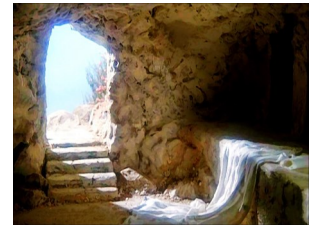




THE GOOD NEWS

Lake Gibson United Methodist Church

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



From the Pastor on Easter 2022

I have been thinking a lot about what I could say this Easter. As my retirement approaches, faster than I would like, – the official date is July 1, 2022 – I ask myself this question, “What message do I want to convey to the church?” This may be the last Easter sermon I ever preach; again, what do I say? So, today I write a personal note to you about **“Why the empty tomb matters!”**

There are many people who doubt that Jesus rose bodily from the grave. I had seminary professors with PhDs who said once you are dead you are dead, no resurrection. I know of UMC preachers that deny the physical resurrection of Jesus as well as the virgin birth and the deity of Jesus. They say Jesus was a regular person like you and me. He was a good person we should seek to follow, but he was not deity. To each of these I say you are not, and should not be, a preacher of Christian faith. To deny any of those foundational tenets of Christianity is to deny who Christ is according to our faith practices and our Scriptures.

The fact that the tomb was found empty, along with the witness of the two angels who ask, “Why do you seek the living among the dead?” (Luke 24) should prove to us that Jesus is the Son of God and has the power of life and death as well as the keys to hell. If this miracle is true I can take the rest of Scripture as being true also. That Jesus is God’s Son (proving his deity), I can trust the virgin birth (Jesus fully human yet fully divine) and I trust the promise he will return one day. If the resurrection is a fact I can now face suffering and death with the hope, no the assurance, that there is more to life than what happens on this earth to this physical body. I will see my Christian loved ones again in eternity. Believing in the resurrection of Jesus is the foundational tenet of Christian faith. As Paul says, “If there is no resurrection we are to be most pitied” (1 Cor 15:19). I ask you, if there is no resurrection, why should I serve God? If there is no resurrection how do I know I have eternal life? If there is no resurrection why do I believe there is a supreme God?

The message I leave you is this: Trust God and trust the Scriptures. Hold fast to the faith you have been taught by the Mother Church of tradition. Listen respectfully to those with differing opinions, but put your faith in God and His Word (both Scripture and Jesus). Do not let anyone, a preacher, a District Superintendent or a Bishop, tell you anything contrary to scripture. They did not rise from the dead – ONLY JESUS HAS, and it is to Him we owe our primary allegiance and loyalty. He is the one every knee shall bow before and every tongue confess He is Lord. I do so now and trust you will to.

Happy Easter and may you have a Glorious Resurrection Sunday!

Pastor Steve

Date Day April Events as of 3/28/2022

(Entries marked with * repeat every week and are only listed on the first occurrence)

- | | | |
|----|-----------|---|
| 1 | Friday | |
| 2 | Saturday | Wonder Walk 2022 in Tampa (Hyde Park UMC) and Pinellas County (Constitution Park), 9:00 am to noon; Cantata practice , 10:00 am, Sanctuary. |
| 3 | Sunday | Sunday School classes* , 9:15 - 10:15 am in Family Life Center (FLC); Worship Service* and Communion , 10:30 am; Publix bakery goods* in FLC for needy; Movimiento Misionero Mundial Pentecostal Church* , 10:30 am, FLC upstairs; New Testament Christian Church* , 1:00 pm, Sanctuary. Last day to order Easter lilies (form on page 3) |
| 4 | Monday | Board of Trustees meeting , 2:00 pm, Family Life Center (FLC) classrooms 1 and 2; Boy Scouts* , 7:00 pm, FLC. |
| 5 | Tuesday | Cub Scouts* , 7:00 pm, FLC; Zoom Video Conference (ZVC), Just Energy for All Working Group , 7:00 pm; ZVC To Stay or Not to Stay , 8:00 pm (see article). |
| 6 | Wednesday | A Little Bit of Heaven (ALBOH) Chapel* , 9:00 am, Sanctuary; United Women in Faith (UWF) [formerly UMW] combined circle meeting , 10:00 am, FLC (read chapter 7 (He Gives Sight to the Blind) of <i>Never Alone</i> by Max Lucado); ZVC The History of Race in Florida , noon; (see article); Cantata practice , 6:30 pm, Sanctuary. |
| 7 | Thursday | Food Pantry* , 9:30 - 11:30 am, office; ZVC Still in Mission #41 , noon (see article); ZVC Bible Study* with Pastor Steve , 1:00 pm (Philippians); ZVC Zooming the Peace* , 7:00 pm (discuss Pastor's Left Overs from Sunday's sermon) |
| 8 | Friday | |
| 9 | Saturday | United Methodist Men (UMM) meeting , 9:00 am, FLC classrooms 1 and 2 (Car and Motorcycle Show cancelled); Cantata practice , 10:00 am, Sanctuary |
| 10 | Sunday | Palm Sunday; Easter Cantata - In the Presence of Jehovah , 10:30 am, Sanctuary; HARVEST SUNDAY (Bring canned or dry goods and paper grocery bags for our food pantry.) |
| 11 | Monday | |
| 12 | Tuesday | ALBOH Board Meeting, 2:00 pm, FLC |
| 13 | Wednesday | Merry Matters Workshop , 10:00 am to noon, FLC (repeats 2nd and 4th Wednesdays); Call for May newsletter articles; Choir practice , 6:30 am, Sanctuary |
| 14 | Thursday | Praise Team practice , 6:30 pm, Sanctuary |
| 15 | Friday | |
| 16 | Saturday | |
| 17 | Sunday | Easter Sunday (If you ordered Easter lilies, please take them home after the service.) |
| 18 | Monday | |
| 19 | Tuesday | ALBOH Board Meeting, 2:00 pm, FLC |
| 20 | Wednesday | April newsletter articles due to editor; ZVC Just Energy for All , 3:00 pm; Choir practice , 6:30 pm, Sanctuary |
| 21 | Thursday | |
| 22 | Friday | |
| 23 | Saturday | |
| 24 | Sunday | ANNOUNCEMENT SUNDAY; church meeting after service in FLC and potluck meal. |
| 25 | Monday | UWF Leadership Team meeting , 11:00 am, FLC |
| 26 | Tuesday | ZVC Eat, Pray, Grow webinar (FL Conference Creation Care topic), noon. |
| 27 | Wednesday | Merry Matters Workshop , 10:00 am to noon, FLC |
| 28 | Thursday | Praise Team practice , 6:30 pm, Sanctuary |
| 29 | Friday | |
| 30 | Saturday | |

Mark Your Calendars for April 24th!

Three events will occur on April 24th at LGUMC. COVID-19 has kept us apart for too long. We believe now is the time we can cautiously return to in-person meetings and fellowship. We encourage everyone to join us this day.

1. First, as you likely know, **Pastor Steve is retiring at the end of June**. Our new pastor's name **will be announced** during the Sunday service on April 24th.

2. Second, we are holding a **church meeting** in the Family Life Center **immediately after the worship service on April 24th**. You may have heard some discussions regarding the possible division of the United Methodist Church into one or more new denominations. We want to keep you up-to-date on the status of the Methodist church and discuss what possible courses of action we might desire to take. This is an important issue for the congregation to discuss. Any course we take will impact our congregation for years to come. We need to hear your voice.

3. And third, we are finally getting together for a **potluck meal immediately after** the discussion. The church will provide the meats. We hope that all of you will **bring your specialty side dishes, salads or desserts to share** with others.

We hope to see you there!

Last Day to Order Easter Lilies is April 3rd

You still have time to purchase Easter lilies to help us celebrate our Lord's Resurrection. You may purchase lilies "In Memory of", "In Honor of" and/or "To the Glory of our Lord".

The last day to order is Sunday, April 3rd. Please drop off your order form and payment in the office no later than Monday, April 4th, before noon.

The cost is \$10.00 per lily. Checks should be made out to **Lake Gibson UMC**. Please indicate "**Lily**" on your check and use this form (or the one in the March newsletter). Be sure to fill out the dedication as you want it to appear in the Easter program. You can also get an order form from the office.

Lilies

Total Cost

Your Name

Dedication:

In Honor of _____

In Memory of _____

To the Glory of Our Lord ___ (mark with a check or x)

Celebrating a Special Birthday for a Very Special Lady

After church service on March 13th, a crowd of family and friends gathered in the Family Life Center to celebrate Frankie Hooks' 95th birthday. It was a rare event in that we managed to keep the party a secret and actually surprised her!

Thanks to Frankie's family who gave a generous donation to the church in her honor, to the ladies of the United Women in Faith (UWF) who baked or bought food, drinks and desserts, and to the Hostess with the Most-est, Maria Thomas, the UWF's go-to lady for hospitality, who planned the event and bought all the coordinating party supplies.



2021 Food Pantry Impact

The number of Food Pantry guests in the first half of 2021 was about the same as in past years, but "business" kicked up surprisingly from August to year-end. We don't know what drove the increase in people asking for help, but thanks to the Lord and your faithful donations, Lake Gibson UMC was able to meet the needs. In total we gave out **617** bags of groceries and **610** bags of Publix baked goods. These numbers represent opportunities to help members of our community.

For **2022** the average weekly number of bags of groceries ranges from 20 - 23, with monthly totals between 80 and 92 a month. This is more in line with the years before 2021.

Thanks to everyone who supports the Food Pantry. This is a partial list of tasks and team members:

Donors of money, groceries and the paper bags we use to package the items,

Buyers of meat and any groceries still needed to fill out the bags if donations have fallen behind, or needs for help have increased, **NOTE: We need someone to pick up the meat. Please let Ann Johnson (863-450-2765) know if you can help.**

Tom Burns who places the food on shelves in a well-organized manner, and to the packers who fill grocery bags,

Friendly and caring people who interact with our guests as they hand out bags,

Night owls who pick up bakery donations from the Lake Gibson Publix on Wednesday and Saturday nights, and black out the prices on each item,

And to the Food Pantry coordinator, Ann Johnson.

Below is a summary of our monthly 2021 food donations to hungry people:

Month	# Bags of Groceries	# Bags of Bakery Items
January	63	67
February	45	46
March	46	56
April	39	37
May	43	43
June	46	43
July	48	48
August	55	57
September	52	48
October	63	59
November	64	57
December*	53	49
TOTALS	617	610
*Open 3 weeks		

Rummage Sale, February 25 - 26, 2022

Praise the Lord for what was probably the most successful rummage sale we've ever had! We raised a hair under \$5,000! There is no way to name everyone who made this sale so successful, but a few people were key: Lynn Meske, who washed a ton of glassware and kitchen items, put jewelry on cards or displays, was the brains behind all of the sales improvements, and too many more tasks to list; Leon Rumohr, who took care of equipment sales and a hundred other jobs; and to everyone who helped with setup, worked the sales, helped with the teardown, and loaded the items for donation to the Vietnam Veterans.

Thanks also to Lynn and Shirley Schmidt for the photos.



A Letter from the Bishop about the Vision of the Continuing United Methodist Church



Dear Friends,

I write to you as we lament the violence and loss of life in the Ukraine. We pray for peace, and we lift up United Methodist churches in this area and all people living in harm's way.

Each day we learn more about the implications of the postponed General Conference. I am a part of the work of the Council of Bishops in this season, and am I writing to provide guidance to you and your local churches.

I regret the activity of closed meetings being held in United Methodist churches in Florida by the Global Methodist Church. I do not understand the need for closed meetings. I do not understand the turning away of persons at the door of a church. I do not condone falsehoods being shared about The United Methodist Church. I rely on the spirit of 1 Peter 3:15 and appeal to us to take the high road and "give an account for the hope that is in us."

We are United Methodist disciples of Jesus Christ. We are a people under the cross of Jesus Christ, and the flame is the warmth of the Holy Spirit that calls us into connection with each other. We are an evangelical church that lives deeply in the grace of God and therefore shares this grace with all people, without exception.

A series of district gatherings are being planned for later this month. Superintendents will host these opportunities for you to [learn about the vision of the continuing United Methodist Church](#) – a vision that preserves the rich heritage of Florida United Methodism while committing to an ever more faithful and inclusive church for all. We want to encourage you in the important ministry you are doing in your local context. These meetings will be open to all. Two webinars will be held [**were held**] to give insight and support to our clergy and lay leaders as they guide us through opportunities and challenges of this season. The webinar for laity will be [**was**] held on Sunday, March 20 at 7:00 pm. The webinar for clergy will be [**was**] held on Monday, March 28 at 1:00 pm. ~~Registration links will be sent out next week. I invite you all to participate in these gatherings.~~ I commend three resources for you:

1. A Narrative for the Continuing United Methodist Church [<https://www.unitedmethodistbishops.org/files/websites/www/a+narrative+for+the+continuing+united+methodist+church....pdf>] [Statement from the Council of Bishops dated November 4, 2021]

2. #BeUMC <https://www.umc.org/en/what-we-believe/umc-topics/our-people/beumc>

3. A Community of Love and Forgiveness [video with Leah Wiley at bottom of page] [<https://florida-email.brtaapp.com!/HewvpVqnB9NpBKw423ovXw2hUT2e9QXgRUplJB0QavzuWX7TmM6+dhjhcvqInnNFM>]

And my appeal to you is simple: **Take the high road; give an account for the hope that is in you; and remember that we are scriptural, grace-filled, and missional people who want a church for all, no exceptions.** [Emphasis added. Ed.] "Welcome one another, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God." Romans 15:7

The Peace of the Lord,

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

[Source: Letter by email from Bishop Carter, March 10, 2022. Edited to update status as of March 21, 2022 and for the space available. Editor]

United Methodist Women is Now United Women in Faith!

Press Release, March 2, 2022

[United Methodist Women is now United Women in Faith!](#) The move is part of a refreshing of the organization that includes a new logo and an array of new and improved programs to nurture current members and welcome new women to join to put their love in action on behalf of women, children, and youth.

The organization announced the new operating name in the March - April edition of **response**, its bimonthly magazine for members, and is launching the rebrand with a new website and Facebook event March 3 at 1:00 pm ET. The new programs are fruits of research conducted over the past five years with more than 24,000 United Methodists and women of other Christian traditions participating in the surveys, focus groups and interviews. This input informed the prayerful discernment of staff and elected leaders.

The changes are designed to address the different needs and life stages of current members and new women and expand options for membership and engagement. The new name also aims to welcome current members whose local churches may choose to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church as well as women of other faith traditions who want to join.

New and innovative programs will be rolled out throughout 2022, including:

- A new, easier to navigate website with a homepage designed to pique new women's interest in United Women in Faith and a special portal set to come online later this year where members can log in to access additional resources.
- A new "All-Access" National Membership Option enabling women to join United Women in Faith via the new website and participate online or in person at local units or larger events.
- Soul Care Retreats, a pilot recruitment program for members and their nonmember friends and new women focused on nurturing women's bodies, minds, and spirits.
- Innovations to Mission u, the organization's longtime spiritual growth and transformative education program. Beginning in spring 2022, Mission u will introduce new curricula each year—one for children, one for youth and one for adults—all focused on a shared biblical theme. The new Mission u curricula will be more adaptable for use in small groups, local churches, vacation Bible schools, retreats, and other settings. Through these vibrant, relevant, justice-oriented, and biblically centered curricula, Mission u will continue its commitment to learning together for the transformation of the world and expand its impact.
- More targeted giving options and new interactive online resources for members.

"This is an exciting time for our organization!" said Harriett Jane Olson, CEO of United Women in Faith. "Looking back, we see the through lines for our organization—faith in God, love for each other and commitment to putting our faith into action supporting women, children, and youth. These commitments have been expressed in different ways at different times using different names, always calling women to world changing action. This combination of a new look, more accessible resources for members and new ways to participate, positions us for impact in our own journeys and in how we engage the world that God so loves."

'Ainise 'Isama'u, United Women in Faith board president, said the changes express the organization's core values in ways that will excite current members and invite new women to join us. "I'm confident our members will be excited about these changes," she said. "Together we are creating more opportunities for engagement with more women through new programs and updates of long-standing programs that embody our core values. Things change. People change. But God remains, and that continues to be the purpose behind everything that we do in this organization." Continued on the next page . . .

United Methodist Women is Now United Women in Faith! Continued

The organization remains incorporated in New York as United Methodist Women and is doing business as United Women in Faith. United Women in Faith seeks to connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation, leadership development, creative fellowship, and education so that they can inspire, influence and impact local and global communities.

The UWF website is <https://uwfaith.org/>.

Support for Ukraine Refugees

[Source: Email from Florida Conference, March 14, 2022]



Rev. Mike Zdorow of the Florida Conference and his wife Zenie, both with strong ties to Ukraine, have been instrumental in identifying ways to safely and effectively send funds to help refugees within Ukraine through the United Methodist Church. At the same time, the Florida Conference has made available a Conference Advance Special to help Ukraine refugees crossing the border into Poland. Please consider donations to these funds as we continue to hear the cries of our brothers and sisters in Ukraine and are being given the great privilege of “sharing in this service to the Lord’s people.” (2 Cor. 8:4)

100% of your gift will go right away to United Methodist churches in Ukraine and Poland on the front lines of this refugee humanitarian crisis.

1. **To Help Refugees within Ukraine:** Please make checks out to **Lake Gibson UMC** with an annotation **Advance #14053A-Ukraine Refugees**. Cash donations should also be labeled for this advance number.
2. **To Help Ukraine Refugees in Poland:** Please make checks out to **Lake Gibson UMC** with an annotation **Advance #102130-Ukraine Refugees**.

A Little Bit of Heaven (ALBOH) Child Enrichment Center Is Having Another Krispy Kreme Fundraiser!

A Little Bit of Heaven will be hosting a Krispy Kreme Doughnut fundraiser via “**Digital Dozens**.” It will be a contactless and convenient way for our preschool to raise money. We are hoping to raise \$5,000. Profit from this fundraiser will go towards a **new roof for the preschool**. Sell Original Glazed dozens virtually to friends and family, and Krispy Kreme will distribute redemption codes via email. You and your supporters can redeem their Original Glazed Dozen the next time they visit a shop or the drive-thru. We appreciate everyone’s support throughout the school year. Call the church office for ordering details (863-858-5431).

Thank you, Latisha Cook, Director

Merry Matters

In the last 3 months, the Merry Matters have presented **15 crocheted ground mats** to the homeless guests at Hope House, and more are requested. People love them! Recently three members of another church came to see the process and learn how to make plarn (plastic yarn made from recycled plastic grocery bags) and crochet the mats.

In the future the MMs may make shopping/grocery bags and purses from plarn for the Rummage Sale or local craft sales.

Prayer Ministry

“God raised Him up to the heights of heaven and gave him a name that is above every other name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Philippians 2:9-11 (NLT 1996)



We give thanks that prior to Jesus's ascension into heaven, he gave his disciples instructions on how to go into the world and spread the Good News. May we continue our journey on earth by praying and restoring hope and faith by the love and compassion for others as Jesus has taught us to do. Take up your cross and follow Jesus; cling to Him to have eternal life. Amen

Please call the church office if you wish to become a prayer warrior for Lake Gibson UMC and Jesus.

Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Happy Easter and God Bless

Prayer Ministry - Fran

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

Contact Information

Pastor Steve Polk, 863-858-5431; fax 863-853-1625; pastor@lakegibsonumc.com

Kristie Otte, Administrative Secretary, 863-858-5431, office@lakegibsonumc.com

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

Sue Heishman, Bookkeeper

Glenda Grant Hess, Music Director

Leon Rumohr, Custodian

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

Financial Report

The past two years have been traumatic with the advent of COVID-19. It has assaulted us in ways we did not imagine. Thankfully, we have been able to remain financially solvent, if not flush.

The below charts, as in the past, are a month behind due to the publishing of the Good News prior to the completion of the month. There will be some minor adjustments to our budget over the year as we welcome a new pastor. We envision some upgrades to the church office, fixing flooring within our Narthex, and making slight changes to our pay and housing allowance lines. Nothing drastic, but the Board of Trustees and the Finance Committee will be busy.

Three-year Congregational Giving Profile (CGP) Template: Monthly Version							
Data Entry							
Current Year	2022						
Current Budget	\$295,275						
Month	Actual 2019	Actual 2020	Actual 2021	3-Yr Total	3-Yr \$ Avg Monthly	3-Yr \$ Avg Cumulative	Actual 2022
January	\$32,120	\$19,250	\$41,469	\$92,839	\$30,946	\$30,946	\$45,644
February	\$23,134	\$26,344	\$26,633	\$76,111	\$25,370	\$56,317	\$26,373
March	\$34,381	\$31,430	\$23,181	\$88,992	\$29,664	\$85,981	
April	\$29,060	\$48,131	\$24,073	\$101,264	\$33,755	\$119,735	
May	\$22,029	\$25,816	\$26,093	\$73,938	\$24,646	\$144,381	
June	\$27,031	\$25,894	\$15,866	\$68,791	\$22,930	\$167,312	
July	\$23,569	\$0	\$23,104	\$46,673	\$15,558	\$182,869	
August	\$21,790	\$22,494	\$20,877	\$65,161	\$21,720	\$204,590	
September	\$22,385	\$25,185	\$21,208	\$68,778	\$22,926	\$227,516	
October	\$0	\$20,998	\$20,238	\$41,236	\$13,745	\$241,261	
November	\$28,024	\$25,284	\$18,325	\$71,633	\$23,878	\$265,139	
December	\$52,968	\$26,088	\$25,183	\$104,239	\$34,746	\$299,885	
Total	\$316,491	\$296,914	\$286,250	\$899,655	\$299,885	\$299,885	\$72,017

Monthly Budget Monitoring Based on CGP Goals								
Current Year	2022							
Current Budget	\$295,275							
Month	% Needed Monthly	\$ Needed Monthly	Received Monthly	% Needed Cumulative	\$ Needed Cumulative	Received Cumulative	Status Ahead or (Behind)	% Ahead or (Behind)
January	10.32%	\$30,471	\$45,644	10.32%	\$30,471	\$45,644	\$15,173	49.80%
February	8.46%	\$24,980	\$26,373	18.78%	\$55,451	\$72,017	\$16,566	29.88%
March	9.89%	\$29,208	\$0	28.67%	\$84,659	\$72,017	(\$12,642)	
April	11.26%	\$33,236	\$0	39.93%	\$117,895	\$72,017	(\$45,878)	
May	8.22%	\$24,267	\$0	48.15%	\$142,162	\$72,017	(\$70,145)	
June	7.65%	\$22,578	\$0	55.79%	\$164,740	\$72,017	(\$92,723)	
July	5.19%	\$15,319	\$0	60.98%	\$180,058	\$72,017	(\$108,041)	
August	7.24%	\$21,386	\$0	68.22%	\$201,445	\$72,017	(\$129,428)	
September	7.64%	\$22,574	\$0	75.87%	\$224,018	\$72,017	(\$152,001)	
October	4.58%	\$13,534	\$0	80.45%	\$237,552	\$72,017	(\$165,535)	
November	7.96%	\$23,511	\$0	88.41%	\$261,063	\$72,017	(\$189,046)	
December	11.59%	\$34,212	\$0	100.00%	\$295,275	\$72,017	(\$223,258)	
Totals		\$295,275						

Continued on the next page . . .

Financial Report, Continued

Our church, like most others, continues to function through your generous contributions. We wax and wane partially as our financial position permits us to support certain programs. Our pastor often mentions opportunities to give at some time during our worship services. He even puts in a plug for actually looking at our website (www.LakeGibsonUMC.com). I would like to draw your attention to the website heading found in red. Within the heading are three buttons of particular interest. These are:

[Financial](https://lakegibsonumc.com/financial/) (<https://lakegibsonumc.com/financial/>)

[Contribution Options](#) (which Pastor Steve addresses most Sundays)

[Automated Contributions](#) <https://tinyurl.com/LGUMC-Vanco>

While rarely discussed, look at information under the Financial button. On the left-hand side of the page is detailed information regarding Planned Gifts. You may have received information on how to give a bequest to an alma mater, a favorite charity, or numerous other groups. These are groups which, through advertising, attempt to pull at your heartstrings. Can making disciples of Jesus Christ be any less worthy?

My father and step-mother took the time to establish a trust for their children. With their passing, our family has been informed that the trust will be distributed this year. We plan to tithe a portion directly to our church. This also brings to mind that we have not rewritten our wills in over thirty years. It is time to clarify how our current physical property and financial investments will be distributed. Whether our assets are distributed piece-meal over time, or through a will at our passing, this is something which we should consider now.

If you have not looked at your will, trust, or bequest, do so. NOW IS THE TIME. They can always be amended and updated before they need to be used. Don't be like those who say they will but fail to do so. You can contribute in making future disciples of Jesus Christ.

Dwight Kitchens, Chair, Finance Committee

Data, Data, and More Data

In March's copy of *The Good News* you may have read about a church opt-in smartphone directory, as well as the possibility of making a printed directory through the commercial firm Lifetouch. A third alternative, which includes more information with less work on our part already exists. Again, it is computer based, so it requires either a desktop, laptop, tablet, or smartphone to work. So long as you have internet connectivity, you can access our database in the cloud to read, and in some cases, immediately update your information.

Your church information:

Lake Gibson UMC uses Servant Keeper software to manage our list of members, visitors, etc. It is possible for you to both update your personal information online and view your Giving History by going to:

https://servantkeeper.com/member-portal/Lake_Gibson_UMC, also at:

<https://tinyurl.com/55fs3rry>. Note that there are underlines between Lake, Gibson and UMC which are obscured by the underline.

It is convenient to copy the above hyperlink into your browser's favorites. This will enable you to easily find it again.

Continued on the next page . . .

Data, Data, and More Data, Continued

Here you can either:

1. Login into the system where you already have a password
2. Register for the first time (if you haven't registered yet)
3. Revise your password (if you've forgotten your password)

Login Member Portal

Email

Password

Enter

[Forgot your password?](#)

[Haven't registered yet?](#)

If this is your initial registration, you will see:

Registration Member Portal

If your email matches a family in the database, then a message has been sent with further instructions to setup your password. Please check your inbox. If you do not see a message within 10-20 minutes, try re-submitting your email, making sure it's free of typos. Or, if you have another email address that might be correct instead, try that.

[Login page.](#)

[Try another email address.](#)

[Back to the login page](#)

If Servant Keeper recognizes your email address as recorded by LGUMC, you will be asked for a personalized password. This email address and your new password should get you into our database. Please, **RECORD YOUR PASSWORD** for future reference. You may revise your basic personal information as seen by the office as well as see your Giving History.

Your church directory:

Now, a portion of the above information can be immediately formatted into a useful church directory. It is located by typing the below hyperlink into your browser's URL line:

[https://servantkeeper.com/directory/Lake Gibson UMC](https://servantkeeper.com/directory/Lake_Gibson_UMC), also at:
<https://tinyurl.com/2p8npysj>

You will be asked for a password. Here, **you will use the following password: LGUMCFL.**

If you view the Sunday worship service on Facebook, this password is the same as the ending of our Facebook URL (<https://facebook.com/LGUMCFL>). Easy to remember!

Continued on the next page . . .

Data, Data, and More Data, Continued

You will frequently find reasons to contact others in the congregation. You will find having this tab open all the time is helpful.

If you are using Microsoft Edge as your browser, open your *Settings*, then *Start*, followed by *home and new tabs*, and under When Edge starts, click *Open these pages*. Click *Add a new page*. Insert https://servantkeeper.com/directory/Lake_Gibson_UMC and click *ADD*. Your new tab should automatically open the next time you start Microsoft Edge. You may perform similar actions in both Chrome and Firefox browsers.

Wonder Walk for Cornerstone Family Ministries is April 2nd and Donations Are Needed Soon!

130 YEARS!!! That's how long **Cornerstone Family Ministries** has been taking care of **economically disadvantaged children** and encouraging their **families** and **caregivers** so they can **earn and learn their way out of poverty** . . . **Wow!**

What a blessing and honor it is for the Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church and the United Methodist Women to be a part of this organization's legacy of love and care to our community. It boggles the mind to think of the faithfulness of God as we reflect on all of the national and world events, challenges and growth over those 130 years. **BUT GOD** has seen fit to keep Cornerstone here, walking out the same mission throughout the Tampa Bay Area. **Thank you for being a part of Cornerstone's 130 years through Lake Gibson UMC's past support.**

The overall **Wonder Walk fundraising goal is \$150,000**, and to-date \$63,200 has been raised. The average annual cost of a scholarship for one child is \$3,000. We need your help to get to the finish line! The money raised provides **scholarships** for children whose families earn below the poverty level to attend the Rosa Valdez Early Childhood Center in Ybor City.

To learn more about Wonder Walk, go to www.cornerstonefamilyministries.org/wonderwalk. If you can't walk, **please send donations** of any amount. You can also help by bidding on donated gifts in the Silent Auction, which starts on Wednesday March 30th at 9:00 am. To access the link to the auction, go to www.cornerstonefamilyministries.org.

Make your donations to **Lake Gibson UMC** with an annotation "**Wonder Walk.**" Cornerstone Family Ministries is one of two United Women in Faith (formerly United Methodist Women) national mission institutions in Florida. Thank you!

Opportunities to Learn

Just Energy for All Working Group Meeting, April 5th at 7:00 pm

Attention **United Women in Faith**. Thank you for joining us or expressing your interest in our first Just Energy for All Working Group meeting by Zoom on Tuesday, March 1st. We are so grateful for you all and the work you are doing to advance just energy for all. If you were not able to attend, or if you would like to review any links, takeaways, or action items, **notes** for the meeting are at this link:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1r5roSFDBkD-hvBcQhymvvX3iUMqg0DXfsL_BJPcCegg/edit?usp=sharing

You can copy the documents or download them in MS Word.

Continued on the next page . . .

Opportunities to Learn, Continued

Webinar Examines to Stay or Not to Stay, April 5th, 8:00 pm

Numerous congregations and church leaders are weighing whether they want to stay United Methodist or leave for a new, theologically conservative denomination. The United Methodist Association of Retired Clergy and Friends, which plans to stay United Methodist, has scheduled a free webinar to explore issues surrounding whether “to stay or not to stay.” The webinar is set for 8:00 pm EDT, April 5th.

To register for this Zoom webinar, go to

https://www.umarc.org/?mc_cid=bd4ee94664&mc_eid=2ebdf32ef5

Join Bishop Carter on April 6th, 10:00 am for a Conversation with Kate Bowler

Join Ken Bishop Carter for a virtual conversation with *New Your Times* bestselling author and Duke University professor, and incurable optimist, Kate Bowler. They will discuss her book, *No Cure for Being Human (and Other Truths I Need to Hear)*, which was written after Kate was unexpectedly diagnosed with Stage IV cancer at age 35. Learn more about Kate at katebowler.com.

To register, go to https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_LL4SSNnATzyf-bkslkj8lQ.

Table Talk, The History of Race in Florida Part I April 6th, Noon

The Florida Conference’s Table Talk is a series of monthly half-hour conversations with various speakers about anti-racism efforts in the conference.

Table Talk is hosted by The Beloved Community. Part I of this topic will be **April 6th at 12:00 pm**.

Register for each month’s virtual meeting at <https://www.flumc.org/table-talk-webinar-series>. You can also view past webinars at this site. Part II will be **May 6th at noon**.



Still in Mission #41 April 7th, Noon

You are invited to join us for #StillInMission Episode 41! You will have the opportunity to meet in a small group to hear a presentation from a single **missionary** during the call. Find out more about these missionaries below, or at www.umcmmission.org.

Kyeong-ah Woo is a consultant with the World Council of Churches Assembly Programs and Workshops, serving in Switzerland. **Katherine Parker** serves as a health monitoring, evaluation and learning advisor in Nepal. **Leonardo Garcia** is a clinical advisor, for the East Angola Episcopal Area, Angola. **M. Koffi Sachou** is a church and leadership developer/planter in the Central African Republic mission initiative in Central Africa.

To register, go to

https://gbgm.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJlkfuypqT8jHdMomFI5E4U_Y4vwCzce1idC.

Global Methodist Church Sets Official Launch Date May 1, 2022

March 3, 2022 – With humility, hope and joy, a 17-member body of theologically conservative Methodist clergy and laity, known as the Transitional Leadership Council, is pleased to announce the Global Methodist Church will officially launch on May 1, 2022.

Supported by fervent prayers, faithful discernment, and a sure hope for the future, the Global Methodist Church is a Holy Spirit inspired movement committed to making disciples of Jesus Christ who worship passionately, love extravagantly, and witness boldly.

Thousands of Methodist clergy and laity from around the world have worked together for over three years to lay the groundwork for a new, theologically conservative Methodist denomination steeped in the great ecumenical and evangelical confessions of the Christian faith. They envision a church fired by a warm hearted, Wesleyan expression of that faith that is dedicated to sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ in word and deed.

“The Global Methodist Church will warmly welcome people eager to join others in fulfilling its mission,” said the Rev. Keith Boyette, Chairman of the Transitional Leadership Council and President of the Wesleyan Covenant Association. “We have heard the truth of Jesus Christ, experienced the forgiveness of his grace and love, and so bear witness to his transforming power. We long to take our place alongside brothers and sisters in the church universal who seek to live out their faith every day so that others might come to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.”

After having worked for years to renew and reform The United Methodist Church, in late 2019, theological conservatives faithfully joined leading UM Church bishops, and leaders of centrist and progressive advocacy groups to hammer out an amicable and orderly plan to divide the UM denomination.

That plan, known as the *Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace through Separation*, rapidly gained the support of people across the UM connection, and it appeared headed for approval at the denomination’s May 2020 General Conference. Unfortunately, after two previous postponements, the UM Church’s Commission on General Conference announced today that it is postponing the conference for a third time. Its inability to find ways to help international delegates gain access to COVID-19 vaccinations and secure U.S. entry visas led to the cancellation.

Consequently, the *Protocol* cannot be adopted this year, so faithful and patient United Methodists will not be afforded the opportunity to part ways with the UM Church according to the *Protocol’s* terms. Under its provisions, every theologically conservative local church and annual conference would be allowed to join the Global Methodist Church with clear title to all of their property and assets in perpetuity.

“Many United Methodists have grown impatient with a denomination clearly struggling to function effectively at the general church level,” said Boyette. “Theologically conservative local churches and annual conferences want to be free of divisive and destructive debates, and to have the freedom to move forward together. We are confident many existing congregations will join the new Global Methodist Church in waves over the next few years, and new church plants will sprout up as faithful members exit the UM Church and coalesce into new congregations.”

It is anticipated that some theologically conservative local churches will find annual conferences willing to negotiate fair and just exit provisions, while others will unfortunately face obstacles placed in their paths. The Transitional Leadership Council decided it was time to launch the Global Methodist Church, so those who can leave early will have a place to land, to begin building and growing, and making room for others to join later.

Continued on the next page . . .

Global Methodist Church Sets Official Launch Date, Continued

Boyette said, “For theologically conservative local churches deciding to remain in the UM Church for a time, we are confident Good News, the Confessing Movement, UMAction, and the Wesleyan Covenant Association will continue to vociferously advocate for the ultimate passage of the *Protocol*. Every theologically conservative local congregation and annual conference should have the right to join the Global Methodist Church with all of their property and assets intact.”

Over the past two years the [Transitional Leadership Council](#) has met on almost a weekly basis to create a Global Methodist Church *in formation*. Informed by the work of the Wesleyan Covenant Association’s Global Council, Legislative Assembly, and dozens of task force teams that prepared white papers covering a host of issues, the members prepared a [Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline](#). The book will govern the church during a transitional period prior to a convening General Conference to be held in the next 12 to 18 months. The *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* and much of the Transitional Leadership Council’s work can be found on the [new church’s website](#) and in [Crossroads](#), the weekly e-newsletter it publishes. Persons and churches interested in aligning with the Global Methodist Church may express their interest through the new church’s website.

“As we embark on this great venture, we know we will stumble and fall at times,” said Boyette. “But with the great prophet Isaiah, we also firmly believe we will, in God’s good time, ‘run and not be weary,’ and ‘walk [in the way of the Lord] and not faint!’”

For additional information about the Global Methodist Church, visit [GlobalMethodist.org](https://globalmethodist.org) (<https://globalmethodist.org>).

[Source: Press release, March 3, 2022, <https://www.confessingumc.org/#:~:text=Our%20Purpose%C2%A0.We%20Confess%20publications>]

Debate about Church Future Heats Up

[Source: United Methodist News]

By Heather Hahn

Jan. 26, 2022

[Some of the information in this article has evolved since it was written in late January 2022; however, a member of the congregation asked that it be published because there are many conversations about the UMC’s future flying around. Due to the lateness of its receipt, the length of the article and the number of pages already in the issue, I didn’t put it in the February newsletter, and then I forgot about it when preparing the March newsletter. Editor]

Two years after a diverse group of United Methodists introduced a proposal for separation, a global pandemic continues to keep the denomination uneasily together. However, ~~with General Conference scheduled for later this year,~~ preparations are accelerating for the future United Methodist Church and the theologically conservative group that plans to break away. Meanwhile, a theologically progressive group that announced the launch of a new denomination in 2020 is re-evaluating its plans.

Amid all these preparations, long-simmering disputes over LGBTQ inclusion — that led to the proposed split in the first place — have started boiling up again. Council of Bishops President Cynthia Fierro Harvey acknowledged that anxiety is running high for many in the church. She said she often reminds herself of Paul’s advice in [Philippians 4:6-7](#) not to be anxious but to bring prayers and petitions to God. “We need to navigate this season with love and care for one another and not heap more harm on one another and The United Methodist Church,” she said.

Continued on the next page . . .

Debate about Church Future Heats Up, Continued

It's been a busy season. Recent developments include:

- The bishops sharing their vision for the continuing United Methodist Church.
- The North Central Jurisdiction approving a covenant for the future that welcomes and affirms LGBTQ people, and that covenant facing a challenge under church law.
- Iowa Conference leaders facing a backlash after opening the way for same-sex weddings.
- The East Zimbabwe Conference removing its lay leader because of his involvement with an advocacy group.
- Both theological conservatives and progressives making plans for their futures.

Tensions reached a breaking point with the 2019 special General Conference, which, [by a vote of 438-384](#), strengthened bans on same-sex weddings and “self-avowed practicing” gay clergy. The relatively narrow vote did not settle the debate, but [instead sparked widespread resistance](#) and hastened discussions of a denominational divorce. But for the past two years, much of the denomination has been in a holding pattern waiting for action by General Conference — now twice postponed by the pandemic.

The coming legislative assembly faces multiple proposals for division along theological lines. The most endorsed of these is the Protocol of Reconciliation & Grace Through Separation, [negotiated by a professional mediator with a theologically diverse group of United Methodists](#). Under the proposal, churches and conferences that support restrictions on gay marriage and ordination can vote to leave with church property and \$25 million to form a new traditionalist denomination. The protocol also sets aside \$2 million for any other new Methodist denominations that form.

The Wesleyan Covenant Association, a theologically conservative advocacy group, has worked toward forming that traditionalist denomination — [now named the Global Methodist Church](#). However, General Conference delegates have the final say on whether the protocol takes effect as written.

~~The Commission on the General Conference, which organizes the international assembly, expects to decide by the end of March whether the big meeting can go forward as scheduled [Aug. 29-Sept. 6 in Minneapolis](#). The commission is looking at not just delegates' access to vaccines but also the availability of visas. While visas are an issue for every General Conference, the pandemic has caused more difficulties. The commission has been clear [that this coming assembly must have a reasonable level of global participation](#). [The General Conference of the UMC has been postponed to 2024. Editor].~~

The commission met January 26, mostly in closed session, and did not announce any final decisions about whether General Conference can go forward. Even with General Conference still up in the air, United Methodists are moving ahead with plans to go in different directions.

In November, the Council of Bishops offered [a vision for the continuing United Methodist Church](#) as a big-tent denomination that is rooted in Scripture, centered in Christ and welcoming to all churchgoers — whatever their sexual orientation or theological outlook. “Our best witness is to love each other as Christ loves us, to show the world the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit to bind us together despite our differences,” the bishops wrote in [“A Narrative for the Continuing United Methodist Church.”](#)

Harvey, who also leads the Louisiana Conference, said she sees United Methodist congregations, conferences, agencies and individual followers of Jesus who are already living into the narrative. “By that I mean, they are being faithful to God’s call to create space and embrace people from the left, the right and the in between,” she said.

As the bishops were developing their narrative, [an ad hoc group of United Methodists urged bishops](#) not to wait for General Conference but allow congregations that want to do so to leave with property now. The group’s open letter, [titled “A Call to Grace,”](#) garnered more than 2,030 signatures.

Continued on the next page . . .

Debate about Church Future Heats Up, Continued

[The special online session of the North Central Jurisdiction](#) — representing 10 conferences in the U.S. Midwest — offered a statement that shares similarities with both the bishops' narrative and "A Call to Grace." By a vote of 135-32, the delegates approved a ["Covenant to Build BeLoved Community"](#) that calls on the jurisdiction to work to end racism and to create a culture that welcomes and affirms LGBTQIA+ people. The covenant also encourages conferences to accommodate local congregations and clergy seeking disaffiliation.

John Lomperis, a delegate from the Indiana Conference and advocate with the conservative Institute on Religion and Democracy, asked for a decision of law on whether the covenant violates the Book of Discipline. Lomperis specifically questioned the section that requests bishops "dismiss charges related to LGBTQIA+ identity or officiating same gender weddings." That section goes on to say, "We will not restrict God's calling based solely on a candidate's sexual orientation or gender identity."

Bishop David Bard, who was presiding when Lomperis asked for a ruling, [decided that the section is aspirational and therefore does not violate church law](#). The section "asserts important values and encourages consideration of how one might live into those values," wrote Bard, who leads the Michigan and Minnesota conferences. All bishops' rulings of law must go for review by the Judicial Council, the denomination's top court, [which recently has begun deliberations on its fall docket](#).

Invoking both the bishops' narrative and the North Central Jurisdiction's covenant, Iowa Conference Bishop Laurie Haller [announced that the conference would not wait to live out the documents' vision](#). While no one would be compelled to violate their convictions, the conference vision statement said, the question of same-sex weddings would be up to local congregations starting this month.

"To put it clearly, pastors will be able to choose which weddings they officiate, as long as it is two consenting adults who have been counseled," the statement said. "Likewise, church leadership, in consultation with their pastors, will be able to determine their own policy regarding weddings."

Many bishops have quietly held complaints related to homosexuality in abeyance as requested by the protocol. Both the Wesleyan Covenant Association and Good News, another theologically conservative advocacy group, argued that Haller's statement went further and violated church law. "If Bishop Haller and her cabinet permit this policy countenancing defiance of the Discipline to go into effect, I think they risk returning the UM Church to the level of conflict witnessed at the 2019 General Conference," [warned the Rev. Keith Boyette, WCA president](#).

[In his Perspective column for Good News](#), the Rev. Thomas Lambrecht wrote that the announcement could have significant consequences. "Local churches and laity have power, too," he wrote. "They have the power of purse strings. ... And secular courts might be inclined to say that, by this action, the Iowa conference has repudiated its status as a United Methodist conference, breaking the trust clause that holds churches hostage to the whims of a wayward church leadership. Who knows where this road of rule by power could lead?"

Members of the Iowa extended cabinet told UM News that the cabinet took the lead in developing the conference's vision statement in response to false rumors and fears being spread about the future United Methodist Church. "In this statement by the cabinet, we have been clear — and this is our truth — that for anyone who wants a future in The United Methodist Church, they will have a home," said the Rev. Lanette L. Plambeck, assistant to the bishop and director of clergy and leadership excellence. Living that vision right now, Plambeck said, gives United Methodists the chance to make decisions based on facts, not fear. "There is a difference between a truth that is asserted and a truth that is observed and experienced," she said.

Iowa is not the only conference seeing changes. At a virtual session December 4th, the Zimbabwe East Conference resolved to relieve Simon Mafunda as its conference lay leader following the WCA hiring him as its Africa coordinator. Delegates from the seven districts unanimously passed a vote of no confidence, asserting that his new employment presented a potential conflict of interest with his voluntary conference position as lay leader. Mafunda called the vote flawed, saying it did not follow any established procedure. Continued on the next page . . .

Debate about Church Future Heats Up, Continued

“It is very key to be careful how we follow procedures so that it validates the outcome of the results,” Mafunda said. “I still respect and appreciate those who elected me to office, but feel that they were all cowed down by this process.” He added that he does not see a conflict of interest. “My appointment as a consultant had nothing to do with my role as a conference lay leader,” he said. The conference has not yet named a new lay leader.

Amid these disputes, the WCA continues its planning for the Global Methodist Church. In December, the WCA Sexual Holiness, Wholeness, and Brokenness Task Force released [a 22-page report](#) on proposed teachings around sexuality and gender. WCA members are now taking feedback and plan to bring the report for adoption at its Global Legislative Assembly on May 7. The WCA continues to prepare other documents on sacraments and other aspects of church life for the still-being-formed [Global Methodist Church](#).

The WCA also announced plans to pay for General Conference delegates in Africa, Europe and the Philippines to travel to receive vaccines with the intention of ensuring General Conference goes forward. However, bishops, General Conference organizers and others [criticized the move for helping only delegates from the central conferences and not the community at large](#).

Meanwhile, the people forming the [Liberation Methodist Connexion](#) (LMX) offered a transparent look at the challenges faced by all groups trying to start something new. In 2020, [the connexion announced its launch as a new denomination](#) that would center the voices of people of color as well as queer and transgender individuals. In late 2021, the connexion’s collaborators offered [a full assessment of where they are now](#), noting unexpected challenges and limited resources. “Common ground was easier to find when we were focused on critiquing old institutions,” the group said in the statement. “It has been much harder to find as we all bring ideas about what can be.”

For now, the connexion — which is all unpaid volunteers — has decided that: “Positioning ourselves against the United Methodist Church or any other spiritual institution does not serve us and is an unfair burden to place on ourselves.” The connexion also no longer is identifying itself as a denomination. “We are a group of people working to dismantle existing systems of oppression and liberating marginalized people, and we want to do that with as many people as possible,” said Adrian Hill, one of the connexion’s collaborators and a General Conference delegate. “These issues transcend membership in existing denominations.”

Changes Coming to Thursday Night's Zooming the Peace

While we have hearing assistance devices available in the sanctuary for Sunday services, we have not previously found a good way to help the hearing impaired for our Zoom meetings.

We’ve recently found a way to add closed captions to the Pastor's Left Overs. We hope that this will make it easier for those who might be slightly hearing impaired to enjoy Zooming the Peace discussion of the weekly Left Overs (videos that are posted on Facebook and our website each Wednesday).

We're still trying to figure out how Zooming the Peace oral discussions might be closed captioned. Trying to type into a chat what someone is saying is currently beyond our skill level. If anyone has an idea for an affordable way to convert speech to text in real time on Zoom, please let us know.

With some work we might be able to figure out how to add closed captions to our sermons, although this will take more research to figure out. Separating the recorded sermon from everything before and after it currently is very laborious. We'll also need a volunteer for that job.

Dwight Kitchens, dwight@dwightkitchens.com

United Methodist Men (UMM)

The UMM opened our monthly meeting on March 12th with a prayer and a breakfast.

The purpose of the meeting was to determine if we were going to have the Car/Motorcycle show, previously scheduled for April 9th, or wait until next year to allow for more advance notice to exhibitors and preparation time. It was voted to **cancel the Car/Motorcycle show** due to the fact we did not have enough cars entered to warrant the expense to put on the show.

We also discussed how to **increase our membership** in order to have more resources for projects in the future. It is extremely difficult to do certain projects without the manpower to accomplish the task.

We have finished the repairs to the men's shed and will plan in the future to either replace it or completely rebuild it. We will be doing yard work in the upcoming months around the church. If anyone has any concerns we might be able to address or project suggestions, let us know.

Thanks to all who helped with the UMM rummage sale setup and unloading of stored items. It took the joint effort of all to set up and tear down everything in order to have a successful sale and prepare the FLC for Sunday morning's classes.

Should anyone care to join the UMM, our monthly meetings are held on the **second Saturday at 9:00 am in the FLC**. We collect monthly dues of \$10.00 which go to purchase items needed for repairs or upgrades of the church or grounds improvements.

You may contact me by calling 863-816-3194 or 386-965-0170, or call the church office.

Michael Moake UMM President

The Boy Scout Oath Makes a Difference When You Live the Words

By Joe Henderson, News Content Editor for the Florida Conference, February 23, 2022
Reprinted in UM News Daily Digest, March 9, 2022

"On my honor, I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; to help other people at all times; to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight."

For more than a century, Scouts all over the United States repeated that oath. Those are strong words to live by, speaking of faith, service, self-care, and high morals. And despite the much-publicized scandal that rocked the Boy Scouts of America, those higher goals remain.

"Leadership development and servant development are important values that Scouts can learn. Scouting does lift up one's duty to God and country," Rev. Dr. Sharon Austin said. "It enhances your faith and shows what it means to be a good citizen." Dr. Austin, the Director of Connectional and Justice Ministries for the Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church, has first-hand knowledge about the impact of Scouting. Her father was an Eagle Scout. Her husband received a citation for starting a troop of Scouts with Down Syndrome, all of whom were adults. The couple's son was a Scout, and their daughters, along with Dr. Austin, were Girl Scouts.

The United Methodist Church has a lengthy history with Scouting. Many churches throughout Florida chartered Scout troops, allowing them to meet on church campuses. Some congregations recently celebrated Boy Scout Sunday, where Scouts participated in the services.

Continued on the next page . . .

Boy Scouts, Continued

The Florida Conference Scouting Coordinator, Randy Nunley, has served as a volunteer for the Boy Scouts of America for the last 16 years. He was a Den Leader when his oldest son joined the Cub Scouts in the first grade. For two years, he was a Cubmaster, then became an Assistant Scoutmaster when his son moved on to the Scouts BSA Troop.

In addition to various leadership roles, he serves as the Troop Chaplain for a Scouts BSA Troop at a UMC in the Central Florida Council of BSA, and has received the BSA's District Award of Merit and the Silver Beaver Award. "The Boy Scouts of America provide the connections, programs, and opportunities for youth to apply the practical lessons of character," he said.

Scout Law: A Scout Is:

TRUSTWORTHY. Tell the truth and keep promises. People can depend on you.

LOYAL. Show that you care about your family, friends, Scout leaders, school, and country.

HELPFUL. Volunteer to help others without expecting a reward.

FRIENDLY. Be a friend to everyone, even people who are very different from you.

COURTEOUS. Be polite to everyone and always use good manners.

KIND. Treat others as you want to be treated. Never harm or kill any living thing without good reason.

OBEDIENT. Follow the rules of your family, school, and pack. Obey the laws of your community and country.

CHEERFUL. Look for the bright side of life. Cheerfully do tasks that come your way. Try to help others be happy.

THRIFTY. Work to pay your own way. Try not to be wasteful. Use time, food, supplies, and natural resources wisely.

BRAVE. Face difficult situations even when you feel afraid. Do what you think is right despite what others might be doing or saying.

CLEAN. Keep your body and mind fit. Help keep your home and community clean.

REVERENT. Be reverent toward God. Be faithful in your religious duties. Respect the beliefs of others.

[Article by Joe Henderson, Florida Conference, used with his permission]

What is Critical Race Theory and What Christians Should Know

[Source: <https://www.r2hub.org/library/what-is-critical-race-theory>]

Critical Race Theory (CRT) examines how laws in the United States have built and supported racial inequities. It is an ideological framework that names race as a social construct and asserts racialized inequities in society are fostered by historic and current systemic, institutional, and legal policies and practices.

The General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR) invites you to view a Facebook video to learn more about Critical Race Theory. Garlinda Burton speaks with guests, Dr. Karla McKanders, Dr. Cristian De La Rosa, and Dr. Miguel De La Torre. Go to **GCORR Real Talk** [<https://www.r2hub.org/library/what-is-critical-race-theory>] and click on the video. This website also contains Infographics" (charts) that summarize key points about CRT that you can download.

United Women in Faith (UWF)

Our next United Women in Faith (UWF) **combined circle meeting** will be on **Wednesday, April 6th at 10:00 am** in the FLC. Please read chapter 7 (He Gives Sight to the Blind) of *Never Alone* by Max Lucado, and think about the discussion questions on page 181. We'll also brainstorm plans for June, July and August, when our numbers are usually reduced.

The **Leadership Team's** next meeting is **Monday, April 25th at 11:00 am** in the FLC. We are still looking for someone to serve as vice president. Please contact Phyllis Kitchens (863-984-4564), if you would like to learn more about this position.

Although it is mentioned elsewhere in this issue, THANK YOU again to everyone who made our rummage sale such a great success. Our next rummage sale is tentatively set for October. Although storage space is tight, we will accept sale items, except large pieces of furniture and clothes during the summer. Call Tom Burns or Lynn Meske, or text a photo of your donations to Lynn, to make sure we can take your items over the summer. We'll accept clothing and textiles once the temperature and humidity fall.

Gulf Central District UWF Book Club

The book club met via Zoom on Tuesday, March 15th to discuss *She Came to Slay* by Erica Armstrong Dunbar, a short, fast-moving biography of Harriet Tubman. This book club meets virtually **every 3rd Tuesday of the month** to discuss a different book selected from the UWF Reading Program (RP) for 2021/2022. You are expected to read the book before the meeting. If you read all 10 selections this year, you will have completed the second level of the RP.

The next book club Zoom meeting is **April 19th at 6:30 pm**. The book is *One Dress, One Year* by Bethany Winz. You will need to read the book before the meeting. The May meeting will be **May 17th at 6:30 pm**, and the book is *Hidden Figures* by Margot Lee Shetterly.

To join the book club and get the Zoom login information, email Judi Levan, Secretary of Program Resources, judilevan.umw@gmail.com. Sandy Stanfield and Phyllis Kitchens have joined the club, and we wish more Lake Gibson ladies would do so. This is a great way to learn about interesting topics and people and subjects, as well as to share insights with women from around the district.

United Women in Faith Invite You to Attend Assembly 2022, May 20 - 22, in Orlando, Florida



The first live space to experience our new brand as United Women in Faith is at the **TURN IT UP! Assembly, May 20-22, in Orlando, Florida**. Register now and receive preview information to get ready for the exciting new journey of our sisterhood. Learn more about all the new opportunities created for current members and new women. Discover how the voices of more than 24,000 local members, nonmembers and faith-based women outside The United Methodist Church—through surveys—led the way.

Speakers are announced on the Assembly website, <https://assembly2022.org/speakers/>. To see the workshops planned, go to <https://assembly2022.org/workshops/>. Workshops will focus on four areas: Soul Care (28 choices), Leadership (30), Change-maker (18), and Virtual Workshops (7).

The virtual workshop topics are: Restoring Just Relationships: The Critical Role of Just Transition Toward Climate Justice, Just Energy for All; For Such a Time as This: Racism, Antiracism and The United Methodist Church; New Wineskins -The New Brand and How to Share It; Soul Care Retreats: How to Enjoy or Design Your Own; Women in Leadership: Live Faith Talk Workshop; Facilitating Bible Study that Anchors Christian Transformative Education; and Putting the FUN in Fundraising and How to Leave a Legacy. Registration fee for the virtual program is \$235.00.

Florida United Methodist Children's Home (FUMCH) Virtual Day On Campus

For 2022, the Children's Home will be presenting another Virtual Day On Campus. But this year, instead of producing one long program, they have created **multiple short segments**. The FUMCH YouTube channel will have all eight of the segments, one posted per day.

If you regularly receive emails from FUMCH, an email will be sent to you with a direct link to the video segment on YouTube. The segments will also appear on FUMCH's Facebook page, and will be posted to their website (www.fumch.org).

Please check the **Day on Campus - Part 1** video [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dF-jNwnvOi8>] with Dr. Kitwana McTyer, Chief Executive Officer of FUMCH. This video explains important changes at FUMCH in response to COVID-19, and the major impact of the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA), which places emphasis on foster families rather than on the residential care model used previously. Part 2 is also on line at <https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=florida%20united%20methodist%20children%20s%20home>.

In response to FFPSA, last fall FUMCH began a Family Foster Care program that allows a foster parent couple to live in a cottage on the Enterprise campus. Five cottages are planned to be remodeled into foster family homes. This change should allow children from the same family to stay together and live with one couple of foster parents. Under the previous residential model, two sets of cottage parents rotated on and off duty for two-week periods.

Thanks to Vicky Pitner, First UMC Lakeland's Memory Ministry for the following articles.

Nurturing the Spirit of Persons Living with Memory Loss

by Vicky Pitner, First UMC Lakeland

Spiritual and social connectedness are key to our overall well-being. This is especially true for persons living with memory loss. Creating and sharing joyful moments that promote spiritual and social growth can improve their overall happiness and quality of life. Not only does nurturing their spirit affirm their personhood, but it also brings opportunities to maintain relationships with their care partner, friends, and family.

Despite their confusion and difficulty retrieving memories, persons living with memory loss retain the ability to feel and respond to emotions. They may have trouble expressing their spiritual needs, but finding ways to help them sense and feel God's love will bring meaning and purpose to their lives.

Making a prayer box together can bring spiritual awareness. Find a small box for you and your family member to write down prayers or Bible verses on slips of paper. You can also decorate the box together. Bring out the box when you sense their need for comfort. Rituals such as lighting a candle while you share the prayer box can bring a familiar closeness to God.

Many people find a connectedness to God in nature. Taking walks, being outdoors, smelling the flowers, hearing the birds sing, and watching the sunset and sunrise will bring opportunities to appreciate the beauty of nature that can feed and nurture the physical soul.

Continued on the next page . . .

Avoiding Accidents in the Home

By Vicky Pitner, First UMC Memory Ministry

Taking measures to improve safety can prevent injuries and help a person with memory loss or dementia and the caregiver feel more relaxed and less overwhelmed. Changes in the brain and body can affect safety. Areas affected can include physical abilities (difficulties with balance and changes in gait), judgment (forgetting they turned on the stove), and challenges with time and place (getting lost in the neighborhood). Also, be mindful of changes in vision, depth perception, hearing, and sensitivity to temperature. Below are other suggestions to consider:

- Take a walk through and around the outside of the home and evaluate safety risks.
- Avoid serving food and beverages that are too hot.
- Install walk-in showers and add grab bars to the shower or tub and at the edge of the vanity to allow for independent and safe movement.
- Add textured stickers to slippery surfaces.
- Apply adhesives to keep throw rugs and carpeting in place, or remove rugs completely.
- Monitor the hot water temperature.
- Keep hallways and entrances well lighted. Keeping lights on in the evening as the sun goes down can minimize confusion from seeing shadows in the early evenings.
- Remove guns from the home and keep them safely locked up. Also, make sure knives, power tools, and dangerous machinery are out of sight.
- Make sure chemicals are in a safe place.
- Check your home for lighters or matches that could be problematic.
- Be prepared with emergency phone numbers and make sure they are easily accessible.

Paying attention to home safety can help the individual maintain his or her independence longer, minimize stress, and aid in the ease of caregiving.

If you want more information on our Memory Ministry, Memory Café, or Virtual Support Group, or need caregiving tips, please contact Vicky Pitner at vpitner@firstumc.org.

Reviving Mix and Mingle Seniors' Group

We had to suspend our Mix and Mingle activities when COVID-19 made it dangerous to get together for games, films, presentations and trips. Interest has been expressed in taking some group trips in the local area, either in the church van or in car pools using privately owned vehicles.

Proposed destinations so far are a trip to the Polk Museum of Art gallery on Florida Southern College's campus to see **The Highwaymen art exhibit**. The show is currently open, and **closes on May 22nd**. Another destination is the **Polk County Historical Museum** in Bartow, which has both rotating and permanent exhibits.

If you are interested in taking local trips as a group, or have ideas for destinations, call Phyllis Kitchens, 863-984-4564. **If you would like to volunteer as the M&M event coordinator**, let Phyllis know.

Hope House Happenings

(Excerpts from Volunteer Reports)

March 1, 2022 - Debbie and Rick McLellan

We are still following COVID-19 restrictions. By the end of the day, we had served 20 guests. Rick McLellan led in prayer and a devotion from Romans 8, "Help with Life's Puzzle".

Our snowbird friends Hampton and Sharon Conway prepared a terrific meal, Meatball Chili (with lots of meatballs), individually wrapped cornbread, and fresh baked cookies in reclosable bags. We appreciated help from Dick McPherson, who served the food and ministered to our guests with Rick, and Miss Joey for her help. Our brown to-go bags included a premium ham and cheese sandwich on rye bread, a bag of chips, and other goodies. The brown bag items were provided this week by Lake Gibson United Methodist Church.

We gave out blankets, toiletry kits, razors, deodorant, flashlight, lantern and radio batteries, masks, socks, pocket New Testaments and clothes. Many of these items were provided by Lake Gibson United Methodist Church. We also filled requests for two men who asked for the wonderful mats made by the MERRY MATTERS women's group at Lake Gibson United Methodist Church. We want to say THANKS to Jamie who brought a variety of items from the folks at Foxwood. Thanks to Jim Aldrich for items from Christ the King Episcopal Church, and Polk City Baptist Church for some clothing and food items. Our friend Harry, from Lake Gibson Church of the Nazarene, brought some bags and items and checked on our laundry detergent supply.

March 8, 2022 - Debbie and Rick McLellan

We are still following COVID-19 restrictions, had tables set up for lunch and jointly maintained social distancing. It was a sunny and warm day; most of our guests gathered in the front yard. We require everyone who goes inside the House to wear a mask, with only two at a time allowed inside.

By the end of the day, we had served 17 guests. Rick McLellan led in prayer and a devotion from Matthew 7, "God Still Answers Prayer".

Our guests were served a meal by Chef Dick McPherson, who dished up the food and ministered to our guests with Rick McLellan. Our guests enjoyed Dick's now-famous meat loaf, macaroni salad, and broccoli, with bagged sugar cookies for dessert. Our to-go bag included a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, a bag of chips, a pudding cup, a fruit cup, and other goodies. Our brown bag items were furnished by Lake Gibson United Methodist Church.

We brought sanitized towels and wash cloths for showers, and gave each guest a towel, washcloth and hygiene kit. Nine guests requested showers and three used the laundry.

We had lots of donations from our friends and many very useful items were provided for those less fortunate. We want to especially thank Polk City Baptist Church, Lake Gibson United Methodist Church, and our friend Harry, who is a Military veteran, who also served as a Hope House volunteer. Harry has been wonderful, supplying detergent for our guests to do laundry and coffee. Thank you, Harry!

We did have an ambulance take one of our female guests to the hospital. The EMTs believed she was having a heart attack, but it was not and she has been discharged from the hospital, Praise God. God is working in hearts and lives at the Hope House and we are grateful that our guests were Blessed.

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Hope House Happenings, Continued

March 15, 2022 - Debbie and Rick McLellan

Today we served 14 lunches to our guests. Rick McLellan led in prayer and brought a devotion from Matthew chapter 3, ST. PATRICK EXPLAINS THE TRINITY.

Our guests were happy to see Hampton and Sharon Conway from Lake Gibson United Methodist Church, who provided a wonderful meal of chicken and sausage jambalaya and those fabulous large, soft cookies she brings. Our to-go bags included a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, a bag of Lay's potato chips, a pudding cup, a diced peaches fruit cup, and other goodies.

We got a blessing today of 2 brand-new washing machines, provided by a generous couple. We were amazed that the new machines, when we followed Brent's setting instructions, were able to get loads of clothes clean in minutes! Thank you, Brent, for doing the installation!

We were also blessed this week by our folks from Lake Gibson United Methodist Church, who provided our to-go bag items. Debbie was busy and gave out toiletry kits, razors, deodorant, camping toilet paper, lantern and radio batteries, masks, socks, underwear and other clothing items and administered first aid to some of our guests. We were happy to fill requests for pocket New Testaments provided by Lake Gibson United Methodist Church. We had other wonderful donations by Jamie and the folks at Foxwood, and other donors who dropped by.

We are closing early at 1:30 pm for the next 3 Tuesdays due to Debbie receiving daily cancer treatments every afternoon. We had a good day and believe that hearts were touched and lives were Blessed. God is working at the Hope Center!

March 22, 2022 - Debbie and Rick McLellan

By the end of the day, we served 19 guests. Rick McLellan led in prayer and a devotion from Joshua 7, GOD of SECOND CHANCES.

Chef Dick McPherson dished up the food to our guests with Debbie and Rick McLellan. Our guests enjoyed Dick's fabulous pulled-pork, with mac 'n' cheese, baked beans and mixed vegetables, with bagged fresh baked cookies for dessert. Our to-go bag included a chicken salad sandwich, a bag of chips, a pack of Lance crackers, a pudding cup, a pack of cookies, and an applesauce cup.

We gave out toiletry kits, razors, deodorant, flashlight, lantern and radio batteries, masks, socks, camping toilet paper and clothing items. We brought sanitized towels and wash cloths for showers, and gave each guest a towel, washcloth and hygiene kit. Seven guests requested showers, and three used the laundry.

We had lots of donations today. We want to thank members of Lake Gibson United Methodist Church who provided several New Testaments and a Bible that we gave out today. Thanks also to Jamie and our friends from Foxwood who brought a variety of items.

God is working in hearts and lives at the Hope House and we are grateful that our guests were Blessed.

Continued on the next page . . .

Hope House Happenings, Continued

March 23, 2022 - Laura Webb, Stevie Paton and Geri Mayo

Happy Wednesday from Hope House! My apologies for missing so many HH newsletters.

As HH is still under COVID-19 restrictions, a limit of two guests were allowed inside at a time. Tables and chairs were set outside. Also, the patio was opened and fans set up. A total of 17 guests signed in, with 9 using the shower and 2 using the laundry.



Breakfast consisted of cereal, breakfast bars, instant oatmeal and grits, and *Geri's infamous breakfast casserole*. Coffee, hot tea, cocoa, juice, and bottled water were the beverage choices. The HH kitties enjoyed their al fresco breakfast.

Laura and Ms. Stevie processed all of the food and clothing donations. At the end of the day, **Laura re-donated 26 bags of clothing!** These are clothing items that can't be used by the HH guests. This was from clothing donations within the last week! **We are asking for volunteers to take donations to other charities**

Lunch consisted of a whole smoked turkey, baked chicken leg quarters, mashed potatoes with gravy, stuffing, and green beans. Sodas were added to the beverage choices. Every guest received a lunch bag with a choice of a PB&J or ham and cheese sandwich. Also, they had a choice of one canned good and one snack item from the pantry.



After Hope House closed, our student volunteers, Nick and Hannah, worked in the clothing boutique. They did a fantastic job hanging up and folding clothes.

God is blessing Hope House. He is changing hearts and lives. May God bless you and keep you safe.

We are so thankful for all the folks who donate to HH! This is only a partial list:

Marie and Bill sent rain ponchos. With the rainy season starting early, these ponchos are appreciated. They also sent monetary donation to purchase food and other supplies. Buzz from Dedicated Senior Medical Center brought several loaves of bread and other food donations.

Mariane from the Cypress Lakes Veterans Auxiliary donated a large box of food which included several huge jars of peanut butter and jelly.



The Cypress Lakes Veterans Auxiliary has been wonderful in their ongoing support. Earlier this month, our inside washer began to leak. The president of the auxiliary, Maggie, brought the president of the veterans association, Steve, to look at the washer. Unfortunately, it could not be repaired. He also looked at one of our outside washers which had not been working for quite some time. Unfortunately, that one could not be repaired as well. Some wonderful folks, who wish to be anonymous, donated TWO BRAND NEW Whirlpool washers! We are so blessed!

Lakeland's 38th CROP Hunger Walk, February 27, 2022



Eighty walkers gathered in front of First Presbyterian Church across from Lake Hollingsworth to pose for a picture before taking off around the lake. Another group of twenty walked around Lake Hunter.

Lake Gibson UMC raised \$750.00! Across America CROP Walks raised very close to \$6 million.

Thank you to everyone who donated to Church World Service through this CROP Hunger Walk! Please mark your 2023 calendar or day planner for **Sunday, February 26th for the 39th Lakeland CROP Hunger Walk!**



Birthdays in April

<u>Date</u>	<u>Names</u>
4/1	Cindy Heishman
4/6	Connie Damaschke
4/8	Stanley Retter
4/9	Richard Kneeland
4/10	Bonnie Fuqua
4/12	Bryan Mowell
4/14	Susan Chambers
4/14	Rom Harbaugh
4/14	Mary Mason
4/15	Kyle Fox
4/15	Alison Oftedal
4/16	Sarah Schiemann
4/17	Gwendolen Allen
4/17	Sharon Ruth
4/19	Dave Hess
4/24	Cyndi Kuhlman
4/27	Lynne Rushing
4/29	Ray Welch



Anniversaries in April

<u>Date</u>	<u>Names</u>
4/4	Linda and Larry Smucker
4/29	Kathy and Leon Rumohr