

SOUTH GEORGIA ADVOCATE – MAY 7 EDITION

Vineville UMC youth builds picnic tables for Wesley Glen to earn Eagle rank

By Kara Witherow, *Editor*

On warm, sunny days, Wesley Glen's 40 residents enjoy eating picnic lunches.

They're now able to, thanks to 18-year-old Joshua Asbell, who recently managed the fundraising, design, and production of 10 picnic tables to earn Boy Scouts' highest rank.

Asbell, a senior at Macon's Howard High School and a member of Vineville United Methodist Church, is the fourth Asbell to earn the Eagle Scout rank. His father, Dr. Jimmy Asbell, older brother Jimmy, and uncle have all achieved the prestigious rank.

"It's consistent with our faith values of service above self, working for the common good, thinking ahead, and being prepared," said Dr. Asbell, who also noted the Boy Scouts' strong faith component. "It's part of who our family was and is, and I wanted our boys to have the opportunity."

During his time in Boy Scouts, Joshua has been a part of three different troops in three separate United Methodist churches. He started in Cub Scouts at Bonaire United Methodist Church and then moved to Warner Robins where he was involved with Scout Troop 550 at Christ United Methodist Church. In Macon, he's been a member of Troop 170 at Forest Hills United Methodist Church.

Scouting has been a fun experience, Joshua said, and has afforded him the opportunity to attend camp, go on hiking trips, whitewater raft, and more.

"They have so much to offer and you can be in it for seven years and do a new thing each time," he said. "It opens up what you can do."

Joshua's older brother Jimmy encouraged him to finish his Eagle Scout project and his mother, Vanda, who works at Wesley Glen, saw the ministry's need for new picnic tables.

The Eagle Scout Service Project, or simply Eagle Project, is the opportunity for a Boy Scout to demonstrate leadership of others while performing a project for the benefit of his community. A component of the project is fundraising, and Joshua visited Vineville UMC's Sunday school classes to ask members to donate in honor of someone or towards Wesley Glen Ministries. Members were generous in supporting his project and Wesley Glen, Joshua said.

"We raised more than enough to build the 10 picnic tables and I was even able to make a donation to Wesley Glen," he said.

The project involved more than just fundraising and assembling a few picnic tables, Dr. Asbell said. It involved working with Wesley Glen, ordering supplies, and coordinating volunteers.

“The project is supposed to be not just the production, but the leadership involved in having your goals accomplished,” he said. The actual building of the picnic tables took a crew of about 15 Boy Scout volunteers and a few parents two days.

The tables were a huge blessing to Wesley Glen, said Julie Rogers, Wesley Glen Ministries’ Director of Development. Placed in a central location behind Wesley Glen’s Life Skills Center, they replaced some older, unsafe, unused tables and give residents a place to eat and socialize.

“We do so many projects and fun things outside, and we really wanted a place for them to be able to congregate together,” she said. “They can now have a picnic lunch most days. We are so thankful that Joshua chose us and that he built something that we can use for years to come.”

Only four percent of Boy Scouts earn the 21 merit badges, serve the 18 hours, and complete the other requirements to earn the Eagle Scout rank. While proud to have accomplished his goal, Joshua Asbell is just as gratified to have continued a family tradition and to have helped others.

“It’s amazing to see the smiles on the faces of the residents,” he said. “Just to know that I’m helping them is a great feeling.”

South Georgia prepares for 2019 Annual Conference session

Nearly 1,000 South Georgia United Methodists will gather June 2-5 at [The Columbus Georgia Convention & Trade Center](#) to worship, fellowship, vote for delegates, and discuss the future of the South Georgia Conference.

Meeting under the theme, “Alive Together in the World,” the 2019 Annual Conference session will celebrate how South Georgia churches have connected with their communities in creative ways.

“We introduced ‘Alive Together in the World’ one year ago at the conclusion of Annual Conference 2018,” Bishop R. Lawson Bryan said. “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.”

Many South Georgians will recognize the conference’s opening worship service preacher, Bishop Richard Looney. Bishop Looney, who will preach Sunday evening, served as South Georgia’s bishop for 12 years, from 1988 until 2000.

Dr. Gil Rendle, whose research focuses on how to have an effective witness for Christ in a changing culture, will lead the conference’s four teaching sessions. Dr. Rendle also worked as a consultant for The UMC’s Commission on a Way Forward and is author of “Quietly Courageous: Leading the Church in a Changing World.”

On Monday, June 3, the conference will recognize those retiring and, during the Memorial Service, celebrate the lives of South Georgia clergy and clergy spouses who have died during the past year. Rev. Cleo Gilchrist, pastor of Grace United Methodist Church in Brunswick, will preach. Eleven people will be ordained or commissioned Monday evening, and Bishop Bryan will be the preacher for the service of ordination and commissioning.

Additional times for worship and fellowship have been built into the schedule, and time will also be devoted to considering the outcome of General Conference and voting on several of the decisions made during the Feb. 23-26, 2019, called special session of the General Conference.

“I will also share specific steps we can take to be Alive Together in Christ over the coming conference year,” Bishop Bryan said.

Also during this year’s annual conference session, clergy and lay delegates to the 2020 General and Jurisdictional Conferences will be elected. Those interested in becoming a delegate may find more information and fill out a form [here](#). Those who have declared their interest in serving as members of the delegation may be viewed online [here](#).

“The election of these delegates is important because they will represent us at General Conference next May and at the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference the following July,” Bishop Bryan said. “This role involves months of preparation as well as a total of three weeks of time devoted to these conferences. May our laity and clergy choose delegates who represent the broad array of persons, talent, and commitment that characterize the South Georgia Conference at its best.

During the 2019 Annual Conference session, South Georgia United Methodists will have the opportunity to partner with United Methodists in Russia through the opening worship service’s special offering, which has been designated to support Moscow United Methodist Seminary. Offerings will help provide the means for students to attend the seminary and will help the seminary continue to be instrumental in helping revive Methodism in Russia.

“Our special offering will support the training of generations of pastors who will preach the Gospel in Russia and surrounding countries,” Bishop R. Lawson Bryan said. “We are reminded of John Wesley’s statement, ‘The world is my parish.’ Thank you for giving to this special offering through which South Georgia can be part of helping others come to know Jesus as Savior and serve Him as Lord.”

Those who seek to become pastors in Russia, or anywhere in all of Eurasia, face huge uphill struggles. Answering the call of God to pastoral ministry often means stepping outside the cultural norm in a community that has been agnostic and often means a large decline in earnings and a sacrifice to attend seminary. South Georgia’s offerings will help provide the means for students to attend seminary and will help Moscow United Methodist Seminary continue to be instrumental in helping revive Methodism in Russia. Congregations are encouraged to send and

present their offering during the opening worship service on June 2. [Click here for additional and information and promotional materials.](#)

“To me, annual conference is a giant annual family reunion for United Methodists,” Bishop Bryan said. “Those who have attended past conferences will come to Columbus anticipating the joy of this reunion. This year we will have a whole new group of delegates who are under 40 years old. Most will be attending for the first time. I am excited that they will get to experience what it means to be Alive Together in Christ with 1,000 of their brothers and sisters in Christ.”

For more detailed information and a daily agenda, visit www.sgaumc.org/annualconference.

Annual Conference Special Offering to benefit Moscow Theological Seminary

The story of The United Methodist Church in Russia is 130 years old and includes Hitler’s invasion of Europe, the dissolution of churches, and heart-breaking accounts of the persecution of Methodist clergy in prisons or labor camps.

It also includes the story of Moscow Theological Seminary of The United Methodist Church, founded in 1991.

With a main campus in Moscow and three regional centers across 11 time zones, Moscow Theological Seminary is the largest United Methodist student body in Europe, training not only future pastors for the Methodist church, but also lay leaders.

“The leadership of the church immediately realized that in order for Russia to have an indigenous Methodist church we needed a Methodist seminary in Russia,” said Dr. Sergei Nikolaev, president of Moscow United Methodist Seminary. “Now there are 98 students studying at the Moscow Seminary.”

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offering through which South Georgia can be part of helping others come to know Jesus as Savior and serve Him as Lord.”

A member of the seminary’s first graduating class, Dr. Nikolaev, a former atheist who professed his faith through the outreach of a United Methodist Church in Russia, says that one of the greatest blessings of being a seminary professor is seeing the transformation in the students’ lives.

“Because the Methodist church, the modern Methodist church in Russia is so young, we didn’t learn how to be Methodists in our families, from our parents and grandparents,” Dr. Nikolaev said. “So seminary is the key place where leaders in Russia learn how to be United Methodist leaders, and your support will make Methodist church in Russia stronger. Thank you.”

Congregations are encouraged to watch a [video to hear Dr. Nikolaev’s testimony](#) and share his story and the story of Moscow United Methodist Seminary.

2019-2020 Projected Appointments

Bishop R. Lawson Bryan has announced projected appointment changes as of May 5, 2019. The appointments will be set at the South Georgia Annual Conference and will be effective in June.

[Click here to download the list of projected appointments.](#)

Book of Recommendations & Reports for the 2019 Annual Conference Session now available

Business items for the 2019 Annual Conference session are contained in the *Book of Recommendations and Reports* (BOR). One of the purposes of the BOR is to encourage delegates to read the recommendations, reports, and resolutions prior to arriving at conference. A good delegate is a prepared delegate.

The 2015 Annual Conference session voted that all Annual Conference materials, including the *Book of Recommendations and Reports*, be made available online on the conference website and through other electronic means. The BOR is now available for download as a PDF file at no cost in its entirety or in sections. You can also purchase it for \$5 (plus tax and shipping) as a professionally bound book through [lulu.com](#). Additionally, a version has been designed specifically for those wishing to utilize the information in electronic form only.

A complete conference agenda may be found in the BOR (please note that it is subject to change). Please check out “[AC 2019](#)” regularly on the conference website as we get closer to annual conference. There are some reports that will appear on the website which are not included in the BOR. These reports will be important to have with you during the Annual Conference

session. Please download onto your digital device, or print out, all the materials that you wish to have with you, because wireless internet capabilities in the Conference Center may be limited.

Option #1: On-demand printing of the 2019 *Book of Recommendations and Reports* through LULU.com.

[CLICK HERE to order your printed copy today.](#)

Option #2: Digital download / free PDF for making Printed Copies or Electronic Viewing

The *Book of Recommendations and Reports* is also available as a free PDF download. Adobe Acrobat Reader is required to download the file(s). If you don't already have it installed, visit www.adobe.com and follow the instructions. If you are viewing the document electronically, the page numbers have been formatted to match the printed version, enabling you to easily find a page when referenced during the Annual Conference session.

Full version of the 2019 *Book of Recommendations and Reports* for printing/Electronic Viewing:

[2019 Book of Recommendations and Reports](#) (140 pages)

Section versions of the 2019 *Book of Recommendations and Reports* for printing/Electronic Viewing:

[Section 1 - Preparing for Annual Conference](#) (22 pages)

[Section 2 - Recommendations](#) (45 pages)

[Section 3 - Consent Calendar](#) (Reports) (83 pages)

**The Conference is using www.Lulu.com, an online print-on-demand publishing company, to print the 2019 Book of Recommendations and Reports. Orders will be made and processed via their secure website and shipped directly from their facility.*

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Gather in confidence, go forth and witness

**FROM THE BISHOP
R. LAWSON BRYAN**

How fortunate for us that Annual Conference falls between Ascension Day (May 30) and Pentecost (May 5). For Christians, that is an extremely important 10-day period. The Apostles' Creed reminds us that after his resurrection Jesus "ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, and will come again to judge the living and the dead." Ten days after his ascension, on the Jewish festival of Pentecost, Jesus sent the promised Holy Spirit upon the believers gathered in Jerusalem and the Christian church was born.

As we continue to participate in the process of discerning God's future for the South Georgia Conference and for The United Methodist Church, let us draw on the spiritual wisdom that flows to us from the Ascension and Pentecost. The Ascension means Jesus Christ has been exalted above every authority on earth and in heaven. There is no problem, dilemma, or situation that is greater than Jesus Christ. Pentecost means we are Alive Together in Christ, not through our own ingenuity, but through the Holy Spirit that has been poured out upon us by the One who sits on the throne. This is the source of our confidence as children of God: Jesus reigns and has sent His Spirit to guide us. This is the same confidence in which the earliest Christians outlasted rejection and persecution. And it is the same confidence in which we gather in Columbus for the opening service on Ascension Sunday, June 2, and through which we shall go forth on Wednesday, June 5, to celebrate Pentecost the following Sunday.

Do you recall Jesus' instructions to his disciples for that 10-day period? He ordered them not to leave Jerusalem but to wait there for the promise of the Father for "...you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and **you will be my witnesses** in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

Not only were they to be Alive Together in the World, Jesus now tells them they will be Alive Together in Witness. As we meet between Ascension and Pentecost let this be our theme: we gather to celebrate the specific ministries through which we are Alive Together in the World, then we go forth to be **Alive Together in Witness** in our own communities, in the South Georgia Conference, and to the ends of the earth.

I am asking us to be Alive Together in Witness in two specific ways: reclaim our passion for the salvation of the world and refocus our energies on redemptive relationships. Our God-given purpose is the salvation of the world; that is why we make disciples of Jesus Christ. God has given us the means to accomplish that purpose: changed lives (redemptive relationships). There will always be many other matters in our circle of concern. But I am asking us to recommit ourselves to living in our circle of influence by keeping the main thing the main thing: the salvation of the world through redemptive relationships lived out daily at street level in the South Georgia Conference.

Please read Gil Rendle's book, "Quietly Courageous," which offers practical guidance on how to be Alive Together in Witness in a changing world. What is the difference between our public mission and our private mission? What are the temptations of nostalgia, empathy, and weariness? How can we witness with courage and conviction in today's rapidly changing world?

Alive Together in Christ,

Lawson Bryan

Campers will turn the world Upside Down for Jesus. Register for Camp Connect today!

Don't miss out on the opportunity for your child to spend a week away from normal everyday life in the beauty of God's creation with people who seek to share Christ in the everyday. Register today for [Camp Connect](#), the camping ministry of the South Georgia Conference.

With an "Upside Down" theme this summer, a week at Camp Connect will teach campers how to turn the world upside down for Jesus. Diving into scripture and sharing life stories will show them they can make an impact for Christ in their own schools and communities.

"My prayer, as each camper registration comes through, is that everyone will have the opportunity to encounter Christ in a powerful, life-changing way during their week at camp," said Suzanne Akins, Camp Director. "There is something so rare and unique about shutting down technology, looking eye to eye with people, sharing meals, laughing, playing, and worshipping together day after day, night after night." [More information](#)

Each morning at camp begins with a Morning Show, an interactive high-energy gathering with music, skits, and announcements for the day. From there, each team's day is filled with swimming, marsh walks, trips to the beach, fishing, Bible studies, art, and indoor/outdoor games. Each evening is a camp-wide activity bringing out the best of competitions. Camp closes each night with a worship service of meaningful skits, powerful music, testimonies and relevant speakers.

College students who are committed to serving Christ through working with children and youth during the summer are the full-time camp counselors. Each staff member has been interviewed by the Camp Ministry Team, passed a background check, attended 10 days of training, and is supervised by Camp Director Suzanne Akins.

For more information, visit www.campconnectumc.org or call [\(912\) 638-8626](tel:9126388626).

Called to Life in the Spirit

Spring Quarter: Discipleship and Mission

Unit 3: Call to Life in Christ

Sunday school lesson for the week of May 12, 2019

By Dr. Hal Brady

Lesson Scripture: Romans 8:1-14

Key Verse: Romans 8:1

Lesson Aim

1. To grasp what it means to live in the Spirit.

In recent years, researchers have detected an increase in spiritual interest among people. At the same time, they have detected no increases in church affiliation or attendance. Some identify themselves as “spiritual but not religious” (SBNR). These people usually have personal beliefs and practices that could be understood as spiritual, but have no desire to participate with what they see as “institutional religion.”

As we understand, some SBNR folks desire their own religious world apart from a church. However, this desire is not necessarily Christian in orientation. It often borrows spiritual practices from Eastern religions, Native American traditional religions, or ancient pagan sources. The good news is that people are spiritually hungry while the bad news is that the church is not being seen as a source for quenching that thirst.

Thus, the insights of the apostle Paul are important and decisive in overturning this outlook in today’s lesson.

In Romans 6-8, Paul discusses what it means to live in the Spirit, to be a follower of Jesus Christ.

In Romans 6, Paul discusses new life in Christ as it relates to the problem of sin. Verse 23 reads, “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Paul warned that while we are no longer slaves to sin because of the atoning work of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary, we are not free to sin at will.

In Romans 7, Paul expanded his discussion of the Law. Paul made numerous statements that suggest we are no longer under the Law (6:14; 7:5-6). However, Paul was crystal clear that we should not ignore the Law (6:15). As far as Paul was concerned, the Law has two primary functions: It reveals God’s general will for our lives, teaching us what is right and what is wrong, what is good and what is evil. It also convicts us of sin, reveals to us our need for God’s forgiveness, and makes us realize our need to change our lives.

And in Romans 8 (our text for today) Paul directly addresses the issue of living in the Spirit, that is living daily under the guidance of the indwelling presence of God. This concept is crucial for Paul. Our existence is different after we put our lives in the hands of Jesus Christ. We are no longer slaves to sin but rather slaves to God, and it is only by the power of the Holy Spirit that we can overcome our sinful nature.

Law of the Spirit (Romans 8:1-4)

As Paul stated it, “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.” No condemnation! Not partial condemnation! Not appropriate condemnation! No condemnation! There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set us free from the law of sin and death. Undoubtedly, this is one of God’s greatest promises to Christian believers. Because we are justified by faith in conjunction with our

union with Christ, we escape the sentence of spiritual death that our sins have justly earned. Transferred into this new realm of life, we no longer fear that our sins will ever condemn us.

Paul really has no argument with the integrity of the Jewish law itself. He has said that it is good and holy (Romans 7:12). However, the weak link is our keeping of “the law.” Our fleshly nature presents a problem not because it is inherently evil, but because it is weak. Our weakness negates any sort of saving power the lesson might represent (compare 7:18-19).

God’s remedy for this weakness was to send his own Son. Our situation was dire and hopeless. The law can only condemn. No human being can overcome sin. So God provided one “who condemned sin in the flesh,” one who could live a victorious, sinless life.

This is the act of the incarnation, the Son of God assuming human form (“in the likeness of sinful humankind”).

Jesus had full awareness that his mission included his death as a sacrifice for sin, paying the price for our salvation (Mark 10:45; 1 Timothy 2:6). This price could not be paid unless Jesus died as a human (Hebrews 2:14,17).

The righteous requirements of the law mentioned in verse 4 are not discarded but “fully met” through Christ. This fulfillment finds its expression “in us” because we are the beneficiaries of being justified (counted as righteous). The law maintains its righteousness without compromise while losing its power to condemn. The difference between those who live “according to the Spirit” and those who do not comes next.

Life in the Spirit against Death in the Flesh (Romans 8:5-8)

At the end of verse 4, Paul presents a contrast that governs these next four verses: “the sinful nature” versus the Spirit. Sinful nature (flesh) refers here to the sinful tendencies of human beings.

In verse 5-8, Paul notes a series of contrasts between flesh and Spirit. His overall intention is clear: to show that flesh (sinful nature) brings death while the Spirit brings life (v.6).

Paul leads us in this key claim by tracing people’s manner of life to their underlying way of thinking. The lifestyle of the flesh flows from a mind oriented to the flesh, whereas the lifestyle of the Spirit comes from a mind oriented to the Spirit. And the mind of the flesh is death whereas the mind of the Spirit produces life and peace.

Romans 8:7-8 offers explanations as to why “the mind of the flesh” brings death. The orientation of the will reflects the values of this world, and that is always “hostile to God.”

William Barclay states, “To allow the things of this world completely to dominate life is self-extinction; it is spiritual suicide; it is, again in the most literal sense, soul destroying. By living it a person is making himself/herself totally unfit ever to stand in the presence of God. He/She is hostile to God.”

Paul's letting the church know in no uncertain terms that anything that the flesh generates is not acceptable to God. And that "will" cannot obey God's law. Therefore, people who are in the flesh, controlled by the sinful nature, cannot please God.

You are God's Home (Romans 8:9-11)

Paul saw two kinds of people in the world: those who live in the Spirit and those who don't. Those who don't simply exist with a purposeless hunger for the things of this world. However, those who live in the Spirit live in covenant relationship with God and God's people. As has been noted, we are part of the church; and God is at work within us, shaping us, teaching us, empowering us, and molding us in the divine image. Essentially, living in the Spirit means the Spirit living in us.

E. Stanley Jones, missionary and author, once said, "The great secret of the Christian faith is summed up in two words: in Christ." Live in Christ. Let Christ live in you." The key here is surrender!

Important notation! Paul calls God's Spirit the Spirit of Christ. This is not a different person. The Holy Spirit is God's Spirit and Christ's Spirit. There is no such thing as a Christian believer without the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit: that would be a contradiction in terms.

But back to the main idea here – living in the Spirit means the Spirit lives in us.

Those who selfishly live in the flesh look out for number one. Those who live in the Spirit love their neighbor and are learning to put others first. Those who live in the flesh see things from their own perspective. Those who live in the Spirit increasingly learn to see things from God's perspective. Those who live in the flesh demand justice, at least when they are wronged. Those who live in the Spirit offer grace, mercy, and forgiveness because they recognize they have received these gifts from God.

In verse 11, we see that the presence of God's Spirit assures Christians of resurrection life, life beyond the day our current "mortal bodies" expire. The only way this happens is through "the Spirit of Him that raised Jesus from the dead (compare John 5:21). Eternal life is not mentioned here as such, but it is implied. After all, what point would there in being raised from the dead only to die yet again?

When David Livingstone, a missionary, was asked how he had been able to serve God so well and for so long in Africa, he replied that the source of his strength had been the divine companionship of Jesus. How utterly true for everybody!

An Obligation to Live the Godly Life (Romans 8:12-14)

Paul, therefore, looks back at what he's taught previously. He has explained the Gospel, addressed the differences between Jew and Gentile, and outlined the need for righteousness and how that righteousness has been provided for us. He has made clear the principle of justification

by faith using Abraham and David as examples, and he has pointed out that reconciliation has been secured through the blood of Jesus Christ.

Paul now moves from what God has accomplished to how we are properly to respond. He calls the needed response by one word: “obligation.” This word can refer to financial obligation (as in Matthew 8:24). But Paul uses it in the sense of “one who has a moral obligation” (compare Romans 1:14; 15:27; Galatians 5:3).

Paul’s readers, “brothers and sisters in Christ,” indeed have such an obligation. And it’s an obligation to the Spirit that includes killing the misdeeds of the body. Life in the Spirit must include rejecting self-centered impulses approved by the world (Colossians 2:20-23).

This self-mortification is not easy. It is a complete reorientation of our priorities with God as the focus. And, to be sure, we can never accomplish this by our own willpower. It must happen by the Spirit. God does not expect us to live the spiritually pleasing life without giving us the resources we need to be successful. It is through the leadership of the Holy Spirit that we are able to live and produce the deeds of a godly life (Galatians 5: 22-25).

When Albert Schweitzer was over 80 years of age, he returned to Europe for a furlough from Africa. Before he set out again for Africa, a reporter asked him, “Why are you going back to Africa? For that matter, why did you leave comfort and fame in the first place for Africa?” Dr. Schweitzer thought for a moment and then said quietly, “You see, I had to do something for Christ.”

Right there is our moral obligation, and the end result of filling this obligation is life! The good life!

Action Plan

1. How does Paul view the Law? What purpose does the Law serve?
2. How does Paul, and how do you, characterize people who “live in the Spirit?”
3. What are some ways we can make ourselves more open to the Spirit’s influence?

Resources for this lesson:

“2018-2019 Standard Lesson NIV Commentary,” Uniform Series “International Bible Lessons for Christian Teaching,” pages 313-320

“The NIV Application Commentary, Romans” by Douglas J. Moo, pages 247-255

“Adult Bible Studies, Spring 2019, Discipleship and Mission, Teacher, Uniform Series,” Gary Thompson, pages 98-106

“The Book of Romans, The Smart Guide to the Bible Series,” Gib Martin and Larry Richards, pages 107-114

Dr. Hal Brady is a retired pastor who continues to present the Good News of Jesus Christ and offer encouragement in a fresh and vital way through Hal Brady Ministries (halbradyministries.com).

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Called to Mutual Acceptance

Spring Quarter: Discipleship and Mission

Unit 3: Call to Life in Christ

Sunday school lesson for the week of May 19, 2019

By Dr. Hal Brady

Lesson Scripture: Romans 11:11-24

Key Verse: Romans 11:18

Lesson Aims

2. To realize how easily pride can destroy effective Christian discipleship.
3. To understand the components of Paul's analogy of the olive tree and why they are important today.

As Paul's letter to the church in Rome moves into Chapter 9, a new issue occupies his thoughts: the problem of Israel.

We are informed that fewer than 1 percent of Christians today come from a background of Judaism. But that was not the case in Paul's day. Initially, the majority of Christian believers were of that background. The church in Rome had a mix of Jews and Gentiles. There were apparently significant numbers of both, with evidence supporting that those of Gentile background were in the majority (Romans 1:13; 15:11).

But in Romans 11, Paul addresses God's relationship with both Jews and Gentiles. Paul wants to stress the fact that his having become the Lord's apostle to the Gentiles did not mean that God had rejected Jews.

Paul began this chapter, "So I ask you, has God rejected his people? Absolutely not! I'm an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. God hasn't rejected his people, whom he knew in advance" (Verses 1-2). Paul offered himself as an example to prove his point.

After all, Paul was a Jew who had been brought into a right relationship with God. Therefore, the rejection of Israel was partial rather than total. There was a remnant of Jewish believers, and Paul was one of them. Although Israel had been disobedient and stubborn, she had not been totally renounced as a nation. If God had rejected the entire nation of Israel, then Paul would not have been able to claim a right standing before God.

For his understanding of remnant, Paul took to the experience of the prophet Elijah. At a time of national crisis, Elijah had complained to God that he was the only one who had remained faithful. God then reminded Elijah that there were 7,000 others who had not bowed the knee to Baal (1 Kings 19:18).

It was from this event then that came the Jewish idea of "the remnant." While there was never a time when every Jew was faithful, there would always be some, a remnant, who would remain true to God (see Romans 9:27).

Paul used the story of Elijah to argue that the concept of the remnant still applied. While most Jews seemed to be rejecting Jesus, there was a remnant, including him, who were not. “So also in the present time there is a remaining group by the choice of God’s grace” (Romans 11:5). In other words, we do not become part of God’s remnant through our efforts; it is a gift of God. And since the remnant has been secured by the grace of God, the remnant stands as a pledge that God will continue to show favor toward Israel as a whole.

Result of Stumble (Romans 11:11-15)

At this juncture, Paul turns his attention from the remnant to Israel as a whole. In Romans 11:8, Paul quotes from Deuteronomy and makes an astounding claim: “God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes so that they could not see and ears so that they could not hear, to this very day.” Now, in verse 11, he asserts that the Jews have stumbled so that salvation could come to the Gentiles. Paul insists that the Jews have temporarily stumbled but not permanently fallen. He explains that while the Jews are rejecting God, God will sow the gospel seed among the Gentiles to make the Jews envious. Consequently, they will see God’s blessing upon the Gentiles and they’ll get jealous and eventually return to faithfulness.

Paul doesn’t really explain how the Jews’ failure to believe led to the salvation of the Gentiles. However, he may have had in mind the idea that the rejection of the Jews encouraged early Christian evangelists to take the gospel to those who were willing to believe. And still, the idea that Jews would become jealous and turn back to God has not happened in the 2,000 years since. Apparently, this was a hope Paul held onto that has yet to become a reality.

Paul goes on to say that if the “failure” (11:12) of the Jews brings riches to the Gentiles, their return to God will bring even greater riches to the world. While the rejection of Jesus by most Jews has led to the salvation of many Gentiles (thought certainly not all), the world will be even more blessed when the Jews returned to faithfulness. Paul’s hope lay in his belief that nothing can defeat God’s love and hinder God’s ultimate plan.

Next, Paul addresses the Gentiles in his readership with a direct appeal: he intends to do everything in his power to “arouse my own people to envy” for the sole purpose of saving “some of them.” His technique will be to use his “ministry as the apostle to the Gentiles” in any way possible to win as many Gentiles to Christ as possible. By implication the Gentiles’ part is to live in such a way that Jewish unbelievers will want to have what they have.

By their rejection (Verse 15), Paul refers to the Jewish refusal to believe in Christ. As he has already shown, the Jewish unbelievers deserve blame for this, but it also fits into God’s plan for the reconciling of the world, the inclusion of Gentiles into the people of God (see Romans 5:11; 2 Corinthians 5:19). What a great marvel it would be if as a result, Jews come to faith! It would be miraculous, like “life from the dead.”

Outcome of Brokenness Romans 11:16-21

Here in Verse 16, Paul uses two examples tied to Jewish history. First, bread-making is considered. The “part of the dough” in his illustration is the final dough ball that is ready to be baked. This process begins with grinding grain to make flour. Moses had commanded the people of Israel to take the “firstfruits,” a portion of this flour, and make a loaf that was to be offered to the Lord (Numbers 15:17-21; compare Nehemiah 10:37; Ezekiel 44:30). Paul considers this act of offering to be making the firstfruit loaf “holy,” and by extension, this holiness can be applied to the whole batch of flour and its resultant bread loaves.

Paul’s second illustration has to do with a tree, its “root” and its “branches.” Branches are dependent upon the health of a tree’s root system. If the root dies, so will the branches. Branches detached from the main tree and its root will die (John 15:4-6). Paul is thinking here of a family tree, the tree of the nation of Israel. In a sense, Israel is continually blessed and made holy by the covenant God made with its great patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (see Exodus 2:24; Leviticus 26:42). Therefore, if the essential root of the tree (the patriarchs) is considered holy, this holiness extends to any branches attached to the tree.

The olive tree is a familiar and beautiful part of the landscape in Israel. It is a symbol of both strength and blessing. The psalmist wrote in Psalm 52:8, “but I am like an olive tree flourishing in the house of God; I trust in God’s unfailing love forever and ever.”

Paul uses the branch of an olive tree to picture what God has done in grafting the Gentiles, the “wild olive tree” (Romans 11:17), into the cultivated olive tree, Israel. In Paul’s picture, some of the olive tree’s branches were broken off and wild shoots were grafted into the tree. This description fits the Gentiles well, for they have been growing wild, apart from the supervision and care of God given to Israel for hundreds of years.

These new, grafted branches will be productive only if they tap “the nourishing sap from the olive’s root.” These new branches have been given a huge upgrade from their scrubby wild-tree origins. They flourish because of the new tree, not the other way around. So Paul’s word to the Gentile believers is to remember that their inclusion in the church allows them to be recipients of the great blessings the Lord has lavished on Israel for centuries. They, with faithful Jews, are now fellow heirs of God’s promises (Ephesians 3:6). Thus, there is no justification for boasting about status (compare John 4:22).

Now, Paul continues to warn his Gentile readers to consider God’s purpose in all of this. The word “granted” (verse 20) indicates that those who made the argument that “branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in” are correct up to a point. What they overlook is the reason those Jews were broken off: it was “because of unbelief.” This is not a cause for being “arrogant,” as if the Jews have been humiliated by God so Gentiles can feel superior. Rather, this is a cause to “tremble,” realizing how dire their situation was and how gracious God has been to them.

Verse 21 points out how arrogance displeases God. If the Gentiles let go of their dependence on God, God can just as easily break them off of the tree as he broke off the self-reliant Jews. What has been grafted in (the Gentiles) can just as easily be removed.

Possibility of Restoration

Romans 11:22-24

Paul now reflects that this situation reveals a paradox: God is good and severe at the same time. While the analogy of the olive tree is still clearly visible here, it has been suggested that this is more akin to presenting God as a parent. Parents know that there is a time to demonstrate great love and kindness to a child, but also a time when discipline is necessary. Discipline does not negate the love of a good parent, but to receive kindness the child must be obedient. Continuing in God's goodness is a matter of continuing in the faith. As with the unbelieving Jews, unfaithfulness risks being cut off for the in-grafted Gentiles.

N.T. Wright reminds us that "faith remains the only valid badge of membership; anything else will inevitably lead to boasting."

But in addition to the warning to the Gentiles, Paul also offers a word of hope for the Jews. If the wild branches, the Gentiles, have been grafted in, how much more possible is it that the original branches, the Jews, can be grafted back in.

Thus Paul's vision is not just Gentile inclusion, but a return of fellow Jews. The tree would then thrive as new before. What a magnificent tree it would be! What a glorious church we would see!

Action Plan

4. Considering Christianity's roots in Judaism, how should this text influence our view of the value of the Old Testament?
5. From today's text, how can we describe the inclusive nature of God's grace?
6. Do you think the church in general has a reputation for being a place of generosity and love? Please explain!

Resources for this lesson:

"2018-2019 Standard Lesson NIV Commentary," Uniform Series "International Bible Lessons for Christian Teaching," pages 321-328

"The NIV Application Commentary, Romans" by Douglas J. Moo, pages 362-368

"Adult Bible Studies, Spring 2019, Discipleship and Mission, Teacher, Uniform Series," Gary Thompson, pages 109-116

"The Book of Romans, The Smart Guide to the Bible Series," Gib Martin and Larry Richards, pages 165-171

Dr. Hal Brady is a retired pastor who continues to present the Good News of Jesus Christ and offer encouragement in a fresh and vital way through Hal Brady Ministries (halbradyministries.com).

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John Wesley's Conversation with an Indian (continued)

JOHN WESLEY MOMENTS
DAVE HANSON

Q. Do you often think and talk with the beloved ones?

A. We think of them always, wherever we are. We talk of them one to them, at home and abroad; in peace, in war, before and after we fight; and indeed whenever and wherever we meet together.

Q. Where do you think your souls go after death?

A. We believe the souls of the red men walk up and down near the place where they died, or where their bodies lie. For we have often heard cries and noises near the place where any prisoners have been burned.

Q. Where do the souls of white men go after death?

A. We can't tell. We have not seen.

Q. Our belief is that the souls of bad men only walk up and down, but the souls of good men go up.

A. I believe so too. But I told you the talk of the nation.

Q. We have a book that tells us many things of the beloved ones above. Would you be glad to know them?

A. We have no time now but to fight. If we should ever be at peace, we should be glad to know.

Q. Do you ever expect to know what the white men know? (They had told Oglethorpe, "We believe the time will come when the red and white men will be one.") How came your nation by the knowledge they have?

A. As soon as ever the ground was sound and fit to stand upon, it came to us, and has been with us ever since. But we are young men. Our old men know more. But all of them do not know. There are but a few whom the Beloved One chooses from a child, and is in them, and takes care of them and teaches them. They know these things. And our old men practice; therefore, they know. But I don't practice; therefore, I know little.

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

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Lay people as partners in ministry

GROWING IN GRACE
BEN GOSDEN

I want to tell you about Molly. Molly is in her early 30s and she came to our church two years ago. From the moment I met Molly I sensed a special energy about her. She's always been willing to help with ministry ideas around the church.

The first big project she undertook was redesigning our church logo. She and her husband have a marketing business and special expertise in this area, and, after about a month of meetings and an email thread that grew to about 100 messages long, we now have a new logo. It showcases our historic red doors, flung wide open to tell the story that being an open and inclusive church is one of the core values at Trinity Church.

The next big project Molly led was developing a social media calendar for us. I've been the social media director for the church and Molly noticed that, while it was okay, we were really missing some of the potential in the power of social media. For the last six months or so I've been following Molly's weekly formula (some weeks better than others) and we've gotten a lot more traction in connecting to people in the digital world.

Now, Molly has developed into what I'm calling our "secret sauce." She's our Hospitality and Outreach Chair. She organizes our greeters. She started an intergenerational small group for folks who live in Pooler since it's a suburb of Savannah and potentially isolating to live there instead of within the city limits. The next frontier for Molly is developing our livestream worship experience which, once some minor logistical glitches are fixed, we hope to develop into one of the best livestream worship experiences in the entire conference.

Molly even came to me with a crazy idea. "You should start a podcast to talk about what ministry is like for a Millennial pastor of a historic church," she said. I didn't know the first thing about starting a podcast, feared it would be dumb if I tried, and told her I didn't think it was a good idea. "Trust me," she says. Well, I did. And now we've launched the [Faith Revisited Podcast](#) designed to talk about leadership, being 30-something leaders in the church, and what it means to reach new people at a historic church.

You may be wondering why I'm I telling you about Molly. Because Molly is teaching me one of the biggest lessons in leadership I've discovered to date: *Trust your lay people. Get out of their way. Let them lead.*

Too often I've thought that all I needed to lead my church more effectively was to find a new book, a clever blog post, or an idea to borrow from a nearby mega church. Too often we pastors treat lay people like the labor force for the church and we never take the time to listen or even let them shape our leadership. Molly is teaching me that the best idea your church needs might not be in the latest, greatest book or blog post. It might not be in the mega church down the street. It might be inside that person who sits on the third pew on the right every Sunday who's just waiting to be asked.

Here's a challenge: announce and host an idea laboratory – an event designed to foster input from laity around new ideas for ministry – and for goodness sake, feed them lunch for attending. See where the energy is. Listen for the wisdom. I'd be willing to bet we've all got a Molly or two in our pews just dying to be set free to lead in the name of Jesus.

The Rev. Ben Gosden is senior pastor at Trinity United Methodist Church in Savannah. He can be reached at ben@trinity1848.org.

Retired Clergy Birthdays – May 2019

- 5/01 – Jacque Asbel: 4116 Amberley Trail; Valdosta, GA 31602
- 5/01 – John Beck: 1210 Tribble Rd.; Ft. Valley, GA 31030
- 5/02 – Henry Erwin: 530 Liberty St.; Waynesboro, GA 30830
- 5/03 – Rick Turner: 798 Mallery St., Apt. 11; St. Simons Island, GA 31522
- 5/08 – Thomas Teate: 2091 Teate Rd.; Vienna, GA 31091
- 5/12 – Reese Nelson: 2804 Willow Wood Circle; Valdosta, GA 31602
- 5/12 – William Willis, Jr.: 2021 Bernhurst Dr.; Knoxville, TN 37918
- 5/12 – Ron Womack: 4444 GA Highway 15, S.; Vidalia, GA 30474
- 5/14 – Donald Clark: 197 Cubbedge Dr.; Rincon, GA 31326
- 5/14 – Marshall Howell: PO Box 658; Midway, GA 31320
- 5/14 – Kenneth Watkins: 170 Sanford St.; Wadley, GA 30477
- 5/15 – Jack McCollough, Jr.: 100 Lindsey Barron Dr., Apt. 232; Newnan, GA 30263
- 5/15 – Tommy Roe: PO Box 56; Montrose, GA 31065
- 5/15 – Dan Smith: PO Box 188; Lumpkin, GA 31815
- 5/19 – Ronnie Howell: 32 Vanceville Co. Line Rd.; Tifton, GA 31794
- 5/20 – Franklin Pierce: 602 Ft. King George Dr.; Darien, GA 31305
- 5/22 – Jimmy Gilbert: 464 Penia Rd. N; Cordele, GA 31015
- 5/23 – Jeri Pruette: 2188 Peacock Rd.; Quitman, GA 31643
- 5/27 – Cecile Mitchell: 130 Hitchiti Ridge Rd.; Juliette, GA 31046
- 5/28 – Richard Newton: 1823 Kaufman Circle; The Villages, FL 32159
- 5/29 – Marsha Emery: 3855 Dennis Creek Road; Talbotton, GA 31827
- 5/30 – Marvin Goodman: 97 Maple Ridge Dr.; Ray City, GA 31645
- 5/30 – Luanne Kemper: 1412 Sapling Dr.; Orange Park, FL 32073

OBITUARIES

Mrs. Betty Ann Driggers

Mrs. Betty Ann Flowers Driggers, 78, of Tifton, passed away Monday, April 15, 2019, at her residence surrounded by her loving family.

Services were held Wednesday, April 17, 2019, in the Chapel of Albritton Funeral Directors with Brad Padgett, grandson, and the Rev. Joseph Carter officiating. Mrs. Driggers was laid to rest at Mt. Calvary United Methodist Church Cemetery.

Grandsons and nephews serving as pallbearers were Matthew Driggers, Philip Hankins, Greg Williams, Clint Flowers, Doug Petty, and Richard Petty.

Betty was born November 29, 1940, to her parents, Johnny and Mildred Tucker Flowers, both deceased. She grew up in Tift County and graduated from Tifton High School. Her siblings are her dearest friends – sister, Linda F. Petty of Chula and her late brother, Larry Flowers of Avery, GA. She was of the Methodist faith and her favorite bible scripture was Psalm 23.

She was preceded in death by her husband of 43 years, Rev. Clarence E. (Buddy) Driggers, Jr. They served together in ministry at Remerton United Methodist Church, Remerton, GA and Pineview Finleyson United Methodist Church, Pineview, GA. They were also directors of the Dooly County Campground in Vienna, GA for seven years. She was also preceded in death by three brothers-in-law, Gene O'Quinn, Charles Petty and Rob Turner; and one sister-in-law, Mary Frances Driggers Turner.

Together they had two children: David Driggers and his wife, Gwen of Ashburn, GA and Debbie Driggers Padgett and her husband Robert, of Chula, GA. Survivors include an adopted son, Ric Cruz of Smithfield, NC; and her grandchildren's mother, Shay Grist Kennedy of Tifton; six grandchildren, Ashley Driggers Williams (Greg), Becky Padgett Hankins (Philip), Kathy Fulghum (Ross), Matthew Driggers (Anna), Brad Padgett (Jessica) and Caley Driggers; Ten Great-Grandchildren, Riley Williams, Mallory Hankins, Amelia Padgett, Macy Hankins, Reese Williams, Ridley Williams, Avery Padgett, Bellamy Fulghum, Griffin Driggers and Hadley Driggers. She is also survived by two sisters-in-law, Beth Flowers of Avery and Ann O'Quinn of Tifton; and several loving nieces and nephews.

During her working life, she served as the lunchroom manager at the former Annie Belle Clark and Northside Elementary schools in Tifton and as a cross-guard for Valdosta City Schools. Although Betty lived a quiet life, it was rich and full. She loved her family, especially her grandchildren, and she was extremely independent and known for her talent of whistling, passion of crocheting lap blankets for nursing home patients, beautiful baby blankets and a great love for reading, flowers and fishing. She studied her Bible and journaled daily. She was particularly fond of her dearly beloved pets, Scooter and Honey.

Special thanks to Regency Southern Care Hospice and Mrs. Brenda Miller and her team of sitters for their exceptional care and assistance during her illness.

Albritton Funeral Directors is in charge of the arrangements.

Rev. Jim McLendon

Brother Jim McLendon, age 86, of Homer, Georgia, passed away on Wednesday, April 17, 2019.

Brother Jim was born on April 25, 1932, in Columbus, Georgia; a son of the late James Jesse and Katherine Hammond McLendon. He was also preceded in death by his son, Mike McLendon and brother, Ed Sanderlin. Brother McLendon was a member of Homer United Methodist Church. He served in the South Georgia United Methodist Conference for 40 years in the following churches: in Rebecca at Rebecca Charge UMC, Brunswick at Lakeside UMC and McKendree

UMC, Talbotton at Talbotton UMC, Columbus at St. Mary's Road UMC, Baxley at Baxley First UMC, Savannah at Trinity UMC, Dublin at Pine Forest UMC, Fitzgerald at Central UMC, Perry at Perry UMC, and Savannah at Wesley Monumental UMC. He retired and moved to Clarkesville in 1997 and three months later he started his ministry at Homer United Methodist Church, where he pastored for the next 21 years.

Survivors include his loving wife of 64 years, Marilyn Williams McLendon of Homer; daughter and son-in-law, Beth and Henry Lowman of Rentz; son and daughter-in-law, James A. and Gemma McLendon of Lyman, SC; sisters, Millie Hamilton and Harriet Sanderlin, both of Dahlonga; sister-in-law, Judy Sanderlin of Appling; grandchildren: Tabitha Mullis, Jamie McLendon, Dallas McLendon, Jamison Barnhill, Gage Lowman, and Lexi Lowman; ten great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

Services were held Saturday, April 20, 2019, at Homer United Methodist Church with Rev. David Collins, Rev. Kathy Lamon, Rev. Don Woeltjen, and Mr. John Rivers officiating. Interment followed in Banks County Memorial Gardens.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Homer United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 37, Homer, Georgia 30547 or Commerce First United Methodist Church, 54 Cherry Street, Commerce, Georgia 30529.

Those wishing to express online condolences to the family may do so by visiting www.whitfieldfuneralhomes.com.

Arrangements are in the care of Whitfield Funeral Homes & Crematory, South Chapel, 1370 Industrial Boulevard, Baldwin, Georgia.

Mrs. Elia Dorsey

Beloved by family and friends, Elia Josephine Lilley Dorsey died peacefully, surrounded by family, on the morning of May 2, 2019, at the Langdale Hospice House in Valdosta, Georgia. She was 89.

The daughter of Glenn Newman and Elma Barnes Lilley, Elia was born on November 26, 1929, in Gatesville, North Carolina. Along with her three brothers and one sister, Elia grew up working on the family farm which had been managed by her family for multiple generations. It was in the coastal region of North Carolina that Elia acquired her distinct accent which she would proudly explain by annunciating the difference between "oot" and "aboot."

She graduated from Gates County High School in 1947 and attended historic Asbury College, of Wilmore, Kentucky. She was especially proud of Asbury's Wesleyan Holiness tradition and graduated in 1951 with a degree in Religious Studies.

At Asbury, Elia developed a lifelong interest in the missionary work of her classmates around the world. During this same period, Elia met the love of her life, Robins E. Dorsey, who she married May 27, 1951.

While Elia would spend 20 years as a devoted Special Education teacher, she was always at the side of her minister husband, the Reverend Bob Dorsey. Together and inseparable, they served the South Georgia Conference of The United Methodist Church for over 41 years, often serving multiple churches, while raising their two children, Zeke and Robin.

Elia served with Bob in many Methodist churches including Bridgeboro, Berlin, Edison, Clayton E. Miller (Savannah), Pelham, Hawkinsville, Sandersville, Hazlehurst, and Sylvania, Georgia. In each of these communities Elia was known and respected for her devotion to the mission of the Methodist Church and also admired for her personal, handwritten notes to those in need and those celebrating a life moment.

Following her husband's retirement in 1992, Elia and Bob moved to Valdosta, Georgia and became active members of Park Avenue United Methodist Church where she was involved in many church activities including the United Methodist Women's Thursday Morning Circle, The Fellowship Sunday School Class and was a longstanding member of the Congregational Care Committee. Socially, Elia and Bob were very active and involved with the retired Methodist minister and spouse organization, The Eagles. Her favorite personal ministry was delivering devotional books to local nursing homes with encouraging words and a sparkling smile.

She was preceded in death by her husband the Reverend Robbins E. Dorsey who died in April of 2009. She is survived by her siblings, Glenn N. Lilley, Jr., of Gatesville, NC., J. Harvey Lilley, (Nancy) of Swansboro, NC., Fleetwood B. Lilley (Brenda), of Colombia, SC., and Marie Blaylock, (James) of Fort Worth, TX., a son and daughter in law, Howard Ezekiel and Jessie Dorsey of Valdosta, GA., a daughter and son in law, Robin D. and Sam J. Zamarripa from Atlanta, GA., four grandchildren, Matterson E. Dorsey (Heather), Rex H. Dorsey, of Valdosta, GA., Jane M. Zamarripa (Nicolas Garcia) and Eva L. Gonzalez (Eduardo) of Atlanta, GA., and two great grandchildren, Jake and Addyson Dorsey of Valdosta, GA., and many nieces and nephews.

Services were held Saturday, May 4, 2019, at Park Avenue United Methodist Church in Valdosta. Rev. Craig Rikard and Rev. Jimmy Towson officiated. Interment followed at Union Baptist Church Cemetery in Pitts, Georgia in Wilcox County. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to UMCOR-United Methodist Committee on Relief, www.umcmmission.org/umcor. Condolences to the family may be conveyed online at www.mclanecares.com.

Scripture Readings – May 7

May 12

Fourth Sunday in Easter

Acts 9:36-43

Psalm 23 (UMH 754 or 137)

Revelation 7:9-17

John 10:22-30

May 19

Fifth Sunday in Easter

Acts 11:1-18

Psalm 148 (UMH 861)

Revelation 21:1-6

John 13:31-35

May 26

Sixth Sunday in Easter

Acts 16:9-15

Psalm 67 (UMH 791)

Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5

John 14:23-29

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Events in the South Georgia Conference – 5/7/2019 edition

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.

2019 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](#)

Mission u – July 11-14

Mission u, the mission education event of the South Georgia Conference, will be held July 11 through July 14, 2019, at Epworth By The Sea on St. Simons Island. The annual event is co-sponsored by the conference United Methodist Women and the conference Outreach team. This year's theme is Radical Discipleship: Then & Now. [Click here to download the brochure.](#)

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.

Golden Cross Sunday – Aug. 18

Golden Cross began in 1908 with the commitment of Methodists in Dallas, Texas to provide the first health care to persons who could not afford it. They began to receive offerings for the

expenses of the poor patients at Methodist Hospital in that city. By 1930, the concept was officially adopted throughout the predecessor denominations of The United Methodist Church. Today Golden Cross is a ministry that reaches out in love to the laity in our Annual Conference who are experiencing financial difficulty due to excessive medical expenses. Through Golden Cross, United Methodists care for members of our local churches in time of emotional stress and financial need. The South Georgia Conference has designated the first Sunday of July to be the Sunday to receive a special offering for Golden Cross. Each church is asked to observe Golden Cross Sunday to receive an offering and send it to the conference treasurer. [Click here for information about Golden Cross Sunday.](#)