

SOUTH GEORGIA ADVOCATE – FEBRUARY 5 EDITION

Respite Ministries are fresh expressions, vital outreach ministries

By Kara Witherow, *Editor*

What ministry are you building for the future? Are you laying bricks or are you building a church?

Those are the questions Daphne Johnston posed to Winter Conference attendees as she passionately led a presentation of respite care ministries, focusing on Montgomery (Ala.) First United Methodist Church's Respite Ministry, which she has led since its 2012 inception.

"What ministry do you have to give people purpose?" she asked the crowd as she explained that at Respite Ministry, which serves those who live with memory loss, there is no distinction between participant and volunteer.

Participants also serve, and through their interactions with Respite Ministry staff and volunteers they find identity, connection, security, autonomy, meaning, growth, and joy.

"Can you imagine never hearing the words 'thank you' again?" Johnston said. "With dementia and Alzheimer's, you can feel so isolated, but when you get to Respite you hear, 'We're glad you're here' and 'We missed you last week.' Everyone needs to hear those things."

She continued to tell about the now thriving, vibrant ministry that began with just two participants and has grown into a model for others around the country. She shared memory loss statistics and the staggering cost of long-term private care. But most of all, she inspired attendees to look at their own congregations and communities and, "tell the story, and invite other people in!"

In addition to Johnston, two South Georgia pastors presented during the workshop.

Rev. Meg Procopio, Minister of Staff Development at Isle of Hope United Methodist Church in Savannah, told the story of Hope Arbor, Isle of Hope UMC's respite care ministry.

The only church-based respite care ministry in the Savannah area, Hope Arbor opened its doors Jan. 23, 2018, with 65 volunteers. It's been a blessing to the church and the community, she said.

"With Alzheimer's, we so often become invisible, and with respite, we belong," Rev. Procopio said. "This ministry has taught me so much about what it means to be human."

Rev. Teresa Edwards, associate pastor of Forest Hills United Methodist Church in Macon, was inspired to start a respite care ministry after meeting and befriending a couple who was facing memory loss.

“So many families are isolated by this disease,” she said. “I was humbled and blessed to get to walk with them for a little while and get to learn what this experience was for them. I thought, ‘we can do better.’”

Forest Hills UMC’s respite ministry hopes to open in September, offering care twice a week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

“It’s fresh expressions like these and the individuals who are finding ways to minister to their communities that make us Alive Together in the World,” said South Georgia Bishop R. Lawson Bryan. “May we all take a look around us to see where God is calling our churches to be more alive.”

Apportionment, mission giving are ways Conference is Alive Together in the World

By Kara Witherow, *Editor*

The numbers are in, and South Georgia’s United Methodist churches paid 89.5 percent of their apportionment giving for 2018.

Given the devastation many in the conference experienced from Hurricane Michael and the tenor of the times, conference leaders are pleased.

“To have people come through like this, especially considering what’s going on in their personal lives, is astounding,” said Dr. Derek McAleer, Director of Administrative Services. “The Southwest District paid almost 93 percent. That’s amazing considering the turmoil they’ve had with the weather and how much it’s damaged the economy. It’s pretty exciting.”

Cash totals on conference apportionments for 2018 were \$9,543,587.14, up \$96,877.92 over 2017. An increase of almost \$100,000 should be celebrated, Dr. McAleer said.

Apportionment giving is one of the many ways United Methodists show their connection with each other and their communities, conference leaders say.

“I celebrate the strong payment of apportionments because apportionments are one of the ways that we are Alive Together in the World,” said South Georgia Bishop R. Lawson Bryan. “It is through our apportionments that we actually participate in the global ministry of the Methodist Church.”

Apportionments support United Methodist efforts such as campus ministries, camps and retreats, new church starts, and the revitalization of established churches.

And they extend the conference's ministry beyond the bounds of South Georgia through such higher education efforts as the Ministerial Education Fund and the Black College Fund and international efforts like the World Service Fund and Africa University.

In addition to apportionment giving, South Georgia United Methodists gave \$84,599.92 in gifts for approved Special Sundays and \$686,884.55 in advance specials and other missional giving.

“Every local church, doing wonderful ministry in its own area, also is doing ministry around the world through the apportionments,” Bishop Bryan said. “It is a thrill to me to know that we, together in South Georgia, support our United Methodist seminary in Russia. We are turning out Methodist pastors there through our apportionments. In Africa, Africa University and all of our other Methodist ministries are supported by apportionments. Everywhere we go, around the world, we see the work of each local church being multiplied through the apportionments to touch lives all over the world. That's very important to me. And when we talk about being Alive Together in the World, apportionments are one of the ways we touch the whole world through The United Methodist Church.”

Congregations meeting to discuss Way Forward report, General Conference

By Kara Witherow, *Editor*

Although the start of the 2019 Special Session of the General Conference is more than two weeks away, South Georgia pastors and laity have been meeting to discuss the [Way Forward report](#), its three legislative plans, and possible outcomes of the General Conference session.

At Mulberry Street United Methodist Church in Macon, senior pastor Dr. Matt Woodbery in January began a weekly series with his congregation to discuss the 2019 General Conference session and the Way Forward report.

Meeting on Wednesday afternoons, the intent of the meetings is to inform, Dr. Woodbery said. The purpose of the special session, the Way Forward Commission, the three plans, basic United Methodist polity, and church governance have been discussed. During one session he introduced John Wesley's Three General Rules and the Wesley Quadrilateral to give two Methodist models that those in attendance could use to discern and make their own decisions.

Informing the congregation in a balanced, non-biased, clear, precise manner is intentional and important, Dr. Woodbery said.

“Change is coming,” he said. “We will be different after the special General Conference. It's not a question of if, it's a question of when and how much. That's what I'm trying to equip them for, to be prepared for the change in order to mitigate any turbulence or pain.”

In downtown Savannah, Rev. Ben Gosden, senior pastor of Trinity United Methodist Church, is telling his congregation to be careful about their news sources.

While he doesn't sense much anxiety yet and therefore hasn't held formal meetings, he is keeping church leaders informed and up to date with news from official UM outlets.

"I'm reading the room and I'm not sensing a lot of anxiety, so why create anxiety where there's not any and when there isn't a path evident yet?" he asked.

Very careful about the information and links he does share, he says he will begin more in-depth conversations about the outcome of the special General Conference session between the March 9 [Post-General Conference Information Session](#) and [Annual Conference](#).

"We are being very careful about the information we use and trust and distribute," he said. "We are not spinning this, especially in the void of information. When there is a void of information people tend to fill it with their worst fears, so we are being really careful."

Late last fall Rev. Robert Greene began a three-phase process of education, conversation, and prayer surrounding the 2019 Special Session of the General Conference and the Way Forward report.

Not wanting to merely react to whatever news comes out of St. Louis, he and Porterfield Memorial United Methodist Church's leaders opted instead to share, listen, and pray.

"When people are panicky, nothing good comes out of it, so I'm trying to do what the Bishop says – stay calm, stay connected, stay the course," Rev. Greene said. "I think by actually talking about it we're better able to do that, as long as we talk about it in the right way, with the right tone. That's been the objective."

As part of the sharing phase, an open forum was held last fall (a second was cancelled because of Hurricane Michael). Now, during the listening phase, Rev. Greene and the church's two lay delegates to Annual Conference are spending time in each adult Sunday school class, discussing the three plans and the situation, and giving class members a chance to talk and be heard. Prayer, the third phase, is being integrated into all that's being done, and a special Wednesday night prayer service is being planned for the General Conference delegates.

"It's important to listen and to have this time and not to just react," Rev. Greene said.

The congregation appreciates the chance to hear from their leaders and express their viewpoints, he said, and, while frustrated with the lack of answers, is eager to move on and focus on their ministry.

Making time for education, discussion, and dialogue is important, Rev. Woodbery said, and is a vital part of being United Methodist.

“I believe it’s who we are as Methodist,” he said. “I believe in the priesthood of believers. We’re all in this together, and I want to make sure that there’s a levelness about the information we have and to equip the saints. The Holy Spirit is alive and at work in their lives, and I want to hear what the Holy Spirit has to say through them. That’s part of what we mean about being in connection.”

For further information and resources about the 2019 Special Session of the General Conference and the Way Forward report, visit www.sgaumc.org/wayforward.

Put faith into action on #ServeSouthGA Day

What would South Georgia look like if every local United Methodist church spent an entire day serving its community?

Hungry people would be fed.

Lonely people would find friends.

Schools could be beautified.

Rivers could be cleaned.

Homes could be repaired.

And so much more.

The Conference’s Discipleship Teams are hoping that the Annual Conference’s inaugural [#ServeSouthGA](#) volunteer day inspires congregations throughout South Georgia to move outside the church building and into their communities on March 23. If that day isn’t convenient, they hope church leaders can choose another day to serve.

“We want to intentionally bridge our churches and communities in real and tangible ways,” said Stacy Avera, chair of the Conference’s Nurture Team. “We want our communities to realize the United Methodist Church is present and a real, involved part of their community! There is an old saying that asks, ‘If your church ceased to exist, who would notice, besides the members?’ We want our churches to be vital parts of their communities so that they would be missed and so that the communities know our UMCs can be counted on!”

Designed for people of all ages, [#ServeSouthGA](#) allows people of faith to put their faith into action as they serve those in need in their own towns, neighborhoods, and communities.

The [#ServeSouthGA webpage](#) gives examples of volunteer opportunities and project ideas, has a downloadable media kit, and invites those who have participated in the service day to fill out a short form to share how they have served in their community.

Avera said that while the Discipleship Teams know [#ServeSouthGA](#) is only two months away, they hope that the [planning tools and resources](#) they've provided will help congregations feel confident to go out into their communities to serve.

“Sometimes we have to meet needs before we can share Jesus and His love with people,” she said. “It’s showing them the love of Christ.”

What Defines Us

**FROM THE BISHOP
R. LAWSON BRYAN**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Exhilarating! That describes the energy at Winter Conference as hundreds of pastors from four annual conferences filled Epworth By The Sea last week. Tod Bolsinger, author of “Canoeing The Mountains,” led us in deeply meaningful reflections on being Christian leaders in times of uncertainty.

Another highlight for me was the hour and a half I got to spend with nearly 100 clergy from South Georgia. I had something I needed to share. It is so important that I want to share it now with you.

First, while the conference staff and I have been very intentional in providing [resources to educate and inform you about the 2019 General Conference](#), do not misunderstand: I am not fixated on the special session of General Conference. My primary focus remains on the local church, the primary arena where disciples of Christ are made. There are so many good things happening in our churches, and my goal is to resource our local churches to support effective ministry.

Second, while I appreciate the wisdom in saying “we cannot know specifics until after General Conference,” nevertheless I believe there is actually a good deal more we can say. We can begin by recalling that our theme, “Alive Together in Christ,” was given to us by the Bible. It is found in Ephesians 2:5 and expresses God’s vision for us. For two and a half years everything we have done has been guided by this vision.

We have even adopted a special process to help us live into what it means to be Alive Together in Christ. It shapes our appointment making process, how we plan the sessions of annual

conference, and has led to the identification of wildly important goals. This process - Appreciative Inquiry - consists of four movements:

- Discover (Where are we alive now?)
- Dream (Where is God calling us to be more alive?)
- Design (What are we already doing to reach this dream? Who else needs to be at the table with us?)
- Deliver (How will we know when we get there? What will people be seeing, saying, feeling?)

Recognizing that we have faithful local churches, a strong Biblical vision, and a powerful process, here is what we can confidently say right now:

Whatever comes from [General Conference](#) will be received by South Georgia as information, but it will not DEFINE us.

Here IS what defines us:

1. 284 years ago, in 1735, John and Charles Wesley landed here in the South Georgia Conference. In America, the Methodist movement starts with us in South Georgia. We are Wesleyan Methodists. That is what defines us. Being true to that identity is our fundamental challenge. What defines us is owning that identity.
2. Our local churches - with their history of worship, prayer, bible study, mission projects, and fellowship - define us. Those practices are called spiritual disciplines. When practiced over many years, these spiritual disciplines build our spiritual strength and our adaptive capacity. I hear the strength of our local churches as the laity continually say to me, "This is my church before General Conference, and it will be my church afterward as well. We know how to be the church, and we will continue doing that."
3. Ephesians 2:5, "Alive Together in Christ," our four-year theme in South Georgia, defines us. This is not a human invention but a Biblical statement of what God is up to: "when we were dead in our trespasses and sins, God made us alive together in Christ." This shapes everything we do, from goal planning to appointment making to the themes of annual conference.

Now here is the really good news: when we stick with what defines us and follow our process we will be radically open to God's future for us.

This is what I shared with our clergy during the Bishop's Forum at Winter Conference. That led to increased dialogue with my brothers and sisters while we were at Epworth. This dialogue has been so rich that I left Epworth making the following notes to myself.

As we stick with what defines us and remain faithful to our process:

- I pray that we in South Georgia will be better and stronger in the Spirit of God after having gone through this time of conferencing.
- I pray that “better and stronger” will mean that we have a deeper relationship with the person of Jesus who was fully human and fully divine.
- I pray that this relationship with Jesus will lead us to a deeper resolve to be Alive Together in the World by connecting with those in our own church and community who are overlooked or excluded.
- I pray that we may become Ambassadors of Christ who are non-anxious, radically open to God, and wide-eyed with curiosity because we suspect God is up to something in us and in our world through the Methodist movement.
- I pray that the whole denomination will look at South Georgia and ask: How did they do it? Before, during, and after General Conference, the South Georgia Conference was able to stay calm, stay connected, and stay the course. How did they do it?

As we stick with what defines us and follow the process, we become hope-filled people who can bring hope to our churches and our communities.

Glorify Yourself in us, O Lord, for when we were dead you made us Alive Together in Christ.

Alive Together in the World,

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.

Registration is now OPEN. 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.

Apply today for Camp Connect Leadership Team!

Applications are still 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.

Our Loving God

Winter Quarter: Our Love For God

Unit 3: Songs that Glorify the God of Love

Sunday school lesson for the week of February 10, 2019

By Helen and Rev. Sam Rogers

Lesson Scripture: Psalm 48

In this final unit of the Winter Quarter we will focus on three psalms. Hopefully, you remember we studied Psalm 103 on December 16. A careful review of lesson 3 (December 16) would add to your appreciation of the literary form and power of the Psalms as the Hebrew hymn book.

The psalm for today is classified as one of the Songs of Zion (46, 76, 84, 87, and 122). All of these celebrate Mount Zion, the hill in Jerusalem where the Temple was built. Some also believe this is the location where Abraham came to sacrifice Isaac and today is holy to Islam, Christianity, and Judaism – certainly a place of importance!

The Songs of Zion are not just about the place, but celebrate the reason the place is special – God, the King, reigns there! Still today we mix religion and nationalism in strange and often dangerous ways, but these ancients did not ever separate the two.

The success or failure of crops, war, children, health – indeed life – depended on the superiority and presence of the god of the nation and its people. At first glance, these Hebrew Psalms may appear to be no different from those of other ancient nations and their gods. Isn't this god just like all the other gods? Isn't Israel just like all the other nations? The gods resided on mountains. What makes the god of Zion different? Even in verse 2 of this psalm a reference is made to Mt. Zaphon, where the pagan deity El lived. (Since this location is in the north, some translations use this word as a direction rather than a specific place.)

Of course, the difference is WHO this god is and His rule extends far beyond the national boundaries. Yes, the psalm celebrates the location, but goes much farther. Yahweh (rendered *LORD* in our translations) is the great King over all the earth.

David's choice of Jerusalem as Israel's capital was a strategic decision. He was attempting to unify the 12 separate tribes into a nation. Jerusalem was centrally located between north and south. Its history was not associated with any tribe but had been a Jebusite walled fortified city – a perfect location for rule and defense.

Please notice these features are not the emphasis of the beginning of the psalm – God's greatness and worthiness of praise opens and closes the psalm. Many times in the Old Testament Jerusalem is defined as the City of David, but not in the Psalms! The Psalms were used in worship and the city was always designated "the city of our God" or Mount Zion – God's Holy Mountain.

"The joy of the whole earth" states emphatically that Yahweh is the God not only of Mt. Zion, the city of our God, but of everyone, everywhere. The psalmist celebrates not only its physical features, but also its history. By the time this psalm was written, several attacks by foreign powers had been thwarted with reference to "Yahweh is in her citadels and has shown the Lord to be her fortress." Martin Luther used this image in the great hymn "A Mighty Fortress Is our God."

As grammarians, we are impressed with the tense of the verb – present perfect, indicating both completed actions in the past, but also the ongoing reality of God who was, and is, and is to come! God is the only security! The psalmist emphasizes this point by shifting the emphasis from the geography and defenses of the city to the Temple. Verse 9 is the only reference to the Temple in all the Songs of Zion. In this shift, the psalmist declares the true strength of the nation is the presence of the living God.

One writer notes in Solomon's prayer at the time of the dedication of the Temple how God chose to dwell in the Temple, but was not confined to this place. (Read II Chronicles 6:18) Our places of worship are important primarily to remind us to reflect on God's *hesed* – steadfast and unfailing love! (vs.9) This Hebrew word occurs more than 130 times in the Old Testament. We believe this is the best Old Testament word to describe "grace."

Valentine's Day is near, and we hope you will send messages to those you love. Don't wait – do it now. During World War II, Sam's dad wrote love letters to his mother. Thankfully, they were preserved, and our daughter has them. Sam has never read them, nor will he. Their privacy is important to him, but not so God's communication with us. The scriptures are "love letters" from

God. We read and re-read them. They are to be treasured not as mementoes of the past but as mail received today!

From the perspective of the worldwide outreach of God's love, praise, and righteousness, the psalmist quickly turns to the local effect in "Jerusalem and the cities of Judah." The god of the universe is also very personal to each one of us, His children. John Wesley said it best, "The best of all, God is with us."

In closing, the psalmist invites us on a tour of the city's structures. Walk, count, look, inspect – walls, citadels, towers, ramparts. We have been privileged to lead five groups of pilgrims to the Holy Land. We have indeed done all the above, but the invitation in this psalm is not to join a tour, but to share the faith with the next generation. We urge you to look back to the very first lesson of this quarter on December 2 where Moses told the Israelites how important it was to pass the faith from generation to generation.

Why? *"Because this god is our God for ever and ever;*

He will be our guide even to the end." Psalm 48:14

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

Praising God's Mighty Works

Winter Quarter: Our Love For God

Unit 3: Songs that Glorify the God of Love

Sunday school lesson for the week of February 17, 2019

By Helen and Rev. Sam Rogers

Lesson Scripture: Psalm 66

Hopefully, during this lesson series we have acquired an increased appreciation of the Book of Psalms as the hymnbook of the Hebrew people. In this, the third psalm we will study this quarter, we continue to see the gamut of emotions, experiences, and needs expressed in the psalms. No wonder the Disciple Bible Study labeled them "Songs of the Heart." Across many generations, the various writers expressed both national and personal outpourings to God.

In today's psalm, there are specific verses listed for study, but we believe the psalm should be read as a whole. Like in our hymnody, to leave out a verse would interrupt the thought and meaning of the poem as expressed by the author. Every verse is significant and deserves pondering. So it is with the Psalms. Study the whole thing!!

There are five stanzas: 1-4; 5-7; 8-12; 13-15; and 16-20. Transitions between three of the stanzas are marked by the word "selah," which some believe may be a musical sign. These are clearly seen after each of the first two stanzas and after the fourth. The transition after stanza three is marked by a shift from first person plural – we/us – to first person singular – I/me. We will

explore the powerful emphasis of this shift later in the lesson. For now, let the structure sink in! For you purists, the assigned scripture covers the first two, only a portion of the third, skips the fourth, and resumes with the fifth.

The hymn begins with a call for the whole world to recognize the mighty acts and wonders of Yahweh. Shouting may be considered out of place in our staid churches, but not for the Hebrews! We had a dear friend in our church in Tifton who would shout “GLORY,” and Sam felt he had knocked a walk-off home run! For the Psalmist, shouting and singing are two actions of a kind – another parallelism, the poetry of the Psalms.

The notation at the beginning of the Psalm says “to the director of music – a song.” We may wonder how our singing glorifies God. Is it the skill of our voices, how loud we sing, how harmoniously, the words we say, or the emotion expressed? We believe it is all of the above – and more! The entire person is needed to express the glory and majesty of God: heart, mind, soul, and strength – and voice!!

The second stanza focuses on the specific acts of God in the Exodus. The reader is invited to “come and see” these saving acts of God. This invitation invites us to do more than read or even meditate. We are to get up and go to where God is at work.

For the Hebrew singers/readers of this psalm, the work is the centerpiece of Israel’s faith – the Exodus. From the Ten Plagues to the passage through the sea on dry land, God’s actions of deliverance and salvation are for all humankind, not just the Hebrews. The Divine plan for saving the world is unfolding in these ancient events. The Divine watch-care of the entire world is affirmed in verse 7. None should rebel against such gracious concern for the well-being of humankind.

The third stanza once again calls for everyone to praise God. The need for corporate worship is sadly undervalued in many churches. We enter worship as spectators. If the sermon keeps our attention or the choir’s anthem is good, we judge worship to be okay. As a current ad says, “OK is not enough!” The congregation is not the audience – God is!

The Psalmist then lists some painful moments the people have experienced and God’s actions: lives saved and feet planted on firm ground. But God tested them, refined them in fire, allowed them to be imprisoned, added burdens, and subjected them to subservience to others. In short, they “went through fire and water.” Their destination was “a place of abundance.” Scholars see these as allusions to the long years of the Babylonian captivity, and the joyous return home.

The stage is set for the crucial fourth stanza (which the printed material skips!), moving from corporate to very personal worship. The grammatical change from third to first person, highlighting the transition, should help us in our congregational worship. Yes, there is much about animal sacrifices and offerings no longer relevant, but the point is clear. We must be honest in remembering our past and how God has seen us through in spite of our sins of action and inaction.

Each time we gather with our fellow believers the hymns, prayers, scripture, special music, and sermon should flow together and enable each individual worshipper to remember *vows made in times of trouble*.

With the specified verses of the lesson skipping this stanza, we move to the fifth and closing stanza. Again, there is a personal invitation with an RSVP! Before we were “to see” but now we are “to hear.”

Personal witness is not very common in our corporate worship. In fact, most would oppose it, for too often those who do witness are the same ones with the same message we have heard before! Not so with the Psalmist because he has a very personal word of “what He has done for me.” There is the secret to powerful words of a witness. Here is why the invitation has an RSVP – we all have a personal story to share, and our story may be the very one someone desperately needs to hear.

The acknowledgement of the barrier of sin to God’s response is stated in verse 18. The condition of our heart is crucial to our relationship with the Divine One. Let’s be very clear – not being sinless, but “cherishing”/holding on to sin and not being honest with God or ourselves. This barrier prevents the full Divine response.

The Psalmist has a more positive story to tell of how God did respond. We who know Jesus and have the Advocate of the Holy Spirit have even more assurance God hears and answers our prayers. The Psalmist concludes in the last verse where we always begin – the love of God. Here again is our favorite Old Testament word – “hesed.” We are eternally in the grip of grace. Hallelujah! Praise God!

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

Clarity in the Chaos

LEADERSHIP REALLY MATTERS

ANNE BOSARGE

REV. JAY HANSON

We have just recently been working through repainting several rooms in our house. While I love the finished product and look of fresh paint, I really dislike the chaos created during the renovation. Art comes down off the walls to reveal nail holes, furniture is moved giving way to dust bunnies, and closets are turned inside out. Rooms I thought were clean and orderly reveal clutter and wear. Renovations get messy before they get better.

Even in the midst of the chaos, there is an opportunity. As I move things around and put rooms back together, I gain an opportunity to assess what really is, not just what things appear to be. I get clarity about what is actually useful and what needs to be changed or improved. I have the opportunity to assess what should go back into the room and what just doesn’t fit.

This month some renovations are happening within our denomination. As things begin to move and change, there can be a tendency to focus on the chaos and discomfort. When we see seasons of transition, we often react in one of three ways.

1. Some of us try to control the chaos. Even as the changes are happening, we try to exert control over our circumstances and restore a sense of order and comfort to our world. Our driving motivation becomes, “How do I keep everything together so things stay the same?”
2. Some of us become consumed by the chaos. When this happens, it becomes all we think about and all we focus on, but because we spend so much time caught up in the chaos, we are unable to see anything else. We drift along, feeling helpless to change anything and spending all of our energy consumed by what is happening and thinking about what that means to us.
3. Some of us seek clarity in the chaos. As we look at making changes and revising what isn’t working, we go back to the basics – we remember our calling, evaluate our character, and seek to clarify our mission. The chaos becomes a catalyst for creativity, growth, and reflection. The change becomes an opportunity to do new things in new ways that will attract new people and draw them closer to a relationship with the Savior.

So, what will you do with the chaos you experience this month? Will you attempt to control it, become consumed by it, or see it as a catalyst for increased clarity? I hope you choose option three with me and join me in clarifying what it means to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Jay Hanson, Lead Pastor, and Anne Bosarge, Multi-Campus Director, serve at The Chapel Ministries. They love sharing about the ways God is moving in their church. Contact them at jay@thechapelbrunswick.com and anne@thechapelbrunswick.com.

Listen Up!

JOHN WESLEY MOMENTS

DAVE HANSON

On May 28, 1778, John Wesley wrote, “O, when will even Methodists learn not to exaggerate? After all the pompous accounts I had of the vast increases of the Society, it is not increased at all; nay, it is a little smaller than it was three years ago...”

Some things seem to never change.

Rev. Dave Hanson is a retired pastor and John Wesley scholar.

Retired Clergy Birthdays - February 2019

2/01 – Rodney Body: 1205 North Palm Dr.; Plant City, FL 33563
2/02 - Paul Buckhiester: 3820 Pearl St.; Columbus, GA 39886
2/03 – Eugene Barlow: 605 Victoria Circle; Warner Robins, GA 31088
2/03 – David Barton: PO Box 497; Talbotton, GA 31827
2/03 – Wesley Jones, Jr.: 122 Woodland Terrace; Moulton, AL 35650
2/04 – John Bagwell: 5300 Zebulon Rd., Apt. 2226; Macon, GA 31210
2/04 – Bob Dixon: 1808 E. Washington St.; Thomasville, GA 31792
2/06 – Robert Buckles: 5429 Sirius Dr.; Wilmington, NC 28405
2/07 – George Anderson: 3227 Dundale Road; Vestavia Hills, AL 33216
2/07 – Bill Brown: 109 Woodlawn Dr.; Statesboro, GA 30458
2/09 – John O’Connor: 247 Jim Nash Ct. NW; Lilburn, GA 30047
2/10 – Paul Best: PO Box 747; Social Circle, GA 30025
2/10 – Bill Reinheld: 102 Arthur J. Moore Dr.; St. Simons Island, GA 31522
2/10 – Tommy Veal: 340 Pine Hill Rd.; Dublin, GA 31021
2/11 – Robert Poston: 105 Hawk Hammock Dr.; Springfield, GA 31329
2/12 – Robert Bean: 326 Wildsmith Dr.; Brunswick, GA 31525
2/14 – Jim Jensen: 4323 15th St.; St. Simons Island, GA 31522
2/15 – Mark Carter: 1741 Stevens Rd.; Ellaville, GA 31806
2/16 – Bill Lee: 480 Bostwick Circle; Vidalia, GA 30474
2/18 – Don Black: 13553 Highway 171 N; Avera, GA 30803-5234
2/19 – Don Proctor: 106 Ingham St.; St. Simons Island, GA 31522
2/20 – C.G. Haugabook, Jr.: 215 Walters St.; Plains, GA 31780
2/20 – David Hudson: PO Box 521; Portal, GA 30450
2/20 – Lee Pulliam: 16702 Ollifftown; Metter, GA 30439
2/21 – Jim Duvall: 10502 Regal View Loop; Clermont, FL 34711
2/22 – Wayne DeFore: 107 Chestnut St.; Bloomingdale, GA 31302
2/24 – Tommy McCook, Jr.: 93 Edgewater Dr.; Midway, GA 31320
2/24 – Marcelle Myers: 110 Arthurs Ct.; Kingsland, GA 31548
2/25 – Wesley Jones: 5942 Plantation Villa Dr. N.; Macon, GA 31210
2/27 – Ed Cadle: 163 Robin Rd.; Guyton, GA 31312
2/27 – Jim Osborn: 310 Slash Pine Dr.; Broxton, GA 31519
2/27 – Donald Sparks: PO Box 407; Portal, GA 30450

OBITUARIES

Rev. Bill Berry

Reverend William Earl “Bill” Berry, loving husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, went to be with the Lord on January 22, 2019. He was born to the late Evelyn Sheppard and Luther Hartzel Berry.

Bill grew up in Graniteville, SC and at the age of 9 came to live with his legal guardians Lucy and Reginald West. He resided in their home until he graduated from Leavelle McCampbell High School and joined the United States Navy. While on leave at the age of 23, he attended a

church service at his beloved St. John's Methodist Church in Graniteville, SC. He sensed God's tug on his heart and surrendered his life to Christ. He was called to preach from St. Luke's UMC and devoted his life to full time Christian ministry in the US Navy and The United Methodist Church. He graduated from Asbury University and Candler School of Theology at Emory University. He proudly served his country for 21 years in the US Navy, retiring as LCDR in the Chaplain Corps. US Navy commendations include the Korean Service Medal (1 star), Vietnam Service Medal (2 stars) and the National Defense Service Medal (1 star). As a United Methodist minister, he served more than 50 years in ministry with the North and South Georgia Conferences.

Following retirement from The United Methodist Church, he worked for Richmond County Department of Corrections as a Probation Officer, and also worked as a supervisor for DFACS. After retiring from Richmond County, he and his wife, Shirley, enjoyed 18 years directing and leading tours throughout North America.

He was preceded in death by his parents, his sisters Betty Berry and Patricia Carrow, and his brother, Walter H. Berry. He leaves to cherish his memories his loving wife of 66 years, Shirley Burton Berry, daughter Lillie Angelyn "Angie" Haywood (Van), Augusta, GA and son William Earl Berry, Jr. (Kim), Poulan, GA, nine grandchildren, 16 great grandchildren, and many other family and friends.

A celebration of life service was held at Trinity on the Hill United Methodist Church on Friday, January 25 with Reverend Mike Cash officiating.

Memorial gifts may be given to Trinity on the Hill United Methodist Church, 1330 Monte Sano Ave, Augusta GA 30904 or St. Luke United Methodist Church, 309 Crawford Avenue, Augusta, GA 30904.

Pallbearers were Lt. Dustin Lee Berry, Christopher Burton Berry, William Garrett Berry, William Earl Berry, Jr., David Wesley Haywood, and Michael Christopher Haywood.

Thomas Poteet & Son Funeral Directors, 214 Davis Rd., Augusta, GA 30907 (706) 364-8484. Please sign the guestbook at www.thomaspoteet.com.

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Scripture Readings – Feb. 5

Feb. 10

Fifth Sunday After the Epiphany

Isaiah 6: 1-8 (9-13)

Psalm 138 (UMH 853)

1 Corinthians 15: 1-11

Luke 5: 1-11

Feb. 17

Sixth Sunday After the Epiphany

Jeremiah 17:5-10

Psalms 1 (UMH 738)

1 Corinthians 15:12-20

Luke 6:17-26

Feb. 24

Seventh Sunday After the Epiphany

Genesis 45:3-11, 15

Psalms 37:1-11, 39-40 (UMH 772)

1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50

Luke 6:27-38

St. Mary's Road UMC hosts leadership retreat

Submitted by Rev. Dr. L.K. Pendleton

... No extra spiritual fat, no parasitic sins. Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we're in. (Hebrews 12:1 The Message)

On Saturday, Jan. 26, St. Mary's Road United Methodist Church in Columbus hosted more than 70 people at the 2019 "Moving with Momentum" Leadership Retreat. The retreat focused on bringing a new level of excellence to ministry and hope to communities by renewing passions, addressing vision, and building foundations for a kingdom-focused ministry in the age of modernity.

Workshop sessions included "Inspiration and Improvement in Leadership," "Build Strong and Stable Ministries," "Synergize and Mobilize," and "Understanding Faith and Finance."

In order to fulfill Christ's calling for kingdom-focused ministry, we understand that the method may change, but the message remains the same: making disciples of Jesus Christ. To do this we are seeking not only solutions, but also resolutions to accomplish our mission.

South Columbus UMC, Midway UMC, St. Mary's Road UMC, and The Edge Church, a non-denominational congregation, attended the retreat. Facilitators included Rev. Cedric Brooks of Atlanta, Vincent Watkins of Atlanta, Rev. Gregory Stanton of the Spiritual Oasis Center in Phoenix, and Mr. Enoch Asante' Bediako, Assistant Finance Director at St. Mary's Road UMC. Dr. Buddy Cooper serves as the Superintendent of the Northwest District of The United Methodist Church.

Youth invited to annual worship, discipleship event

Every four years, youth from throughout the United Methodist Church gather for four days of discipleship, fun, and fellowship at the YOUTH event. The event is filled with interactive learning, worship, Bible study, service opportunities, and fellowship time. Expect inspiration, support, and challenges to authentically experience what it means to be United Methodist. The South Georgia Conference will be taking students from our conference to the event via charter bus. For more information, contact Group Leader Rev. Melissa Traver at melissa.s.traver@icloud.com. [More information](#)

Events in the South Georgia Conference – 2/5/2019 edition

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

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

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. [Click here for an event invitation](#).

Andrew College Sunday – Feb. 10

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

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

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

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

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 \$125 per student includes a tour bus, meals, lodging, and a t-shirt. [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

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 **OPEN**. [Click here for more information and registration information.](#)

Post-General Conference Informational Session – March 9

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.

Work as Worship Retreat, Richmond Hill UMC – March 9

For Christians who also happen to be business professionals, faith and work don't often intersect. The connection between faith and work is not always obvious, but it is a God-given calling to make them connect. God gives every person their talents and skills so that through them we might worship him. The Work as Worship Retreat is an opportunity to connect our talents and skills back to our daily worship through work. The simulcast begins at 8:30 a.m. and will last until approximately 3 p.m. Lunch and refreshments are included in your registration fee. Please

click [HERE](#) to register, or visit Richmond Hill UMC's [Facebook event page for more information](#).

Marriage Enrichment Retreats at Lake Junaluska – March 10-12

Lake Junaluska invites you to their Marriage Enrichment Retreats. The retreats are perfect for pastors who regularly do marriage counseling, or anyone who wants to strengthen the bond in their marriage. Three retreats will be held at Lake Junaluska, March 10-12, Aug. 18-20, and Sept. 29 – Oct. 1. Learn more at www.lakejunaluska.com/marriage or call 800-222-4930.

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

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](#).

Minister Spouses Retreat – March 15-17

South Georgia's minister spouses are invited to "Come to the Waters" to refresh, rekindle, and remember at their annual retreat, March 15-17, at Epworth By The Sea on St. Simons Island. Please direct any questions to Lisa Crosby at (706) 392-6673 or lisamcrosby@msn.com. [Download the flyer](#)

#ServeSouthGA Day – March 23

#ServeSouthGA is our Annual Conference's volunteer day, set aside for churches all over South Georgia to move outside the church building and into our communities. An event for all ages, #ServeSouthGA Day allows us to put our faith in action as we serve those in need in our very own town, neighborhood, and community. One Saturday each year, we set aside our personal agendas and head out into the community on a mission to serve others. It is truly a great day of sharing our time and talents with the charitable agencies the South Georgia Conference and your local church supports. [More information](#)

Wesley Glen's Cherry Blossom Road Race – March 24

Join hundreds of runners for the 17th annual Cherry Blossom Road Race for Wesley Glen Ministries. It will be held in a very special location this year - Downtown Macon! Plan to enjoy the 5k or Fun Run while parade spectators cheer you on. Please check the race website soon for

more updates: www.cherryblossomroadrace.com and www.wesleyglenministries.com/cherry-blossom-road-race.

Antioch UMC's 175th anniversary celebration – March 24

Antioch UMC in Clinch County is turning 175 years old! The congregation will host a special celebration on March 24 at 3 p.m. Rev. Henry Bass, superintendent of the South Central District, will be one of the featured speakers. There will be lots of singing and good food afterwards. Past preachers, their families, and members are invited to share memories and photographs by calling or emailing Lori Miller at 912-286-5807 or lorihowellmiller@gmail.com.

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

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

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](#).