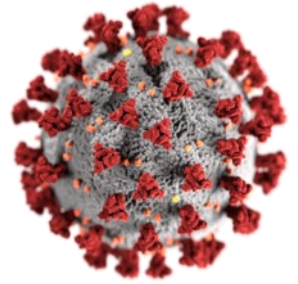




THE GOOD NEWS

Lake Gibson United Methodist Church

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



From the Pastor

I must make a confession to you: I do not like what is going on in the world, the country or our local community at this time. I do not like the decisions that I am forced to make during this time of coronavirus and racial divide. Decisions that deal with having in-person church services or infecting people with the virus; decisions to sing or not to sing, to wear masks or not, to use pews or chairs and other major decisions concerning how we worship God properly.

Then there are the other decisions that must be made concerning racial equality, the reframing of our history, the relearning of everything we were taught. Plus the political debate and the division going on in that realm. I really want to throw my hands up, fall on my knees and scream, "Why me God"?

I actually did that last week . . . and God answered me. He said you were born for such a time as this (Esther 4:14). I replied, "But God, I . . ." and He cut me off midsentence with the words of Jesus: "*Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will*" so that I had to say, "Yes, my Lord."

You probably feel much the same way. Frustrated, angry, neglected, unloved, lonely, afraid, uncertain of anything past this moment, and afraid of planning for anything for the future. Yet God says that He ordained our days (Psalm 139:16) and we can trust Him. Meaning God knew what would happen in our life span. God told both Joshua (Jos. 1:9) and Isaiah (Isa. 41:10) not to fear or be dismayed, for He (God) is with us.

Jesus promised us the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us in making wise decisions, and encouraged us to stand on the promises of God. Paul said in 2 Timothy 1:7 that "*God did not give us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of sound mind*". I think scripture says those same things to each of us today.

I pray for the Holy Spirit to guide me in all my decisions, and I try to use the sound mind God has given me to wade through data in order to reach the right decision concerning our church. I seek counsel from others, but the buck stops on my desk. I sincerely ask you to pray for me, our leadership team and those in power over us as we make these decisions. My bottom line is keeping all of our congregants safe while also helping them grow in the faith.

I pray that you know the same God has called you for such a time as this, and He is with you also. I pray that all of us can see how great a love God has for us and His church, and pray we will all make decisions that benefit everyone and give glory to our Lord and Savior.

Stay safe, act wisely and trust the Lord.

Pastor Steve



First Town Hall Meeting on Dismantling Racism

“Freedom doesn’t just show up; we go in search of it.” Erin Hawkins, General Secretary of the General Commission on Religion and Race

[Source of quoted paragraphs: <https://www.umc.org/en/content/dismantling-racism-town-hall>]

“The upcoming July 4th holiday has many of us in the United States thinking about our nation’s history. What does it mean to celebrate the Fourth of July when we haven’t yet realized #JusticeForBreonna? How can we sing about the “land of the free” when we still hear George Floyd crying out for his mama?

“Many of us are wrestling with how we can most faithfully understand and interpret the realities of this present moment, both for ourselves and for our congregations. From pulpits and pews, we pray and hope for a yet-unrealized future where Black lives matter as much to our nation’s decision-makers—and to each person of faith—as they do to our almighty God.

“On July 1st the Council of Bishops, the General Commission on Religion and Race, the General Board of Church and Society and United Methodist Women hosted a **Town Hall** meeting via Facebook, intended to be the first in a series, focusing on how the Methodist churches can begin the work of dismantling racism throughout society. Key questions included:

“* Are we telling the story of our nation’s history from the perspective of the lion or the lamb? How has a culture of white supremacy and settler colonialism distorted our understanding of our shared past? What are the truths we need to learn—and the lies we need to un-learn—about US history?

“* What about our church ancestors? How and when have Methodists furthered racist national projects and caused real harm? How and when have United Methodists showed up on the side of Jesus, justice and freedom for all peoples?

“* How might a careful look into this past enable us to build a more Gospel-grounded future together? How might a careful look into this past

Dismantling Racism Town Hall, Continued

enable us to build a more Gospel-grounded future together?

“The one-hour Town Hall [was] moderated by General Secretary of the General Commission on Religion & Race, Erin Hawkins, with expert panelists Rev. Dr. Bobby McClain, Dr. Lisa Dellinger, Rev. Dr. Fred Day III, and Dr. Alison Greene to explore the history of the United States and the United Methodist Church, racial (in)justice and where God is calling us to go next.”

The panelists and moderator told some of the history of the founding of America by Christian Europeans who regarded the indigenous peoples as inferior, their land to be taken and their culture to be erased, replaced with that of the colonizers.

The recently announced UMC plan to train more local church historians could be a useful tool to support a careful examination of our church’s records. Dr. McClain read a list of 8 pillars that support or enable racism, and suggested that each church adopt one of them to work on for a year to take the first concrete step in dismantling racism. (Sounds like a potential job for the UMW and UMM.) The pillars will be posted on the UMC website later.

One example of racism mentioned in top-level church administration is how the decision to close “Black” or “white” churches is made. What assumptions are made, what metrics are used, and are they applied without bias toward either color of church?

Another example of racism is a pattern of white churches rejecting the assignment of a minister of color. Cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments are **appointments of clergypersons to congregations** in which the majority of their constituencies are different from the clergy person’s own racial/ethnic and cultural background (UMC Book of Discipline, para 425.4).

The town hall was interesting and informative, although there were times when the Rev. Drs. dropped into “clergy-speak” and we laypersons had to catch up. I’m looking forward to future town halls and dismantling racism, and hope others in our congregation will participate. You can view it on our website, lakegibsonumc.com.

Phyllis and Dwight Kitchens

Bishop's Updated Guidance As COVID-19 Cases Rise in Florida

[Source: Email, FloridaConference.florida@brtapp.com, 26 June 2020, 1:35 pm
(Most hyperlinks have been removed except for those in the paragraph **updated guidance**).]

Dear Florida Conference Churches and Clergy:

Last Thursday we wrote to encourage and inform you as you make decisions in the midst of this ever-changing reality. We know there is stress and anxiety in having to rethink decisions as the pandemic continues.

Today, we write to inform and encourage you so you have the information you need to make safe decisions. We are learning and adapting alongside of you. Bishop Carter stated on May 28th that our guidance around returning to in-person worship could change as the number of cases began to increase.

The latest information shows:

* Cases are **rising exponentially** in our state. The seven-day average of new cases is up 85% from the previous week (new seven-day average is 4,149) and the last two days have seen over 5,000 new cases each day (breaking news as we send this says 8,942 more cases were reported today). The CDC and other health experts agree that this increase in cases is not simply connected to increased testing.

* Even though the increase in positive cases is among younger people, the spread of the virus is real and dangerous for all people, especially those with underlying health conditions. Yesterday, the CDC updated its list of people at risk.

* We encourage you to look at all the data including: the number of new cases, the infection rate, the positive test rate, the hospitalization rates, and the ICU bed capacity. We have learned that it is not wise to base guidance solely on ICU bed space availability. As one of our health consultants said, "Sadly, by the time ICU beds reach capacity the outbreak will be uncontrollable."

Based on this information we offer this **updated guidance**:

1. *This is not a time to relax any of our previously stated health [guidelines](#), [protocols](#), or [FAQ](#).*
2. Virtual worship is the safest approach, and outdoor worship is encouraged over inside.
3. Churches should consider delaying plans to return to in-person worship. We know some of you have already pushed your return to in-person worship date back in response to the rise in cases, and others of you have met in person and are now returning to virtual-only worship.
4. Wearing masks is essential when any group gathers together. We ask everyone to wear a mask and do not consider masks to be optional.

We continue to honor the sense that there is not a "one-size-fits-all" approach for every church around the conference. Contexts are different as cases rise at different rates in different counties and zip codes (click here for a county and zip code break down).

At the same time, **your church is not the exception**. We have had increased positive cases among clergy families, church staff, volunteers, preschool families, church members, and more. Some of these are connected to individuals who made exceptions to the protocols. Others are connected to the increased spread of the virus around us.

We encourage you to continue your discussions with your local church teams. In your discussion, you and your leaders might refer back to the article [Why Reopening a Church is Different](#). Although it was written a few weeks ago, a key point remains the same: "Our reopening plans are not about what is best for the management of our church, but what is best for the common good and greater community."

Continued . . .

Bishop's Updated Guidance, Continued

This is not a time to focus primarily on what we may be sacrificing by not gathering, but how we are serving and loving all our neighbors by not gathering too soon.”

If you have questions, please reach out to your District Superintendent or contact the Episcopal Office at ashanks@flumc.org.

The Peace of the Lord,
Bishop Ken Carter and The Cabinet of the Florida Annual Conference

A Pastoral Letter to United Methodists of the Southeastern Jurisdiction

June 5, 2020

Brothers and Sisters:

As president of the Southeastern Jurisdiction College of Bishops my heart rejoices over the bold, courageous, and compassionate offering of confession, lament, and call to action by our white brothers and sisters of the SEJ College and the gracious acceptance of this act of truth telling as we journey toward the Beloved Community. It is our belief that such actions enhance our work and witness to a hurting community seeking moral leadership in this time of racial upheaval.

We see this statement as a reversal of the sentiments of the letter sent to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by a group of clergymen that caused him to write the eloquent and brutally honest “Letter From a Birmingham Jail.” <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/letter-birmingham-jail>

We have longed for white voices of power and influence to stand with us. It is an amazing gift to hear and work with colleagues joining voices in solidarity with African Americans who have been both prophet and victim. It is only when the privileged who have benefited from the evils of racism take a stand that real change happens. It is our prayer that the church, the nation, and our world will no longer place the burden on the oppressed to liberate themselves. It is impossible to free yourself when the power of systemic injustice has its knee on your neck.

We pray that what follows will serve as a model for our brothers and sisters who have lived a life of white privilege to speak a gracious yet painful word of truth as we journey together toward real transformation, hope, and love in this racially charged atmosphere. We share this work of solidarity with these words from our fellow White Bishops with thanksgiving and hope that others will join us.

Bishop Leonard Fairley

We, the White Bishops of the Southeastern Jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church, call upon all United Methodists to stand with and see our Black brothers and sisters.

As White American Bishops, we stand up and stand with our Black Bishops in the Church who have consistently named and called out the systemic and sinful practice of discrimination that has been pervasive in the United States since the first slaves walked the shores of this land. For our failure to join our sisters and brothers we ask forgiveness.

As White American Bishops, we stand up and stand with the Black Communities across our Episcopal Areas recognizing that we who have been in positions of power and privilege have been silent. In our silence we have and do sin. We implore all United Methodists across the Southeastern Jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church to exercise influence and power to be agents of repentance, reconciliation, reformation, and restoration in a system that has failed to bring hope to all God's children of color.

Continued . . .

A Pastoral Letter to United Methodists of the Southeastern Jurisdiction, Continued

As White American Bishops, we stand up and stand with all persons who live in fear of the very systems designed to protect them.

As White American Bishops, we stand up and stand with all persons whose anger has reached the point of intolerance due to failure after failure to change systemic racial injustice which has created the climate where black lives can be snuffed out without consequence.

As White American Bishops, we stand up, stand with, and stand against any systems of injustice that treat people differently because of the color of their skin. We call on the people called Methodist to live fully into our baptismal vows to renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of this world, and repent of our sin.

We believe that the soul of our nation needs to be examined which means that each person, individually, needs to engage in self-examination. Self-examination includes educating oneself about the roots of racism from slavery to lynching to racial segregation and Jim Crow to contemporary presumptions of guilt, incarceration, and police violence. Self-examination means scrutinizing one's beliefs, attitudes, and actions. A **beginning** place is for each of us to read "Letter From a Birmingham Jail" written by Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1963.

God calls us individually and collectively to take action.

In our Baptism we are called to accept the freedom and power given by God to resist evil, injustice, and oppression however, wherever, and whenever they are present.

We, the White American Bishops of the Southeastern Jurisdiction United Methodist Church, cry out to the people of The United Methodist Church to unite our hearts, our minds, our souls, and our strength now to step into this present brokenness by seeing those we have chosen not to see. We do so believing that out of the pain of the tragic deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Eric Garner, Philando Castile, Trayvon Martin, and countless others whose names have faded, that these senseless killings will stop and healing can begin.

Let us now, this day, stand up and stand with our Black brothers and sisters so that we will be united as one body in Christ, redeemed by his blood. May we be one in Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world until Christ comes in final victory.

This is our deepest prayer.

The Holy Work Before Us

We now ask you to join us in recommitting ourselves to non-violently exposing and opposing injustice, racism, and violence even when it resides in our own hearts. We must not allow our righteous indignation and prophetic calls for justice to become spiritually hollow with no moral integrity to speak into a world that is in desperate need of the fresh bread of hope.

We hear and see it in the protests. The world grows weary of injustice where the marginalized become voiceless and invisible living at the mercy of power. If we are unwilling to walk the path of Jesus Christ and truly acknowledge white privilege, then all our statements simply become high sounding pontificated documents joining other statements gathering dust on the shelves of empty promises.

Continued . . .

A Pastoral Letter to United Methodists of the Southeastern Jurisdiction, Continued

With your prayers and actions joined with ours, we can answer the cries we hear in the midst of protests--cries of injustice, fear, and anger, that when gone unanswered turn violent. If Jesus is indeed the answer let us dare to see one another as beloved children of the living God deserving of love, mercy and justice.

We offer our example to the church. In the name of Jesus Christ this is our work and we dare not abandon it or the world because we desire privilege and power over what the Lord requires of us.

Please join us in this holy work of dismantling racism in its subtle and overt forms. If not us, who? If not now, when?

Christ have mercy.
Lord have mercy.
Christ have mercy.

[Signed by 35 bishops]

Lay Leader's Page

HAPPY 4th OF JULY! We should really hold on to this holiday as it is the basis of who we are as a nation.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness"

In this short segment of the Declaration, ". . . only five words were capitalized: Creator, Rights, Life, Liberty, and Happiness. It appears the Founders were ensuring that everyone understood that those words deserved a common level of respect. Our rights come from our Creator, and those Rights provide us with access to Life and Liberty and the ability to pursue Happiness."¹

We have failed to educate some of our youth on the origin and hope that people all over the world saw in this nation as it developed over the last four centuries. Now the troublemakers only see the bad issues that have been dealt with and corrected over the years as prevailing and needing correcting again. And perhaps some changes are warranted, but not the destruction and rewriting of our history.

I came across this short article which so vividly describes what is happening in our country today. In a book about parenting², Paul David Tripp described the nature of foolishness in the Book of Proverbs: *"The fool has the world inside out and upside down. The fool looks at what is foolish and sees it as wise. The fool looks at what is good and sees it as bad. The fool looks at what is false and sees it as true. . . . The fool argues with the wise and listens to other fools. The fool has it all wrong, but is convinced he is always right."*³ (Proverbs 1:7, 15:5, 26:3, 29:11)

All of us over 65 years old should be especially cognizant of what is happening in our world and our country, since we are so vulnerable to the coronavirus which has shut us down socially and economically. Perhaps our commitment and priorities need correcting as well.

One final word from Proverbs 3:5, *"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding."* SHALOM!

John Bernat, Lay Leader

1 <http://consciousbridge.com/wordpress/commentary/spirituality-2/life-liberty-and-the-pursuit-of-happiness/> posted by Mark Gilbert, July 4, 2011

2 [Parenting: 14 Gospel Principles That Can Radically Change Your Family](#), Paul David Tripp, 2016, Crossway Books

3 Quotation can also be found at <https://www.paultripp.com/bible-study?page=3>

Prayer Ministry

"Your prayers and your compassionate acts are like a memorial offering to God."

Acts 10:4 (CEB)

Jesus's life was about prayer and showing compassionate acts. Being one of our prayer warriors allows us a gracious way to be a blessing to others in need of prayer, and to fulfill His call for us to serve Him.

You will be richly blessed by becoming a prayer warrior for Lake Gibson. Contact the church office at 863-858-5431 or email office@lakegibsonumc.com if you wish to become a prayer warrior.

Please continue to pray for healing within our world.

God Bless,
Fran, Prayer Ministry

Pakistani Christian Family Decided Not to Relocate

Junaid Saqib was informed at the end of June that the family of six Christian refugees has decided to stay in Pennsylvania rather than relocate to Lakeland. We're disappointed, but understand why they might not want to move into a coronavirus hot spot.

Thanks to everyone who searched for and/or donated household furnishings to set up an apartment for this family. We plan to retain these items in case another family has an emergency need for some furniture and kitchen goods. If they haven't been taken, we will offer the items at the next rummage sale.

Phyllis Kitchens

Looking for a New Best Friend?

On **Saturday, July 18th**, the SPCA, Polk County Animal Control and the Humane Society of Polk County will hold a cat and dog adoption extravaganza -- **\$20.00 adoption fee**. Events will be held **at each organization's facility**.

A Little Bit of Heaven Child Enrichment Center (ALBOH)

The preschool has 45 students enrolled and has 10 summer camp students.

We have truly been blessed to continue to operate and run as an essential business. We would like to thank Pastor Steve for his leadership and for fighting for us to stay open when our enrollment had decreased tremendously. Pastor Steve said "no matter if we have eight students, those parents need a place to bring their kids, and we will be there for them".

We would also like to thank Mr. Dwight Kitchens and Mr. Dick McPherson for helping us get the C.A.R.E.S Act loan. This loan has allowed us to stay afloat and operate as normal.

Latisha Cook, Director

[Update: One ALBOH employee tested positive for coronavirus on June 29th. As a result, ALBOH will be closed until July 9th. We regret the disruption this causes to the children and their parents. Please pray that our staff and children are virus-free when they return after quarantine. Editor]



Just Energy for All Video Conference, July 15th, 3:00 pm

The United Methodist Women (UMW) Office of Economic and Environmental Justice is holding monthly videoconferences on the subject of advancing just energy for all at the local, state and national levels.

The first session will be by **July 15th at 3:00 pm EDT**. The focus will be "Casting Our Vision and Communicating Our Story". Video meetings will be held the 3rd Wednesday of every month.

If anyone (man or woman, to use the binary terms) has interest in this topic, or perhaps knows something about energy production, and would like to watch the first meeting, you can register at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8151212121?pwd=Zm9udG91bW5kdz09>.

Want to Get Involved?

[This article was published in the June issue and, frankly, we were underwhelmed by the response. Changes since June are in italics; deletions marked by strikethroughs.]

~~Over time,~~ **We need to train a few more individuals in both mixing our worship music and preparing our vMix software for Live Streaming.**

Our current audio/visual team will require sanity breaks every so often. You could be one of the backup individuals. We've proven that most of us can start from scratch and build a functioning system. Thankfully, we now have people who can help you learn.

~~OK, we know.~~ You've been gone from the sanctuary for over ~~two~~ *three* months. We understand. It's not as if you were given much of a choice. But, there are benefits to the congregation as a whole. We get better each Sunday with the ability to bring worship into your home.

The church took a leap into Live Streaming. Most of us knew little and had to learn much over a short period of time. We started having our services Live-Streamed on Facebook and linked to our website. Shortly thereafter we uploaded to YouTube (not sure that we'll ever go to Twitter as the permitted messages are too short).

We are rearranging our sound booth to fit both audio and video equipment, *and installing additional cameras*. We've enhanced some of our equipment and will continue to upgrade it over the next few months.

As we return to in-person worship there will be a need to continue our Live Streaming worship services. Initially, we will have some limitations on how we worship together. Some may not feel comfortable returning to the sanctuary and joining the main body of our congregation for quite some time. This is understandable. We will continue to offer the ability to participate in worship through our Live-Streaming services.

Please consider volunteering to learn the audio/visual system and fill in where necessary. Call or email the church office if you can help (863-858-5431 or office@LakeGibsonUMC.com).

Dwight Kitchens

Tech Talk

Better Video Conferencing

OK, we've moved some Bible studies to Zoom. You may be talking to friends on Zoom, Google Meet, GoToMeeting, Webex Meetings, Microsoft Teams, etc. But do you look your best? Here are some hints to make sure those on the other end see who you really are:

1. Put your computer camera at eye level. Don't put it in your lap. Put it on a desk, countertop, or table and stack it on books or a shoe box if necessary to get that camera up to eye level. Much more pleasing view of your face.
2. If your program permits the use of a background image to display behind your face, consider if this might be useful. Zoom permits you to show one of their images, or a photo you took, as background. You can appear to be on a beach or at the mountains or in outer space.
3. Have light come from in front of you so that it illuminates your face. Backlighting is not your friend. If there is a bright light coming from a nearby window, close the curtains or change your setup so the light is not flooding the camera lens.
4. You might want to use earbuds or Bluetooth headphones. You will probably hear better and you won't disturb others in the same room.
5. If using a wireless fidelity (Wi-Fi) connection, test the speed in different locations within the home. This will help to insure that your connection doesn't break up due to a poor signal. Better yet, if you have an Ethernet cable, why not look at connecting directly from your computer to your modem/router? Your internet speed will likely double.
6. If you are participating on a cell phone, PLEASE hold it steady. Don't pace around. Watching an image bouncing around can induce nausea.
7. If you want to speak, make sure your mouth is pointing directly toward the microphone. If you turn your head to the side to look at something while speaking, the mic is likely to miss some or all that you say.
8. Remember that if two or more people speak at the same time, the words will be garbled. Be patient and courteous to the others who may have something to say.

Tech Talk, Continued


Facebook Sermons and Closed Captioning

We recently noticed that when viewing our church services on Facebook, we were getting closed captioning on the screen. Unfortunately, it usually overlaid the scripture text inserted into the sermons. Not exactly what we wanted.

An inquiry to David McPherson, our vMix guru, revealed that this is a Facebook issue, not one with our livestream. If this bothers you, there is a simple fix.

You have the capability to turn your closed captioning on or off. By default, I recommend that it should be **off**.

On your computer, the following should work:

1. Click  in the top right.
2. Select > **Settings**.
3. Scroll down and click **Videos** in the left column.
4. Click either ON or OFF next to **Always Show Captions**.
5. If **ON** for Closed Captioning, continue to item 7.
6. If **OFF** for Closed Captioning, you are finished. Click your **HOME** option at the top of your page.
7. Click **EDIT** under Captions Display.
8. Choose the background color/Opacity, Text Color, and Text size for your Closed Captioning.
9. Click **Save Changes**. Click your **HOME** option at the top of your page.
10. If the above **does not work** due to AUTO CAPTIONING, you might want to change the text size to 50%. This reduces the size of the Closed Captioning and permits you to see more of the displayed scripture.

Continued . . .

Facebook Sermons and Closed Captioning, Continued

Your caption settings will only apply to videos you watch on a computer.

On an Apple iOS device, the following should work:

1. Open **Settings** app on your iOS device
2. Tap **General**
3. Tap **Accessibility**
4. Tap **Subtitles & Captioning**
5. Set the switch by **Closed Captions + SDH**

On an Android device, the following should work:

1. Open Facebook
2. Tap **Menu**
3. Scroll down and tap **Settings and Privacy**
4. Tap **App Settings**
5. Tap **Subtitle Settings**
6. Choose either
 - a. Always show subtitles, or
 - b. Only show subtitles when sound is off

Having Trouble Using Zoom?

Future meetings, Sunday school classes and Bible studies can be held easily using Zoom video conferencing software. Zoom is available for iOS, Android and Windows devices.

It is **best** to install the latest version of Zoom on your device, rather than attempting to connect to a meeting. Why? Accepting an invitation and attempting to connect to a meeting will not allow you to **test** out both your **camera and microphone** before the meeting starts.

The full version of Zoom software allows you to test both your camera and microphone to insure that they work properly. You can find all versions at https://zoom.us/download#client_4meeting (note the underscore between **client** and **4**). The free version allows you to hold up to one-hour meetings with a maximum of 100 participants.

Continued on the next page . . .

Having Trouble Using Zoom?, Continued

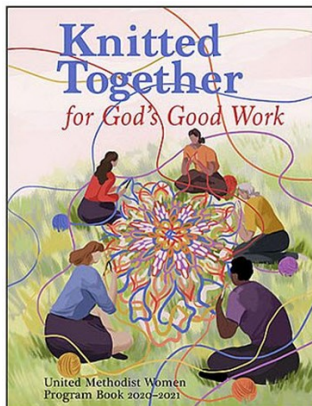
If you haven't yet tried joining the church on a video conference, download the Zoom software today, test your camera and microphone, and join us for **Bible study with the pastor on Thursdays at 1:00 pm**. We're on the book of Romans. You will need to contact the church office to get an email invitation to the study which provides instructions on how to connect to this specific meeting.

If, after installing the software and running your tests, you still have problems, contact Dwight Kitchens (863-984-4564) about getting help to set up Zoom on your device.

If you don't have a device with a camera, you can log into a meeting on your telephone. Your email invitation to join will provide telephone numbers you can call to connect. You can talk to the members; others will see your name on a black box during the meeting.

Dwight Kitchens

UMW Program Book for 2020 - 2021 Is Available in July



Do you want to find out more about the United Methodist Women and their missions?

One way is to look at the annual program book. The following information describes the latest issue:

"Knitted Together for God's Good Work explores how we as children of God are joined and linked together into the whole body of Christ. Even at times when social distancing or other obstacles may keep us physically apart, we are knitted together in community to transform the world."

"New This Year: To ensure that everyone can join together virtually for monthly study and bonding, instructions on how to use videoconferencing platforms are provided, along with suggestions on how to adjust program activities for
Continued . . .

UMW Program Book for 2020 - 2021, Continued

these forums." [Source: UMW e-Commerce website, <https://www.umwmissionresources.org>]

Members of our unit's leadership team (officers and circle leaders) are provided a copy of the program book to use for planning programs and activities for the year. Circle leaders may present the book's monthly programs in their circles, but are not required to do so. The UMW program book covers one calendar year, corresponding to the school year. The new book starts in September 2020 and ends in August 2021.

UMW members may want to obtain a copy for themselves to become more informed about the major programs, issues and missions of the UMW. There are back issues of the program book in the UMW area of the church's library. These are available to borrow, if you would like to learn more about what this organization does.

Phyllis Kitchens

Volunteers Needed for Hope House by Geri Mayo

Hope House is short on volunteers. We're open the 1st and 3rd Monday (with volunteer Kelly), every Tuesday (with Rick and Debbie), and every Wednesday (Laura and Geri). Every other day, I'll (Geri) go if it's my day off. If there's a second volunteer, we open Hope House; if not we all stay outside. If I'm alone, I carry the food down US 98N from RaceTrac to 7-Eleven, or distribute food at Hope House. We're all praying for more volunteers so we may open at least Monday to Thursday, as we were before COVID-19. Being open Monday to Friday would be fantastic.

My **hope** is churches or groups could come out **1 Saturday a month** to open Hope House. **If we had enough groups, it could be 1 group volunteering every 2 months.** This would make it easier to recruit volunteers.

We train by having people shadow experienced volunteers. Best thing would be to talk to Debbie and Rick McLellan if you're interested in learning more. After shadowing a few times, if you're still interested, you should talk to Brent Lipham at Kathleen Baptist Church.

Books about Racism for Kids

[Source: UM News Daily Digest, June 30, 2020, written by Crystal Caviness]

The conversation about race should not be limited to adults. Bringing children into calm, educated discussions can help a younger generation confront the reality of racism and be part of the solution in ending racial injustice. The following books were recommended by our friends at the [United Methodist Church] General Commission on Race and Religion.



["The Snowy Day"](#)

One of a series, this book by Ezra Jack Keats, features a black boy who experiences the joy of a snowy day in his city. First published in 1962, the book is lauded for breaking the color barrier for mainstream children's literature. Other titles in the series are "A Letter to Amy," "Hi, Cat!" and "Whistle for Willie". (Recommended for ages birth to 3 years old.)



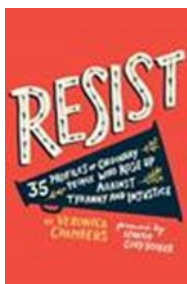
["Hair Love"](#)

The book that inspired an [Oscar-winning short film](#), "Hair Love" tells the sweet story of author Matthew A. Cherry, a black father, learning to do his daughter's hair for the first time. (Recommended for ages 3 to 5.)



["The Youngest Marcher"](#)

Cynthia Levinson tells the true and shocking story of 9-year-old Audrey Faye Hendricks, who, in 1963, was jailed for a week along with hundreds of other children following a Birmingham civil rights march. (Recommended for ages 5-8.)



["Resist: 35 Profiles of Ordinary People Who Rose Up Against Tyranny and Injustice"](#)

Veronica Chambers, a senior editor at The New York Times, gathered inspiring stories from the past 500 years, each with a lesson for our kids about how to fight injustice in their own lives. (Recommended for ages 9-12.)

["All American Boys"](#)

The book, written by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely, looks at the effects of police brutality from the perspective of two teenage boys, one white, the other black. Written in tandem, the story recounts the complications that spin out of a violent moment, causing reverberations throughout families, school and a town. (Recommended for ages 12 and older.)

Continued on the next page . . .

Books about Racism for Kids, Continued

In addition to reading and discussing books together, check out these [tips on how to address racism with kids](#), as well as a list of additional resources.

Check out [this list](#) for **books for adults** to read on the topic.

You will find additional information and resources about racial justice [here](#).

Crystal Caviness, who works for UMC.org at United Methodist Communications, compiled this list of books based on recommendations by staff at the General Commission on Religion and Race. You may reach her by email or at 615-742-5138.

This article was published on June 9, 2020.

Local Church Historian Online Class Starts September 14th

[Source: UM News Daily Digest, June 5, 2020]

Are you interested in caring for or improving your church's program of history?

The General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church will be offering a **Local Church Historian School** in 2020 for church historians — or **anyone interested in the story of their church**.

This is the same school developed and offered by the Indiana Conference in the past, now updated and being offered by the General Commission on Archives and History to any United Methodist church globally.*

The Local Church Historian School curriculum will cover a wide range of skills necessary to become a "complete" church historian. Participating congregations will benefit from a new consciousness of their heritage and legacy, and be motivated to study their unique stories and proclaim it to those around them.

The *Book of Discipline* says our Commission is "to encourage and assist the local churches in **preserving their records, compiling their histories and celebrating their heritage....**" This school provides United Methodists the opportunity to do just that.

Continued . . .

Local Church Historian Online Class September 14th, Continued

The school will begin on **September 14, 2020**. Plan now to use this opportunity to ensure that the heritage of each of our churches will be celebrated and that each church can receive the full benefit of its own amazing story.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER FOR FREE](#)

If this hyperlink doesn't work, put the source document (UM News Daily Digest, June 5, 2020) in your browser. The announcement and registration link are the below the last article on the page.

Phyllis Kitchens, 863-984-4564

**The only prerequisite for the Local Church Historian School is access to dependable email service. (Minimal computer skills are required.)*

United Methodist Men (UMM)

July 1, 2020

I want to wish all a safe and healthy year. It is my hope and prayer that this terrible virus will soon leave us. It has impacted the UMM in some ways, but maybe we can complete some projects and start a few more while keeping social distance as the situation allows.

We were able to complete insulating the HVAC lines on the outside air conditioners. We have installed the new metal church direction signs on W. Daugherty Road and Old Polk City Road without incident, as well as put up barrier posts in front of the new electronic sign.

We have completed the lighting upgrade project of the church sanctuary's alcove lights. We are relocating some outlet boxes to provide better service to the audio/visual equipment.

As always, if anyone has a project that needs to be done, we will attempt to assist you. We are somewhat restricted by the virus, but we will try to help in some way if possible.

Continued on the next page . . .

UMM, Continued

Subject to the status of the coronavirus, the next UMM meeting **may** be on **August 8th at 9:00 am in the FLC**, if the church has reopened by then. It will be a full breakfast meeting for all who care to come.

Please contact me at 386-965-0170 or 863-816-3194 if you want to discuss work projects or anything else.

Sincerely,

Michael Moake
President UMM

Self-Paced Racial Justice Online Class Offered by UMW



If you are interested in learning more about racial justice, the United Methodist Women are offering a class based on Ijeoma Oluo's book *So You Want to Talk about Race* (2018)

The book is available in hardback and paperback from Amazon; Target may also have copies. You can also get it for Kindle.

To register for this class go to this site: http://umw.convio.net/site/MessageViewer?em_id=4991.0&div_id=8777 (note there are two underlines in the address, each before the **id**).

How does this online course work?

- Reading Supplement: Take this course after you have finished reading the book or as a companion alongside your chapter-by-chapter reading. You will want to have your copy of the book before you begin the online series.
- Self-paced: Participate any day or time that works for you.

Continued . . .

Self-Paced Racial Justice Online Class, Continued

- 10-Session Series: After you finish one session, start the next. Sessions align with selected chapters in the book.

(1) Register. If you are new to BRIDGE, you will need to [register here](#) first.

(2) Enroll. If you already have a BRIDGE account, you can log-in right away and access the [program of courses](#) here.

A Word About BRIDGE

You can access training and learning opportunities online from United Methodist Women, through BRIDGE. With a BRIDGE account you can access a variety of free, web-based learning opportunities from any computer, smartphone or tablet connected to the internet at <https://unitedmethodistwomen.bridgeapp.com>.

[Sorry, couldn't make hyperlink work; just copy it into your browser and see where it takes you. Ed.]

United Methodist Women (UMW)

Our three circles have not met since March 15, and we didn't have the scheduled May Unit meeting. There are a lot of things going on at the national and district UMW levels, most involving meetings by video conferences. Thank goodness for this technology.

Major thrusts of UMW, either carried over from previous years or reenergized:

1. Under the heading of **Climate Justice**, the UMW is working on the cause of "**Just Energy 4 All**". Please see the announcement elsewhere in this issue of a series of video conferences for planning how UMW will work on this issue. Affordable energy is also a thrust since the poorest people experience utility shutoffs creating difficulty caring for their families.

2. **Mothers, Mass Incarceration Movement Work** is another UMW mission. This work involves helping formerly incarcerated

Continued on the next page . . .

UMW, Continued

mothers successfully reenter society and regain custody of their children (requiring jobs, housing and transportation to be obtained within a short time after release).

a. The UMW held a US-wide video presentation (webinar) with over 150 participants on June 26th on this topic. Guest speaker Tanja Honsey, a formerly incarcerated mother who was in jail during parts of all three of her pregnancies, talked about how much these women want to be with their children. The children suffer when they are separated from their mothers, sometimes just weeks after birth. Both mother and child need to be helped to figure out how to form a bond.



b. Many of these mothers think they are not worthy or capable of being mothers, even though they desperately want to. Tanja said most county jails provide no opportunity to acquire skills that would make these ladies employable. Some jails even make money by charging women an exorbitant amount to make a monthly phone call to their loved ones. This situation makes it difficult to maintain a connection with their families.

c. There is a high rate of recidivism among women. About 70% of incarcerated women have mental health issues such as PTSD or depression, and self-medicate with drugs. They may only know how to make money by selling drugs or prostitution, which lands them back in prison. Tanja said she was in 11 drug treatment centers; once released, the only way she knew to get on her feet was by doing what she always did.

d. Most of these women have never experienced being part of a supportive and loving community. The UMW believes that its members can help by becoming a community of support. We can also become knowledgeable about the problems and express our opinions and ideas for change to elected officials at all levels of government. Sentencing inequity in many states results in men serving shorter sentences for child abuse than their female spouses/partners do as an "enabler".

The UMW plans to continue video conferences on this subject. I hope many Lake Gibson ladies (men are welcome, too) will participate in these webinars and become informed on the many issues related to the incarceration of mothers.

Florida United Methodist Children's Home (FUMCH)

[Source: Photos and captions from FUMCH's Facebook page]

FUMCH continues in stay-at-home mode due to coronavirus. Here are some examples of their recent activities.

"Here's another group of heroes that work here at the Children's Home - our Spiritual Life team! This is Rev. Madeline Luzinski (Chaplain), Betty Cesar (Program Coordinator), and Blake Trent (Worship Coordinator). You'll notice their SPARK shirts - that's the name the children gave their youth group. It stands for Spiritually Powerful And Righteous Kids. Pretty awesome!"

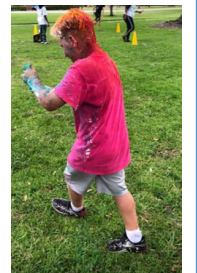


"We received a great donation of food items from Harvest Time International in Sanford. Mary Jones, one of our Food Services Assistants (part of the Commissary team) cooked up a giant pot of chicken noodle soup for the children. And for dessert? Some of this Superman Ice Cream bars, also donated by Harvest Time. Thank you, Harvest Time!"

"Today [June 29th] was the first day of our special summer camp, aptly named **Camp Rona** (for coronavirus). The children started the day with a brief worship service, then went on to creating their own tie-dyed shirts. After some pizza



for lunch and a movie in the gym, things got really messy. It was an all-out color war with the children throwing slime, shaving cream, color powder, and topping it off by walking through a flurry of confetti."



Our garage is still filled with donated and repaired bicycles. We are waiting for word from the volunteer coordinator on when we can bring them up and spend a week repairing the bikes already there.

Phyllis and Dwight Kitchens, FUMCH Reps

Hope House Update

Thanks to the reports that two sets of volunteers write to document what happened on their service days at Hope House (or Hope Center, as it is also called), we get insight into the spiritual, material and physical needs of the homeless people who depend on it. This update is longer than is usually included in this newsletter to give you a detailed description of what the volunteers do on their days, including meal preparation. Is there a better way than this for us to obey Jesus's command to "Feed my sheep"?

Lake Gibson's own Debbie and Rick McLellan serve on Tuesdays, while Laura Webb and Geri Mayo serve on Wednesdays. We hope you will continue your generous donations of food, clothing, hygiene supplies, etc. Please, won't you consider becoming a Hope House volunteer, too? Rick and Debbie would be glad to talk to you about what is expected of volunteers and how you can apply.

Tuesday, May 26th, WE ARE BACK AGAIN AT HOPE CENTER !! - Debbie and Rick

We were shut down for 14 days due to a (false) COVID-19 scare. Better to be cautious, but now we are grateful to be back and having some inside access. We can only allow 2 guests inside at any one time, but we can now offer showers, laundry, shaving in the bathroom, and access to our clothing room.

Today Debbie and Rick gave out brown bag lunches, featuring a chicken salad sandwich, a hard-boiled egg, fruit cups, cookies, and a bag of Cheez-Its. We also brought our cooler with ice and ice cold bottles of water and juice cups. Each guest also received a pop-top can which they took to their tents for their supper meal. We served 22 guests by the end of our day.

Debbie was busy and gave out toiletry kits, razors, and radio and lantern batteries. Debbie had been making masks for family and friends and gave out four to our guests. We also gave a box of food and 2 packages of diapers (for Benjamin) to Emily and Max.

Please pray for Daniel, (known as D), as he has had serious chronic stomach issues and is in a lot of pain at present.

Wednesday, May 27th - Laura and Geri

Even though the weather was gloomy and stormy, the mood was sunny. The patio was opened to provide shelter and still keep social distance. Our guests were cooperative and there were no issues.

Prayers work wonders! Yesterday, D (Daniel) had painful stomach issues. Today, he felt great. Praise God!

A special thanks to the Lake Gibson United Methodist Church family and Reverend Chris Elrod from Impact! for the food donations. They provided food for blessing bags while Hope House was closed, and pantry items and lunch bags now.

Tuesday, June 2nd - Debbie and Rick

We really felt the love from our church, Lake Gibson United Methodist Church, today as we were empowered with so many items provided by them.

We really appreciate all that was delivered by Rob and Sue Atchley, Dick McPherson and Fran Mudge. We miss everyone!

Continued on the next page . . .

Hope House Update, Continued

Tuesday, June 2nd - Debbie and Rick, Continued

Harry Card came from Lake Gibson Church of the Nazarene with a carload of items. Harry is one of our military veterans who also served 4 years as a volunteer at Hope Center, and continues to serve the Lord providing so much that we need. He brought laundry detergent, coffee and so much more. Thank you, Harry!

We served 25 guests and the Hope House kitty today.

Debbie was busy and gave out toiletry kits, socks, razors, Neosporin, Band-Aids, Motrin, radio and lantern batteries, and a case of 12 big cans of mosquito repellent. The mosquitoes are getting bad lately, eating up the guests who dwell in tents. Debbie has been making masks for family and friends and gave out some today, including **to one guest who got a job today** that required him to wear a mask. We also gave out a tarp and a new Bible.

We had a Blessed day and received many expressions of gratitude from our guests. We appreciate your prayers for all of our volunteers as we minister daily to our guests at the Hope Center!

Tuesday, June 9th - Debbie and Rick

We had a table outside with to-go lunches and jointly maintained social distancing. It was a partly cloudy day with our guests spread out in the front yard. Rick McLellan led in prayer and a devotion from St. John chapter 8, GRACE, JESUS' UNDESERVED FAVOR.

We also gave out one backpack, a pillow and 2 blankets.

It was so gracious of Jim Aldrich, from Christ the King Episcopal Church, to think of the Hope Center and bring us a **new-looking Kenmore washer and dryer** today. Our guests really use the washers and we have to replace them frequently. The employees of Lakeland Electric generously made a donation which will enable us to get more mosquito repellent; the mosquitoes are really bad this year.

Thursday, June 11th - Geri

Today, several chairs were set under the trees to give guests a chance to relax while practicing social distancing. A table was set outside with cereal, Pop Tarts, boiled eggs, and fruit. Hope House guests enjoyed coffee, milk, juice or water with their alfresco breakfast.

Geri made BBQ pork sandwiches. Ms. Jean brought chicken salad for sandwiches, pickled cucumbers and celery sticks. Also, cheese and crackers, popcorn, fruit and Oreo cookies were set out. Our guests enjoyed the impromptu lunch. Many had seconds and took to-go plates. No sandwiches were left! Every guest took a food bag home with a canned good of their choice. A total of 17 food bags were given out (15 at Hope House and 2 on the way home).

Hope House was not opened [because there was only one volunteer working], so no showers or laundry were done.

Many folks dropped off food donations from their children's lunch program. The guests took the perishable food home (cheese, yogurt, fruit slices). What non-perishable food remained will be used in food bags (fruit cups, cookies, dried cranberries).

Marie and Bill Heffelfinger responded to Wednesday's request for first aid supplies and bug repellent. They brought the repellent and sunblock, which by the end of the day were all taken.

In the first aid products were tubes of antibacterial ointment. Less than an hour later, a young man was offered food and water. He said he would take it, but didn't want to eat in front of his 2 friends waiting in the camp. When he was given 3 food bags, he asked for some hygiene products. He explained one friend, Larry was confined to a wheelchair and had only one leg. Larry had severely cut his remaining leg and they were doing their best to keep it clean. Continued on the next page . . .

Hope House Update, Continued

Thursday, June 11th - Geri, Continued

When given the antibacterial ointment in a first aid bag, he said he has been looking at some, but it was too expensive. I explained it had just been donated that day. He wanted me to pass on his thanks. **God fulfills our needs, sometimes before we even know of them.**

Tuesday, June 16th - Debbie and Rick

Today Debbie and Rick gave out brown bag lunches, featuring a hot bowl of New Orleans style red beans and rice with sausage, onion and garlic. The brown bag included a hard-boiled egg, fruit cup, crackers and peanut butter, a bag of peanuts, a Moon pie and a Mott's fruit snack. To quench thirst, ice cold bottles of water, grape juice, orange juice or apple juice. Each guest also received a pop-top can (choice of spaghetti, ravioli or Beefaroni), which they took to their tents for their supper meal. We served 17 guests by the end of the day. We also gave out a new Bible.

We are so grateful to the members of Lake Gibson United Methodist Church who provide much of what we need to keep on keeping on in this ministry.

We had a Blessed day and as we share God's Love, it is a joy to see some of our guests ask for a Bible, ask spiritual questions and show kindness to one another. Even in these stressful times, we can see that JESUS IS ALIVE and God's Word still has Power.

Tuesday, June 23rd - Debbie and Rick

Today Debbie and Rick tried a change, at the request of some of our guests. We served a Sunrise Breakfast Casserole, with fresh-baked hot biscuits and sausage gravy. We also gave out a brown bag with lunch snacks, including applesauce, a pack of Lance peanut butter crackers, a bag of Lay's Chips, and a pack of cookies. To quench thirst, the choice was fresh cold milk, orange juice, apple juice and ice cold bottles of water. Each guest also received a pop-top can (choice of spaghetti, ravioli or Beefaroni) which they took to their tents for their supper meal. We served 13 guests and the Hope House kitty today. We also sent out 4 to-go containers for guests who could not make it here today.

We also gave out a Bible to a guest named Sheila.

A lady named Marilyn, a friend of Kelly, brought in donations now in the fridge: eggs, blueberries, strawberries, whipped cream, butter and sour cream. Some other items were put in the fridge freezer.

A lady named Carmen donated a number of 12-packs of Coke/Pepsi/7up products. Some are in the fridge, the rest on the table.

Wednesday, June 24th - Laura and Geri

Of the 16 guests, 8 used the shower and 1 used the laundry. Lori kept order and made sure our guests had a clean change of clothes, new socks and/or underwear and hygiene products. Also, she and her husband, Larry, have been working on the Hope House garden.

Breakfast was cereal, boiled eggs and yogurt parfaits made with fresh strawberries and blueberries. Water, juice, milk and coffee were the beverage choices. (Our Mama Kitty had an early alfresco breakfast.)

Our lovely Ms. Jean provided a delicious lunch of turkey and cheese croissants and black bean soup. The guests were most appreciative! Drink options were water and sodas. A freezer pop was offered for a cool dessert.

With this wonderful lunch provided, the original sack lunches were sent home with each guest and given to the latecomers. Billy packed each bag with a fruit cup or applesauce, chips or Cheez-It snack made by Geri. The guests also took 1 canned good for dinner. Continued . . .

Hope Center, Continued

Wednesday, June 24th - Laura and Geri, Continued

*****A very special thank you to Ms. Kay from Combee Connection Ministries (CCM). *****

Combee Connections held a drive-through food bank today. This wonderful group supplies food to other ministries as well as to families. Laura and Geri went after closing Hope House to pick up the food donations. Hope House was blessed abundantly!

CCM donated 5lb bags of cooked, diced chicken, 1lb of butter, pints of milk, celery and carrots, cases of yogurt and cartons of eggs. Hope House was given bags of fruit and potatoes and onions. Boxes and bags of snacks and candy were provided. The refrigerator and chest freezer are full. Praise God!!

Even more wonderful were the dry goods boxes (from Traditions). Each large box was filled with smaller boxes containing a canned food, powdered milk, crackers, fruit cup and a snack. These boxes of blessings can be handed out to our guests as is. God is so good!

Tuesday, June 30th - Debbie and Rick

We are still under coronavirus restrictions, can only allow 2 guests inside at any one time, but we can now offer showers, laundry, shaving in the bathroom, and access to our clothing room.

Today Debbie and Rick served hamburgers and cheeseburgers on a premium bun, with choice of lettuce, tomatoes, onion, mustard, mayonnaise, or ketchup. We also gave out a brown bag of lunch snacks, including a pack of Lance peanut butter crackers, a bag of Lay's Chips, a pack of cookies, a pudding cup, and a big pickle.

To quench thirst, the choice was Coca-Cola and ice cold bottles of water. Each guest also received a pop-top can (choice of spaghetti, ravioli or Beefaroni) which they took to their tents for their supper meal.

We also try to be sure that a black line is marked through all bar codes. The manager of Publix put out the word that some of our guests return canned goods without a receipt for store
Continued . . .

Hope Center, Continued

Tuesday, June 30th - Debbie and Rick, Continued

credit, and then use store credit to buy beer, wine, etc. One of our donors stated that the Salvation Army and Christian Food Banks also mark out bar codes. We served 20 guests and the Hope House kitty today.

Debbie was busy giving out toiletry kits, socks, men's underwear, razors, Neosporin, Band-Aids, Motrin and radio and lantern batteries. We also gave shoes to one of the men.

We brought some clean towels and washcloths with us from home for showers, had 17 guests sign up for showers, and brought the dirty towels home to clean. We'll bring them back next week. We had 5 guests who signed up to use the washer and dryer.

Ms. Jean came in today and brought minestrone soup, carrot muffins, and cheesy bread. Our guests really liked and enjoyed it!

Although it was a hot day to be outside, we had a Blessed day today.

Examples of Devotions Presented at Hope House

Luke 10, Who is Your Neighbor?

Psalm 103, Praise the Lord, O My Soul

Matt 11 and Isa 40, Strength for the Tired

John 8, Grace - Jesus's Undeserved Favor

Luke 7, The Kindness Man

Psalm 51, Better Than Ever

Philippians 4:1-23, Gospel-driven Work in the COVID-19 Crisis

Revelation 21, We Know Who Wins

Hope House Lunch, June 24th, Prepared by Ms. Jean

Photos provided by Geri Mayo



Donations to Hope House By Combee Connections Ministries, June 24th, Continued

Photos provided by Geri Mayo



Example of a *Traditions* Food Box



Our Food Pantry in a Time of Coronavirus



Ann Johnson and Cathy D'Amato wait for the next person. The food pantry was moved outside to the office's carport so only essential people come into the office.

Donations to Hope House By Combee Connections Ministries, June 24th

Photos provided by Geri Mayo



Full refrigerator
(and freezer)



Another beautifully decorated altar
by Glenda Hess

Photos by Dwight Kitchens

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. The purpose of the 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 make disciples of Jesus Christ. All members and constituents are encouraged to write articles and share their thoughts and photos with the congregation.

Phyllis Kitchens, Editor
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phyllis_kitchens@hotmail.com

Finding Peace in an Anxious World, UMW 4-Week Study

The Florida Conference United Methodist Women presented this study (which would have been offered at **Mission u** had that not been cancelled), June 3 - 24th. Over 100 women (and one man) participated via Zoom video conference, complete with "breakout rooms" in which small groups discussed assigned questions before re-joining the large group.

Weekly sessions lasted from 6:15 to about 8:15 pm. People were instructed to join the meeting at 6:15, which allowed time to work out camera or microphone problems before the actual class started at 6:30. That was an excellent idea; the problems with Zoom were due to lack of familiarity with it. The study leader, Kim Wendt, was very good at helping everyone who had a problem.

The Gulf Central District (GCD) UMW leadership team was well represented at the meetings. It is unfortunate that the announcement was issued with a rather short suspense to sign up. **The GCD said they plan to offer this study again this summer and perhaps in the fall.**

It was obvious that a lot of planning went into the preparation for this course. A number of ladies made presentations each small group had a facilitator who guided the discussions when the members needed help to start the assigned conversation.

Continued . . .

Finding Peace in an Anxious World, Continued

In addition to reading the book, there is homework involved each week, including reaching out to two members of your breakout group and becoming acquainted. Confidentiality is required, since we were learning about situations that caused each other's anxieties.

Each chapter of the book relates to one key part of the Serenity Prayer, explaining the Christian meaning of the words serenity, acceptance, courage and wisdom. The meanings are a lot deeper than I realized.

Also in each chapter there are one or more techniques introduced to help reduce stress. Some were very effective for me; others just didn't click.

I thought this study was a worthwhile experience. The text, *Finding Peace in an Anxious World*, edited by Erin James-Brown, is available from UMW mission resources for \$10.00 plus shipping (maybe \$7.00), at their e-commerce site, <https://www.umwmissionresources.org>. An e-reader version is available from Amazon if you prefer.

Phyllis Kitchens

Blessing Bags

Thank you to everyone who so generously gave supplies for Blessing Bags the last time we asked!

Due to circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 virus, Hope House is not open as many days as it was pre-epidemic. Also it has been necessary to limit the extent of operations inside Hope House. This situation has left the participants lacking essential food and hygiene supplies.

One means of helping is by **providing both food and hygiene items which volunteers at Hope House will put into plastic zip-closure bags** to be given out to each guest.

Here are suggestions as to the type of items requested. Due to limits on the quantity of many items which can be purchased, please use your imagination and provide what you can.

Continued on the next page . . .

Blessing Bags, Continued

Food items for 2 days such as:

Single-serving pop-top cans (stews, soups, pasta, etc.)
 Vienna sausages
 Tuna or chicken salad kits
 Small, to-go containers of peanut butter
 Sandwich crackers (Lance, Nabs, etc.)
 Granola bars
 Fruit cups/non-refrigerated puddings
 Individual packets of instant tea or Crystal Light
 Bottled water

Hygiene items (small packs for 2 days):

Razor blades
 Deodorant
 Body powder
 Face wipes

Please deliver all Blessing Bag donations to the church office between 9:00 am and 2:00 pm, Monday thru Friday. (Mark your donations as for Blessing Bags to avoid confusion with our Food Pantry donations.)

Debbie Moore and Dwight Kitchens



Anniversaries in July

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>
7/1	Sandi and Doug Harwell
7/10	Jamie and Matthew Collins
7/11	Merry and Dennis Greenwood
7/30	Fran and Gary Mudge



Birthdays in July

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>
7/1	Adam Schertzer
7/2	Mimi Meyer
7/4	Mary Bristol
7/4	Gary Mudge
7/5	Dick McPherson
7/7	Robert Hawksby
7/8	Mary Armentrout
7/8	Dorothy Beckum
7/8	Jessica Cogswell
7/9	Shirley Schmidt
7/11	Jeff Acor
7/11	Dennis Greenwood
7/12	Dottie Huven
7/14	Laura Welch
7/15	Mollie Oliva
7/15	Joy Walters
7/16	John Bernat
7/18	Debbie Moore
7/22	Allison Wesley
7/23	Larry Smucker
7/24	Matthew Collins
7/24	Raymond Merritt
7/26	Eric Hines
7/30	JoAn Beebe
7/30	Mike Fitzgerald
7/30	Ed Haney
7/30	Lynn Meske
7/30	Martina Willome