

SOUTH GEORGIA ADVOCATE – JANUARY 8 EDITION

Delegates pray, prepare for special called General Conference session

Eight people will represent the South Georgia Conference at a special called session of General Conference, which will be held Feb. 23-26 in St. Louis.

The South Georgia delegation, elected during the 2015 Annual Conference session, will join other elected delegates to act on a report from the Council of Bishops based on the recommendations of the Commission on a Way Forward. The 32-member Commission was appointed to examine paragraphs in *The Book of Discipline* concerning human sexuality and explore options to strengthen the unity of the church.

The South Georgia delegation attending the called Special Session of General Conference in St. Louis is the same delegation that went to Portland, Oregon, for General Conference 2016.

South Georgia's delegation includes four clergy members and four lay members. They are: Rev. Don Adams, Rev. Jay Hanson, Dr. Bob Moon, Rev. Jim Cowart, Bill Hatcher, Allison Lindsey, Larry Price, and Carl Childs. Alternates are Rev. Denise Walton, Dr. Scott Hagan, Marianne Wright, and Richard Shinhoster.

"This General Conference is unlike any other," Hatcher said. "While the focus is on one subject, there is much more than the issues dealing with human sexuality. I believe the essence of our beliefs and the foundations of our faith are at stake now."

The issues the Church is facing are difficult and sensitive, Hatcher says, and he has spent considerable time reading about, studying, and discussing them.

"I believe God, our Heavenly Father, our Source and Provider, will show us the way – His Way," Hatcher said. "And that is my daily prayer: 'Lord, may Your will be done and help me to know and to be a part of that will and the way you have for us.' I have a peace about where He is leading and how we'll get there, even though I don't know the specifics. We are a part of His kingdom and He will prevail."

Rev. Adams, like all delegates, has received information from a variety of sources and has sought to read ideas and concerns from differing positions. He said the delegation's listening post sessions provided meaningful ways of hearing from people throughout South Georgia, and he appreciated those who took the time and traveled significant distances to personally communicate their stories and convictions.

"I have spent hours reflecting on such input," Rev. Adams said. "Of course, for months I have sought to wait upon the Lord, reading scripture and praying as earnestly as I know how for God's will to emerge through both the General Conference and the responses that individuals, churches, and annual conferences make to what takes place at General Conference. My prayer is that God's grace will lead us through what will likely be a difficult pathway to new opportunities to be renewed in purpose and faith. The cross of Jesus reminds me that God can see us at our worst

and love us the most. Easter morning assures me that walking in faith and obedience will allow God to have the last word and it will be good. I seek to be prepared to walk in faith along with others.”

South Georgia’s delegation will meet again Jan. 10 and will hear from a Wespath representative who will help them more fully understand the issues and possible financial impacts surrounding clergy pensions and benefits in the proposals before General Conference.

The total number of delegates participating in the special called General Conference Session is 864, about 58 percent from the United States and 30 percent from Africa.

General Conference is the top policy-making body of The United Methodist Church, typically meeting every four years. At the request of General Conference 2016, the Council of Bishops set a plan for addressing the overwhelming number of proposals related to same-sex marriage, the ordination of gay clergy, and related topics. The bishops’ plan involved creating the Commission on a Way Forward and setting a Special Session of General Conference in 2019.

The “regular” General Conference 2020 will follow and will be held in Minneapolis, Minn., May 5-May 15, 2020.

South Georgia United Methodists are encouraged to join the delegation in prayer for the church’s mission and way forward. Resources can be found online at www.sgaumc.org/prayingourwayforward and umcprays.org.

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Post-General Conference Information Session planned for March 9

South Georgia United Methodists are invited and encouraged to attend a post-General Conference information session Saturday, March 9 from 1-4 p.m. at the UGA Tifton Campus Conference Center in Tifton.

An informational meeting – not a special session of the annual conference – the gathering is open to everyone in the South Georgia Conference of The United Methodist Church.

“I encourage everyone to come, and I especially encourage every local church to send a delegation of persons to represent that church at the information session in Tifton,” said Bishop Lawson Bryan.

The information session is to share with laity and clergy the decisions made during the denomination’s special called General Conference, which will be held in St. Louis Feb. 23-26, 2019. South Georgia’s delegation will be on hand during the information session and will share information about decisions made during the General Conference session. Bishop Bryan and other conference leaders will also be in attendance to discuss and explore implications for the South Georgia Annual Conference and outline next steps.

“Our goal is to provide clarity for laity and clergy and all of our churches so that we know what came out of General Conference and what the next steps are in our journey as we move together into God’s future for our annual conference,” Bishop Bryan said.

This is an information session only, and no votes will be taken.

[Click here to watch a video from Bishop Bryan.](#)

Cleanup, recovery still happening in southwest Georgia

A few weeks ago, Allison Lindsey, associate director of connectional ministries, was among a team of conference leaders who traveled to southwest Georgia to assess the ongoing Hurricane Michael recovery efforts and welcome North Georgia bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson and a North Georgia Conference work team plus a South Georgia Conference work team, to the area.

“There’s so much that has been done, but there’s still so much left to do,” she said in a [disaster response video update](#). “The work doesn’t stop here.

“Thank you, South Georgia, for all that you have done,” she said, “for providing resources, funds, health kits, cleaning buckets, generators, for housing teams, for attending trainings ... but the work continues, so keep on keeping on. There’s still so much work to do. ”

Lindsey encouraged South Georgia churches to invite a Connectional Ministries representative or a district disaster response coordinator to share with their congregation the [Connecting Neighbors](#) curriculum which helps churches discover their resources and how they can be engaged in their communities in the event of a disaster.

“We’re in it for the long haul,” Lindsey said. “We will continue to be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ in these communities.”

Visit www.sgaumc.com for more information and opportunities to serve.

Read: [North Georgia Team Spends Week Before Christmas Serving in Southwest Georgia](#)

Tod Bolsinger to headline Epworth’s Winter Conference, Jan. 29 – Feb. 1

Dr. Tod Bolsinger, author of “Canoeing the Mountains, Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory,” will headline this year’s Winter Conference at Epworth By The Sea, Jan. 29 – Feb. 1, 2019.

Bishops Sue Hauptert-Johnson (North Georgia), Ken Carter (Florida), James Swanson (Mississippi), and Lawson Bryan (South Georgia) will lead the gathering and Dr. Bolsinger, who

also serves as Vice President for Vocation and Formation and Assistant Professor of Practical Theology at Fuller Theological Seminary, will also serve as the keynote speaker.

“We are so excited about Tod Bolsinger coming to teach on ‘Canoeing the Mountains,’ and this is the first time we have had four Annual Conferences collaborating together,” said Rev. Wayne Racz, executive vice president and director of spiritual formation, church relations, and development. “Come experience peace, connection, and beauty at Epworth, where the Spirit comes alive!”

Although on-campus housing is fully booked, [commuter registrations are still available](#).

How can we bring hope to our communities this year?

FROM THE BISHOP R. LAWSON BRYAN

My wife, Sherrill, uses the Notes app on her iPad to greater advantage than anyone I have ever seen. At last count she had accumulated more than 10,000 notes covering more topics that I can imagine. Those notes are a treasure house for me. The following note seems especially appropriate for us as we enter a new year. Even though I do not have the name of the author I am glad to be able to share this with the South Georgia Conference:

We, Christians steward the only message on planet Earth that can give people what their hearts need most, which is hope. Hope that sins can be forgiven. Hope that prayers can be answered. Hope that doors of opportunity, that seemed locked, can be opened. Hope that broken relationships can be reconciled. Hope that diseased bodies can be healed. Hope that damaged trust can be restored. Hope that dead churches can be resurrected... Of all people, we must claim that hope and live in it and radiate it to others. And we must proclaim that message of hope to everyone God gives us the opportunity to influence.

Perhaps this spoke to me because one of the questions we are asking in South Georgia is, “How will my local church bring hope to our community this year?”

Without hope, our communities become depressed and find it difficult to muster the will and the energy to move toward a new future. Churches are places of hope. Christians are people of hope. Here is a way we can explore how to bring hope to our communities: Discover, Dream, Design, Deliver.

First, discover (list) all the ways we have brought hope to our community in the past.

Second, dream of ways God might be calling us to bring hope into our community in the future. What resources do we have that suggest how we might be equipped to bring hope? What needs to happen in our community that is not likely to happen unless a church does it?

Third, design the way we will bring hope to the community. What steps have we already taken to move toward this goal? What else do we need to know? Who needs to be at the table with us? Adding local residents, government officials, educators, public safety officials, counselors, and community agency representatives is key in discerning where and how God is calling us to bring hope.

Fourth, deliver hope to the community. How will we know when we have reached our goal? What will people be seeing, saying, and feeling when we have brought hope to our community?

For the unknowns and uncertainties of any new year, one thing remains clear and certain: communities need hope. Churches are places of hope. Christians are people of hope. This is our great opportunity in 2019.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13

R. Lawson Bryan

2019 Join the Journey Confirmation Retreat set for March 1-3

During the weekend of March 1-3, 2019, more than 500 confirmands will gather at Epworth By The Sea on St. Simons Island for the annual “Join the Journey” Confirmation Retreat of the South Georgia Conference.

Tailored to fifth-grade students and above, confirmands will enjoy learning about their United Methodist heritage in a high-energy, exciting atmosphere. Participants will also be exposed to the diverse leadership that makes up the South Georgia Conference as Bishop Lawson Bryan, pastors, youth directors, children’s directors, and lay members share and teach during the general sessions and workshops. Throughout the weekend, confirmands will journey through the church seasons, gaining a better understanding of their role as United Methodists and members of the body of Christ.

Online registration is now available for South Georgia Conference churches. Beginning Jan. 14, registration will be open to all churches both in and out of conference. The deadline to register is Feb. 11 or until the event reaches maximum capacity. [Click here for more information about registration.](#)

For more information, contact Event Coordinator Suzanne Akins at the Office of Connectional Ministries at (888) 266-7642 or by email at suzanne@sgaumc.com.

Leadership Team applications now available

Applications are now being accepted for the 2019 Camp Connect Summer Leadership Team at Epworth By The Sea. Applications are open to college students who have completed at least one year of college. The Leadership Team will commit to nine weeks of camping ministry which will include serving at high school, middle school, and elementary camps. These Camp Counselors will minister to hundreds of youth and children throughout the summer while making Christian friendships with other staff members that last a lifetime.

For more information, [click here](#) or contact Suzanne Akins, Camp Director, at (912) 638-8626 ext. 107, or by email at suzanne@sgaumc.com.

Submit to God

Winter Quarter: Our Love For God

Unit 2: Loving God by Trusting Christ

Sunday school lesson for the week of January 13, 2019

By Helen and Rev. Sam Rogers

Lesson Scripture: James 4: 1-10

Four or five men were named James in the New Testament. The writer of the book bearing this name was likely the brother of Jesus. He never claims the authority of the family relationship, simply calling himself “a servant of God.” Josephus, the Jewish historian, marks his death in 62 CE, killed by Jews.

He became a follower of Jesus *after* the resurrection and became the leader of the church in Jerusalem. The book was written “to the twelve tribes scattered among the nations.” His readers were Jewish Christians, who probably fled the persecution following the stoning of Stephen. As their spiritual leader, he would be concerned for the spiritual health of his scattered flock.

With his death dated as 62, the time of writing in the 50s would make his letter, with Paul’s, among the earliest documents in the New Testament. He expected much from these people, now in the midst of a non-Jewish world. Certainly, a cultural conflict was in full bloom. Rivalries were present, focusing primarily on the inequity of wealth. These conflicts between rich and poor impeded the witness of the early Church. James’ famous dictum, “faith without works is dead,” was being sorely tested by a pride very contrary to the Lord they worshipped.

Humility is the theme of the verses we study this week. James’ language is tough! When Sam read the passage, he groaned: “I don’t want to write this lesson!” The fighting and quarreling sound too much like today, when you can hardly have a discussion without cussing and choosing sides – politics, religion, social issues – even football! Too many of our relationships become confrontational. James’ Greek vocabulary suggests armies in battle.

James sees the root of the trouble as the inner conflict within the believer. Sam has seen too many church fights between strong-willed individuals who are motivated by personal issues and can tolerate no contrary opinion. Surely, James' language of killing is figurative. We must remember, however, what Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount: anger is tantamount to murder. (Matthew 5:21-22)

James's diagnosis of this spiritual illness is the acquisitive spirit of wanting more and more. The result is division within the family. Once again, prayer is elevated to the central place in the life of the church family. Those praying either do not ask God, or they ask with the wrong motives.

Sam remembers vividly a discussion with a church member who quoted Jesus: "If you ask anything in my name, it will be granted." She was absolutely sure she would own a "cottage" on Sea Island. Sam's response was similar to our scripture. When you pray in Jesus' name, you pray as His disciple who has denied self, taken up your cross, and followed Him. Praying in His name means we align our prayer with His will and way – His way, His truth, His life.

The strong language continues in the next verse, when he calls these Jewish Christians an adulterous people. He is not speaking sexually, but using unmistakable language to describe their lifestyle. Sure, sex may have been a problem in this Greek/Roman culture, but, like Joshua, the necessity of choosing between the world or God is all-encompassing. You can't have it both ways – the values of the world are in direct conflict with the Divine will and way. A friend of the world is God's enemy. Like the prophets of old, adulterous meant unfaithful. The bride (the Church) is being unfaithful to the groom (Christ)!

In the middle of this very harsh language, James opens the door of grace. Thank God! How we need to hear this word, when we are reeling from being battered and bruised! He reminds them and us: in creation God implanted a spirit within us. The heart of the Eternal One "jealously longs for that spirit to dwell in us." What is that spirit? He quotes from Proverbs 3:34: "God opposes the proud, but shows favor to the humble." More importantly, our heavenly Father understands our need and provides the gift – grace! Our pride can only be held in check by God's grace.

Sam's favorite benediction is "in the grip of grace." God will hold us fast by His grace, if we recognize the need. Pride is the enemy, allowing us to love the world. Pride is warped self-love – we become self-made idols of worship.

Our lesson concludes with the admonition to submit to God. Submission does not come easily to human beings. We remember, growing up in the Cold War of the 1950s, people shouting they would rather be dead than Red. We weren't going to "give in" to anybody. Herein is the problem: balancing proper self-love with our relationship to God. When Jesus defined discipleship, he began with "deny self." Full submission to God requires us to see ourselves as God sees us: a beloved child who is totally obedient to the Father.

In our human ages and stages of development, we must move from dependence to independence. In our spiritual development, we must grow in the opposite direction, from self-will to His will. In growing and developing God's way, "We draw near to God," and, as Jesus promised, "If we

seek, we will find.” God is always there, like the Prodigal’s father, waiting for us with open arms.

The closing verses are a harsh reminder of the necessity of repentance. If we are to “turn around,” we must go through some tough changes in thought, word, and deed. This change of life’s direction does not come without discomfort. James describes it with words like grieve, mourn, and wail. Laughter becomes mourning and joy becomes gloom. Is it any wonder Sam didn’t want to write this lesson?

But the call to change/repentance comes with a marvelous promise: God will lift us up. God forgives and restores our joy. The prodigal comes home, beaten down by sin and selfishness. When he comes to himself in the far country and heads home, he has no idea of the welcome he will receive.

Helen and Rev. Sam Rogers are a retired clergy couple. They can be reached at sgr3@cox.net.

Rejoice in All Circumstances

Winter Quarter: Our Love For God

Unit 2: Loving God by Trusting Christ

Sunday school lesson for the week of January 20, 2019

By Helen and Rev. Sam Rogers

Lesson Scripture: Philippians 1:12-21

Hallelujah! What a lesson lies before us, as we join the voices across the centuries in giving thanks for Paul’s letter to the “saints in Philippi!” What a contrast in tone and content from last week’s tough message from James! Paul’s message is not easy or free from pain. Just the opposite: he is in great distress and danger, but rejoices. How?

A little history is in order. The city was named for Philip, the father of Alexander the Great. Later, in the Roman era, Octavian defeated Brutus and Cassius, two of the assassins of Julius Caesar, in a bloody battle there. When Octavian became Caesar Augustus, he made land grants to his veterans at the site of his triumph. Thus, Philippi became a Roman colony.

Paul, Silas, Timothy (and probably Luke) came to Philippi on the Second Missionary Journey. Here is where Acts, written by Luke, begins first person (not third person) accounting. From Acts we know of several members of the Christian fellowship there: Lydia, the wealthy dealer in purple; the woman being used for financial gain by unscrupulous men for divination; and the famous jailer. The Philippian church was very generous in the offering for the Christians in Jerusalem. The letter bearing their name was a “thank you” for financial support, sent during Paul’s imprisonment.

Oh yes, Paul was now in prison in Rome, awaiting trial before Nero, the current Caesar! Certainly, these circumstances prompted a spiritual crisis for this congregation: proud of their

Roman heritage, but bewildered because Paul was under criminal charges by Caesar. The Praetorian Guard, like the U.S. Secret Service, was entrusted with protecting Caesar in all ways, including guarding anyone who was considered a threat to the stability of the Empire. Thus, the conflict: allegiance to Christ or allegiance to Rome.

In addition to this conflict, there were deeper divisions among the fellowship. Later, in chapter 4, Paul names two women – Euodia and Syntyche – as leaders of the split. Sam always said the split was over the color of the carpet, but Helen felt chairmanship of the Parsonage Committee was at the heart of the conflict! Paul doesn't say, but in this loving "thank you" letter he pleads – repeatedly – for the two women "to agree in the Lord." Christ will be at the center of their reconciliation, as well as the Author of their salvation. Here is the heart of Paul's ability to rejoice in the circumstances of imprisonment and possible death.

As Jesus willingly suffered and died for the sins of all, Paul sees his incarceration as an opportunity to visibly show the way of the Cross to all. He is a sermon in action, but he is also a "talker!" He is telling everyone about Jesus – who he is and what he has done for humankind. Even his guards listen and are influenced *by what he shows and says*. The Good News advances by the same way it began: by faithful, lowly self-sacrifice.

Paul explicitly states the palace guard (the Praetorian Guard) is aware he is a prisoner for Christ. The last place anyone would expect acceptance of such a message would be among this elite guard. After all, they know Jesus was a rebel Jew crucified on a Roman cross.

Yet, this was the result of Paul's imprisonment. The message of Christ is being told through the life of this messenger. Paul's captivity reflects Jesus' arrest, trial, and execution. The message and the messengers are inseparable.

The spill-over value is visible as well. The Christians in Rome are gaining encouragement and confidence in their Lord and are becoming preachers of THE STORY. Paul's chains have unbound their chains of fear and silence.

Next Paul hits head-on another problem within the Christian community: persons who use preaching to advance their own selfish purposes. Sound familiar? Remember the scandals surrounding several television evangelists? They preached the selfless Christ for selfish reasons. Quite a contrast with Paul's life!

Paul knows such inconsistency cannot stand long. They are using his imprisonment to advance their claim of superiority to Paul. How does Paul react? Attack and defend? Verse 18 is astounding! "What does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached."

Once again, Paul reflects Jesus' response to opposition. Jesus falsely accused, he made no defense; from the cross, he prayed for his enemies; mocked to save himself, he remained on the cross to the end. Message and messenger are, once again, consistent. Paul's reputation is unimportant. Christ is preached.

He is grateful for the outpouring of concern in the prayers and gift of his Philippian brothers and sisters. He is confident whatever happens will bring his “deliverance.” The word does not mean his eternal salvation, but life in the Spirit now and forever. The life Paul now lives is the “saved” life – the restoration of life God created “in the beginning,” reflected in the life of Jesus. Deliverance from prison and possible death is for which the Philippians are praying, but for Paul that outcome is also irrelevant. The prayer he asks them to make is for courage and faithfulness in the days ahead. He wants to face the Imperial tribunal as Jesus faced Pilate, the Roman governor.

We conclude this lesson with one of the best known, most loved, words of scripture. “For me to live is Christ and to die is gain.” Our human understanding is rendered incomprehensible. Death better than life! No way!

Here we face the heart of the Gospel: through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, death for Christians means something totally new. In life, we live like Jesus and we discover his promise is true: “in losing life we find it.” (Mt. 10:39) Even death cannot separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:34-39) The promises are made sure and certain.

We are not made to hold on to our lives, but to give them away. Holding on, we run away from the purpose for which we were created. When we let go, we find joy – the real purpose for which God gave us life. Hallelujah!

Helen and Rev. Sam Rogers are a retired clergy couple. They can be reached at sg3@cox.net.

Fire, Fire!

JOHN WESLEY MOMENTS

DAVE HANSON

Once when John Wesley was preaching he observed several people sleeping in the congregation. He stopped in the middle of his sermon and shouted, “Fire, Fire!” The sleeping fellows sprang awake and asked, “Where? Where?” Wesley replied, “In Hell, where those go who sleep during the preaching of the Word.”

Retired Clergy Birthdays - January 2019

1/01 – Cindy H. Autry: 2958 Roswell Lane; Columbus, GA 31906

1/01 – James Hancock: 4360 Manor Millwood Rd. S; Manor, GA 31550

1/01 – Larry Roberts: 12 Foxfire Estates Circle; Waynesville, NC 28785

1/01 – Dan Robinson: 222 N. Bobby St.; Lenox, GA 31637

1/02 – Sharon Loyley: 1544 Harris Ridge Rd.; Young Harris, GA 30582

1/03 – Marcus Tripp: 3791 Overlook Dr.; Macon, GA 31204

1/07 – Tommy Martin, III: 606 Chastain Place; Macon, GA 31210

- 1/08 – Kenneth Banker: 220 W. Pecan St.; Surrency, GA 31563
 1/08 – Ernie Rogers: 1803 Pineknoll Lane; Albany, GA 31707
 1/08 – Gary Starrett: PO Box 113; Bolingbroke, GA 31004
 1/11 – V.L. Daughtery, Jr.: 3713 Bermuda Run; Valdosta, GA 31605
 1/12 – Eddie Braswell: 1110 Moore Dr.; Americus, GA 31709
 1/12 – Grady Vance: 127-B Nina Dr.; Eatonton, GA 31024
 1/13 – Randy Nease: 195 Zipperer Rd.; Guyton, GA 31312
 1/15 – Gary Morris: 2445 Jacqueline Circle; Moultrie, GA 31768
 1/16 – J. Brooks Partain: 206 Eckles Rd.; Americus, GA 31719-2118
 1/17 – Ed Ellington: 675 Arthur Wolfe Rd.; Dublin, GA 31021
 1/18 – Steve Rumford: 130 Arlington Row; Macon, GA 31210
 1/21 – Billy Wicker, Jr.: 400 Ridgecrest Rd.; E. Dublin, GA 31021
 1/22 – Tom Davis, Jr.: 155 Twin Creek Ct.; Athens, GA 30605
 1/24 – Joe Dunagan: PO Box 1903; Bristol, VA 24203
 1/25 – Frank Harris: 312 Brim Dr.; Macon, GA 31220
 1/27 – James Ford: 1751 G 8th St. NW; Hickory, NC 28601
 1/27 – Bill Jones: 106 Hilldale Circle; Vidalia, GA 30474
 1/30 – Harold Feightner: 107 Harvest Point; Warner Robins, GA 31088
 1/30 – Holland Morgan: 2 E. 62nd Street; Savannah, GA 31405

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OBITUARIES

Rev. Dr. Denton Roscoe Parker

Rev. Dr. D. R. Parker was born on June 13, 1932, and passed away on Sunday, Dec. 23, 2018. Rev. Dr. Parker was a resident of Twin City, Georgia at the time of passing. He had served as pastor for the Stillmore United Methodist Church and was a United States Navy veteran. Funeral services were held Wednesday, Dec. 26, 2018, at Tomlinson Funeral Home with Dr. James M. Ford, Rev. Russ Lowe, and Rev. Ros Parker officiating. Interment followed in the Stillmore City Cemetery with military honors. Pallbearers were Brandon Lowe, Roscoe Parker, Chesley Johnson, Josh Parker, Jared Lowe, Tucker Parker, Hunter Parker, Zeke Parker, Javan Parker, and Baylor Parker. Dr. Parker is survived by his wife, Mary Parker, daughter, Maggie Parker Lowe (Russ) and their family, Brandon Lowe (Crystal) and their children, Emmitt and Beckham.

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Scripture Readings – Jan. 8

Jan. 13

Baptism of the Lord/First Sunday After the Epiphany

Isaiah 43:1-7

Psalm 29 (UMH 761)

Acts 8:14-17

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

Jan. 20

Second Sunday After the Epiphany

Psalm 36:1-10 (UMH 771)

Isaiah 62:1-5

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

John 2:1-11

Jan. 27

Third Sunday After the Epiphany

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10

Psalm 19 (UMH 750)

1 Corinthians 12:12-31a

Luke 4:14-21

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Multicultural Luncheon set for Feb. 9

The third annual Multicultural Luncheon will be held February 9, 2019, from noon until 2 p.m. at Cordele First United Methodist Church. The 2019 theme is “Alive Together in Christ, the World.”

The luncheon will celebrate the gifts God has provided in the South Georgia Conference through its local churches as well as the service the gifts and talents provide for the churches and communities. Speakers from around the conference and the connection will present.

There is a small cost of \$6 for lunch. [Register here](#). For more information, contact Earnestine Campbell at earnestine@sgaumc.com. The 2019 Multicultural (MC) Luncheon is sponsored by The Office of Connectional Ministries and hosted by the 2019 MC Luncheon Design Team.

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2018 Conference Journal ready for orders and download

Journal includes conference business, directories, reports, appointments, and statistical tables

The 2018 *Journal of the South Georgia Annual Conference* is now available for purchase. As has been our process in recent years, those wishing to purchase a Conference Journal will order their copy(ies) online directly from the printer. The cost of the Journal is \$20 each plus tax and shipping.

[Click here to order your copy of the 2018 *Journal of the South Georgia Annual Conference*.](#)*

The *Journal* is also available as a **free PDF download** at www.sgaumc.org/conferencejournal. Adobe Acrobat Reader is required to download the file(s). The ability to download just the sections needed is also available.

Format and publishing changes introduced a couple of years ago have resulted in tremendous cost savings for both the Conference and the individual purchaser. The convenience of online ordering also allows purchasers the ability to order copies throughout the year, not just during a pre-order window.

Contact *Journal* Editor Meredyth Earnest at meredyth@sgaumc.com with any questions about the *Journal*.

**The Conference is using www.Lulu.com, an online print-on-demand publishing company, to print the 2018 Journal of the South Georgia Annual Conference. Orders will be made and processed via their secure website and shipped directly from their facility.*

Events in the South Georgia Conference – 1/8/2019 edition

Connectional Ministries Leadership Tour, Pine Forest UMC, Dublin – Jan. 13

Leaders all across the South Georgia Conference have answered the call to serve in their local church setting. As a faithful member of your congregation, we know you want to serve and serve well! To help equip and empower you in your ministry role, the 2019 Leadership Tour will offer practical teaching and resources to both inspire you and help you lead with confidence. This free event is sponsored by the Office of Connectional Ministries. [Download a flyer to promote this event in your local church.](#)

Lay Speaker Training, Centerville UMC – Jan. 18-19

The Basic and Advanced Lay Speaking Courses will be taught Friday, Jan. 18 and Saturday, Jan. 19, 2019, at Centerville UMC. A lay speaker is a professing member of a local church who is ready and desirous to serve the Church, and who is well informed on and committed to the Scriptures and the doctrine, heritage, organization, and life of The United Methodist Church. A lay speaker has completed the required training courses in lay speaking and has been approved by a district or annual conference committee on lay speaking. Lay speakers serve the local church by witnessing to the Christian faith through spoken communication, church and community leadership, and caregiving ministries. When certified, the lay speaker may conduct services of worship, preach, and lead study sessions as requested by the pastor or the district superintendent. Registration fee for the class is \$25 which covers all materials and lunch on Saturday. (Note: The Basic Lay Speaking class must be completed before taking Advanced Class). [Register here.](#)

Connectional Ministries Leadership Tour, Tifton FUMC – Jan. 20

Leaders all across the South Georgia Conference have answered the call to serve in their local

church setting. As a faithful member of your congregation, we know you want to serve and serve well! To help equip and empower you in your ministry role, the 2019 Leadership Tour will offer practical teaching and resources to both inspire you and help you lead with confidence. This free event is sponsored by the Office of Connectional Ministries. [Download a flyer to promote this event in your local church.](#)

Human Relations Day – Jan. 20

Sunday, Jan. 20, is [Human Relations Day](#), one of six churchwide Special Sundays with offerings for The United Methodist Church. Human Relations Day strengthens United Methodist outreach to communities in the United States and Puerto Rico, encouraging social justice and work with at-risk youths. [Click here to learn more.](#)

Early Response Team and Chainsaw Training, Fitzgerald – Jan. 26

An Early Response Team and Chainsaw Training will be held Saturday, January 26 at Central UMC in Fitzgerald. [Register here.](#) Early Response Team Trainings help equip individuals and teams to respond in the immediate aftermath of a disaster. The cost for the training is \$25 per participant. At the training, participants will receive an ERT Training Manual and upon completing the course will receive an UMCOR ID Badge and a T-shirt. Background checks are required before receiving badges. (UMCOR background checks are required before receiving badges—participants must register [here](#) at no cost to participants.) Lunch is also included in the cost. ***Pre-registration is required.*** *Chainsaw training requirements: complete and pass ERT training offered in the morning or hold current ERT badge. Cost for chainsaw training only is \$12. If taken following the ERT class in the morning, \$6. The cost includes your textbook and badge. This chainsaw training will be demonstration and lecture style. There must be 6 participants for a chainsaw course to make. Host church must facilitate 1-2 trees (within reasonable distance from training venue) to be fell during hands-on training portion. ERT training time: 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.; Chainsaw training time: 1 p.m. - 5 p.m. To schedule an ERT training/chainsaw training, contact Luis Morales at morhill@gmail.com.

Connectional Ministries Leadership Tour, Springfield UMC – Jan. 27, 2019

Leaders all across the South Georgia Conference have answered the call to serve in their local church setting. As a faithful member of your congregation, we know you want to serve and serve well! To help equip and empower you in your ministry role, the 2019 Leadership Tour will offer practical teaching and resources to both inspire you and help you lead with confidence. This free event is sponsored by the Office of Connectional Ministries. [Download a flyer to promote this event in your local church.](#)

Winter Conference at Epworth By The Sea – Jan. 29-Feb. 1, 2019

Join Bishops Sue Hauptert-Johnson (North Georgia), Ken Carter (Florida), James Swanson (Mississippi) and Lawson Bryan (South Georgia) for Winter Conference 2019 at Epworth By The Sea on St. Simons Island. Dr. Tod Bolsinger, Vice President for Vocation and Formation and Assistant Professor of Practical Theology at Fuller Theological Seminary and author of

"Canoeing the Mountains, Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory," will be the keynote speaker. Register early as we believe demand will be high. Further information about faculty, preachers and curriculum will be announced shortly. [More information and registration](#)

Vashti Day – Feb. 3, 2019

Every local church in South Georgia is encouraged to receive a special offering to support the ministry of The Vashti Center, Inc. To learn more about Vashti and its great ministry, visit www.vashti.org.

Lay Speaker Training, Hahira UMC – Feb. 8-9, 2019

The Basic and Advanced Lay Speaking Courses will be taught Friday, Feb. 8 and Saturday, Feb. 9, 2019, at Hahira UMC. A lay speaker is a professing member of a local church who is ready and desirous to serve the Church, and who is well informed on and committed to the Scriptures and the doctrine, heritage, organization, and life of The United Methodist Church. A lay speaker has completed the required training courses in lay speaking and has been approved by a district or annual conference committee on lay speaking. Lay speakers serve the local church by witnessing to the Christian faith through spoken communication, church and community leadership, and caregiving ministries. When certified, the lay speaker may conduct services of worship, preach, and lead study sessions as requested by the pastor or the district superintendent. Registration fee for the class is \$25 which covers all materials and lunch on Saturday. (Note: The Basic Lay Speaking class must be completed before taking Advanced Class). [Register here](#).

Annual Multicultural Luncheon Celebration – Feb. 9, 2019

The third annual Multicultural Luncheon will be held February 9, 2019. For more information, contact Earnestine Campbell at earnestine@sgaumc.com.

Andrew College Sunday – Feb. 10, 2019

Founded in January 1854, Andrew College has continuously provided an academically challenging liberal arts education within a nurturing community for more than 160 years. A member of the South Georgia Conference, Andrew strives to inspire academic and spiritual growth across its historic 40-acre campus. The qualified faculty and caring staff engage with students in an intimate setting to encourage a lifelong love of learning and a strong sense of civic leadership. Students are regularly invited to strengthen their Christian discipleship through weekly chapel services and participation in a myriad of religious offerings. Andrew Sunday seeks to gain support for the College and identify prospective students. To learn more about Andrew College - a United-Methodist affiliated institution in Cuthbert, Georgia - visit www.andrewcollege.edu.

Volunteers in Mission Awareness Sunday – Feb. 17, 2019

United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM) exists to promote, encourage, and enable Christians to exemplify "Christian Love In Action" through short-term mission service in the United States and abroad. UMVIM provides opportunities for service by developing and

nurturing relationships with domestic and international leaders. They continually nurture their contacts with these leaders to respond to the needs of local communities and to provide comprehensive project information. You can help support the work of UMVIM in the South Georgia Conference by giving an offering to support this vital ministry on this special Sunday.

Sexual Ethics Workshop, Statesboro – Feb. 21, 2019

According to the Conference Sexual Ethics policy, this workshop is required every three years for any person serving under appointment by the bishop (clergy, local pastors, extension ministers, appointed lay speakers). The Sexual Ethics Workshop will be held Thursday, Feb. 21 from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. at Pittman Park UMC in Statesboro. [Register here](#). Cost is \$35, which includes lunch (collected at the door). Checks can be made payable to South Georgia Conference. For questions, email cpcassistant@sgaumc.com. Please note that spouses and lay employees who are not appointed by the bishop are not eligible to attend the workshop.

Kingdom Builders Promotion Sunday – Feb. 24, 2019

You are blessed to be a blessing. We have been blessed to travel roads that were paved by those that went before us. Our lives have been changed by the investments they made. Now the torch has been passed to us to make the investments that will pave the road for the generation that will follow us. In 1962 the Kingdom Builders Club was started to change lives by funding new ministries and new congregations. Several of the largest congregations in South Georgia were started with funds from Kingdom Builders. In fact, the #1 and the #2 fastest growing United Methodist Congregations in the U.S. over the past 10 years are both in our conference and you started them. Way to go South Georgia! **PRAYER IS ESSENTIAL!** The Kingdom Builders Club is about far more than starting churches. It is about CHANGING LIVES! We have published a new daily devotional book entitled “Pray for 5.” This 40-day devotional is a tangible tool to help you and your friends change the lives of your family and friends. To obtain copies for all the people in your congregation simply ask your District Superintendent. Our hope is that this daily devotional book will ignite a movement of prayer that unlocks a wave of relational evangelism that helps new people come to know Jesus like we have. **Funding is important.** God sends people to congregations who are ready to minister to them. We need to be starting new ministries to connect with these new people. To reach people no one is reaching, we must start doing things no one is doing, which requires funding. Pray for your friends AND become a Kingdom Builder by making a financial investment today to the Kingdom Builders Advanced Special. [Click here to download a Kingdom Builder support form.](#)

Campus Crawl – Feb. 28-March 3, 2019

The 2019 Campus Crawl is set for Feb. 28 - March 3, 2019. During the Campus Crawl weekend, high school students from both the North and South Georgia Conferences will meet representatives from United Methodist Colleges and Universities in Georgia as well as meet several Wesley Foundations on public university campuses. Stops on this year’s tour include: Oxford College, Young Harris College, Reinhardt University, Kennesaw State Wesley, Clark Atlanta, Georgia Tech Wesley, Emory University, LaGrange College, Andrew College, Wesleyan College, Mercer University Wesley, Augusta Wesley, Paine College, UGA Wesley, and more. The cost of \$100 per student includes a tour bus, meals, lodging, and a t-shirt. After

Jan. 15, 2019, the price increases to \$125. [Click here to reserve your seat on the bus](#). For more information, contact Suzanne Akins at the Office of Connectional Ministries at suzanne@sgaumc.com or (912) 638-8626 ext.107.

Join the Journey Confirmation Retreat – March 1-March 3, 2019

Designed for students in the fifth grade and above, the “Join the Journey” Confirmation Retreat will provide churches of all sizes an opportunity to connect with others through worship, study, and fellowship. The event will also include large group gatherings around the church seasons and breakout sessions with topics of grace, United Methodist History and United Methodist lingo as well as Holy Clubs throughout the weekend. Not meant to be the only confirmation youth go through, the Confirmation Retreat should be complementary to what a church is or will be doing. For more information, please contact Event Coordinator Suzanne Akins at suzanne@sgaumc.com or (912) 638-8626 ext. 107. Registration is now open to all South Georgia Conference churches.

Post-General Conference Informational Session – March 9, 2019

An informational session will be held at the UGA Tifton Campus Conference Center in Tifton, GA to talk about the outcome of the 2019 called General Conference Session.

Lay Speaker Training, Pittman Park UMC – March 15-16, 2019

The Basic and Advanced Lay Speaking Courses will be taught Friday, March 15 and Saturday, March 16 at Pittman Park UMC in Statesboro. A lay speaker is a professing member of a local church who is ready and desirous to serve the Church, and who is well informed on and committed to the Scriptures and the doctrine, heritage, organization, and life of The United Methodist Church. A lay speaker has completed the required training courses in lay speaking and has been approved by a district or annual conference committee on lay speaking. Lay speakers serve the local church by witnessing to the Christian faith through spoken communication, church and community leadership, and caregiving ministries. When certified, the lay speaker may conduct services of worship, preach, and lead study sessions as requested by the pastor or the district superintendent. Registration fee for the class is \$25 which covers all materials and lunch on Saturday. (Note: The Basic Lay Speaking class must be completed before taking Advanced Class). [Register here](#).

Annual SBC21 Leadership & Development Conference – March 26, 2019

The 2019 SBC21 Annual Celebration of Leadership and Development Conference will be held Saturday, March 16. Contact Rev. Earnestine Campbell, associate director of Connectional Ministries, at earnestine@sgaumc.com, for more information.

Lay Speaker Training, Richmond Hill UMC – March 29-30, 2019

The Basic and Advanced Lay Speaking Courses will be taught Friday, March 29 and Saturday, March 30 at Richmond Hill UMC. A lay speaker is a professing member of a local church who is ready and desirous to serve the Church, and who is well informed on and committed to the

Scriptures and the doctrine, heritage, organization, and life of The United Methodist Church. A lay speaker has completed the required training courses in lay speaking and has been approved by a district or annual conference committee on lay speaking. Lay speakers serve the local church by witnessing to the Christian faith through spoken communication, church and community leadership, and caregiving ministries. When certified, the lay speaker may conduct services of worship, preach, and lead study sessions as requested by the pastor or the district superintendent. Registration fee for the class is \$25 which covers all materials and lunch on Saturday. (Note: The Basic Lay Speaking class must be completed before taking Advanced Class). [Register here](#).

UMCOR Sunday – March 31, 2019

UMCOR Sunday (fourth Sunday in Lent) enables the United Methodist Committee on Relief to reach out through worldwide ministries of food, shelter, health and peace. A special offering is taken on this day to support humanitarian aid through the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR). You can be assured that when catastrophes cause suffering, your church, impelled by Jesus' love and compassion, will be in the lead to ease the pain. Gifts to the UMCOR Sunday offering underwrite UMCOR's "costs of doing business." That helps them keep their promise that 100 percent of every other gift you make to a specific UMCOR project can be spent on that project - not on home office costs. To learn more about UMCOR or to order resources to promote the offering, visit www.umcor.org or call 888-346-3862. [Click here for resources to help promote this offering in your local church](#).