministry Continues	10:30 - 11:45 am	Sanctuary & FLC
Middle Eastern Christian Svc	3:00 pm	Sanctuary

Monday

Intercessory Prayer	9:30 am	Sanctuary
Boy Scout Troop 711	7:00 pm	FLC

Tuesday

Deadline for Sunday Bulletin	noon	Office
Praise Team Rehearsal	6:30 pm	Sanctuary
Cub Scout Pack 711	7:00 pm	FLC

Wednesday

Mid-week Devotions	8:00 am	FLC
ALBOH Chapel	9:00 am	Sanctuary
Book of Acts Messianic Study	10:00 am	Off-campus
Choir Rehearsal	6:30 pm	Sanctuary
Bible Study with Pastor	7:00 pm	FLC

Thursday

Food Pantry	9:30 - 11:30 am	Office
Bible Study with Pastor	10:00 am	FLC

Middle East Christian Worship Service Starting January 7th at 3:00 pm

Junaid Saqib will lead a Middle East Christian worship service on Sundays at 3:00 pm starting on January 7th. The focus will be on the persecuted church. Everyone is invited to participate.

The United Methodist Church and the World Methodist Council issued statements below following the terrorist bombing of a Methodist church in Pakistan on December 17th.

To Our Christian Brothers and Sisters in Pakistan

We share your grief and sense of outrage that this (2017) Advent Season, when we prepare for the birth of the Prince of Peace at Christmas, has been violated by the terrorist attack that took the lives of nine worshippers and wounded more than 40 others, during a service in Quetta on Sunday, December 17. We pray for the families that lost loved ones, for the congregation of the Bethel Memorial Methodist Church, a congregation of the Church of Pakistan, a union denomination and our mission partner, and for the often persecuted Christian minority of Pakistan. We also pray for the transformation of those who attack Christian or any religious group that they may forfeit hatred for the blessings of compassion and goodwill. We also call upon civil authorities in Pakistan to increase security for Christian churches and community in the face of threats from the self-declared Islamic State (ISIS) and other terrorists.

Global Ministries
The United Methodist Church
Thomas Kemper, General Secretary
December 18, 2017

The World Methodist Council



The World Methodist Council has learned with horror and sadness of the bombing and shooting at Bethel Memorial Methodist Church in Quetta, Pakistan, in which at least nine people were killed and many injured. We offer our deepest sympathy to those whose families have been visited with violent death and injury in this attack. Our thoughts and prayers are with the members of the congregation, the Church of Pakistan, and all those affected by this atrocity.

We condemn unequivocally all such violence perpetrated in the name of religion and against those who are in minority communities wherever these may be. We urge those in positions of influence and responsibility to do all that is possible, by both word and action, to prevent such atrocities against innocent people.

As we celebrate the coming of the Prince of Peace as a vulnerable child into an oppressed land, our prayer is that that violent hands may be stayed, that peace may prevail in God's world, and that all may live in safety.

Behold, I will create a new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered nor will they come to mind. (Isaiah 65:17)

[Source: United Methodist News Service (UMNS) Daily Digest, December 18, 2017]

December News

Christmas Activities and Celebrations

The return of the Sox Box; UMW parties and visits with gifts for shut-ins; thoughtful and beautiful decorations and poinsettias in the Sanctuary; two performances of the Christmas cantata, *God for Us*, written and arranged by our own Pastor Steve Polk and Music Director Glenda Grant Hess; caroling; delivering gifts to the Florida United Methodist Children's Home, and other activities filled the month.

December ended on a high note: Boy Scout Troop 711's Eagle Scout Recognition ceremony that presented 4 of this year's 6 Eagle Scouts to the congregation, and baptism of Danielle Cavas and daughter Emma Faircloth (Pastor Steve and Penny Polk's daughter and granddaughter). Dani and Emma also joined LGUMC.

The big surprise and unwanted gift: A flood in A Little Bit of Heaven (ALBOH) discovered on Wednesday morning, December 6th. After moving a lot of the furniture and contents to the Family Life Center, ALBOH continued to serve its children there. The broken water line was repaired, as was damage to some walls. The flood provided a great opportunity to do a thorough floor cleaning and waxing (and provided lots of exercise for volunteers who moved almost every piece of ALBOH's furniture into the FLC on December 13th). We got to do it again when church members and ALBOH staff put everything back in place after the cantata on December 17th. The best news is that the Florida Conference forgave our insurance deductible because we've been paying our apportionments in full for the last four years!

Caroling on December 10th

Carolers were Beverly and Jay Ellis with cute dog Lily; David and Glenda Hess; Joe and Pat Moon; Bob and Martina Willome; Bob Herrick; Sue Shelton; Grace Foster with grandchildren Hannah and Michael; Deina, Reese and Jace McKee and Debbie Moore. Pat Moon gave out Christmas gift bags to all Lake Gibson members we visited.

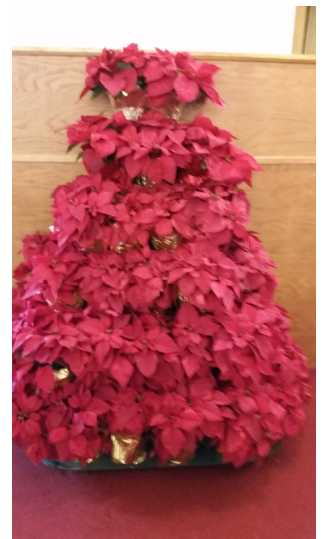
Reese continued the tradition and gave flowers to all our church members and to a few other residents. We began at Carpenters where Stella Eismann, Shirley Patterson and Marion Schroeder were waiting in the second-floor reception area. We were privileged to sing happy birthday to Marion (103). We then went to Wedgwood and began with Herb Allen's reception area where several residents joined in the singing. From there we went to Carol Troup who was being visited by our Sharon Vojtko. We also sang in the halls on the way to the rooms. Our last stop was Valencia Hills where we began with Bill Webb who found Michael to be delightful. Again we sang on the way . . . all the way to the other end of the facility where Nita Davis was in great joy at being surrounded by choir and friends. She brought smiles to faces as she recognized each one. It was a full day with much merriment.

Debbie Moore

Christmas Poinsettias

Thank you to Marina Hernandez who arranged for purchase of the beautiful and inexpensive poinsettias that enhanced the Sanctuary during our Christmas cantata and candlelight worship service. Not only did she find a vendor, she picked them up and placed them around the Sanctuary. Thank you also to the many people who purchased the plants in memory of, or in honor of, friends and family or to the glory of God. And a final thank-you to Marina for the beautiful art work and composition of the cantata program and the poinsettia brochure.

December News continued on the next page . . .



December News, Continued



Lake Gibson UMC's Cindy Webb volunteers with PACE Center for Girls, along with some friends, and teaches crafts such as making these centerpieces. LGUMC donated silk flowers from our fall rummage sale. In 2018 we'll get to see the art the girls create from the paper towel and toilet paper rolls we donated.



At least one casualty from the flood -- Lisa's ALBOH desk fell apart, but GOOD NEWS, there was an even better desk in storage.

Almost finished moving everything into the FLC



Michael Moake and Don Heishman in the A/V booth. Thank you for supporting church worship activities! The Sanctuary's sound system is at its best!

Linda and Charlie Alvarez had to restock the socks from the "Sox Box" daily. Thanks to everyone who gave them!



December News, Continued



Bagged and labeled socks were hung around the campus.

Notice the spiffy new concrete circle painting. Weather played havoc with this phase of Campus Revitalization Campaign (not to mention local kids who rode their bikes thru the wet paint).



Prophetess Anna (Sue Bodemer), Simeon (Roy Bodemer) and Pharisee (Ken Fuqua) getting ready to start the cantata.



Our "youngest" shepherd, Junaid Saqib.



Dress rehearsal (Etmonia Davis as Mary)

Bonnie Fuqua, one of our liturgical dancers (sorry, had to cut out the adorable Reese McKee in this picture per our child protection policy).



Looking festive inside and outside.

December News, Continued



Praying for the Eagle Scouts on December 31st.

Baptizing Danielle and Emma on December 31st



Photo from www.eduardklassen.com

**Paraguayan Harpist
Eduard Klassen
performs at LGUMC
January 28th, 10:30 am.**

Music and testimony; free will offering is requested.

January Events

Acts Home Study Resumes January 10th

This home study group meets at Debbie Moore's house and will resume on January 10th. We are on Chapter 7 of the book of Acts, which we are studying from a Messianic (Jewish Christian) point of view. Study leaders are Maria and Rich Thomas. This group includes both men and women who are excited to be a part of bridging the gap between Jewish and gentile believers, and becoming the "one new man" Paul speaks of in Ephesians. We study, worship and pray together.

We meet on Wednesday mornings from 10:00 am until about 12:00 noon, with a light lunch afterward. This is a multi-week study, and you may start it at any time. The address is 400 Vineyard Drive, Lakeland 33809. To sign up, please call Debbie Moore (863-614-7193) or Maria Thomas (302-750-1676). We hope you will join us!

Dinner and Talent Show

Saturday, January 20th, 5:00 pm

Have you waited all your life to be discovered by Broadway or Hollywood? Bring your talents to the Lake Gibson Talent Show on January 20th and start small, with us! We're looking for people or groups who'd like to sing, play music, read poems, tell jokes, etc. Please let Glenda Hess know what you'd like to perform.

If you are still hiding your abilities under a basket, you can come and enjoy the dinner of spaghetti and tacos (a free-will donation to support the LGUMC music department is requested). This menu is sure to please young and old alike.

These shows have provided a lot of fun in the past. [My favorite act was the late Gene Wileman instructing us on **How to Give a Cat a Pill**. I laughed and cried the whole time he talked! PK] The next year Lee Mueller recited the same work as an homage to Gene; it was a memorable and touching performance.

If you've never attended the Talent Show before, take this opportunity for fellowship with your church family and friends. If you're one of the growing number of people who don't drive in the dark, please call the office and let Marina know if you need a ride to and from the show. She'll pass on your request to a volunteer driver so no one is left out due to decreasing eyesight or other transportation issues.

Debbie Moore and Phyllis Kitchens

Child Protection Class

Saturday, January 27th, 10:00 am

If you volunteer in the nursery during worship services, or assist in the Children's Ministry or Youth Ministry, you need to obtain training on the church's Child Protection Policy. [Limited interaction with children, such as reading to ALBOH students, does not require this training.]

Please call Marina Hernandez, Administrative Secretary, 863-858-5431, to sign up and ensure we have sufficient handouts. New volunteers will have to fill out forms for a State Police background investigation, so you might want to refresh your memory on previous addresses and character references before you come. (Current volunteers are required to renew their background investigations periodically.)

Eduard Klassen, Paraguayan Harpist, Performs Sunday, January 28th, 10:30 am

Invite your music-loving friends to this performance and hear the amazing story of how Mr. Klassen discovered God as a poor boy living in the jungles of Paraguay. You will be inspired. A free-will offering is requested.

January Events, Continued

Gulf Central District Learning Extravaganza Sunday, January 21st, 3 - 6:00 pm

For Pastors, Church Leaders and the Faithful

[Editorial comment: This looks like a worth-while event. I'd like to see representatives of every church committee and members of the congregation attend. We could use the church van to take up to 12 people. Please let Marina Hernandez know if you want a ride, or are willing to drive.]

Is your church looking for ways to grow? Ways to reach those untouched by Christ? Ways to reach your community? Ways to make disciples? Ways to be obedient? Join us on Sunday, January 21st, from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm at Palm Harbor UMC, 1551 Belcher Road, Palm Harbor, FL 34683. **Registration is on-line at <https://flumc.org/eventdetail/10168842>.**

The Keynote address will be **Next Level Discipleship** by Rev. Junius B. Dotson, General Secretary of Discipleship Ministries, United Methodist Church, and the author of *Developing an Intentional Discipleship System: A Guide for Congregations*.

Learning Sessions Include:

Intentional Discipleship. A 2-part session focuses on creating an intentional discipleship system (or pathway), unique to your church's context, with solutions and strategies to meet the challenges of making disciples in the 21st century.

Communicating across... Our glimpse of heaven is beautifully diverse. Join the conversation on how to reach across generations, cultures, race and economics to build relationships and invite new friends into a relationship with Christ.

Fresh Expression with a Slant. Yes, we are "bought into" the Fresh Expression movement. BUT . . . How do they become self-sustainable? Is it "church"? How does it support my church? Explore the next level of questions in creating a Fresh Expression.

Welcoming the New. A real story of revitalization: Established church revitalizes itself through reaching out in new and relevant ways to its community.

Servant Hearts on the Move. Learn proven approaches to identify and engage your church's servant hearts into service for Christ.

Leading through Change. How many times does the church start a visioning process and nothing changes? Hear how one church is building a new vision, bringing their congregation into the conversation and making it happen.

Low-Risk Start to Ministry. We see the needs of our community. How do we build relationships to meet those needs AND share Christ's story? This session focuses on how to get started in Social Justice and Mercy ministry with "low risk" while sharing the Good News with those working with us and those we are reaching out to.

Editorial Policy

The articles contained in *The Good News* express the opinions of their authors, and do not necessarily reflect policies of the United Methodist Church or of Lake Gibson United Methodist Church. All members of LGUMC are encouraged to write articles and share their thoughts with the congregation. The purpose of this newsletter is to foster better communication of ideas and opportunities for worship and service among LGUMC members and friends as we seek to share God's love and to make disciples of Jesus Christ. Phyllis Kitchens, Editor

Marina's Corner

From a small seed a mighty trunk may grow.

Aeschylus

Saving Dates on Calendar: 2018 is here and our calendar is filling up fast with weddings, birthday parties, private functions and many different types of celebrations. If you believe you will be in need of either the FLC or Sanctuary, please come by the office and fill out a building form to reserve the date pending approval of the Board of Trustees.

Sunday Bulletin Announcements: Bulletin deadline is **Tuesday at noon**. If you need to place an announcement in the bulletin, please have it into the office at least 2 weeks in advance.

Food Pantry: The second Sunday of each month is Harvest Sunday. Please bring your donations of canned or dry foods or personal care items to the Sanctuary on Sunday, or to the office during business hours. You may also donate cash or check (annotated Food Pantry) to help keep our pantry full.

These are some of the items we need:

Tuna
Hamburger Helper (Walmart has GV Brand in a flexible pouch for \$1.00 (perfect to fit in grocery bags))
Mac & Cheese
Peanut Butter & Jelly
Canned Fruit
Cereal
Rice & Beans
Ravioli
Potted Meats (Vienna sausage, Spam etc.)

***** and Paper Grocery Bags ***** Instead of getting your shopping packed in plastic bags, please consider asking for paper (or even a few extra), and bring the bags into church. (Purchasing paper grocery bags is very costly!)

All donations are greatly appreciated. We thank you in advance.

Marina G. Hernandez, Administrative Secretary, 863-858-5431. Office hours: 9 am - 2 pm, Mon-Fri.

2017 Food Pantry Report

Our small, self-funded food pantry saw a little increase in demand for groceries over the course of 2017 (the dotted trend line on the next page); however, that was probably influenced by Hurricane Irma. There was no change in the trend of demand for baked goods over the year.

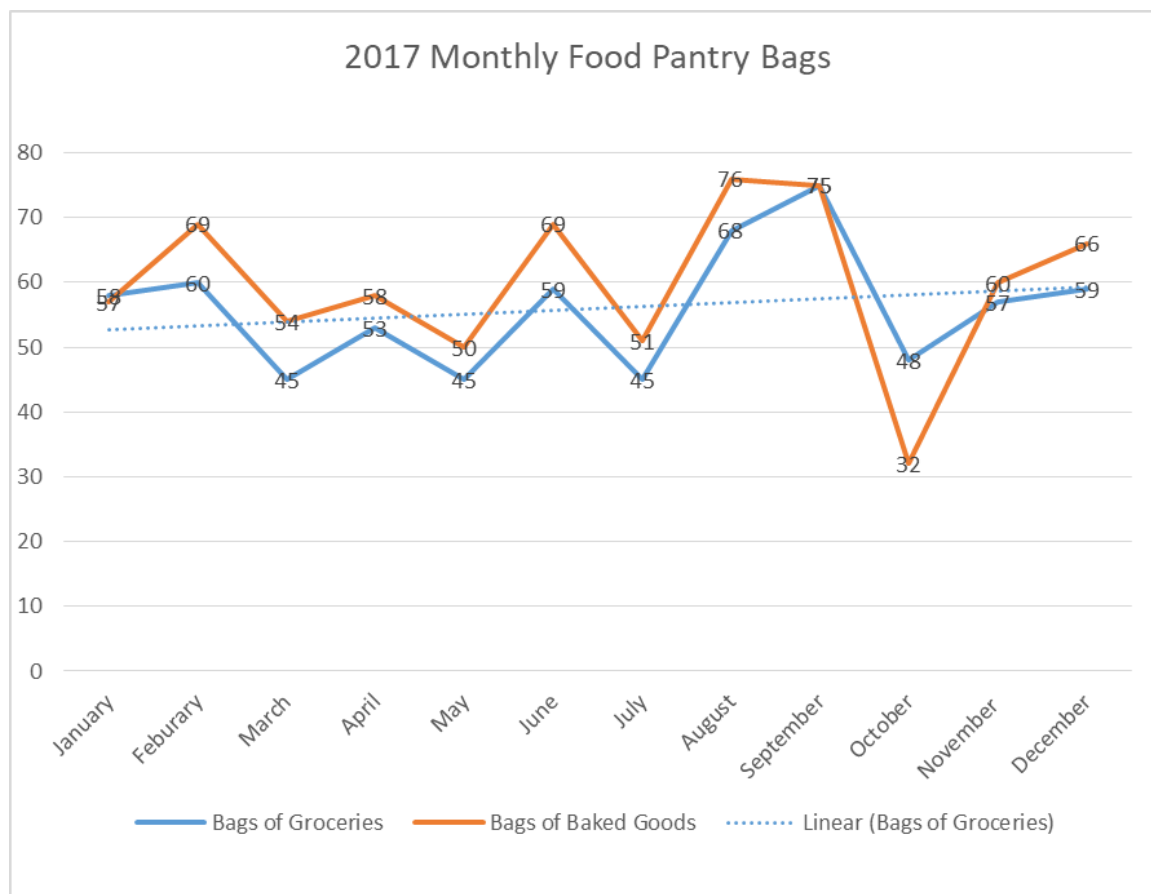
The 2017 totals given out are **672 bags of groceries and 717 bags of Publix baked goods**. In 2016 we provided 698 bags of groceries and 802 bags of baked goods. In 2015, through December 10th, we had provided 700 bags of groceries and 783 bags of baked goods.

Food Pantry Report continued on the next page . . .

Food Pantry Report, Continued

This year Hurricane Irma's visit on September 10th and the lengthy power outages that followed outside of the city of Lakeland are assumed to have driven up the number of people requesting grocery bags in that month (75 vs 52 in 2016).

Based on three years of food pantry totals, it appears that the need for our gifts is steady or very slightly decreasing. However, the recent announcement of the closure of AGAPE food bank, which supplied food to other free pantries, may result in an uptick in guests requesting our assistance in 2018.



Finance and Related Topics

Financial Update

As we are preparing the January issue of *The Good News*, we have not yet finished the month of December. Therefore, the charts that normally portray our financial status are not in this report. We should be able to give a summary of 2017 in total, as well as that of both December 2017 and January 2018 in the February issue.

Campus Revitalization

As the last Sunday of December was the 31st, we don't have all the data yet on contributions as we 'go to press'. But, we have raised \$3,895 as of 24 December towards our last remaining project (the installation of an electronic sign announcing our programs). With our pledged dollar-for-dollar match through 31 January 2018, we now have \$7,790 in the bank toward our requirement of \$20,000. Consider helping soon so that we might take advantage of these matching dollars.

Our Departments

The Administrative Council

The Chair of the Administrative Council for 2018 is Tom Burns. The first meeting of 2018 will be on Monday, January 29th, at 7:00 pm in the FLC.

The Board of Trustees

The Trustees will meet on Tuesday, January 2nd, at 2:00 pm in the office. The Campus Revitalization Campaign is in its final phase, raising money for the electronic sign which will enable us to inform our neighbors of church activities and worship opportunities.

Music Department

Thanks to everyone who participated in the December musical events -- singers, dancers, musicians, audio/visual booth workers, set builders, sanctuary decorators, children and their parents, and actors. Hope I haven't left anyone out. You all worked so hard as we worshiped God in words, music and dance.

Lay Leader's Letter

No report.

Children's Ministry

Kidtricity has been in existence at our church for 5 months now. We have covered lots of scripture lessons and done many crafts. The month of December has brought the story of our Savior's birth to life again. We have been working hard on our parts in the Cantata. A very big thank-you to everyone who brought the children to practice and encouraged their joyful participation.

Thank you to Bonnie Cochran for the great crafts she donated. Even A Little Bit of Heaven has gotten enjoyment from them. Thank you also to Glenda and David Hess for the joyful bells used in the Cantata.

The big event for the children was December 10th when we made crafts, played and had snowball fights during children's church. You know it is good when you hear "let's do it again!" We have a very talented group filled with energy and enthusiasm. We have begun a prayer journal, so expect great things to happen, and continue to pray for us as we love Jesus and learn more and more about how wonderful He is.

We want to thank the following children (and their parents/grandparents) for their performances in the Christmas cantata and its reprise on Christmas Eve: Hannah Berry, Michael Berry, Emma Faircloth, Brandon Oliva, Logan Oliva, Evan Saunders, Nathan Saunders, Elijah Wiley and Issac Wiley. The kids were adorable.

Debbie Moore, Children's Director

A Little Bit of Heaven (ALBOH) Child Enrichment Center

Thank you to ALBOH staff, family members and congregation who helped us cope with the "flood".

Our Departments, Continued

Worship Committee

We are “resting” after a very intensive December, so there is no report this month. Our next meeting is January 22nd, at 7:00 pm in the Sanctuary. Please consider joining us as we discuss different ways to worship God and enhance the experience for all members of our congregation and visitors.

Adult Sunday School Classes

All three Adult Sunday School classes meet in the FLC from 9:15 to 10:15 am. **Each class welcomes new members. Please join us!**

The **Friendship** Sunday School Class is led by Mike Stafford and meets downstairs in the multipurpose room.

The **Seekers** Sunday School class meets in FLC Classrooms 1 and 2. Eric Hines is the leader.

The **“Upstairs”** class meets next door to Kidtricity with Michael Moake as the leader.

New for 2018: The church will be united in the study of *The Story, The Bible As One Continuing Story of God and His People*. Sermons will be based on that week’s chapter and the Sunday School classes will discuss that chapter. The January syllabus is as follows:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Subject</u>
Jan 7	1	Creation: The Beginning of Life as We Know It
Jan 14	2	God Builds a Nation [Abraham]
Jan 21	3	Joseph: From Slave to Deputy Pharaoh
Jan 28	none	Review and reflection (No sermon; Paraguayan Harpist)

We will pick up with chapter 4 on February 4th and continue with a chapter a week until May 27th (chapter 18), with the exception of Holy Week, when we will study the chapters for Palm Sunday (26) and Easter (27). Because we have a lot of people who travel during the summer, we will take a break and resume study of *The Story* starting September 16th (chapter 19) and continue a chapter a week (except for October 28th, United Methodist Men’s Sunday) until we reach chapter 31 on December 2nd.

If you need a book, let the Sunday School class leader know.

Our Ministries

Mission Moments

Thank you, one and all, who gave socks for our sock ministry in December. The socks were hung out front on a drying rack, by the Family Life Center on a clothesline, and on the bushes between the sanctuary and A Little Bit of Heaven. Two hundred and twenty-two (222) pairs were bagged and marked with sizes for man, lady, or child.

Mission Moments continued on the next page . . .

Our Ministries, Continued

Mission Moments, Continued

Charlie and I were amazed by how fast they were taken. We would drive by the church almost every day and restock the supply. Many of the socks were in packages of six or more and were fastened together with plastic “strings”. I would like to bop whoever invented those plastic ties, as I had to cut them apart and try to remove them without putting holes in the socks. Our den floor is probably covered with little pieces of plastic.

Again, thank you for being a blessing to many in our community.

Linda Alvarez, Missions Coordinator

United Methodist Men (UMM)



Our first meeting for the year will be **Saturday, January 13th at 9:00 am**, and will include a **hot breakfast of pancakes and sausage**. If you’ve never participated in UMM, or haven’t been active for a while, please come and join us. We will be discussing ideas for projects we can undertake to improve the church campus and to serve our neighbors. If you can, please bring a donation for the Food Pantry and \$5.00 monthly dues (which you can pay for the year if you prefer).

Our normal meeting date is the second Saturday of the month. For 2018 we will be starting at 9:00 am to allow time for breakfast preparation. If anyone would like to help in the kitchen, please let me know.

Michael Moake, President, 863-816-3194

Igniting Men Conference

February 10, 2018

8:30 am - 4:30 pm

Mandarin United Methodist Church
Jacksonville, FL 32223

In 2018, our single-day Igniting Men conferences will feature the following:

- *A masculine worship experience.
- *Powerful, Biblically-based keynote messages.

*Breakout sessions featuring topics relevant to the lives of men.

*A “Unity Roundtable” discussion featuring an ethnically diverse panel.

This conference is led by men’s ministry leaders from Florida’s United Methodist Church, but is open to all men seeking a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and the desire to be better leaders in their homes, workplace, and community.

To register, go the web site ignitingmen.com. Adult admission is \$25.00; Student (age 13 and up) admission is \$15.00, and lunch is \$8.00.

Our Ministries continued on the next page . . .



Our Ministries

United Methodist Women (UMW)

The next meeting of the **UMW Leadership Team** is scheduled to be Monday, **January 29th at 1:00 pm** in the FLC. UMW officers are Pati Gilmore, President; Pat Moon, Vice President; Shirley Lux, Secretary; Maria Thomas, Treasurer and Phyllis Kitchens, Secretary of Program Resources. The three circle leaders (Ruth Zona, Debbie Moore and Pat Moon) complete the Leadership Team. If anyone is interested in learning more about UMW, please speak to one of these ladies.

Upcoming UMW Events:

Unit Meeting on Saturday, February 10th at 10:30 am. If you'd like to meet all the UMW members at one place and time, this is your opportunity. **This meeting was scheduled for Saturday so the working women among us can attend.** In addition to a short business meeting, lunch will be served. The three circles will provide the food.

The Unit meeting's guest speaker is **Diane Schmelz**, who will tell us about **Guardian ad Litem** with emphasis on trafficking. UMW's core mission includes taking care of women and children. Unfortunately, central Florida has a large number of sex and labor traffickers. Our unit is active in supporting charitable organizations that help these victims start new lives.

February 16 - 18, 2018 and March 9 - 11, 2018, Florida Conference Women's Retreats, Life Enrichment Center, Fruitland Park, Florida. Information and registration are on-line at www.flumc.org/floridaconferencewomensretreats.

March 24th, 2018, 8:00 am to noon. Save the date for the second fund-raising **Wonder Walk East**, hosted by College Heights UMC. Walk around Lake Hollingsworth any distance you wish, or help others work on projects for Cornerstone Family Ministries. We may want to make and donate some gift baskets for the raffle. Lunch will be provided.

Circle News



Ruth Circle of Love will meet on **Wednesday, January 3rd, at 11:00 am** in the FLC. We will be studying chapter 2, Sarah, from *Women of the Bible* by Frances Vander Velde. Please bring your lunch and a drink; dessert will be provided. Also bring ideas of different mission areas you would like to share with in 2018. All ladies are invited to attend. Contact Pat Moon, 863-858-6883 if you have any questions.

Heart to Heart will meet on **Monday, January 8th at 10:30 am** in the FLC. We will be studying chapter 4, Hagar, from *Women in the Bible, Examples to Live By*, by Sylvia Charles. Please bring your lunch and a drink; Maria Thomas will bring dessert. All ladies are welcome to attend. For questions, contact Ruth Zona at 863-859-5967.

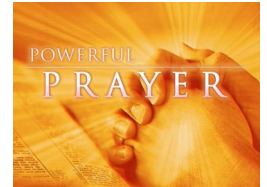


Evening Circle will meet on **Monday, January 8th, at 6:30 pm** at Debbie Moore's home, 400 Vineyard Drive, Lakeland. We start with dinner and dessert, so come hungry and enjoy our fellowship. We will study Chapter 20, Anna, from *Women of the Bible* by Frances Vander Velde. We also have lively discussions and perform tasks like filling welcome bags for first-time visitors. Please bring some small, useful and/or religious items to put into the bags. Call Debbie Moore, 863-614-7193 for information.

Our Ministries, Continued

Prayer Ministry

Happy New Year from Prayer Ministry!



Welcome Prayer Warriors to a new year of praying for others together as Christians in faith and service to our God.

"Therefore, I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks be made for all men." 1 Timothy 2:1 (NKV)

We at Lake Gibson give thanks to our prayer warriors for being dedicated to God's calling to "Pray for one another". We have been blessed the past year with the addition of new prayer warriors.

Along with the Prayer Email Chain we also have our Prayer groups who meet twice a week for group praying. Intercessory Prayer meets Mondays at 9:30 am and Mid-week Devotions meet on Wednesdays at 8:00 am. There is an open invitation to come and pray with us. *Please mark the box on the Connection Card in the Sunday bulletin: "Becoming a Prayer Warrior" or call 863-698-4518 if you would like to become one of our prayer warriors.*

The Prayer Journal is included inside the bulletin twice a month. This is a great tool to enable everyone in the congregation to pray during the week for those in need. Please take the Bulletin and Prayer Journal home with you and pray daily over each section's needs.

We thank God for calling us to be people of prayer.

God Bless our prayer mission and Happy New Year to everyone.

Prayer Ministry

Scouting Report

On December 31st Boy Scout Troop 711 held its Eagle Scout Recognition Ceremony during the church service. Scoutmaster Jim Bibby's introductory remarks explained why achieving Eagle rank is so important to the young men, citing American leaders at every level who were once Eagle Scouts.

Troop 711 developed six Eagles this year, and four were present during the ceremony. The four came with their families who helped to fill the sanctuary (and added children to our Children's Ministry): Ron Aytona, Jonathan Stephenson, Brady Pennington and Brian Reid. The other two Eagle Scouts are Michael Harmen and Nick Riggall. Scoutmaster Bibby noted that all six of these young men have graduated from high school and are pursuing college or career education or are preparing for military service. The congregation was grateful to witness these achievements. Many of the families joined us for 5th-Sunday lunch.

The Cub Scout's web site reports that they have a hike scheduled on Saturday, January 6th, from 9:00 am to noon at the Circle B Bar Reserve.

Our Ministries continued on the next page . . .

Our Ministries, Continued

Florida United Methodist Children's Home (FUMCH)

This year for the Angel Tree we collected \$1,900 in gift cards along with various health and beauty items, linens and kitchen items requested for the cottages. Jeff Acor and Dale Gower were able to deliver the Angel Tree items on December 4th, the deadline requested by the Children's Home.

Jeff and I would like to thank everyone who has supported the Children's Home throughout the year with the Fifth-Sunday offerings, Coins for Camp, School Supplies and the Angel Tree. Without your help the Children's Home could not be the success that it is.

In November there was a ground-breaking ceremony for the construction of the Lamar Louise Curry Early Childhood Education Development Center at the Enterprise campus. The new building will be a 20,000-square foot center that will be replacing the existing building and will be able to triple the number of children [from 72 to 250] they can serve in the Early Childhood Education program. In the 1980's the current building was opened to the surrounding community as an early childhood education center, the purpose of which was to provide quality childcare and education services to low-income parents.

Quoting from a FUMCH press release dated November 9th: "Expansion of the Early Childhood Education Development program through this new building will also benefit many of our residents. The program will partner with our Independent Living program by offering apprenticeship opportunities in education, food service and early childhood education. The new building will be located on the north side of the Enterprise campus, adjacent to Jacob Brock Avenue, and will match the historical architecture of the other buildings on campus."

Testimonial from a parent: "I would like to thank each and every one of you that have helped my son to make the right choices, to walk the lighted path of Christ, and to leave the darkness behind. Your program was wonderful and there are staff that I miss because they became my friends. We are a family again and life is much better now that he is home. Thanks again! P. S. There is hope!"

Karen and Jeff Acor, FUMCH Representatives

Bikes for FUMCH

Another seven bikes were refurbished and delivered on December 8th to the Enterprise campus of the Florida United Methodist Children's Home (FUMCH). Thankfully, this also clears our garage space to accept additional bikes for refurbishment. If you know of any neighbors thinking of getting rid of a bike, why not let them know that our church can put them to good use.

Guess I spoke too soon. The week before Christmas another four bicycles showed up for FUMCH. After receiving a tune-up, they should be on their way during late January.

Dwight Kitchens
863-984-4564

Our Ministries, Continued

Neighborhood Missions Ministry

We have several families who have asked for help maintaining their homes, but we have no volunteers. We've been asked if someone could help modify a chain-link fence by repositioning the existing gate and closing up the current entrance. We also need someone to power wash a one-story home with plant-friendly cleaning solution, and some people to help with periodic housecleaning chores. None of the requestors are able to use the services of other volunteer agencies.

If you can volunteer to perform these tasks or do a few hours grass cutting and yard trimming, please call Phyllis Kitchens, 863-984-4564.

If you can't perform these tasks, at least pray for this ministry which fell on hard times in 2017. We currently have only a handful of volunteers, none of whom should be performing strenuous manual labor. Pray that the Lord places it in many hearts to volunteer to help our neighbors in 2018.

Celebrations

[Please let the editor know if there are errors in these lists so we can correct the data base. We print both members' and constituents' celebrations.]



Anniversary in January

<u>Date</u>	<u>Names</u>
1/19	Lynn and Alan Grier

Birthdays in January

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>
1/1	Jamie Collins
1/1	Joyce Thompson
1/2	Joe Moon
1/4	Rochelle McBride
1/6	Dan Jackson
1/7	Kathy Rumohr
1/7	Bennett Taz
1/8	Stella Eismann
1/8	James Lehner
1/10	Mary Ann Fleming
1/11	Claudette Bosley
1/11	Lexie Otte
1/12	Todd Bower
1/12	Jim Roberts
1/14	Umbuju Grant
1/15	Susan Willis
1/16	Ramona Kendall
1/16	Marcia Lehner
1/16	Donna Newman
1/19	Tammy Fleming
1/20	Bob Blead
1/20	Adrian Lerch
1/20	Abba Schmidt
1/21	Shirley Lux
1/21	Jane Watkins
1/24	Anthony Wilde
1/26	Barbara Allen-Coil
1/27	Linda Alvarez
1/27	Ruth Zona
1/30	Jacqueline Webb

Lake Gibson United Methodist Church shares and supports the love of Jesus Christ.

Lake Gibson United Methodist Church
424 West Daughtery Road
Lakeland, FL 33809

Web Page: www.lakegibsonumc.com

Office Hours: 9:00 am to 2:00 pm, Monday thru Friday

Contact Information

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	FAX:	863-853-1625
	E-mail:	pastor@lakegibsonumc.com

Support Staff

Marina Hernandez	Administrative Secretary 863-858-5431 office@lakegibsonumc.com
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Sue Heishman	Bookkeeper
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Debbie Moore	Children's Director
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Youth Director

Youth Intern

Glenda Grant Hess	Director of Music/Organist
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Don Heishman, Michael Moake, Fay Wright, and Kristie Summers	Audio/Visual Support
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Debbie Moore	Custodian
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A Little Bit of Heaven Child Enrichment Center

Lisa Bacon	Director
Office	863-858-8400
Cell	863-255-8619
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The Good News is a monthly church newsletter that supports Lake Gibson UMC's vision *to be a joyful church family that is crucial to our community*. We welcome your suggestions, comments and articles. Please contact the editor at 863-984-4564 (home) or 410-790-2662 (cell), or by e-mail her at phylis_kitchens@hotmail.com.