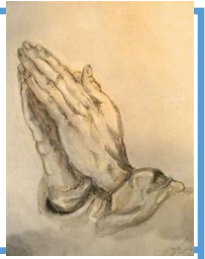




# THE GOOD NEWS

## Lake Gibson United Methodist Church

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



### *From the Pastor*

#### *A Parable of Fishless Fishermen*

by John M. Drescher

Now it came to pass that a group existed who called themselves fishermen. And lo, there were many fish in the waters all around. In fact, the whole area was surrounded by streams and lakes filled with fish. And the fish were hungry.

Week after week, month after month, and year after year these who called themselves fishermen met in meetings and talked about their call to fish, the abundance of fish, and how they might go about fishing. Year after year they carefully defined what fishing means, defending fishing as an occupation, and declared that fishing is always to be a primary task of fishermen.

Continually they searched for new and better methods of fishing and for new and better definitions of fishing. Further, they said, "The fishing industry exists for fishing as fire exists by burning." They loved slogans such as, "Fishing is the task of every fisherman." They sponsored special meetings called "Fishermen's Campaigns" and "The Month for Fishermen to Fish." They sponsored costly nationwide and worldwide congresses to discuss fishing, to promote fishing, and hear about all the ways of fishing, such as the new fishing equipment, fish calls, and whether any new bait had been discovered.

These fishermen built large, beautiful buildings called "Fishing Headquarters." The plea was that everyone should be a fisherman and every fisherman should fish. One thing they did do, however: they didn't fish. In addition to meeting regularly, they organized a board to send out fishermen to other places where there were many fish. All the fishermen seemed to agree that what is needed was a board which could challenge fishermen to be faithful in fishing. The board was formed by those who had the great vision and courage to speak about fishing, to define fishing, and to promote the idea of fishing in faraway streams and lakes where many other fish of different colors lived.

Also, the board hired staff and appointed committees and held many meetings to define fishing, to defend fishing, and to decide what new streams should be thought about. But the staff and committee members did not fish. Large, elaborate and expensive training centers were built whose original and primary purpose was to teach fishermen how to fish. Over the years, courses were offered on the needs of fish, the nature of fish, where to fish, psychological reactions of fish, and how to approach and feed fish. Those who taught had doctorates in Fishology but the teachers did not fish. Year after year, after tedious training, many were graduated and given fishing licenses. They were sent to do full-time fishing, some in distant waters which were filled with fish. Some spent much time in study and travel to learn the history of fishing and to see faraway places where the founding fathers did great fishing in the centuries past. They lauded the faithful fishermen of years before who handed down the idea of fishing.

Further, the fishermen built large printing houses to publish fishing guides. Presses were kept busy day and night producing material solely devoted to fishing methods, equipment, and programs to arrange and to encourage meetings to talk about fishing. A speakers' bureau was also provided to schedule special speakers on the subject of fishing.

Many who felt the call to be fishermen responded. They were commissioned and sent to fish. But, like the fishermen back home, they never fished. Like the fishermen back home, they engaged in all kinds of other occupations. They built power plants to pump water for fish and tractors to plow new waterways. They made all kinds of equipment to travel here and there to look at fish hatcheries.

Some also said they wanted to be part of the fishing party, but they felt called to furnish fishing equipment. Others felt their job was to relate to the fish in a good way so the fish would know the difference between good and bad fishermen. Others felt that simply letting the fish know they were nice, land-loving neighbors and how much they loved and how kind they were was enough.

After one stirring meeting on "The Necessity of Fishing", one young fellow left the meeting and went fishing. The next day he reported he had caught two outstanding fish. He was honored for his excellent catch and scheduled to visit all the big meetings possible to tell how he did it. So he quit his fishing in order to have time to tell about the experience to the other fishermen. He was also placed on the Fishermen's General Board as a person having considerable experience.

Now it's true that many fishermen sacrificed and put up with all kinds of difficulties. Some lived near the water and bore the smell of fish every day. They received the ridicule of some who made fun of the fishermen's clubs and the fact that they claimed to be fishermen yet never fished. They wondered about those who felt it was of little use to attend weekly meetings to talk about fishing. After all, were they not following the Master who said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men"?

Imagine how hurt some were when one day a person suggested that those who didn't catch fish were really not fishermen, no matter how much they claimed to be. Yet it did sound correct. Is a person a fisherman if year after year he never catches a fish? Is one following if he isn't fishing?

## Church Conference on Disaffiliation

Lake Gibson United Methodist Church will hold a Church Conference on Sunday, 17 September 2023, immediately after our worship service. All professing members should attend to express your desires regarding the subject of disaffiliation.

Over the past eighteen months a super majority of the congregation has expressed interest in disaffiliating from the Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church. The Church Council has dropped out of a lawsuit which was designed to lead to a negotiated withdrawal from the conference. This has enabled us to conduct a formal vote to disaffiliate this year under paragraph 2553 of the Book of Discipline

Only members of the congregation may vote. Should you be a congregant but not a member, you might desire to change this before the end of August.

Shown on a separate page is a short comparison of various Wesleyan/ Methodist denominations. While we could choose to become an independent church, it is more likely that we would join with another denomination with similar values. Issues such as ministerial appointments, apportionments, size of denomination, etc. may play a part in our ultimate decision. These issues will only be discussed should we reach a super-majority in favor of disaffiliation (67% or above) within the voting process and be allowed to continue the disaffiliation process.

So, mark your calendar now with Sunday, September 17, 2023. If you are eligible to vote, ensure that you have no plans which interfere with your attendance. It is important that you vote your conscience.

# WESLEYAN/METHODIST DENOMINATIONAL COMPARISON

Denomination	Doctrine	Trust Clause	Bishops	Clergy Appt.	Apportionments	Size	History
United Methodist	Wesleyan, lack of accountability	Yes, local church holds property for conference	Elected for life	Yearly appointed by bishop/DS, some congregational input	7-15 percent of budget (varies by annual conference)	13 million members globally, 6.2 million in U.S., 30,000 churches (2020)	Founded 1968, merger of predecessor denominations founded in 1784, 1800, and 1803
Global Methodist	Wesleyan, adds Nicene and Apostles Creed, More robust accountability	No	Elected for a term (TBD at Convening GC) Likely 12-year limit	Appointed by bishop/DS, more congregational input, possible congregational search	2 percent of operating income, with a 6.5 percent cap	Projected 2,400 to 4,000 churches, 240,000 to 400,000 members in U.S. (2024)	Founded 2022
Free Methodist	Wesleyan	Yes, local church holds property for conference; property transferring in is exempt	Elected to 4-year terms, re-electable	Appointed by Ministerial Appointments Committee chaired by bishop	10-13 percent of previous year's income	77,000 members in U.S., 1,050 churches (2015)	Founded 1860, issues were abolishing slavery and eliminating pew rent
Wesleyan	Wesleyan	Yes, local church holds property for conference	One General Superintendent, 4-year term, re-electable	Congregational call system	11 percent of income	125,000 members, 1,500 churches in U.S. (2019)	Founded 1843, issue was abolishing slavery
Nazarene	Wesleyan	Yes, local church holds property for conference	Six General Superintendents, 4-year terms, re-electable	Congregational call system	15 percent of income, includes pastor's retirement	637,000 members, 5,280 churches in U.S. (2016)	Founded 1908, issue was focus on holiness
Congregational Methodist	Wesleyan	No	One president, minimal authority	Congregational call system	Decided by local church	15,000 members, 150 churches in U.S.	Founded 1852, issue was congregational government

Here are some pictures from the Nerf Night that we had. We had a wonderful time! I also have a blurb or paragraph for you to put in the newsletter:

Hello LGUMC! The REMADE youth ministry is alive and well in our new home. We have been having regular meetings weekly, and have a good core group of 5 kids that come nearly every week. We are very excited and looking forward to what God has in store for the future of this group in the church! We had our first ever large event at the end of June: a Nerf Night! We had 25 kids show up, many of which had never been to our church before, along with around fifteen parents and adults. We had a number of adults expressing how happy and grateful that we had our event, and will be looking forward to attending other events we have in the future. On that note, we have a number of upcoming events! Up next will be a Hawaiian party in order to wrap up the summer, and a Disney Springs trip in several months. In addition, we are excited to announce that we will be able to start having movie nights in the FLC again here soon! You will continue to be updated on this and other exciting happenings as they happen, so stay tuned! As always, thank you for your continued support as we work hard to grow and reach young people for Christ.

Hello LGUMC! The REMADE youth ministry has been going strong throughout the summer with our good core group of four kids. We are hoping to grow even more in the upcoming school year! To that end, we will be having a number of upcoming events. On Saturday, July 29, we will be having a luau in the FLC. On August 5, we will be going to see a movie at the Lakeland Square Mall. We will be attempting to go to Disney Springs in September. Most exciting, we will be relaunching the movie nights here at LGUMC! We are aiming them to be held every other month, starting in August sometime, exact date TBD. We are very excited about the possibilities that this will offer, and all the new youth and families that will come to our beautiful church for these events. Thank you all for your support, and please continue to pray for the continued growth of the youth group. We are all very excited for what God has in store for us, so stay tuned for future events and announcements!



## August Events As of 7/31/2023

Abbreviations: FLC - Family Life Center; ZVC - Zoom Video Conference, O-Office, S-Sanctuary

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

### Date    Day

- 1    **Tuesday**    **ALBOH Summer Camp, 1-3:30, FLC 1&2**
- 2    **Wednesday** **A Little Bit of Heaven (ALBOH) Chapel\*, 9:00 am, Sanctuary; United Women in Faith (UWF)[formerly UMW] Circle meeting, 10:00 am, FLC; Nominations Committee Meeting, 12pm, Choir Practice\*, 6:30 pm, Sanctuary, Hope House\*, 6:30pm-9pm, FLC**
- 3    **Thursday**    **Food Pantry\*, 9:30 am - 11:30 pm, FLC;**
- 4    **Friday**                **Hope House Spaghetti Fundraiser, 5pm-8pm, FLC, Take out only**
- 5    **Saturday**    **Praise Team Practice, 1:00pm, S; Hope House Spaghetti Fundraiser, 3pm-8pm, FLC, Take out only**
- 6    **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\*, 1:30 pm, Sanctuary**
- 7    **Monday**        **Board of Trustees meeting, 2:00 pm, Church Office**
- 8    **Tuesday**        **Zoom 1 PM**
- 9    **Wednesday** **Merry Matters craft group, 10:00 am - noon, FLC Classrooms**
- 10   **Thursday**
- 11   **Friday**
- 12   **Saturday**        **Hope House FLC**
- 13   **Sunday**        **Harvest Sunday (canned and boxed foods for our food pantry)**
- 14   **Monday**        **Finance Meeting, 1pm, FLC**
- 15   **Tuesday**        **Zoom 1PM**
- 16   **Wednesday** **Choir Practice 6:30 Sanctuary**
- 17   **Thursday**    **A Little Bit of Heaven (ALBOH) Board meeting, 2:00 pm, FLC;**
- 18   **Friday**
- 19   **Saturday**    **UWF Event, 9am-2pm, (S;)Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee (SPPRC) meeting, 10:00am, FLC**
- 20   **Sunday**        **\***
- 21   **Monday**
- 22   **Tuesday**        **Zoom 1PM**
- 23   **Wednesday** **Merry Matters craft group, 10:00 am - noon, FLC Classrooms, Choir Practice 6:30 Sanctuary**
- 24   **Thursday**
- 25   **Friday**
- 26   **Saturday**        **Hope House FLC**
- 27   **Sunday**        **\***
- 28   **Monday**        **UWF Leadership meeting 10 am FLC**
- 29   **Tuesday**        **Zoom 1PM**
- 30   **Wednesday**    **Choir practice 6:30 Sanctuary, Hope House**
- 31   **Thursday**        **Praise Band Sanctuary**

## FUMCH Bicycle Maintenance

During the June 30<sup>th</sup>-6 July period we took nine repaired bicycles to the Florida United Methodist Children's Home. It was a slow time at FUMCH as many of the residents had gone to the Warren Willis Summer Camp. Thankfully, they left their bikes behind. While there, we spent time performing bicycle repairs on fifty-two bicycles. Additionally, we triaged numerous bikes which had previously been piled up due to damaged parts. The FUMCH staff has decided to let the children repair their own bikes for minor issues. A hands-on repair class was held for eight of the older children. Topics included repairing flat tires, making brake adjustments, etc. To that end, we left a tool kit, air pumps, and multiple sized tubes with the staff. Unfortunately, this was the start of the hottest weather the world had experienced to date. Not the best of times to perform bicycle maintenance in the sun. We finished earlier than anticipated and look forward to returning in the Fall as temperatures hopefully drop.

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### UW of Faith Circle Meeting

Next meeting of UWF will be August 2nd at 10 am in the library of the FLC. We will be studying Chapter 6, "Calm This Chaos." Also, a decision on the distribution of funds. Afterwards, join us for lunch.

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### MISSION STUDY FOR UW OF FAITH

Four books have been ordered that should be read before the August 19th planning meeting. If anyone is interested in attending this planning meeting please let Phyllis Kitchens know so she can order a book for you.

The book being studied at the September 23rd Mission Study will be:

Living The Kin-dom, Exploring The Lord's Prayer as a Spiritual Practice for Social Transformation.

We will be hosting this event and look forward to an in-depth study and conversation with many other United Women of Faith.



## Prayer Ministry-August 2023



**“Your prayers and your compassionate acts are like a memorial offering to God.”  
Acts 10:4 CEB**

**“I love your sanctuary, Lord, the place where you glory shines. I come to your altar, O Lord, singing a song of thanksgiving.” Psalm 26:7-8 NLT** The world outside may look a little disappointing to us at times, but once we step into God’s house, our spirit comes alive: as we put our focus on Jesus, responding to His call with open arms and willing heart and accepting the empowerment from the Holy Spirit. In Revelation 22:17 we are asked to simply “come” Let them come and drink the water of life.” In God’s house with all of God’s people there is an open invitation to “come”, worship and be blessed.

**We have had many requests for prayer this year and we give thanks for all our dedicated prayer warriors and their constant concern for those in need of prayer and a loving gesture of a phone call, card or visit.**

**“The grace of the Lord Jesus be will you all”. Revelation 22:21**

We currently have 70 long-term prayer requests on the Prayer Journal, 9 in other living facilities other than their own homes, 9 in the U.S. Service and many other needs to pray over within our church. We also average 40 prayer needs on our non-long-term prayer list that extends for a month. Lake Gibson is very blessed to have Prayer Warriors who are dedicated to praying for others. If you would like to become a prayer warrior, please contact the church office or Fran. The purpose of being a prayer warrior is simply receiving an occasional email and a monthly prayer journal to partnership with other prayer warriors in praying for others. Have a blessed summer and if you are traveling, stay safe. Prayers and God’s

Prayer Ministry-Fran

### **FOOD PANTRY**

The transition from using the office to the FLC went smoothly and everyone seems to be happy with the move. There is plenty of storage and a filing cabinet for paperwork. Good job everyone. Current needs are: Jelly and tomato sauce, so please, if you can bring these items it would help.

### **NURTURE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

The Nurture committee needs volunteers for visiting members in the hospital and shut ins (home bound, sick at home, nursing homes, assisted living). We need to step up as a Church and visit those needing caring attention. It only takes once a month or once a week if you wish to visit more often. Please volunteer to help. Call Ann Johnson 863-450-2765

## August 2023 Financial Update:

What are you doing to fulfill your promise to be faithful in your “witness”, as well as in your “prayers, presence, gifts and service”? You took a similar pledge as a profession of membership within the United Methodist Church.

Are you fully involved within the life of the church? Are you joining others in Sunday worship? Are you participating in programs and guiding your congregation through opinions voiced within standing committees?

We, collectively, need to renew our commitment to Christ’s church if our congregation is to survive over the coming years.

We are on a path of discernment regarding whether we remain within the United Methodist Church or take a different path. Collectively, we will likely make a decision as we hold a formal vote during the Fall. Should 67% of the attending members decide to leave the United Methodist Church, we will take steps to transition into a more conservative congregation in December 2023. Doing so will require a significant monetary investment (most likely from a loan).

Our current issue is that we must get to December in a solid financial situation. We have finished six months of our fiscal year. Based on our budgetary plan, we are currently lagging behind by \$44,345 (as reflected in the second chart).

Thankfully, due to Pastor Rob working part-time and taking reduced compensation, we will save approximately \$32,000 over the balance of 2023. This will leave a shortfall of at least \$12,000 for the remainder of the year.

When considering our future, a full-time elder pastor is likely to have a higher salary irrespective of which denomination Lake Gibson finally chooses. Additionally, our Youth/Children’s Director is currently supported by reserved funding accumulated over a number of years. In 2025 this funding will be fully expended and our budget will increase by at least \$30,000 to cover that position. I can easily envision a budget of approximately \$345,000 in 2025.



Month	Actual 2020	Actual 2021	Actual 2022	3-Yr Total	3-Yr \$ Avg Monthly	3-Yr \$ Avg Cumulative	Actual 2023
January	\$19,250	\$41,469	\$45,644	\$106,363	\$35,454	\$35,454	\$45,864
February	\$26,344	\$26,633	\$26,373	\$79,350	\$26,450	\$61,904	\$11,416
March	\$31,430	\$23,181	\$43,835	\$98,446	\$32,815	\$94,720	\$22,184
April	\$48,131	\$24,073	\$23,275	\$95,479	\$31,826	\$126,546	\$22,778
May	\$25,816	\$26,093	\$18,433	\$70,342	\$23,447	\$149,993	\$20,719
June	\$25,894	\$15,866	\$18,293	\$60,053	\$20,018	\$170,011	\$10,979
July	\$20,865	\$23,104	\$22,512	\$66,481	\$22,160	\$192,171	
August	\$22,494	\$20,877	\$19,894	\$63,265	\$21,088	\$213,260	
September	\$25,185	\$21,208	\$16,749	\$63,142	\$21,047	\$234,307	
October	\$20,998	\$20,238	\$19,161	\$60,397	\$20,132	\$254,439	
November	\$25,284	\$18,325	\$15,192	\$58,801	\$19,600	\$274,040	
December	\$26,088	\$25,183	\$22,293	\$73,564	\$24,521	\$298,561	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$317,779</b>	<b>\$286,250</b>	<b>\$291,654</b>	<b>\$895,683</b>	<b>\$298,561</b>	<b>\$298,561</b>	<b>\$133,940</b>

**Current Budget                    \$313,092**

Month	% Needed Monthly	\$ Needed Monthly	Received Monthly	% Needed Cumulative	\$ Needed Cumulative	Received Cumulative	Status Ahead or (Behind)	% Ahead or (Behind)
January	11.88%	\$37,180	\$45,864	11.88%	\$37,180	\$45,864	\$8,684	23.36%
February	8.86%	\$27,737	\$11,416	20.73%	\$64,917	\$57,280	(\$7,637)	-11.76%
March	10.99%	\$34,412	\$22,184	31.73%	\$99,330	\$79,464	(\$19,866)	-20.00%
April	10.66%	\$33,375	\$22,778	42.39%	\$132,705	\$102,242	(\$30,463)	-22.96%
May	7.85%	\$24,589	\$20,719	50.24%	\$157,294	\$122,961	(\$34,333)	-21.83%
June	6.70%	\$20,992	\$10,979	56.94%	\$178,285	\$133,940	(\$44,345)	-24.87%
July	7.42%	\$23,239	\$0	64.37%	\$201,524	\$133,940	(\$67,584)	
August	7.06%	\$22,115	\$0	71.43%	\$223,639	\$133,940	(\$89,699)	
September	7.05%	\$22,072	\$0	78.48%	\$245,711	\$133,940	(\$111,771)	
October	6.74%	\$21,112	\$0	85.22%	\$266,823	\$133,940	(\$132,883)	
November	6.56%	\$20,554	\$0	91.79%	\$287,377	\$133,940	(\$153,437)	
December	8.21%	\$25,715	\$0	100.00%	\$313,092	\$133,940	(\$179,152)	

We, collectively, need to recommit to our membership pledge to support our congregation. Pray about how you might increase your participation in church life. Suggest, implement and participate in new programs to draw your neighbors into our congregation. We can grow and make up our financial shortfall. We want to ensure that we are in the best position to vote regarding our discernment decision through a Fall membership vote.

Collectively, if we each increased our contributions by a minimum of 10%, we would be on a path to cover our expenses for the balance of 2023.

## **SPAGHETTI DINNER FUNDRAISER**

**Benefitting Hope House Mobile**

**Friday August 4th: 5pm-8pm (take out only)**

**Saturday, August 5th: 3pm—8pm**

**Each \$10.00 Dinner includes: Spaghetti with your choice of sauce, Cucumber & tomato salad, or coleslaw, and bread.**

**Lake Gibson United Methodist Church, Family Life Center**

**424 W. Daughtery Rd., Lakeland, FL 33809**

### **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.

Barb Allen-Coil, Editor

### **Contact Information**

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**Sue Heishman**, Bookkeeper

**Office Hours: 8:00 am to 1:00 pm, Monday thru Thursday**

**Glenda Grant Hess**, Music/Worship Director

**Justin Bennett**, Director of Youth and Children's Ministries

**Leon Rumohr**, Custodian

**Barbara Allen-Coil** Newsletter Editor, ballencoil@gmail.com

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

**Kristie Otte, Dave McPherson, Bob Siegel, Stacie Sullivan and Bailey Taylor**, Audio/Visual Team



## Birthdays in August

<u>Date</u>	<u>Names</u>
8/1	George Band
8/10	Rosita Stafford
8/12	Danny Hughes
8/16	Wealthy Brown
8/18	Mike Stafford
8/28	Sandy Stanfield
8/31	Lou Webb



## Anniversaries in August

<u>Date</u>	<u>Names</u>
8/02	Dick & Debbie McPherson
8/05	Jeff & Karen Acor
8/08	Kenneth & Bonnie Fuqua
8/21	John & Anne
Bernat	
8/21	Mike & Rosita
Stafford	