



THE GOOD NEWS

Lake Gibson United Methodist Church

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



From the Pastor

The big religious holidays and celebrations are behind us with Pentecost Sunday on May 23rd. The next major Christian Church celebration is All Saints Day in November. According to the church calendar the time between Pentecost and All Saints Day is called Ordinary Time and its color is green. This means that if we were a liturgical church, the parament bookmarks and altar coverings would be green.

I understand the church year calendar and its significance, yet I think we do a great injustice to ourselves and God to call any time ordinary. It is during our ordinary routines that God often breaks into our lives to challenge and transform us. It was during Saul's ordinary life chasing followers of The Way that Jesus appeared to him on the Damascus Road, and changed this Jesus-denier into perhaps the greatest example of faith the world has ever seen.

It is during ordinary times that the roots of faith are nourished and grow deep. It is ordinary Bible study and worship times that strengthen our faith, comfort our fears and calm our anxieties. It is ordinary events that allow us to develop and deepen relationships with other Christians and to witness to unbelievers. Maybe the color green is for the growth God causes during these ordinary times.

While times may look ordinary, there are extraordinary things going on behind the scenes. Great people of faith are shaped, tempered and honed during ordinary times so they can be ready to lead effectively when times are critical. Character is developed in ordinary times when few if any people are watching. God shaped King David in the fields as he shepherded his family's flocks. God developed Moses over a period of 40 years on the back side of a desert. God is molding you and me in the ordinary times of our lives.

When I look back over life I cannot really say anything God does is ordinary. God has a way of doing something special with very little. God has a way of taking a nobody and making them an instrument of His grace. God goes into the alleyways and back streets of a city, into the no-name towns and crossroads of the world to call, equip, empower and mold His people to share His love with all the world.

There is nothing ordinary about a child of God or the time God takes in loving his children. Maybe we should start looking at every day as a special day – a day when suddenly God may break into our lives and miracles will happen. Enjoy the miracle of today.

Pastor Steve

<u>Date</u>	<u>Day</u>	June Events (as of 5/26/2021)
1	Tuesday	Podcast debut of Expanding the Table/Anti-Racism, “ Racism, Police Reform and Faith ”. Information is on page 10.
2	Wednesday	Merry Matters, 10:00 am - noon, Family Life Center (FLC); Zooming the Peace, 7:00 pm, discuss “Leftovers” from Sunday’s sermon (repeating every Wednesday)
3	Thursday	9:30 - 11:30 am, church office, Food Pantry (<i>repeating every Thursday</i>); 1:00 pm, Pastor’s Bible Study via Zoom (<i>repeating every Thursday</i>); UMW Virtual Bible Study, 6:00 pm (part 3 of 4)
4	Friday	
5	Saturday	
6	Sunday	Communion; Last day of Disaster-Preparedness Sales Tax Holiday
7	Monday	Board of Trustees meeting, 2:00 pm, church office
8	Tuesday	Asian American/Pacific Islander Anti-Racism Zoom discussion, 8:00 pm (contact John Oda joda@umcmmission.org for registration information.)
9	Wednesday	
10	Thursday	Florida Annual Conference, June 10 - 12; Zoom webinar, Reparations: Remembering, Repairing, Re-imagining, 1:00 pm; (part 1 of 3) ; A Little Bit of Heaven Board meeting, FLC, 2:00 pm; UMW Virtual Bible Study, 6:00 pm (part 4 of 4)
11	Friday	
12	Saturday	United Methodist Men (UMM) breakfast meeting, 9:00 am, FLC
13	Sunday	
14	Monday	
15	Tuesday	
16	Wednesday	
17	Thursday	Zoom webinar, Reparations: Remembering, Repairing, Re-imagining, 1:00 pm (part 2 of 3)
18	Friday	
19	Saturday	Juneteenth ; Mission u, 1st Zoom session (part 1 of 2)
20	Sunday	Father’s Day
21	Monday	
22	Tuesday	Asian American/Pacific Islander Anti-racism Zoom Presentation, 8:00 pm (contact John Oda, joda@umcmmission.org, for registration information.)
23	Wednesday	
24	Thursday	Zoom webinar, Reparations: Remembering, Repairing, Re-imagining, 1:00 pm (part 3 of 3)
25	Friday	
26	Saturday	Mission u, 1st Zoom session (part 2 of 2)
27	Sunday	
28	Monday	John Wesley’s 318th Birthday (born 1703)
29	Tuesday	30 Wednesday

A Message from Bishop Carter

Today it was announced that I will begin to serve as bishop of two annual conferences, Florida and Western North Carolina, as of September 1, 2021. This was the recommendation of the Southeastern Jurisdiction Committee on Episcopacy, the SEJ College of Bishops, and the Council of Bishops.

I will begin my tenth year in Florida this fall. I have been blessed by you and sense there is important ministry before us: supporting vital local churches, dismantling racism, clergy health and resilience, and proclaiming the message of the continuing United Methodist Church as our way of sharing the grace of Jesus Christ with the people of our communities and beyond.

I will begin serving the Western North Carolina Conference. This is my home conference, one that supported and confirmed my calling to the work of a bishop. At the same time, I have been away from the conference for nine years, and so I will enter into a time of deep and active listening to and sharing with leaders across the conference in the fall.

To serve both annual conferences, Florida and Western North Carolina, will require a model of shared leadership, flexibility and residence in both areas. I thank Jennifer Davis, Kim Ingram, Molly McEntire and Alex Shanks, who serve on the SEJ Committee on Episcopacy. I thank you all for your faith in me and for our partnership in the gospel (Philippians 1:5). I will give myself wholly to this work, and I ask for your prayers; indeed, I depend on them. I am excited about the future and claim the promise: "God is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine" (Ephesians 3:20).

Note: A list of answers to a few frequently asked questions will be forthcoming.
The Peace of the Lord,

+Ken Carter
Resident Bishop, Florida Conference
The United Methodist Church



July Mission u Registration Still Open

There's still time to register for the Zoom Mission u class which will be held **July 15th to 17th**. Please purchase and read the book that corresponds to the class you select: ***Pushout - The Criminalization of Black Girls in School*** by Monique W. Morris or ***Bearing Witness in the Kin-dom - Living into the Church's Moral Witness through Radical Discipleship*** by Darryl W. Stephens. *Pushout* is an Issue Study; *Bearing Witness in the Kin-dom* is a Spiritual Growth Study.

To learn more, refer to the information below which appeared in the May issue of *The Good News*. Class starts on Thursday, July 15th at 1:00 pm and concludes on Saturday, July 17 at noon. **Registration fee: \$20; to register, select the class you want and pay the \$20 fee, go to this website:**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/148295725507>

For more information, go to the Florida Conference United Methodist Women website, <https://flconfumw.org> and read the Mission u 2-page flyer.

Can You Help with Communications and Messaging?

Thankfully, our Christian community has dedicated people serving the Lord by performing numerous tasks for the church and community. Whether it's leading Sunday School classes, picking up baked goods from Publix, heading or serving on committees, helping those in need at our Food Pantry, etc. a church takes many volunteers.

One place we are missing a leader or coordinator is in church communications and messaging. We have tools, such as Microsoft Publisher for newsletters, signs or flyers; Servant Keeper Notify to create and deliver voice mails, text messages and emails; Facebook; Zoom; electronic signage; and newspaper notices and articles.

What we need is one person helping to coordinate our communications and messaging within the church and community.

Might you be interested in helping to direct and coordinate our messaging efforts? Maybe we're not making the best choices or missing opportunities to use existing communication resources to tell our story. You could make a significant improvements in how we interface with those inside and outside the church community.

Call the church office (863-858-5431) if you are willing to donate some time and effort in leading and coordinating communications and messaging.

Dwight Kitchens



We Want the Bells to Ring and We Need You!

The LGUMC music program would like to start a **handbell/chime choir**. The group would perform together with our choir for cantatas and also the occasional independent performances to enhance our worship experience.

If you are interested in learning more about handbells and chimes, contact Mrs. Glenda Hess (863-307-1261) or the church office (863-858-5431) **by June 30th**. Practices would likely begin in August.

Prayer Ministry

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever." Hebrews 13:8 (NLT)

As we enter into summer many will be traveling away from home. We can trust Jesus to be wherever we are, right beside us hearing our prayers and sending His blessings upon us. Thank you, Jesus, for remaining forever close to our hearts all day and forever.

Have a safe and wonderful summer. A special thank you to our prayer warriors who continue to pray for those in need through our email prayer requests. We have had approximately 40 prayer requests since the end of April.

God Bless,
Fran

Pastor's Bible Study

You are invited to join us on Thursdays at 1:00 pm for Pastor Steve's Bible Study. We are in 2 Corinthians.

Please call the office to get the log-in information for this Zoom meeting (or see the list on page 17, or on the website)..

Christian Concerts Online

If you use a computer and know how to open Facebook, you might be interested in RED'S ROOM ENTERTAINMENT. Red hosts online Christian concerts on Facebook each Friday as well as on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month at 10:00 pm (EST). Join the group at www.facebook.com/groups/redsroom or see it at www.redsroom.net. Generally, the previous week's concert will still be online if you missed it.

Conversation with Rick Steves Now Online

[Source: United Methodist News Digest, April 12, 2021]

The United Methodist Board of Higher Education and Ministry recently hosted a conversation with PBS travel host Rick Steves on "**Travel as a Spiritual Act.**" The agency has posted a recording of that conversation.

[Watch recording](#)

Lay Leader's Message: Put on the Armor of God

Do you think it's a coincidence, or prophetic, that the two most democratic nations in the world, Israel and the USA, are both under attack by the evil forces within and without?

Israel was established as a homeland for Jews after World War II and the Holocaust by the United Nations on May 14, 1948, and has been at war with the surrounding Arab nations ever since then. But now it's the terrorist organizations of Hamas, Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Hezbollah, all supported by the Persian nation of Iran, who claim the right to the Land of Israel. The Palestinians are Arabs and have never been declared a nation or a separate ethnic group. So, while Israel was recently involved a "hot" war, we in the USA are in a spiritual battle.

Paul writes about this in Ephesians 6:10-18. We have been given the armor of Father God to "stand against the wiles of the devil" (v11). We have the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit, and the power of prayer. Let us use the armor wisely and continuously! SHALOM.

John Bernat



United Methodist Men (UMM)

On Saturday, May 8th, the UMM held their monthly meeting with a prayer and blessing over the breakfast meal given by Pastor Steve. The main focus of the meeting was finalizing plans for the upcoming Classic Car and Motorcycle Show on the May 15th. We discussed the musical arrangements, car staging, judges and food preparation for the show. We determined who would be responsible for these areas as well as the registration of the entries.

We are still in the planning stages of concrete repair of the transformer between the FLC and ALBOH. We have the material with the exception of concrete. We have given out all of our *Strength for Service* booklets to the Polk County EMS/Fire Department, Watson Clinic and the Lakeland Police Department. The UMM provided the funds for these booklets out of our dues. We also approved funds for repairing of LGUMC's old sign to be used to display ALBOH hours and special notices.

The UMM would like to thank all those who supported or helped in the Classic Car and Motorcycle Show. We were able to raise over \$600.00 from the donations for the fifty/fifty raffle and for food served, as well as other generous donations. The UMM would like to extend a special and heartfelt thanks to the following individuals for their loyal and tireless support of the Show:

Judges: Pastor Steve Polk, Leon Rumohr, Kristie Otte, Gary Jones and Mark Potter for their time spent judging the entries. It was a time-consuming task as there were so many great entries to judge.

The kitchen staff: Dick and Debbie McPherson, Jackie and Cindy Webb, who ensured we served a great food and kept the service areas clean to maintain safety guidelines. They served over 140 hot dogs and raised \$240.00 in donations.

The stagers: Joe Moon, Tom Burns, Leon Rumohr and Michael Moake for their efforts to ensure safe parking and easy access to judge the entries.

The registration team: Ann Kneeland, Frankie Hooks and Kristie Otte who spent hours registering and recording information to ensure entry for the gifts and awarding plaques.
Continued on the next page . . .

United Methodist Men (UMM), Continued

Prayer Area: John Bernat and supporters staffed a prayer area for anyone seeking to have a prayer or counseling done on their behalf. He spent several hours at the prayer area which was next to the children's activity area.

Special thanks to Dwight Kitchens, Kristie Otte, Tom Burns, Dick McPherson, Bob Siegel, David McPherson and any others who spent endless hours making signs, posting fliers and purchasing food, recording music, testing equipment and purchasing prizes for the Classic Car and Motorcycle Show. More thanks to David McPherson for the great pictures he took of the entries and the slideshow he created for the May 23rd worship service.

It takes the effort of many people to ensure the successful production of these events. No one person can do it alone and that is what Church fellowship is about. This is what makes Lake Gibson UMC an outstanding church. They have always pulled together as a group to ensure successful productions.

The UMM will meet June 12th at 9:00 am in FLC classrooms 1 and 2 to discuss plans for continuing support of projects on the grounds of LGUMC. We will not meet again until September 11th, in order to allow members to catch up on home projects. We will be working on the lighting upgrades to the old church sign and any other small tasks as they are brought to our attention.

In month of September we will be voting on a new president for the UMM. Should anyone care to be considered, please contact Pastor Steve or Michael Moake.

All are welcome to come to our meetings - they are open door. We would embrace your ideas and suggestions. We are also willing to help anyone when it is possible.

Thanks to all who have supported the UMM and LGUMC. Your help is greatly valued. Any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at 863-816-3194

Michael Moake, UMM President

United Methodist Women (UMW)

The Lake Gibson unit of the UMW held a combined Circle meeting on May 10th in the FLC. It was decided that this would be the last Circle meeting until Monday, September 6th at 10:30 am in the FLC. Then we will begin our study of *You Are Never Alone: Trust in the Miracle of God's Presence and Power* by Max Lucado (2020). You can order the book online or contact Pat Moon (863-858-6883) about getting a copy from her. We have found some copies on sale for around \$10.00. Please read chapters 1 and 2 before the meeting.

During June, July and August UMW members will meet together for fellowship lunches at various restaurants around town. Pat Moon is arranging for the first one, which will be in June. (Pat will call members with the details; if you haven't been participating in UMW, but want to come, please call Pat for info.)

The UMW Leadership Team will not be meeting in May, June or July. Meetings will resume on Monday, August 23rd at 11:00 am in the FLC. Upcoming events include the Sidewalk (or Rummage) Sale, November 5th and 6th, and the final 2021 Unit meeting on November 8th at 10:30 am in the FLC.

We are still in need of a Vice President. Duties include serving on the Leadership Team, acting for the President when she is not available, and arranging for guest speakers for the 3 annual unit meetings (February, May and November). No experience required! Someone will tell you what to do (LOL).

Phyllis Kitchens, UMW President

The Truth about United Methodist Women

An important message from Deaconess Judith Pierre-Okerson, PhD,
President, Florida Conference United Methodist Women

[Source: Gulf Central District FL United Methodist Women Facebook post, February 16, 2021, edited for *The Good News*]

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. Galatians 5:1 (NIV, 2013)

I am inviting all, lay and clergy, to help **debunk the misconception/misinformation campaign** going around the conference about United Methodist Women. Please note, **United Methodist Women at the National, Conference and District levels DO NOT hold membership in any political organization, nor do we provide money to the Black Lives Matter organization or Planned Parenthood.**

As a theological matter we do believe all people, regardless of their ethnicities, skin color, or identities (gender, racial, sexual) are created by the One Living God. As a Social Justice issue, in accordance with The United Methodist Church Social Principles, the Charter for Racial Justice Policies, and our Wesleyan heritage to "DO NO HARM," we do claim Black lives matter. We speak against unfair systems, racial discrimination, and violence perpetrated against Black People and other People of Color. We advocate for equal treatment for not only Black People, but for all oppressed persons in our society and in the world ("the world is our parish" said John Wesley*).

Our members' Mission Giving is used to:

- Provide transformative education to the membership so they can be the hands and feet of Christ in their communities.
- Empower underprivileged women to become self-sufficient members in their community and in society at large.
- Provide scholarships to underprivileged youth all over the world to attain higher education so they can be agents of change in their community and beyond.
- Support our National and International Mission Institutions to bring hope in their community.
- Support the Office of Deaconesses and Home Missioners.
- Support the work of our Regional Missionaries in the Caribbean, the Philippines, Latin America and three African countries.

United Methodist Women will continue to live out its purpose to be the creative, supportive community of women and to turn faith, hope and love into actions on behalf of women, children, and youth all over the world, whatever decision might come from the next General Conference. I am not trying to convince anyone to support United Methodist Women. I am hoping each one of you will exercise courageous leadership if folks approach you; and you will suggest that they do their own research so they can make informed decisions. Please encourage lay and clergy who have questions to visit the UMW National website www.unitedmethodistwomen.org or to call or email me. Peace and blessings.

Deaconess Judith Pierre-Okerson, PhD, President, Florida Conference United Methodist Women
JudithPierreOkerson.umw@gmail.com, (305) 608-2420

*["I look upon all the world as my parish; thus far I mean, that in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty to declare unto all that are willing to hear, the glad tidings of salvation." –John Wesley's Journal, June 11, 1739. Editor]

Opinion: Who's Church Is It Anyway?

As you know, the General Conference of the United Methodist Church has been postponed over the past two years due primarily to COVID-19. Between August 29th and September 6th 2022, a number of proposals will be discussed regarding the future of our denomination. The United Methodist denomination will likely continue, but there may also be offshoots with slightly varying theology.

Over the past year, we've worked hard to upgrade our church's ability to minister in new ways. You've seen necessary changes which permitted us to worship remotely until we could join together again. These helped address our short-term needs to minister to our flock. We hope many of you have made a transition back to in-person attendance at worship. But, for those who are homebound, or have preexisting conditions that increase the risk from COVID-19, our snowbirds, our hospitalized, and others, we will continue to offer livestreaming of services, classes and gatherings as a means of reaching out and sharing with other Christians.

As we gather together, another question arises. Do we have an obligation to maintain our campus irrespective of who owns the physical plant? Currently, the individual Methodist Conferences own church properties within their jurisdiction. Individual churches maintain the properties. A primary discussion to take place in 2022 is whether churches separating from the United Methodist family get to keep their physical property and financial assets.

For this reorganization to be amicable, I believe each church congregation will make their own decision and join the denomination most suited to their values and beliefs. If you voted along with the congregation's majority, you should be happy. If you voted with the congregation's minority, you will probably be disappointed. This will likely result in some members departing our congregation and others migrating into our congregation based on their theological bent.

Now, what if the General Conference makes no decision the next time it is held? We delay longer in resolving some underlying issues. But, this also means that our physical plant continues to deteriorate if we take no actions to maintain it. Some in Lake Gibson UMC have voiced the opinion that we should not make any improvements or repairs to our campus until we know what options the General Conference has accepted.

I vehemently disagree. This is God's house no matter which interpretation of theology is preached. I have an option to move to another church at any time, but while here, my obligation is to support this congregation and its physical plant.

COVID-19 showed us how our sanctuary's heating and air conditioning system is outdated. Repairing it now would be a wise thing to accomplish during 2021. Shortly we are going to need new roofs on both A Little Bit of Heaven Child Enrichment Center and the church office. We should be planning now on how these needs can be addressed. They should not be pushed into the future based on some hypothetical outcome of a future General Conference.

Should we get new members after the General Conference, they will benefit from our forethought. Should some of our members move elsewhere, they should benefit from the prior actions of their new church's trustees in maintaining their plant. In all cases, no matter whose name is on the deed, our properties belong to God. We are merely the trustees and should meet our obligations to make our physical plant a safe, environmentally sustainable and inviting location for worship.

Dwight Kitchens

Let Our Children Learn: A Free, 4 - Part UMW Virtual Bible Study on Interrupting the School-to-Prison Pipeline

[Reprinted from the May newsletter. You can join this study at any time.]

Thursdays, ~~May 20~~, ~~May 27~~, June 3, June 10 at 6:00 - 7:30 pm EDT

To register go to

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0vcOispzwtGdfoRKaSO_pwfAUJtgpDZuIP .

You are invited to join United Methodist Women members and friends for a **four-part Bible study on the sacred place of children and youth in God's eyes**, antiracism and interrupting the school-to-prison pipeline. *You do not need to be a UMW member (or even a woman) to participate.* This study includes four 90-minute sessions discussing the following scriptures:

1. Embracing New Life (Colossians 3:1-17, Romans 12:1-2).
2. Embracing the Gifts and Leadership of Children (Acts 16:16-19, Matthew 19:13-15, Luke 2:39-52, Jeremiah 31:15-17, Matthew 2:16-18).
3. Reimagining the Role of Women in Society (Numbers 27:1-8, Matthew 15:21-28, Luke 18:1-8).
4. Unfamiliar Identities: Embodying New Possibilities for Interaction with All Women (Luke 15, Ephesians 6:10-17).

Classic Car and Motorcycle Show May 15, 2021



Photos provided by Michael Moake (shown at lower left).

New Podcast Focuses on Anti-Racism as Christian Discipleship

[Source: GCORR email, May 6, 2021]

“Expanding the Table,” a new video podcast series from the United Methodist General Commission on Religion and Race, will debut on **Tuesday, June 1, 2021**. Series guests will focus on how individual Christians and church-based entities can and should engage the work of creating racial justice and ensuring anti-racism.

Guests for the **first podcast - titled “Racism, Police Reform and Faith”** - are the Rev. Kirk Lyons of Brooklyn, NY, and the Rev. Jeremy Wicks of Traverse City, Michigan. Both United Methodist pastors are leading community-wide conversations and demonstrations that call attention to implicit and explicit racial bias experienced by Black and Brown people at the hands of police officers. Both are bringing together church, community, and law-enforcement members to seek solutions.

The Commission’s interim General Secretary, M. Garlinda Burton, says the new podcast series will offer a deeper understanding of how racism harms both the church and society at large and how anti-racism and racial justice function as an expression of Christian discipleship.

“‘Expanding the Table’ explains how people of faith can foster and practice anti-racism from the lens of followers of Christ. Religious and civic leaders will share practices and experiences that will inform and inspire Christians to live out their faith and bring the Word of God to bear on championing human and civil rights for all people,” Burton added.

As a White man, Wicks, a former police chaplain and reserve officer, says that he came to embrace movements like Black Lives Matter after he “actually started listening to Black people in my community and witnessing how they were treated.” Wicks said the murder of George Floyd led him and members of his mostly White United Methodist congregation to “open our eyes to the racism that was happening and work together for racial justice through police reform.”

Since 2008, Lyons has led men’s nighttime prayer walks through some of the most crime-ridden communities in New York, praying with and for gang members and drug dealers. As they established connections with the mostly Black and Brown men from the streets, Lyons said the churchmen began to hear stories, not just about how known criminals are treated, but how Black and Brown residents in general encountered and experienced the police.

“Too many police officers bring an indifference and fear of people of color to the job, to the point that they don’t see us as human,” Lyons said. He and his group are now in conversations with law enforcement on the value of community policing and having residents and police officers build relationships and trust with one another.

Lyons and Wicks will talk about their work as an outgrowth of their understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and offer ideas for how Christian communities may learn more and get involved in local police reform and anti-racism efforts.

The first episode, “**Racism, Police Reform and Faith**” will be available on **Tuesday, June 1, 2021**. Please visit www.r2hub.org/library/podcast for information on where to listen. In addition to wherever you get your podcasts, this podcast will be available on **Facebook and YouTube**. More information will be provided later on the above link.

The General Commission on Religion and Race is one of 12 church-wide agencies of the United Methodist Church. The Commission offers teaching resources, training, and networking among Christians seeking to bring their faith to bear to dismantle racism, tribalism, and xenophobia in all forms.

More information is available at <http://www.gcorr.org>.

Request for Recommendations on Wheelchair Cushions

Jim Grof and his wife Karen were part-owners of (the now-closed) Happy Apple Quilts in Tampa. Shortly after they retired a year ago their van was slammed between trucks on I-75, leaving Jim with a horrible spinal cord injury at his 4th cervical vertebra (C4). Since then he has developed life-threatening infections from pressure sores. Karen sent this request to people who have asked to stay in touch:

“Jim has a custom manual wheelchair. We need to get him the best cushion for his needs. He is unable to shift his weight at all. He is healing from serious pressure wounds and will always be at great risk for them. It is crucial that he has the proper cushion, but clinicians tend to recommend the ones they've always known about, and company reps recommend the ones they sell.

“We really want to hear from people who sit in wheelchairs every day. They are the only real experts. If you know of someone who can give us feedback on their experience, please ask them to contact us.

“Please reply with a brief recommendation based on your own [or a family member's or close acquaintance's] experience with cushions answering the following 3 questions:

1. What brand and model cushion do you use?
2. What do you like about the cushion?
3. Has your cushion choice improved your life and helped you avoid pressure wounds?”

Please email your comments to Karen Grof at twinquilter@gmail.com. Prayers for Jim and Karen would be appreciated. Phyllis Kitchens

A Hope House Blessing: Gift in Honor of Gary Ogden

We received a NOTEWORTHY BLESSING to Glorify God and help to meet extra needs that our guests have. Thanks to this gift we were able to purchase items that are recently and/or continually needed by our homeless guests, including body wash wipes, rain ponchos, oral hygiene kits for their tents, underwear, various radio and lantern batteries, flashlights, and socks which are always needed. These extra items are always received so gratefully by our less fortunate friends. This gift was donated by Debbie Moore to Glorify God. We pray that God will comfort all of Gary's family and friends in sorrow, but praise the Lord for this gift. Debbie and Rick McLellan



New Banners

You may have noticed recently a number of banners flying along West Daugherty Road. We currently have three 8' x 2' banners, two for frequent use and one for the Easter season.

A Little Bit of Heaven Child Enrichment Center (ALBOH) Summer Camp

(Repeated from May newsletter)

ALBOH is offering Summer Camp for **ages 5 - 12 years from June 1st to August 5th.**

Let the parents of your grandkids and great-grandkids, nieces and nephews know! Maybe even the parents of the noisy kids next door! To sign up, call ALBOH at 863-585-8400.

Fee structure:

Registration fee	\$75.00
Supply fee	\$50.00
Weekly rate	\$120.00
Daily rate	\$24.00

Sibling discounts are available.

Activities include arts and crafts, science, fitness, games, cooking classes, water days, and field trips.

ALBOH will offer a discount if the church newsletter is mentioned when enrolling!

You can see a flyer and calendar of activities for Summer Camp at <https://lakegibsonumc.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/ALBOH-Summer-Camp-2021-04142021110249.pdf>.

Merry Matters Making Many Mats 1st and 3rd Wednesdays

For the summer the Merry Matters will meet twice a month, on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays, from 10:00 to 11:30 am in the FLC. Lynda Gibbs and Kathy Rumohr are guiding this effort while Lynn Meske is away. If you have any questions, please email Lynda at lyndagibbs353@gmail.com.

We are creating plarn (plastic yarn) out of grocery bags which will be crocheted into ground mats for the homeless. If you don't know how to crochet, we can teach you. We also need people to fold the bags and cut them into strips. No experience is necessary.

We welcome anyone interested in helping out, **or just hanging out.**

Florida Sales-Tax-Free Holidays Coming Soon

Disaster-Preparedness - May 28 - June 6, 2021

The "Disaster-Preparedness" tax holiday will run from May 28 through June 6 and is expected to save shoppers \$10.5 million in state and local sales taxes. Its timing is tied to the June 1 start of hurricane season.

During the period, shoppers will be able to avoid paying sales taxes on such things as reusable ice packs that cost \$20 or less; portable radios, gas tanks and packages or batteries that cost \$50 or less; non-electric food coolers that cost \$60 or less; tarps that cost \$100 or less; and portable generators that cost \$1,000 or less.

Freedom Week - July 1 - July 7, 2021

State economists projected that the "Freedom Week" tax holiday, which will start July 1, will save \$54.7 million for shoppers. During that week, people will be able to avoid paying sales taxes on tickets purchased for such things as live music, athletic contests, in-theater movies, cultural events and entrance to museums and state parks. Tickets could be purchased during the week for events that occur later in the year, including annual passes.

The holiday will also provide sales-tax exemptions for such outdoor equipment as tents, grills, bicycles, kayaks and fishing gear.

Back-to-School - July 31 - August 9, 2021

The "Back-to-School" Tax Holiday is from July 31st to August 9th. Over these 10 days, Floridians will pay no sales tax for certain clothing of \$60 or less per item, school supplies of \$15 or less per item, and the first \$1,000 of personal computers and related accessories.

This sales tax holiday adds to your blessing as you purchase needed back-to-school supplies for the children at the Florida United Methodist Children's Home or at Padgett Elementary School, just down the street from church.

Florida United Methodist Children's Home (FUMCH) School Needs List

Last day to bring your donations to church is Sunday, June 6th.

Highest Priority

**Activity fees (field trips, instrument rentals, extracurricular activity fees)
Copy/printer paper
Poster board
Disinfecting wipes
Dry erase markers, erasers and cleaning liquid
Hand sanitizer (large bottles)
Paper towels
Tissue boxes**

Additional Needs

**Colored paper
Construction paper
Art Supplies (acrylic and water color paint, sketch paper, gesso, glitter, drawing paper, small framed canvas)
Tri-fold display boards
Graph paper
Dividers, 5 or 6 tabs
Composition notebook (8.5"x11")
Handwriting tablets
Glue stick (no liquid)**

**Mechanical pencils and lead refills
Colored pencils
Sharpie permanent markers (fine and ultrafine tips)
Black and blue ink pens
Flash drives
Water color paper (9"x12" or 11"x14")
Scotch tape
Crayola fine markers
Sidewalk chalk
Legal size manila folders**

Please, no pencil sharpeners, spiral notebooks or pencil cases

Collection boxes will be placed in the narthex and church office for your donations. If donating by check, please make it out to Lake Gibson UMC with an annotation FUMCH School Supplies. Dwight and Phyllis Kitchens will deliver the school supply donations to FUMCH.

More Repaired Bikes Delivered to FUMCH

We want to thank all those in our congregation and community for their continued donations of used bicycles. The bike ministry for the Florida United Methodist Children's Home is going well. While the Coronavirus pandemic has kept us away from volunteering on campus, we have been able to repair and deliver bicycles to the Enterprise, FL campus twice this year.

On May 18th we delivered six refurbished bicycles. We're sure that they will be appreciated. FUMCH is cautiously reopening the campus to outside visitors. There are several levels of review and approval necessary to gain access to the campus. We are hoping to be able to return in the fall for 7 to 10 days of bicycle maintenance and repair. Their small RV park makes visits like this enjoyable and productive.

The trip also gave us an opportunity to stop by Hollerbach's Willow Tree Café in Sanford. If you are looking for good German food, this is a must-visit location.

Dwight and Phyllis Kitchens, FUMCH Reps



Guardian ad Litem Video

The Tenth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida serves Polk, Hardee and Highlands Counties. Circuit 10 has produced a 13-minute YouTube video to recognize the crucial work volunteer Guardians ad Litem do in improving the lives of children whose families are involved in the court system.

If you've ever thought about what you could do to have a positive impact on children who don't have a secure, loving home, please consider volunteering as a Guardian ad Litem. You'll receive training to prepare you for the duties and responsibilities.

Cindy Webb would be happy to talk with anyone who would like to learn more about this important volunteer service. Call her at 863-221-5253 or email her at cindywebb1953@gmail.com.

To see the video, go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJYIEu1JAsU>.

Thank You for Supporting the Homeless Graduating Seniors Food Bag Project!

Thank you to all who supported the Polk County School Board Homeless Graduating Seniors Food Bag Project. Unfortunately, I don't have everyone's names to thank you personally for your food and/or cash donations. All donations were greatly appreciated. We could not have completed this project without your help. Deadline to complete this project was moved up by two weeks, which really put us in a rush to finish it.

A group including Phyllis Kitchens, Ruth Zona, Sandra Ellington, Ann Johnson, Sandy Stanfield, Jackie Webb, Bev Henrich and Cindy Webb met on May10th in the FLC to bag the food. Michael Moake transported the food and he and Tom Burns unloaded the volunteer's cars. We filled **126 2-gallon** Ziploc freezer bags with food, **126 1-gallon** Ziploc freezer bags with plastic utensils and napkins, wet wipes, extra food and bags of candy. The ladies worked hard setting up the food line and filling bags. It was a long day! On May11th Tom Burns met Dan and Ann Johnson, Bev Henrich and Cindy Webb at the FLC to load our vehicles to take the food bags to Bartow. Tom also took home all of the empty boxes to recycle.

There were five transitional students waiting for us in Bartow to unload our vehicles. These students were excited to see so much food being delivered for the project. We even had extra food bags for them since they were doing the hard work. Vickie, my contact, was extremely happy to see the amount of food in the bags. She said the citizens of the county had been very generous this year with all the donations.

As I am writing this article, the luncheon is being held. Due to COVID-19 social distancing requirements, I did not attend this year so more kids could attend. I hope to have pictures from the luncheon in the July newsletter.

I can't thank you enough for your total support. The students are super excited to attend this luncheon and are thrilled with the food bags. These food bags help them get through a few weeks of harsh times. If not for your support the students would not receive food bags at their luncheon.

God Bless and thank you,

Cindy Webb

Are You Ready to Unmask?

Many of us would welcome the ability to remove masks during worship. The COVID-19 pandemic has given us an opportunity to reflect on how blessed we have been within our church family. A few have tested positive for the infection, yet only endured mild symptoms. Praise God that we have been spared compared with some other congregations around the nation.

Yes, soon we may be able to completely discard the wearing of masks inside our church. But, should COVID-19 rebound locally, we are relying primarily on the ability of inoculations to prevent the spread. There is another tool available to increase safety which has not been seriously considered.

In looking towards the future, is it time to finally 'bite the bullet' and look at improving the capability of our air conditioning system? Current systems are generally more energy efficient, permit the inclusion of fresh air from outside, and have improved high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters. HEPA filters and the incorporation of fresh air would have helped us better deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. We have been saving into a designated fund for over four years to make the air conditioning upgrade a reality.

The Trustees have recently asked for an estimate of the funds required to enhance our sanctuary's air handling system. Our first estimate is approximately \$36,000 for an enlarged system with fresh air intakes on the two larger (7.5 tons) of four new units, ionizer/air purifier on all four units, and smoke detectors required by county codes.

Our designated Air Conditioner Reserve currently has \$18,335 in the account. This leaves us with **\$16,827 still required** to make this upgrade a reality. (There may be some additional funds which could be expended against this project.) How much longer will we need to wait before this upgrade is completed?

If 34 families pledged \$500 each towards this project, we could get additional quotes, choose the best installer, **and have an improved sanctuary in the next few months.** This upgrade saves energy, improves the quality of life

Continued . . .

Are You Ready to Unmask? Continued

for people with breathing difficulties and puts a state-of-art mechanical system in our sanctuary. Are you ready to help us reach this goal?

Justice is Love Out Loud

[Gulf Central District Newsletter, May 2021]

What does the Lord require of you but to do justice and to love kindness, and walk humbly with your God?

As we explore how to engage missionally in our communities, there is a resource in three of the counties that our District covers. These are the **faith-based community organizations** of the DART network: **PEACE in Polk County**, **HOPE in Hillsborough County** and **FAST in Pinellas County**.

Polk Ecumenical Action Council for Empowerment (PEACE) is a congregation-based community organization whose purpose is to build justice ministries, train members from diverse congregations to work together to identify root causes of community problems, and to take action to resolve them. The purpose of the organization is to build a strong coalition capable of negotiating the interests of our community with a special concern for the vulnerable.

These organizations teach leaders in congregations how to advocate for justice on issues right where they live: **transportation, mental health, and diverting youth from incarceration for minor, non-violent offenses.** The benefit to churches is helping their leaders learn the art of engaging in the public discourse on critical issues that affect their neighbors.

PEACE currently includes 23 congregations that represent over 20,000 Polk County residents who are ethnically, religiously, and geographically diverse. We are united by our common desire to make Polk County a better place to live, work, and do business. To learn more about PEACE, go to the website www.polkpeace.org.

PEACE will host a **Rethinking Justice Workshop on August 5th, 6:30 to 8:00 pm** for churches across the Gulf Central District. Laity and clergy are invited to come and learn more.

[Look for more information in the July issue of *The Good News*.]

Thanks for Your Support during the Pandemic

Life has been vastly different during the Coronavirus pandemic of 2020-2021. Fortunately, Lake Gibson United Methodist Church has fared rather well overall. Only four people within our congregation became infected early on, and thankfully, they had mild reactions. We're not aware of any congregational hospitalizations due directly to the pandemic.

We quickly moved to livestreaming our services and offering Bible studies through Zoom meetings. Of course, we initially closed our in-person services before we were able to start remote worship. In attempting to follow the directions of both the Centers for Disease Control and the Florida Conference, you saw some drastic changes within the church when you did return. We discontinued our normal monthly committee meetings early on and held discussions with committee chairpersons when decisions had to be made.

Other than social distancing, hand sanitization, and masks, you saw many of changes. Most of the pews were removed to insure we kept appropriate separations. The pastor was forced to remain more stationary so that cameras could consistently keep him in focus. Singing was limited to prevent the spread of virus droplets. We all made necessary, but unwelcome, changes to the way we worshiped.

We also made major changes which you may not have noticed. Most of the sanctuary stage wiring was redone. Floor boxes were installed to prevent tripping on wires running across the floor. Peripheral lighting was changed from fluorescent to light emitting diode (LED). Point-Tilt-Zoom (PTZ) cameras were added. Chairs replaced most of our pews which permit us to rearrange the seating plan as social distancing guidelines evolve and more people get their COVID vaccinations. Microphones, sound board, computers, and other electronics were upgraded. The Family Life Center (FLC) classrooms 1 and 2 also got an upgrade with a PTZ camera and combination speaker/microphones to support a Sunday school class and future committee meetings.

As you are, I hope, aware, we took advantage of the Payroll Protection Program during 2020 to help cover a portion of our salaries (\$25,500 grant). This was a significant boon to our bottom line. But, we also spent funds to protect our members and upgrade equipment for livestreaming. Techsoup, a group which supplies us with discounted software and hardware, also gave us a \$2,000 grant which was used for three of our computer purchases.

With all this in mind, we thought it was time to provide an update on the expenses involved:

Canon Handicam	\$ 309
2 PTZ Optics livestream cameras	\$4,580
Camera brackets, cabling, Bluetooth	\$ 473
3X PTZ FoMaKo camera for FLC	\$ 379
Bluetooth speakers and cabling	\$ 205
Berringer Mixer	\$2,108
60 new chairs (to add to the 30 on hand)	\$3,422
2 computer monitors	\$ 500
Laptop for FLC Classrooms 1 and 2	\$ 629
Laptop for Pastor Steve and Audio Equipment	\$1,840
Sanctuary security camera system	\$ 380
Miscellaneous General Expenses	\$7,560
(includes sanitizer, decals, disinfectant, cabling, streaming licenses, LED tubes, cables, etc.)	
Total	\$22,385

Dwight Kitchens, Chair, Finance Com

It's Now Easier Than Ever to Log into Our Recurring Zoom Meetings

We hope you are already familiar with the weekly Zoom video meetings we started in 2020. These include Pastor's Steve's Bible Study, Sue Heisman's Sunday School class, and our "Zooming the Peace" sessions.

We've just made it much easier to log into any of the church's recurring Zoom sessions. If you already have installed the Zoom software on your device (computer, tablet or smart phone), you only need to double-click the highlighted numbers beside each event to open the Zoom session. (There will be a slight delay to entering the session until you are admitted by the meeting host.)

Pastor Steve's Bible Study, each Thursday, 1:00 pm [816 7751 0898](#)

Sue Heishman's Sunday School class, Sunday, 9:15 am [819 5082 7396](#)

Zooming the Peace, starting June 2nd, Wednesday,
7:00 pm (please see the article elsewhere) [838 5703 3998](#)

Finance Committee Meetings [819 5082 7396](#)
(postponed until further notice)

If you're on the church website (lakegibsonumc.com), click on Our Recurring Zoom Meetings on the opening page to take you to this list of entry codes. Double-click on the number for the meeting you want to attend.

If you already have the free Zoom application installed, double-click the entry code for your meeting listed above.

If you do not have the Zoom application installed:

To use Zoom, you need to download either a program or application to your device the first time you connect. Afterwards, your device will be configured for subsequent sessions.

[Download Windows application](#)

[Download iPhone/iPad application](#)

[Download Android application](#)

What Happened to Hope House Happenings?

The Editor was challenged to shorten the number of pages in the newsletter. This resulted in omitting the extracts from the Hope House volunteers' reports. If you would like to see shortened copies of the Hope House/Hope Center volunteer reports in future issues of *The Good News*, please let Phyllis Kitchens (863-984-4564/410-790-2662/phyllis_kitchens@hotmail.com) know by June 23rd to make the July newsletter's deadline for input.

To obtain a copy of the original volunteer reports from April 28th to May 25th, call or email Phyllis and she will email you a copy. The office can also print a copy for you.

Hope House Needs: Men's underwear, size MEDIUM or LARGE; Men's shoes, sizes 9 or 9 1/2; and men's outerwear shorts sizes 32 to 36.

Creating a Life Story for Someone Living with Dementia

By Vicki Pitner, First UMC Lakeland

Capturing someone's life through a Life Story is a fun and meaningful activity. Creating the Life Story of someone living with dementia can be both satisfying and therapeutic for the individual and the family. The story includes special events, important people in their life and promotes and supports mental stimulation.

There is no right or wrong way to write a Life Story but if you need ideas, you can find templates to use on the internet. Writing the story is extremely helpful to provide to new caregivers. Whether your family member is planning a short overnight respite in a memory care program, attending a day program, or new caregivers are working with your family member in the home, having an easy to read Life Story can quickly provide information that will help engage the individual in meaningful conversations about the past where memories are clearer and more vivid.

Other ideas/uses of a Life Story:

- A quick reference of likes and dislikes and needs of the person.
- Celebrate life achievements and remarkable events, people, and pets in the individual's life.
- A wonderful book that a grandchild can read with the grandparent and connect on a more personal and relaxing level.
- Provides comfort and can be used to distract the individual from stress and anxiety.
- Taking the Life Story to new places can help the individual adjust to unfamiliar surroundings.
- Include pictures and names of people, but avoid asking "do you remember them?" Just recall events or funny stories that would be enjoyable.
- The Life Story can become a legacy of family relationships and personal history.
- Have the individual "autograph" the book as the author.
- Collect information at different times and avoid bombarding the individual with too many questions. Don't be afraid to be creative. Add drawings, poems, birthday cards, or anything that will bring moments of shared joy.

This book can be a wonderful gift to present to a son, daughter or grandchild once the individual is no longer living.

Families will find that creating Life Stories is an enriching experience. The story can also be an audio recording with the individual telling personal stories. Reach out to family members and friends for memories or ideas. This person-centered approach on storytelling lends itself to providing individualized care and creates comfort and pleasure for the individual, family member, or caregiver.

Connections, a respite and recreation program in our memory ministry, supports individuals and their families living with memory challenges. *Connections* provides opportunities for self-expression by connecting friends, family and faith. Although we are not able to meet at the church due to the health and safety concerns due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have created a Connections Zoom group on Monday mornings and are able to share music, prayer, poetry, and wonderful adventures.

If you, a friend or family member living with memory loss would be interested in learning more about Connections Zoom group, please contact [Vicky](mailto:vpitner@firstumc.org) (vpitner@firstumc.org)

[Article used with permission of the author]

Learning Opportunities

United Methodist Communications produces a number of FREE online courses which may be of interest. For those ready for a refresher on our church, the FREE [What it means to be a United Methodist](https://www.umctraining.org/product?catalog=What-It-Means-to-be-United-Methodist) may be of interest. Click on the above hyperlink, or type the URL below into your browser, for more details.

<https://www.umctraining.org/product?catalog=What-It-Means-to-be-United-Methodist>

Another FREE short course is entitled Exploring General Conference:

[Exploring General Conference \(umctraining.org\)](https://www.umctraining.org/product?catalog=EG-Conference)
<https://www.umctraining.org/product?catalog=EG-Conference>

Should you want to start your own remote group, Leading Remote Worship may be of interest.

[Leading Remote Worship \(umctraining.org\)](https://www.umctraining.org/product?catalog=Leading-Remote)
<https://www.umctraining.org/product?catalog=Leading-Remote>

If you think that our messages could be improved, you might find the Communicator's Toolkit of interest.

[Communicator's Toolkit \(umctraining.org\)](https://www.umctraining.org/product?catalog=Communicators-Toolkit)
<https://www.umctraining.org/product?catalog=Communicators-Toolkit>

If you need help, call Dwight Kitchens, 863-984-4564 or 410-790-4422.

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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Sue Heishman, Bookkeeper

Debbie Moore, Custodian

Glenda Grant Hess, Music Director

Latisha Cook, Director of A Little Bit of Heaven Child Enrichment Center, 863-858-8400.

Kristie Otte, Lexie Otte, Dave McPherson, Bob Siegel and Justin Oliva, Audio/Visual Team



Birthdays in June

<u>Date</u>	<u>Names</u>
6/1	Tom Burns
6/1	Dick Lammey
6/1	Pat Moon
6/5	Reginald Jenkins
6/7	Shirley Addems
6/7	Scott Shelton
6/10	Rusty Collins
6/11	Tom Fischer
6/11	Tyler McKnight
6/17	Tammy Clark
6/17	Linda Osborn
6/19	Dave Meyer
6/30	Corey Fredrikson



Anniversaries in June

<u>Date</u>	<u>Names</u>
6/9	Sharon and Michael Moake
6/24	Maureen and Dave Meyer
6/26	Betty and Tom Fischer