

SOUTH GEORGIA ADVOCATE – APRIL 2 EDITION

Unto the Least of His digs wells, builds clinics, meets needs

By Kara Witherow, *Editor*

In the United States, if someone wants a glass of water, all they have to do is walk a few feet to a faucet and turn it on. In much of Africa, people have to walk anywhere from one to five to seven miles or more to an often-contaminated water source.

But thanks to the work of Rev. Bobby Gale and his Unto the Least of His ministry, more than 50,000 people are able to drink fresh, clean water.

Always concerned with providing basic health and justice solutions, the ministry has recently branched out to build two health clinics in Kenya.

During a recent trip to northern Kenya's Samburu East region, Rev. Gale visited friends and partners in the area and checked on the progress of a well and a new medical clinic in Osceola.

Named the Josena Medical Clinic in honor of former Hazlehurst United Methodist Church member and missions supporter Josena Smith, it serves a region of about 10,000 people who didn't before have access to medical treatment, Rev. Gale said.

"We've seen the needs," he said, of the importance of the clinic. "I've seen them have to travel eight or nine hours to get to a medical facility for something as simple as malaria or an infection."

The clinic includes nurse's quarters and an outhouse, and a small water well was installed about a mile away.

The first medical clinic built by Unto the Least of His ministry, it isn't the last. A second clinic – the Emily Medical Clinic – is already under construction about 25 miles from the Josena Clinic.

Having traveled to Africa for more than 20 years, Rev. Gale has developed relationships and friendships and understands the need of those living in the region. It was apparent, he said, that greater access to medical care was needed.

"When you have relationships with people you begin to understand and they'll tell you what their biggest needs are," he said. "We collaboratively work with them to make these works of mercy take place."

One mother, who otherwise would have had to give birth in her mud hut or out in the open bush, was able to make it to the Josena Medical Clinic to deliver her child, the first baby delivered at the clinic. So happy to have had a safe, clean environment in which to give birth, she named her child Josena, Rev. Gale said.

"It's a hard life," Rev. Gale said of living in Kenya's Samburu East region. "When you see the works of mercy taking place, you can't help but say, "Thank you, God.""

Rev. Jim Dominey has served extensively with Rev. Gale, including in Ghana, and has seen the impact of the ministry in South Georgia and abroad.

“It’s amazing to see the number of people that have been touched by Rev. Gale and this ministry, here in South Georgia and elsewhere,” he said.

He believes that serving others through mission work enhances the life of the local church and the work that’s being done locally.

“I can’t explain it, but God blesses that and multiplies it so you’re able to do even more at your local church because you stepped out in faith to do something in missions,” Rev. Dominey said. “That’s how I’ve seen Unto the Least of His work all around. In my churches, in my life, and in so many others’ lives. There’s life change that takes place. It’s incredible.”

In about three months, the second clinic, in Orchard’s Post, about 25 miles from Osceola, will be completed and open to serve the community.

Meeting people’s needs – whether for water, medicine, or for spiritual guidance – is the way to their hearts, Rev. Gale said.

“If you meet their basic needs in a small kind of way – it’s no different than here in Irwinton or Toombsboro or anywhere else in South Georgia – if you meet their needs, they will come and open their hearts and minds and souls to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ,” Rev. Gale said. “Jesus said if you want to be great, you have to be a servant.”

Sheriff’s chaplains serve spiritual needs of law enforcement officers

By Kara Witherow, *Editor*

When he’s not preaching from the pulpit on Sunday mornings, one can often find Rev. Mike Davis at the ballfield, on the firing range, practicing jiu-jitsu, or in a patrol car.

As a sheriff’s chaplain and reserve deputy sheriff in Lowndes County, Rev. Davis makes time in his week to check in with deputies, stop in the muster room regularly, and support his brothers and sisters in blue. He’s given blessings and benedictions, assisted at death notifications and conducted funerals, and has even hauled mulch and garden plants for an officer.

His role as a chaplain is to serve, not preach. It’s a ministry of presence, and his parish is the community as he ministers to deputies, their families, and the sheriff’s office staff.

“Police officers ... carry great burdens,” said Rev. Davis, a second-career pastor who served as the chief deputy sheriff of Sumter County until 1988. “A majority of police officers don’t have a church family or anyone to lean on. They see so much, they hear so much ... so many of these guys are looking for something to hang onto; it’s tough to find it in the world.”

That’s where chaplains come in, he said: to help give hope when it seems there is none.

“The moments where we can help people catch a glimpse of Christ are why I do it.”

Lowndes County Sheriff Ashley Paulk says that having a chaplain makes a tremendously positive impact on his 240 employees.

“Any time we have anything that is the least bit of a disturbance or a tragedy or something that disrupts a family or an officer, he’s right there,” Sheriff Paulk said of Rev. Davis. “They know that if something serious or tragic comes along he’ll be right there, in the middle of it with them. They can lean on him. It’s great to know that not only is he a good friend and deputy, but that he has a great sense of calm through the Word of the Lord.”

In his tenth year as a volunteer chaplain, Rev. Daryl Brown, pastor of Shiloh and Vienna United Methodist Churches, is also serving as senior chaplain for the Georgia Sheriff’s Association’s (GSA) Chaplain’s Division. There are five active GSA chaplains among South Georgia United Methodist pastors: Rev. Brown, Rev. Davis, Rev. John Haney, Rev. Chip Strickland, and Rev. Stephen Webb. Dr. Rick Lanford, superintendent of the North Central District, helped start the program more than 20 years ago, Rev. Brown said.

Different than a jail or prison ministry, being a sheriff’s chaplain means serving those who are in law enforcement and their families. Those chaplains who are active and serving as GSA chaplains serve a local sheriff and his or her office, actively attend yearly training through and for the Georgia Sheriffs’ Association Chaplains Division, and pay dues to connect to the GSA.

“Our goal is simply to be spiritual guides and to be somebody there for them,” Rev. Brown said. “We just have a passion for helping our law enforcement deal with the everyday stresses of the job. There are several others who serve as law enforcement chaplains with other agencies including Homeland Security, Georgia State Patrol, DNR, and local police departments. We are grateful for their service to those involved in those agencies.”

Trained by the Georgia Sheriff’s Association, each chaplain goes through Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) training that helps them learn techniques and protocols to help deputies deal with issues they may face.

“Law enforcement is a stressful job, and we’re there to help,” Rev. Brown said. “We’re not necessarily counselors, but we help debrief and let them have somebody to talk to so they don’t take that stress home with them.”

There are hundreds of chaplains throughout the state of Georgia, of all faith backgrounds, and several South Georgia United Methodist pastors join Rev. Davis and Rev. Brown in serving as chaplains.

Rev. Brown is thankful that so many sheriffs see the value in chaplains and in helping their deputies.

“There are a lot of our sheriffs in the state of Georgia who have a faith in God and Jesus Christ, so they see the need for spiritual care,” he said. “Most of the sheriffs see the need for care for their deputies. I love the way that our sheriffs are proactive in helping their people.”

Rev. Davis is thankful that he is able to represent the Kingdom of God to his “other family,” and Sheriff Paulk is grateful for the chaplaincy ministry Rev. Davis provides.

“We are really fortunate to have him and I hope that we’ll have him for many, many more years,” Sheriff Paulk said. “He’s a very valuable asset to us.”

General and Jurisdictional Conference delegations will be elected during 2019 Annual Conference Session

The South Georgia Conference will elect its delegation to the 2020 General and Jurisdictional Conferences during the 2019 Annual Conference Session in Columbus, Ga., June 2-5.

Four (4) clergy and four (4) lay delegates to General Conference will be elected. An additional four (4) clergy and four (4) lay delegates will be chosen to complete the Jurisdictional Conference delegation. Alternates will also be elected.

Those who are interested in declaring their interest in serving as delegates are encouraged to read the information on [this page](#) and complete the appropriate form. The forms are a means for candidates to share information that allows members of the annual conference to make informed decisions.

The General Conference is the global gathering of The United Methodist Church where mission and ministry priorities are established and *The Book of Discipline* is reviewed for possible revisions. The General Conference is the policy setting body of United Methodism. The 2020 General Conference will be held May 5-15 in Minneapolis, Minn.

The [Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference](#) meets July 15-18, 2020, in Lake Junaluska, N.C., to coordinate the connected ministry and mission of the region and to elect and assign Bishops for leadership in the Church.

The 2005 session of the South Georgia Annual Conference established a policy on elections in an effort to “create a level playing field and be fair with all potential candidates.” This policy was revised at the 2014 session of the South Georgia Annual Conference and can be found online at www.sgaumc.org/policies.

Clergy

[Declare your interest in being a delegate](#)

[To view those interested in being a delegate](#)

Laity

[To declare your interest in being a delegate](#)

[To view those interested in being a delegate](#)

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Annual Conference 2019: Details and Information

2019 Annual Conference Session

From the Bishop

Dear Lay and Clergy Members of the Annual Conference, Conference and Agency Leaders,

We introduced “Alive Together in the World” one year ago at the conclusion of Annual Conference 2018. When we meet again this June we will have much to celebrate as our churches have been connecting with their communities in creative ways. We will be noting the many ways we are Alive Together in the World.

A special thanks to those in Columbus who are doing all they can to prepare for a great experience. Our business sessions will be held at [The Columbus Georgia Convention & Trade Center](#), a splendid venue on the banks of the Chattahoochee River. The memorial service and the ordination/commissioning service will be held in the beautiful sanctuary of St. Luke UMC.

We will have two special guests with us for our Annual Conference session - Bishop Richard Looney and Dr. Gil Rendle. Bishop Looney will preach during the opening service on Sunday evening. He is deeply appreciated in South Georgia for his leadership as our bishop for twelve years (1988 - 2000). Dr. Gil Rendle, whose research focuses on how to have an effective witness for Christ in a changing culture, will lead our teaching sessions. I encourage you to read his latest book, “Quietly Courageous: Leading the Church in a Changing World.”

We will also devote time to reflect upon the outcome of the special session of General Conference held in February. Some of the decisions made at General Conference concerning pensions and other matters will require a vote of the delegates at annual conference. These matters will be explained in detail during the pre-conference information sessions to be held in each district during the month of May. I will also be reflecting upon General Conference and will share specific steps we can take to be Alive Together in Christ over the coming conference year.

See you in Columbus in June!

R. Lawson Bryan

From the Conference Secretary

Dear Friends,

As you can see, lots of planning has already gone into this year’s Annual Conference session. Below are some additional details you will find helpful. More information can always be found

on the conference website, www.sgaumc.org/annualconference.

Many of you received a book called "[Patches of Prayer](#)" at our conference gathering on March 9. This [prayer book](#) was created to serve as a guide to prayer in the weeks between now and our Annual Conference session. The guide, divided into three, four-week sessions, includes a guiding word, a scripture reading, an invitation to prayer, space for journaling, and a closing prayer. I hope you are using this weekly resource to enhance your prayer time as we move towards annual conference. [For those who were not at our gathering, you can download the book here.](#)

We will hold pre-conference briefings in each district in May. At these briefings, you will receive information about the items related to the recent General Conference that will come before our conference for a vote. You will also receive information on our process for voting for clergy and lay delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences in 2020. Other information that will be needed to participate in the business of annual conference will be provided. Attending one of these briefings will be very helpful as you represent your church at annual conference. Each district will hold a briefing. If you aren't able to attend the briefing in your district, please consider attending a briefing in another district so that you can be fully informed prior to arriving in Columbus. Dates for the briefings will be announced soon.

Please note that the Book of Recommendations and Reports will be available for clergy and lay members by May 1. This annual publication will be available for purchase through lulu.com as a professionally bound book or may be downloaded as a PDF file for free from the conference website. An email notification will be sent to all clergy and lay members when the publication is ready.

Also, if there has been a change in the lay member(s) representing your charge, please log in to your church dashboard, www.sgaumc.org/dashboard, and make the change in the "My Church's Leaders" section. Please also share the change with your district office.

Thank you.

Dr. Nita Crump, Conference Secretary

Meeting Details

Venue

The 2019 Annual Conference Session will take place at [The Columbus Georgia Convention & Trade Center](#) (801 Front Avenue Columbus, GA 31901). All Sunday night activities, as well as all business sessions, will be held at the Convention Center. The Memorial Service and Ordination/Commissioning Service will be held at St. Luke UMC (1104 2nd Ave).

Schedule

The 2019 Annual Conference Session will begin with an Opening Worship Service on Sunday evening, June 2, at 6:30 pm. Conference will conclude with the Sending Forth Service on

Wednesday, June 5. A more detailed schedule will be posted on the [conference website](#) in the coming weeks.

Sunday, June 2, 2019

- 2:30 PM Registration Opens
- 6:30 PM Opening Worship Service, Convention Center
- 7:45 PM Laity Orientation & Clergy Session, Convention Center
- 8:45 PM Receptions hosted by Laity/Clergy for Candidates for GC2020 Delegation

Monday, June 3, 2019

- 8:30 AM Business Session
- 11:00 AM Golden Anniversary/Retiree Recognition
- 12:00 PM Lunch
- 1:00 PM Gathering of Family & Friends of Deceased Servants, St. Luke UMC
- 2:00 PM Memorial Service, St. Luke UMC
- 3:30 PM Business Session
- 5:45 PM Methodist Home Barbecue, St. Luke UMC
- 7:30 PM Ordination/Commissioning Service, St. Luke UMC
- 8:45 PM Ordination/Commissioning Reception, St. Luke UMC

Tuesday, June 4, 2019

- 8:30 AM Business Session (Clergy Voting for General Conference Delegates)
- 12:00 PM Lunch
- 2:00 PM Business Session (Laity Voting for General Conference Delegates)
- 5:45 PM Dinner Break

Wednesday, June 5, 2019

- 8:30 AM Business Session
- 11:45 AM Fixing the Appointments/Sending Forth
- 12:45 PM Adjournment

Banquets

If you have a group that would like to plan a banquet or special event, contact Lisa Marie Ming at lming@stlukeum.com or 706-256-1017. [Click here for a list of special events already planned.](#)

Displays

Display spaces are available to groups and agencies related to the South Georgia Conference. Other non-UM agencies and vendors also have the opportunity to set up displays. Please see the [display policy](#) for those prices and conditions. The display policy, as well as the registration form to reserve booth space, can be found at www.sgaumc.org/displays. Reservations for the space must be made by the May 1 deadline prior to the conference.

Registration

The registration fee for all pastors and lay members to Annual Conference is \$20. Retired clergy not serving a church are exempt from this fee. You will pay when you register at Annual Conference.

Expenses / Per diem

Clergy and lay delegates who represent a local church shall have their expenses (including registration) paid by the local church (this includes retired clergy who are serving a church). Lay delegates who represent an organization and extension ministers shall have their expenses paid by the organization they represent. Retired clergy not under appointment and clergy on disability shall receive a per diem of \$65 per day for each day attended. Lay members who do not represent a local church or conference organization shall receive a per diem on the same basis. Retired local pastors who are not serving a church do not retain their clergy status according to the *Book of Discipline*, and so do not qualify for a per diem.

Change in Lay Member

If there has been a change in the lay member representing your local church/charge, please make sure to pass this information onto the correct person. To let us know of the change, please log in to your church dashboard, www.sgaumc.org/dashboard, and make the change in the "My Church's Leaders" section. Please share the change with your district office as well.

Columbus Logistics

Hotels

Valley Hospitality in Columbus has secured over 600 rooms for our event. All of the hotels on the list will be providing shuttle service to the Convention & Trade Center. Rooms must be booked by May 1 to receive the discounted price. Valley Hospitality has created a [website just for South Georgia Conference United Methodists](#) to make booking your hotel easy and streamlined. For those who prefer to make reservations over the phone, they have provided the phone number for each hotel on the website. [Click here to view the list of hotels.](#)

Childcare

Childcare for infants through 5th-grade students will be provided by St. Luke UMC (1104 2nd Ave), located just blocks from the Convention Center, during this year's Annual Conference Session. Pre-registration for all childcare is REQUIRED. Deadline to register is Friday, April 12, 2019, so we know how to plan for crafts, materials, snacks, and lunch as well as to ensure our staffing is Safe Sanctuaries compliant. For all the details and to register, visit www.sgaumc.org/childcare or contact Hope Sims at hsims@stlukeum.com.

Elections Process

This year we will elect those who will serve as clergy and lay members of our conference's delegation to General and Jurisdictional Conferences. These individuals are servants who are elected to represent our annual conference in meetings and gatherings beyond the boundaries of the conference. Those elected will represent us for the coming four years (2020-2024). If you are interested in serving as a member of the delegation, you now have the opportunity to declare your interest.

- [Click here for more details about the elections process.](#)
- [Click here to declare your interest in serving on the delegation.](#)

Communications & Questions

Receiving the Communications Needed for the 2019 Annual Conference Session

As a delegate to Annual Conference, you will receive several important communications leading up to Annual Conference. The purpose of these communications is to inform you of the matters you need to know about the ministry of the church, its organization, and any decisions you will be asked to make during the conference session.

Most of the business items for the conference session are contained in the Book of Recommendations and Reports (BOR). Inside the BOR you'll find a complete conference agenda, driving and parking information, helpful annual conference information, detailed reports from conference ministries, pension and benefits recommendations, conference budgets, and much more. One of the purposes of the BOR is to allow you to read the recommendations and reports before you come to conference.

In May, the BOR will be made available in two ways. It will be made available for download as a PDF file at no cost, in its entirety or in sections, on our conference website (www.sgaumc.org/annualconference), and disseminated through other electronic means. You will also be able to purchase a professionally bound printed copy for around \$5.00 plus shipping through lulu.com. Ordering information will be provided when the BOR is ready. The Book of Recommendations will not be mailed nor will printed copies be available at the Annual Conference session. If you prefer a printed copy versus a digital download, you must print it at church, at home, or purchase one through lulu.com.

Please continue to visit www.sgaumc.org/annualconference often as we approach annual conference. Some reports that do not make the BOR publication deadline will only be available on the website. These reports will be important to have during the Annual Conference session.

Prior to arriving in Columbus, please download onto your digital device or print all the materials you want to have with you during the Annual Conference session.

Questions

For questions regarding the business of Annual Conference, please contact Dr. Nita Crump at nitac@sgaumc.com. For questions regarding local arrangements, please contact Maggie Roberson at maggie@stlukeum.com or 706-327-4343. For general inquiries, contact Kelly Roberson at kelly@sgaumc.com.

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Cantore comes to town for Conference Disaster Response event

By Kara Witherow, *Editor*

A popular meme states, “It’s never a good sign when Jim Cantore comes to town.”

Cantore, a meteorologist and on-air personality for The Weather Channel, is a famous figure in hurricane reporting and is well-known for being in the middle of the worst weather.

But on April 27, South Georgia residents have nothing to fear from Cantore. Instead of reporting from the eye of a hurricane he’ll be the keynote speaker at the Conference Discipleship Teams’ “Witnessing Through The Storm” event.

“Based on our experiences these past several years with hurricanes, straight-line winds, tornadoes, and flooding, responding to natural disasters feels like it has become our ‘new normal,’” said Allison Lindsey, Associate Director of Connectional Ministries. “During these times, churches have a tremendous opportunity to be a witness in their communities, and this event is designed to equip both individuals and congregations to be prepared and explore what their niche can be in their communities and throughout the connection.”

“Witnessing Through The Storm,” set for Saturday, April 27 at Cordele First United Methodist Church, will be a day of exploring the many ways individuals and churches can be prepared in the event of a natural disaster and “be the church” in their communities and throughout the world. An all-day event, it begins at 10 a.m. and ends at 4 p.m.

“This will be a day of equipping, inspiring, building capacity and preparing for our future impact in disaster response ministry,” Lindsey said. “The Conference Outreach and Missions teams are organizing this event for those who are seeking to learn more and are also offering advanced training for those who have been engaged in response ministries.”

In addition to Cantore, the day’s other special guests include Cathy Earl, UMCOR’s Director of Disaster Response and U.S. Partner Relations, and Jenny Phillips, Global Ministries’ Creation Care/Sustainable Development Program Manager.

The Conference Disaster Response Team will be collecting UMCOR hygiene kits and school kits the day of the event. [Click here](#) for information and instructions on assembling these kits.

[Click here for more information about the “Witnessing Through The Storm” event.](#)

[REGISTER HERE](#)

[Click here to download a PDF promotional flyer](#)

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God is moving in South Georgia

**FROM THE BISHOP
R. LAWSON BRYAN**

Where are we *Alive Together in Christ* in South Georgia? Where is God moving?

I want to share with you several specific answers to those questions. God is moving in the lives of those who are sensing a call to ordained ministry and who are responding to that call. For example, at our Annual Conference session in June, 11 people will be ordained or commissioned. That is one of the largest classes to be ordained/commissioned in several years. God is moving in the South Georgia Conference by calling men and women into ordained ministry. I know you will want to join me in prayers of thanksgiving to God for these 11 faithful people and in praying for even more to respond to God's call in the years ahead.

But that's not all.

God is moving among us in the lives of those who are responding to the call to become Certified Lay Ministers. A Certified Lay Minister is a church member who has received the kind of training that allows a district superintendent to assign that person to any of several possible roles: to conduct public worship, care for the congregation, assist in program leadership, develop new and existing faith communities, preach the Word, lead small groups, and more. Currently we have a large group of laity who are proceeding through the training. Certified Lay Minister training is ideal for the many laity in our churches who want to be equipped to respond to God's call without having to become ordained clergy. For more information on the [Certified Lay Minister program](#), contact the [Office of Connectional Ministries](#).

God is moving among young adults in South Georgia. I have been working with our district superintendents to increase the number of annual conference delegates who are under 40 years of age. Thanks to the young adults who have answered to the "call" to serve as At-Large delegates. Their response means that we will have a noticeable increase in young adults when we gather June 2-5 in Columbus. I expect this trend to grow each year as we "call" increasing number of young adults to serve as At-Large delegates.

God is moving among us in these very specific ways. Hallelujah!

Alive Together in Christ,

Lawson Bryan

Clarity in Uncertainty

LEADERSHIP REALLY MATTERS

ANNE BOSARGE

REV. JAY HANSON

Uncertainty is the world in which leaders live. The world of certainty is the world of managers. Their role is to eliminate the risk and standardize the process to ensure dependable, predictable results. If we do this it will produce that.

Leaders are not simply repeating what has already been proven. They are innovators exploring new territories, trying new things. There is no evidence to prove what will happen or if it will work. Leaders never have all the data they would like to make a perfectly informed decision. They have to become comfortable living in uncertainty but they can never be unclear. When a leader is unclear they are impossible to follow and if no one is following then they are no longer a leader.

So how can a leader be clear when they are uncertain? Let me be clear, I don't know, but I bet the key is:

1. Stay well informed.
 - Read as much as you can from as many different sources as you can. Listen to everyone. Think things through for yourself.
2. Keep the proper perspective.
 - Take the time to get away from whatever it is. Getting some distance helps bring things into focus.
3. Take care of yourself.
 - Your confidence goes up when you are on top of your game. So, eat right, exercise, and regularly pull away to invest in yourself.
4. Say it succinctly.
 - Decide what you think. Determine what you want to say. Say it.

Keep leading well.

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.

A Conversation With An Indian (continued)

JOHN WESLEY MOMENTS

DAVE HANSON

Q. How do you know the One above can destroy all your enemies?

A. From what I have seen. When our enemies came against us before, then the beloved clouds came for us. And often much rain, and sometimes hail, has come upon them, and that on a very hot day. And I saw, when many French and Choctaws and other nations came against one of our towns. And the ground made a noise under them, and the beloved ones in the air behind them. And they were afraid, and went away, and left their meat and drink and their guns. I tell no lie. All these I saw.

Q. Have you heard such noises at other times?

A. Yes, often; before and after almost every battle.

Q. What sort of noises were they?

A. Like the noise of drums and guns and shouting.

Q. Have you heard any such lately?

A. Yes, four days after our last battle with the French.

Q. Then you heard nothing before it?

A. The night before I dreamed; I hear many drums up there, and many trumpets there, and much stamping of feet and shouting. Till then I thought we should all die. But then I thought the beloved ones were come to help us. And the next day I heard above a hundred guns go off before the fight began. And I said, "When the sun is there, the beloved ones will help us, and we shall conquer our enemies." And we did so.

To be continued ...

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

Called to Mission

Spring Quarter: Discipleship and Mission

Unit 2: Call to Ministry

Sunday school lesson for the week of April 7, 2019

By Dr. Hal Brady

Lesson Scripture: Matthew 10:1-15

Key Verse: Matthew 10:1

Lesson Aims

1. Explain Jesus' mission instructions to the 12.
2. To learn to accept the authority Jesus gives us to further his mission.

The purpose of today's lesson is to learn to accept the authority Jesus gives us to further his mission.

It is generally understood that the writer of Matthew's Gospel used a great deal of material from Mark's Gospel, but also added five discourses that include specific teachings of Jesus. Perhaps the first discourse, which is the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), is the best known.

However, the second discourse begins at Matthew 9:35 and goes through Matthew 11:1. And it is this section that includes today's text. Matthew informs us that Jesus had compassion on the crowds who came to hear him "because they were troubled and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd" (Matthew 9:36).

Then Jesus pointed to the massive opportunity that existed and the need for assistance. He said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field" (Matthew 9:37,38).

Our lesson today immediately follows this call to prayer. The 12 disciples Jesus sent out were an important part of God's answer to that prayer.

Called to Imitate (Matthew 10:1-4)

Jesus calls his disciples to him. This is the first time in Matthew that these followers closest to Jesus are designated by the expression "twelve disciples." Matthew is the only New Testament writer to refer to the "twelve disciples" (11:1; 20:17), although the title "the twelve" occurs regularly elsewhere, almost two dozen times in the New Testament (example, Luke 9:1).

These 12 (named below) are the ones Jesus chooses to extend his ministry, which includes spiritual and physical healing. The word translated "disciples" occurs more than 250 times in the Gospels and Acts. It refers to those who subscribe to the lessons and lifestyle of a great teacher (Matthew 10:24, 25; Luke 6:40). The common practice is to live alongside one's teacher in order to imitate the Master's behavior. So Jesus called his 12 disciples and empowered them to carry out the same kind of ministry in which he had been engaged.

In the same verse of our text (10:1), the action verb "called" is now followed by the action verb "gave." Prior to sending the Twelve on their mission, Jesus empowered them to do the same miracles they have seen him do (Matthew 4:23, 24). If God's will is to be done on earth as in Heaven (Matthew 6:10) – and it shall indeed be done in fullness on earth when Christ returns – then there should be no impure spirits or disease or sickness. And the message that is to accompany the exercise of power over there is described in Matthew 10:7.

Next, Matthew lists the names of the Twelve. Alongside the rare designation "twelve disciples" is the equally rare phrase "twelve apostles." The meaning of the noun is "messenger," which is how the word is translated in John 13:16. The fact that this is the first time the Twelve are called "Apostles" is quite appropriate since this is the first instance of Jesus sending them to preach his message.

Now, the term “apostle” has a significantly different meaning than “disciple.” The latter designates anyone who has believed in Jesus, while “apostle” designates one who has been commissioned to be his representative or envoy or ambassador. This is basically the role of the Twelve. As disciples, the Twelve are examples of what Jesus accomplishes in all believers; as apostles, the Twelve are set aside as the leaders within the new movement.

There are four listings of the Twelve in the Bible: Matthew 10:2-4, Mark 3:16-19, Luke 6:13, and (lacking Judas the betrayer) Acts 1:13. The names in verse 2 of our text are always the top four in those lists, which seems to indicate their importance related to the other eight. Peter, James, and John are sometimes referred to as Jesus’ inner circle, being privileged to witness things the others are not (The Transfiguration, Matthew 17:1-9; the raising of a young girl from the dead, Mark 5:37-42; and Gethsemane, Mark 14:32-36).

However, the listings of the Twelve are consistent in that Simon Peter is always listed first; Philip is always listed fifth; and James, son Alpheus, is always listed ninth. The three names following each of those three are always the same (with Judas Iscariot absent from Acts 1:13), although their ordering differs.

Suffice it to say here that the collective identity of the Twelve Apostles is perhaps more significant than their individual biographies. All are close associates of Jesus. They are familiar with his lifestyle, teachings, and methods of ministry. They are therefore well prepared to continue and expand his work.

Important to remember is that these were ordinary men who were called by an extraordinary God. These Twelve didn’t come from great social standing, fabulous wealth, or superior academic background. They were just ordinary people called to serve Christ.

Someone correctly stated that “Jesus is looking not so much for extraordinary persons, but for ordinary persons who do ordinary things in extraordinary ways.” The work of the kingdom is done by ordinary persons, and that is comforting to me and should be to you.

Years ago, one of the youth groups in a church I served put on “Jesus Christ Superstar” in nine other churches around the conference. One young lady got up one night after the performance and told a church full of strangers, “I wandered away, but the youth group brought me back.” As I said, the work of the kingdom is done by ordinary people.

Commissioned to Do (Matthew 10:5-15)

Jesus begins with a surprising prohibition: “Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel.” The mission is shockingly restricted to Jewish Galilee, which was surrounded on all sides by Gentiles except to the south, where lay Samaria. The expression “the lost sheep of Israel” denotes all Israel being called to make a decision about the gospel of the kingdom.

Jesus was so inclusive! How could he have possibly made that statement? Here is Jesus, in the scripture, talking to a woman from Samaria and telling immortal stories of a good Samaritan.

Here is Jesus healing the daughter of a Syro-Phoenician woman and again, “Go into all the world and make disciples of all nations...” Jesus was so inclusive; how could he possibly have made that statement, “Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Go rather to the last sheep Israel.”

Certainly one person who would understand why Jesus said that was an officer in the military. This person would understand that you have to limit your objective if you are going to be successful. You don't attack on all fronts at the same time.

When I lived in Dallas, Texas, they were having mammoth problems in certain areas of the city. So someone came up with the “Adopt a Block” program – one block at a time, minister to the needs, find out what the needs are, minister to those needs, work on healing, stop the crime, help the people economically, then move on to another block. The first thing we knew, the kingdom of God came among the “Adopt a Block” program.

To be sure, the instruction Jesus gives is not ethnic or racial discrimination. Jesus has a plan that includes an offer of the gospel to everyone. But the plan must unfold in an orderly, focused way. The plan's progression is later laid out for the apostles as witnessing “in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8; Romans 1:16; 2:9, 10). At this point, the focus is on restoring and renewing the Israelite people.

The number 12, for its part, corresponds symbolically to the 12 tribes of Israel. Since the forthcoming mission focuses on calling Israel to return to God, it is fitting that Jesus chooses 12 envoys to extend his ministry.

As we know from scripture, Jesus often proclaimed, “Here comes the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 4:17). The message he gave the Twelve to proclaim was a consistent extension of his own message and that of John the Baptist (Matthew 3:1). The message itself doesn't change, only the messengers.

However, even at Jesus' death, the disciples didn't seem to “get it.” These new recruits Jesus was sending out in Matthew 10 certainly did not fully understand all the theological implications of Jesus' proclamation regarding the kingdom of heaven.

In addition to proclaiming the kingdom of heaven is near, the disciples were to minister to the physical, spiritual, and psychological needs of those they encountered on their way. And the clear instructions Jesus gave to his disciples are also instructions for those of us who want to follow him today as well. The point is, God cares when we are sick, lonely, hungry, depressed, or overcome with bills we struggle to pay. Consequently, Jesus instructed his disciples to heal the sick, raise the dead, and cast our demons (evil powers). And the instructions or mission have not changed. “Empower us, oh God!”

Among other instructions, Jesus told his disciples to travel lightly. Jesus made it clear that his followers must never place great value on material goods. While rejecting materialism, Jesus did expect his followers to support those who responded to his call and dedicated their lives to serve him. He and his disciples received the support of others (example, Luke 8:2-3).

While the Twelve are not to solicit money for their preaching and healing ministry, they are allowed to accept room and board. They should expect this from those to whom they minister (Luke 10:7; I Corinthians 9:14). “Worthy” does not refer to people who are unusually spiritual, but rather to those who are receptive to the disciples’ message and willing to provide hospitality (3 John: 5-8).

Then Jesus encouraged his disciples to be careful about whose hospitality they accepted. Since they would not always be known by the locals and had little time to establish their own reputation, the reputation of those they associated with was crucial. And since they accepted someone’s hospitality, they were to stay with those people and not move around seeking more luxurious accommodations.

Verse 12 says, “As you enter the home, give it your greeting.” This verse envisions that the disciples will take their message from door to door in each new village. As they enter a house, they are to invoke the usual Jewish form of greeting: “Peace [shalom] be on this house.”

“Shaking the dust from one’s feet” was a visual demonstration that one was finished with trying to communicate with or minister to someone. Paul and Barnabas shook the dust off their feet when they were driven out of the city of Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 13:51).

In verse 15 we see that there is judgment for rejecting the mission. “I tell you the truth, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.” The preaching of the gospel becomes for Israel a threat as well as a promise. Those who have been exposed to Jesus’ ministry and the witness of the disciples have greater responsibility for the privilege (Matthew 11:20-24).

So Jesus warned that those who failed to welcome his messengers invited a worse faith than those in “the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on Judgment Day, whose land was destroyed for their lack of hospitality (Genesis 19).”

The situation is urgent! The time of Jesus’ earthly ministry is short, and both the blessings of the kingdom and the punishment of judgement are riding on the decision of Israel.

Seeing the Need

Our text tells us that Jesus gave his disciples the authority to carry out the mission they had been given. Jesus also sends us out to touch the lives of hurting, broken people who need to hear the good news about God’s compassion and willingness to forgive. Question: are we committed to the same kind of holistic ministry to which Jesus calls his disciples, and do we trust God’s Spirit to empower us? If so, the harvest is plentiful!

Action Plan

1. What are some of the ways to live out our own discipleship better as people sent by God?
2. Which will be more important in presenting the gospel, the accuracy of the presentation or the perception that we are acting in the other person’s best interest? Explain your answer.

3. What can modern Christians and church do to demonstrate that God's kingdom is present and active in the world?

Resources for this lesson:

“2018-2019 Standard Lesson NIV Commentary,” Uniform Series “International Bible Lessons for Christian Teaching,” pages 273-280

“The NIV Application Commentary, Matthew” by Michael J. Wilkins, pages 382-391

“Adult Bible Studies, Spring 2019, Discipleship and Mission, Teacher, Uniform Series,” by Gary Thompson, pages 52-58

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Called to Remember

Spring Quarter: Discipleship and Mission

Unit 2: Call to Ministry

Sunday school lesson for the week of April 14, 2019

By Dr. Hal Brady

Lesson Scripture: Matthew 26:1-13

Key Verse: Matthew 26:13

Lesson Aims

3. Locate events within Jesus' final week.
4. Contrast the religious leaders' hostility toward Jesus with Mary's expression of love for him.

It is reported that back in 1912 President William Howard Taft was attending a Washington Senators baseball game. After the top of the seventh inning was completed, Taft (a rather large man) was feeling a bit tired, so he stood up to stretch. On seeing the President of the United States stand, those nearby did the same. Soon everyone in the ball park was standing. Thus began a tradition that is still observed at baseball games today: the seventh-inning stretch.

Now, President Taft had no intention of creating a tradition. All he wanted to do was take a break from sitting. Yet his simple act had lasting consequences. And the same is true of the woman in today's lesson. For sure, she did not intend for her act to be “noted in history,” but it was and is. In referring to her act, Jesus said in our ‘key verse,’ “I tell you the truth, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her” (Matthew 26:13).

Before proceeding, let's look at the lesson's context, which is the Passover. The Passover was and still is one of the most important Jewish festivals. Jews celebrate it to commemorate their liberation from slavery in ancient Egypt. To encourage Pharaoh to release the Jews, God sent 10 plagues upon the Egyptians. The last and most horrible of the plagues was the death of Egypt's firstborn. In order to be spared, the Jews were instructed to mark their doorposts with the blood of a slaughtered spring lamb. When this sign was present, the death angel would pass over their home and spare their firstborn.

As we are aware, today is Palm Sunday, the day we remember Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem (John 12:13). That event occurred early in the time frame of what has come to be called Passion week or Jesus' final week. The teachings and events of this week are so important that more than a third of Matthew's Gospel centers on just these few days. And it is likely that the Passion narrative was the first part of the Gospel story that was put together in some organized fashion.

Our lesson today takes us about midway into this week, after Jesus and many others have already arrived in Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. The origin of this single-day observance and the weeklong Feast of Unleavened Bread that accompanies it can be found in several Old Testament scripture passages (example, see Exodus 12:6, 15-20, 43-49).

Jesus is Hated (Matthew (26:1-5))

Matthew 24 and 25 records the fifth and final discourse or "sermon" of Jesus in this Gospel. The phrase "all these things" in verse one of our text refers to Jesus' teaching in these two previous chapters concerning the distant future.

Having finished his Olivet Discourse, Jesus spends that evening again in Bethany, where they spent each evening of Holy Week (Matthew 21:1,17). In just two days they will go back to Jerusalem for the final hours of Jesus' earthly life and mission. Speaking in dramatic fashion, Jesus declares to his disciples, "As you know, the Passover is two days away – and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified (Matthew 26:2).

Jesus has spoken to his disciples of his coming death at least three times to this point (Matthew 16:21; 17:22, 23; 20:17-19). Two of those three times included, as here, predictions of betrayal and crucifixion.

Although this prediction before us is briefer than the others, Jesus connects his death with the celebration of Passover. Later, Paul recognizes the spiritual significance by referring to Jesus as "our Passover Lamb" (I Corinthians 5:7).

The phrase "Son of Man" is the most used designation for Jesus in the Gospels (about 80 times) other than the name "Jesus" itself (which occurs more than 900 times).

While Matthew informs us that it was the chief priests and elders of the people who gathered in Caiaphas' courtyard to plot against Jesus, Mark writes that it was the chief priests and legal experts, as does Luke.

At any rate, Joseph Caiaphas, his full name, was the high priest. He was the son-in-law of Annas, who had also served as high priest A.D. 6-15, and had managed to keep that office of high priest in his family. Obviously, Annas still wielded much influence.

Caiaphas, however, was appointed high priest in A.D. 18 by the Roman prefect Valerius Gratus, Pontius Pilate's predecessor. He maintained the position until he was deposed in A.D. 36 by Roman authorities. Because the Roman governor appointed and deposed the high priests, the office was essentially a political one and apparently Caiaphas was a shrewd politician and knew how to manipulate it well. And, of course, since the high priests were under the rule of the Romans, the people serving in this position had to keep Rome satisfied with their performance. There could be no upheaval whatsoever.

Now, to meet where the high priest resides rather than in the temple area where the council normally convenes may be attributed to the secretive nature of what is being discussed. One theory is that the meeting is held here in the event that it lasts well into the night, since night meetings are not allowed in the temple area.

The group plotting to kill Jesus agreed that it would not be wise to arrest him during the Passover. Thousands of Jews who had been dispersed to other parts of this world would return to their homeland during this important time. Moreover, there was a tradition that the Messiah would appear during Passover.

In addition, Matthew tells us that Jesus' presence in the city had already caused an uproar: "When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up" (Matthew 21:10). And any rebellion by the people would have meant Caiaphas' job as high priest.

Therefore, when Judas later went to Caiaphas with his offer, the high priest realized it was an opportunity that could not be ignored.

Jesus Is Honored (Matthew 26:6-13)

In several places in his Passion narrative, Matthew indicates that the people wanted Jesus to take political control of the nation and lead a rebellion against the Romans. This is rather obvious by their actions as Jesus rode a donkey into the city and a large crowd "spread their clothes on the road and "cut palm branches off the trees and spread them on the road." At the same time, they shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest! Matthew 21:8-9).

The account of the woman who poured perfume on Jesus' head is also found in the Gospels of Mark and John (Mark 14:3-9; John 12: 1-8). Luke's Gospel also has a similar story that some believe may have originally been the same occasion, but several details are different, perhaps changed with years of telling (Luke 7:37).

At any rate, John identifies the woman as Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, and this event took place six days before Passover, not the two days recorded in Matthew. John also adds that Mary, Martha and Lazarus' sister, anointed Jesus' feet, not his head.

The designation “Simon the Leper” is not to be taken that this man still has leprosy. Rather, it is likely that he is one of the many lepers already healed (Matthew 8:2,3; 10:8; 11:4,5). Otherwise unhealed or unclean lepers were required to live away from the common population. And here was Simon the Leper hosting a feast with Jesus, Mary, Martha, Lazarus and others.

We are told that during the meal Mary approaches Jesus carrying an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, “which she poured on his head as he was reclining at the table.” The perfume Mary uses is pure nard (Mark 14:3; John 12:3), an oil extracted from the root of the nard plant grown in India. This is not a typical household oil for anointing, but an expensive perfume oil used for a solemn and special act of devotion. And by breaking the flask, Mary demonstrates that she is not just pouring a few drops to enhance the aroma of the feast but is performing the highest act of consecration to Jesus, even anointing his feet (John 12:3).

Verse 8, our text says, “When the disciples saw this, they were indignant. ‘Why this waste?’ they asked.” John’s account tells us that it is Judas Iscariot who is the most vocal in objecting. He even provides an estimate of the perfume’s value: “worth a year’s wages” (300 hundred denarii, or top dollar). This perfume or ointment could have been sold and all that money given to the poor. What a waste! That was the criticism of Mary!

And right here we see the rule! According to the “World Book Dictionary,” “a rule is a statement of what to do and not to do. A rule is a principle governing conduct or action.” The rule is that people of faith are to help command you to be open-handed toward your brothers and toward the poor and needy in your land (Deuteronomy 15:11). And Jesus added, “I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me (Matthew 25:40). There is no teaching of Jesus more consistently proclaimed than that we care for the poor.

But even though Mary fully understood the rule, nevertheless, she suspended it! Hadn’t she previously listened to Jesus? Of course she understood the rule. But before her, this very minute, sits someone she dearly loves who was in terrible need. So Mary suspended the rule. She leaves the table and momentarily returns with a costly perfume, the most valuable possession she has, and pours it over Jesus’ head.

In reality, that’s the way love is, and love is not the same in every situation. Love does extravagant things.

I read about a well-known author who sent a struggling young author a scarf and a bottle of perfume. The note she sent along said, “I thought you needed a little bit of spoiling.”

Now, Jesus understood what Judas and the other disciples did not. Jesus realized that something was about to happen that would never be repeated. Some things have to be done when the opportunity arises or they will never be accomplished. Jesus knows that the poor would always be a reality and that they could always have the opportunity to help. And they always should help. But Jesus knew he was about to die, and there was only this one chance to anoint his body (prepare his body for burial).

The truth is, many people have misinterpreted Jesus’ words in verse 11 as an excuse not to help the poor. This is not what Jesus meant at all. As pointed out previously, not to help the poor

conflicts with so many of Jesus' teachings and examples. In this case, Jesus meant that the disciples would have the rest of their lives to help the poor. That is the rule of faithful people. "But you will not always have me," he said.

In verse 13, Jesus states, "I tell you the truth, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her." Regardless of what Mary may or may not have understood about Jesus' impending burial, she cannot foresee what Jesus now says about her action. Her demonstration of her devotion to Jesus, though scorned by most who witness it, will be cited as exemplary and praiseworthy.

To me, this story of Mary's extravagant love makes three things clear:

LOVE LISTENS!

LOVE LIBERATES!

LOVE LINGERS!

It's true isn't it? A lovely deed on life does, in fact, become the possession of the whole world. It adds to the beauty of life itself.

In conclusion, someone said of Mother Teresa, "She gave herself to Christ and through Him to her neighbor. This was the end of her biography and the beginning of her life." Love lingers!

Action Plan

4. What did Jesus mean when he said, "you always have the poor with you?"
5. What does today's scripture lesson mean for us? How do we apply it to our own lives?
6. How do we encourage one another to worship and serve? We note the example of Jesus encouraging Mary when she was criticized.
7. What are some extravagant gifts that we can demonstrate our love for Jesus openly?

Resources for this lesson:

"2018-2019 Standard Lesson NIV Commentary," Uniform Series "International Bible Lessons for Christian Teaching," pages 281-288

"The NIV Application Commentary, Matthew" by Michael J. Wilkins, pages 823-830

"Adult Bible Studies, Spring 2019, Discipleship and Mission, Teachers, Uniform Series," by Gary Thompson, pages 59-66

"The Gospel of Matthew" by William Barclay, pages 361-366

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Retired Clergy Birthdays – April

4/01 – Edgar Chance: PO Box 524; Wrens, GA 30833
4/01 – Danny Treadway: 1417 Peabody Dr.; Maryville, TN 37803
4/03 – Jennifer Sherling: 2447 Tuxedo Place; Albany, GA 31707
4/05 – O.C. Dean, Jr.: 265 Three Oaks Dr.; Athens, GA 30607
4/05 – Kay Stanaland: PO Box 905; Murrells Inlet, SC 29576
4/07 – Jim Hamlin: 322 S. Houston Springs Blvd.; Perry, GA 31069
4/08 – Terry DeLoach: 209 Dixie St.; Brooklet, GA 30415
4/09 – Sandra Henry: 111 Laurel Overlook; Canton, GA 30114
4/09 – Glenn McCranie: PO Box 493; Grandy, NC 27939
4/12 – Tim Bagwell: 192 Barrington Hall Dr.; Macon, GA 31220
4/12 – Gerald Goodman: 260 Bel Air Rd.; Tallahassee, FL 32305
4/15 – Leigh Ann Raynor: 212 Torrington Blvd.; Thomasville, GA 31757
4/16 – Nick Hazelton: 517 Ferncliff Terrace; Macon, GA 31204
4/16 – Wesley Kaylor: 855 Chokee Rd.; DeSoto, GA 31743
4/16 – Barbara Nelson: 1106 Merrill Dr.; Dublin, GA 31021
4/16 – Tom Nichols: 414 Cardinal St.; Pooler, GA 31322
4/16 – Jimmy Sharp: 2225 Teate Rd.; Vienna, GA 31092
4/18 – Frances Howell: PO Box 658; Midway, GA 31320
4/19 – Betty Sue Brantley: 210 Moseley St.; Vidalia, GA 30474
4/22 – Fred Maddox: 200 Highland Rd.; Statesboro, GA 30458
4/24 – Willie Lucas: 607 Holloway Ave.; Albany, GA 31701
4/25 – James McLendon: 151 Sullivan Dr.; Homer, GA 30547
4/27 – B.J. Funk: PO Box 187; Chula, GA 31733
4/28 – Bert Alexander: PO Box 964; Pine Mountain, GA 31822
4/28 – Mike McAfee: 3 Porchester Ct.; Columbus, GA 31907
4/29 – Sam Watkins: 1937 E. DeRenne Ave., Savannah, GA 31406
4/30 – Don Kea: 5300 Zebulon Rd., Garden Home 20; Macon, GA 31210

Scripture Readings – April 2

April 7

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Isaiah 43:16-21

Psalm 126 (UMH 847)

Philippians 3:4b-14

John 12:1-8

April 14***Passion/Palm Sunday****Palm Service*

Luke 19:28-40

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29 (UMH 839)

Passion Service

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Psalm 31:9-16 (UMH 839)

Philippians 2:5-11

Luke 22:14-23:56 or Luke 23:1-49

April 15***Monday of Holy Week***

Isaiah 42:1-9

Psalm 36:5-11 (UMH 771)

Hebrews 9:11-15

John 12:1-11

April 16***Tuesday of Holy Week***

Isaiah 49:1-7

Psalm 71:1-14 (UMH 794)

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

John 12:20-36

April 17***Wednesday of Holy Week***

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Psalm 70 (UMH 793)

Hebrews 12:1-3

John 13:12-32

April 18***Holy Thursday***

Exodus 12:1-4 (5-10) 11-14

Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19 (UMH 837)

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

John 13:1-17, 31b-35

April 19***Good Friday***

Isaiah 52:13-53-12

Psalm 22 (UMH 752)
Hebrews 10:16-25
John 18:1-19:42

April 20

Holy Saturday

Job 14:1-14
Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16 (UMH 764)
1 Peter 4:1-8
Matthew 27:57-66 or John 19:38-42

April 21

Easter Sunday

Acts 10:34-43
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 (UMH 839)
1 Corinthians 15:19-26
John 20:1-18 or Luke 24:1-12

Events in the South Georgia Conference – 4/2/2019 edition

Sexual Ethics Workshop – April 9

According to the Conference Sexual Ethics policy, this workshop is REQUIRED EVERY (3) THREE YEARS for any person serving under appointment by the bishop (clergy, local pastors, extension ministers, appointed lay speakers). 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.

Eagles' Spring Picnic – April 25

The South Georgia Eagles (the Conference's retired ministers and spouses) will host a Spring Picnic for all retirees at McRae First UMC Thursday, April 25 at noon. The men of McRae First UMC will prepare a fish dinner for all and attendees are asked to bring dessert or salad fixings. The program will be the hilarious Jacki Beasley impersonating "Miss Busy Body." Come as you are and enjoy the food and fellowship. Contact Dr. Charles E. Cravey at drrev@msn.com for more information.

United Methodist Men Annual Retreat – April 26-27

The South Georgia United Methodist Men will gather for their annual retreat April 26-27 at Epworth By The Sea on St. Simons Island. [Download the brochure](#) I [Click here for housing registration](#)

Wesley Glen Ministries' Fish Fry – April 27

Wesley Glen's annual Fish Fry event is the place to be for good food, music, and great fellowship. Join them for a fun-filled day on April 27 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.! For more information, visit www.wesleyglenministries.com/fish-fry.

Witnessing Through The Storm – April 27

The South Georgia Conference has experienced multiple catastrophic events in the past three years and churches have been actively engaged in their own communities and beyond to meet the needs of those impacted by these storms. United Methodists have been a beacon of light during dark skies by being the hands and feet of Jesus Christ – before, during, and after the storms. Join the Conference Discipleship Teams Saturday, April 27 for “Witnessing Through The Storm,” a day of exploring the many ways individuals and churches can be prepared in the event of a natural disaster and “be the church” in their communities and throughout the world. This will be a day of equipping, inspiring, building capacity and preparing for our future impact in disaster response ministry. Special guests include Cathy Earl, UMCOR, US Disaster Response & Partner Relations, and Jenny Phillips, Global Ministries, Creation Care Program Manager/Sustainable Development. The training will be held from 10 am. – 4 p.m. at Cordele First United Methodist Church. The cost is \$25 per person and includes lunch. [Click here for more information, including the day's schedule.](#)

Early Response Team Training, Columbus – May 4

An ERT Training (only) will be held Saturday, May 4 at Epworth UMC in Columbus. The training will run from 8:30 a.m. until 2 p.m. 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. To schedule an ERT training/chainsaw training, contact Luis Morales at morhill@gmail.com. [REGISTER](#)

Native American Ministries Sunday – May 5

On Native American Ministries Sunday, United Methodists cultivate and support urban missions with Native Americans and fund scholarships for Native American seminarians. Your annual conference retains 50 percent of the offering is to strengthen and develop Native American ministries. However, if no Native American ministries exist in the conference, the entire offering is remitted to the General Council on Finance and Administration for Native American ministries in other areas. The remaining 50 percent of the offering expands mission work with the Native American Urban Initiative and provides scholarships for Native Americans attending United Methodist and other approved schools of theology. Is it easier to learn Native American traditions from a Native American or an Irish American? This is why the Native American

Ministries Sunday offering is critical – to continue the traditions and nurture the gifts of Native Americans. [Click here for resources to help promote this special Sunday.](#)

Magnolia Manor Sunday – May 12

Magnolia Manor is a South Georgia Conference ministry that serves older adults of all faiths in eight locations throughout South Georgia. On this Special Sunday, South Georgia United Methodists are asked to take up a special offering to support this vital ministry. To learn more about Magnolia Manor visit www.magnoliamanor.com.

South Georgia Annual Conference session, Columbus – June 2-5

The 2019 South Georgia Annual Conference session will be held June 2-5, 2019, at the Columbus Georgia Convention & Trade Center in Columbus, Ga. All information related to the annual conference session will be posted on the conference website, www.sgaumc.org/annualconference.

Camp Connect: High School Camp – June 10-14

Students entering grades 9-12 as well as graduating seniors are eligible for High School Camp. Tailored toward the unique time in a high school student's life, this week of camp is filled with fun activities and opportunities to grow closer to Christ through daily worship, Bible study, and fellowship. Campers will enjoy the beach, pool, art, hilarious morning shows, and evenings of camp-wide games and worship. Stay tuned as more activities are in the works! High School Camp is held at Epworth By The Sea on St. Simons Island and will begin at 3 p.m. on Monday and conclude at 11 a.m. on Friday (no lunch will be provided on Friday). Campers will stay in a cabin for the week. Counselors are provided. Visit www.campconnectumc.org for all the details and [to register](#). Contact the Office of Connectional Ministries at (912) 638-8626 with any questions.

Wesley Glen Day – June 16

Celebrate Wesley Glen Day by wearing your new t-shirt to church on Father's Day. Share photos of you and your church friends to let everyone know that you support the United Methodist ministry for adults with developmental disabilities in the South Georgia Conference. www.wesleyglenministries.com.

Peace with Justice Sunday – June 16

Peace with Justice Sunday enables The United Methodist Church to have a voice in advocating for peace and justice through a broad spectrum of global programs. [Click here for resources to help promote this special Sunday.](#)

Camp Connect: Middle School Camp 1 – June 17-21

Middle School Camps, intended for rising 6th-8th grade students, are filled with a week's worth of fun activities and opportunities to grow closer to Christ through daily worship, Bible study, and fellowship. Campers will enjoy the beach, pool, crafts, games galore, hilarious morning shows, and evenings of camp-wide games and worship. Both Middle School Camps are held at Epworth

By The Sea on St. Simons Island and will begin at 3 p.m. on Monday and conclude at 11 a.m. on Friday (no lunch will be provided on Friday). Campers will stay in a cabin for the week. Counselors are provided. Visit www.campconnectumc.org for all the details and [to register](#). Contact the Office of Connectional Ministries at (912) 638-8626 with any questions.

Camp Connect: Middle School Camp 2 – June 24-28

Middle School Camps, intended for rising 6th-8th grade students, are filled with a week's worth of fun activities and opportunities to grow closer to Christ through daily worship, Bible study, and fellowship. Campers will enjoy the beach, pool, crafts, games galore, hilarious morning shows, and evenings of camp-wide games and worship. Both Middle School Camps are held at Epworth By The Sea on St. Simons Island and will begin at 3 p.m. on Monday and conclude at 11 a.m. on Friday (no lunch will be provided on Friday). Campers will stay in a cabin for the week. Counselors are provided. Visit www.campconnectumc.org for all the details and [to register](#). Contact the Office of Connectional Ministries at (912) 638-8626 with any questions.

Camp Connect: Elementary Camp 1 – July 8-12

Elementary Camps, intended for rising 4th-5th grade students, are filled with a week's worth of fun activities and opportunities to grow closer to Christ through daily worship, Bible study, and fellowship. Campers will enjoy the beach, pool, art, games galore, hilarious morning shows, and evenings of camp-wide games and worship. All camps are held at Epworth By The Sea on St. Simons Island and will begin at 3 p.m. on Monday and conclude at 11 a.m. on Friday (no lunch will be provided on Friday). Campers will stay in a cabin for the week. Counselors are provided. Visit www.campconnectumc.org for all the details and [to register](#). Contact the Office of Connectional Ministries at (912) 638-8626 with any questions.

YOUTH2019 – July 10-14

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](#)

Camp Connect: Elementary Camp 2 – July 15-18

Elementary Camps, intended for rising 4th-5th grade students, are filled with a week's worth of fun activities and opportunities to grow closer to Christ through daily worship, Bible study, and fellowship. Campers will enjoy the beach, pool, art, games galore, hilarious morning shows, and evenings of camp-wide games and worship. All camps are held at Epworth By The Sea on St. Simons Island and will begin at 3 p.m. on Monday and conclude at 11 a.m. on Friday (no lunch will be provided on Friday). Campers will stay in a cabin for the week. Counselors are provided.

Visit www.campconnectumc.org for all the details and to [register](#). Contact the Office of Connectional Ministries at (912) 638-8626 with any questions.

Georgia United Methodist Pastors' School – July 15-18

The 2019 Georgia Pastors' School is set for July 15-18 at Epworth By The Sea on St. Simons Island. Georgia Pastors' School provides inspiration, education, fellowship, fun, and relaxation for North and South Georgia clergy and their families. The school is supported by the tuition of attendees, an endowment established by the board of managers, an annual gift from the North Georgia Conference, and the generous contributions of our sponsors who provide refreshments during breaks and fellowship times. The school is managed by pastors for pastors from both the North and South Georgia Conferences. Active and retired United Methodist clergy and their families are cordially invited to experience this combination of continuing education and personal renewal. More details can be found at www.georgiapastorsschool.org.