

## **SOUTH GEORGIA ADVOCATE – MARCH 2 EDITION**

### **South Georgia congregations get creative to celebrate Ash Wednesday, Lent**

**By Kara Witherow, *Editor***

While much of this past year has been an exercise in sacrifice of some sort, the season of Lent is a time of fasting and surrender in preparation for the coming of Easter, a time of self-examination and reflection.

For many South Georgia congregations and pastors, this Lenten season is also a time of creativity and an opportunity to innovate and adapt.

Lent is always an important part of Brunswick First United Methodist Church's year. The church typically hosts daily lunches during Holy Week and offers a Wednesday night Lenten Bible study and a Lent-focused Sunday school class.

But because of the ongoing pandemic, church leaders had to cut back on some of the usual traditions and rethink how they were going to mark the season and journey toward Easter.

"We just knew we couldn't do those things this year," said Rev. Bill Culpepper, a deacon at Brunswick First UMC.

Although the congregation isn't going to gather as it has in the past, the church staff knew it still wanted to help the congregation have a meaningful Lent.

"We wanted to do something that connected our church to Lent even though we couldn't get together," Rev. Culpepper said.

To do so, they created "Lent in a Box," a kit that includes six weeks of devotions, a six-week prayer guide, kids' activities, and fun surprises.

Rev. Culpepper estimates that more than 100 people are participating in the church's "Lent in a Box" project. And although they can't all be together as usual, he hopes it will help strengthen the congregation's connection to each other and Christ this season.

"We need the time of Lent to reflect and consider our part in Good Friday," he said. "We're hoping it will help build bridges that may have been lost in the past year because of the pandemic."

Several months ago, Rev. Allen Cason began thinking about what Ash Wednesday and Lent would look like this year. During conversations with ministry colleagues, he came up with the idea for a calendar that included the three pillars of Lent: prayer, fasting, and almsgiving/service. And knowing that personally administering ashes to worshipers wouldn't be wise, he instead

packed ashes into small, clear makeup containers. The ashes, instructions on how to self-administer them, and the calendar were placed in special purple bags for congregants to pick up.

“I think Lent is extremely important as it prepares us for Easter and as a time of self-reflection,” said Rev. Cason, pastor of Metter United Methodist Church.

The calendar helps keep those who use it on track, Rev. Cason said.

“It’s not all about giving up things, it’s also about doing things and adding things to our life that are good,” he said. “(Using the calendar is) a holistic approach to Lent.”

Even in the midst of the pandemic, it’s important to mark certain days in the life of the church, said Rev. Precious Hawkins, pastor of Asbury United Methodist Church in Savannah.

But how to do so safely? That was the question Rev. Hawkins and the church’s worship team had discussed for weeks.

They decided to join ConneXion Church and team together for three outdoor, drive-in services. Rev. Hawkins and Rev. Michael Culbreth, pastor of ConneXion Church, delivered a liturgy, prayer, and hymn. Individual cups or bags of ashes were given to each group to impose themselves.

“Being together allowed us to offer more than we would have done individually,” Rev. Hawkins said. “That’s the good thing about the Church. We wanted to maintain a sense of fellowship and community in a safe way, and I think we were able to do that.”

Rev. Cason has been inspired by the creativity he’s seen this season in churches across the connection.

“It’s been really neat to see all of the different ways people have come up with how to celebrate Ash Wednesday. It’s caused us to think outside the box and be creative, which I think is ultimately really good for the church,” he said.

---

## **Rev. Jimmy Cason to serve as Northeast District Superintendent**

Bishop Lawson Bryan has announced the projected appointment of Rev. Jimmy Cason as the Northeast District Superintendent, effective June 2021.

Rev. Jimmy Cason, who retired at the 2020 Annual Conference session, will succeed Rev. Chris Ramsey, whose new appointment will be announced when local church appointments are released. In June, Rev. Ramsey will have served his full eight years as a District Superintendent.

Prior to retiring in 2020, Rev. Cason served 11 years as senior pastor of Statesboro First United Methodist Church. From 2002 to 2009 he served as superintendent of the Statesboro District. He has also pastored congregations in Vidette, Savannah, Lizella, Leesburg, and Sandersville. Rev. Cason's appointment will be a one-year, interim appointment.

"Our goal was to appoint someone who has the background and experience to understand the needs of the district, a proven ability to be a good shepherd to local churches, and the spiritual maturity to provide non-anxious leadership over the next conference year," Bishop Bryan said. "I am grateful to Rev. Cason and for his willingness to respond to my request that he serve in this role for the next year, and I am glad the Cabinet will have the benefit of his experience and steady leadership over the next conference year."

Since retiring last year, Rev. Cason and his wife, Susan, have continued to live in Statesboro. Rev. Cason currently serves as the chairman of the Conference Committee on Episcopacy and on the Board of Ordained Ministry.

"While I was stunned by the Bishop's invitation to serve on the Cabinet, I also feel a sense of joyous anticipation to be able to renew relationships," Rev. Cason said. "I look forward to being present with people and offering encouragement as we do ministry together during this pandemic and time of uncertainty in our church."

The other five district superintendents currently serving will be reappointed to serve in their respective districts. Rev. David Thompson will continue as the Coastal District Superintendent; Rev. Craig Hutto will continue to serve as the North Central District Superintendent; Rev. Steve Patton will continue serving as the Northwest District Superintendent; Rev. Paula Lewis will continue to serve as the South Central District Superintendent; and Rev. Doreen Smalls will continue serving as the Southwest District Superintendent.

"As Chris completes his eight years on the Cabinet, I want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for his commitment to the Northeast District and our conference," Bishop Bryan said.

Bishop Bryan and the Appointive Cabinet continue their work to prayerfully discern the pastoral appointment changes. They will meet nearly weekly through mid-April to make decisions and to prayerfully seek God's guidance. Throughout the process, District Superintendents will continue to be in conversation with congregations and clergy as needed.

The Bishop and Cabinet have set April 18 as the day appointments will be announced in local churches and placed on the [Conference website](#).

"I ask for your continued prayers for our Cabinet, for every local church, and for every pastor, for we all want to be alive together in ministry," Bishop Bryan said. "We want the appointment-making process to be a part of that which looks for liveliness and energy and to prosper what God is doing in our lives."

All appointments are considered firm projections pending the official announcement at the conclusion of the virtual one-day Annual Conference session on June 7.

[Click here to read a word from the Bishop about the 2021 appointment making process.](#)

---

## **Morales elected vice president of Georgia VOAD**

**By Kara Witherow, *Editor***

Luis Morales, Disaster Coordinator for the South Georgia Conference, has been elected vice president of the Georgia Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD).

Morales, a member of Centerville United Methodist Church, has for years been active in disaster response, recovery, and disaster training. In 2018, following Hurricane Maria, he served as a consultant for the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) in Puerto Rico.

In his new role with Georgia VOAD, Morales will help the organization collaborate between state members, GEMA, and FEMA.

“We’ve partnered and collaborated a lot with them on responses over the years,” Morales said. “This opportunity just came up for me to do something new.”

While he’ll continue his role as Disaster Coordinator for the South Georgia Conference, Morales’ new role will give him the opportunity to continue to build and strengthen relationships and the disaster response network. There are currently 35 VOAD partners in Georgia, from faith-based organizations to nonprofit groups and community level COADs (Community Organizations Active in a Disaster).

“The work of the Georgia VOAD is incredible to witness when activated during a time of disaster,” said Allison Lindsey, director of Connectional Ministries. “Different organizations have varied resources and services to offer, and this collaboration through the VOAD has everyone at the table, hearing the needs and offering services, working together to increase the impact and be most effective in meeting the actual needs within the communities. It is an honor to have Luis serve in this role, and he will be an asset with his knowledge and experience in providing leadership to this organization.”

The “blue sky season” - the months in between hurricane seasons - is a great opportunity to collaborate and build the disaster response network, Morales said.

“The VOAD structure works on the four Cs: collaboration, communication, coordination, and cooperation,” he said. “We are always using those as a means to build and strengthen the network.”

And although hurricane season is still a few months away, Morales says that South Georgia residents need to be aware, stay safe, and get disaster response certification and training, if possible.

“Storms here in Georgia aren’t just limited to hurricane season. Our communities need to remain vigilant.”

---

## **General Conference Postponed to 2022, Bishops call Special Session for May 8**

Meeting on February 20, the Commission on the General Conference made a decision to further postpone the 2020 General Conference until August 29 – September 6, 2022 in Minneapolis, Minn. as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect the safety of mass gatherings and travel.

It is the Commission’s responsibility to select the site and set the dates of General Conference. Further, the Book of Discipline requires the Commission on the General Conference to "take necessary measures to assure full participation of all General Conference delegates." The Commission concluded that mandate was not achievable by means of either an in-person meeting in 2021 or a virtual meeting.

In making the decision, the Commission determined that it was not feasible to safely hold an in-person meeting involving all delegates as currently scheduled for August 29 - September 7, 2021 due to a number of barriers:

- The number of COVID cases continues to rise, with nearly 2.49 million confirmed [cases](#) the week of February 15.
- Vaccine is not expected to be widely available this year in many countries, and new [variants](#) of the virus which may be resistant to vaccines are emerging globally.
- International travelers to the U.S. must show [proof](#) of negative COVID-19 test results no more than three days prior to travel, but in many places, testing is not readily available or provided free of charge.
- [Visa services](#) remain limited in some areas.

There also remains the possibility that a temporary six-month [visa bond](#) program which requires bonds of \$5,000 - \$15,000 per person for residents of some countries could cost up to \$2.5 million in bonds for affected delegates if the program should be extended beyond June.

The Commission’s decision was informed by the [report](#) of the Technology Study Team appointed to explore the implications of options for accommodating full participation at General

Conference, including but not limited to the possibility of utilizing technology and online voting, in considering whether the meeting should be held virtually.

According to their report, “The study team considered a number of challenges and implications, including how to keep participants safe, providing for global participation, safeguarding the integrity of the voting and credentialing process, and meeting legal requirements ...”

The Technology Study Team analyzed a variety of options, including an entirely electronic General Conference with participation from individual locations; an entirely electronic General Conference with delegates gathering at regional satellite hubs; and two sessions, with the first part being electronic and the second part in-person when it is safe to convene. None of these options were determined by the study team to be viable.

The study team did find that a more traditional method – utilizing mail ballots to vote on emergency actions – could help The United Methodist Church to address important, urgent matters through the General Conference. Their report recommended utilizing mail ballots for making a limited number of “Emergency Interim Actions” on which the General Conference delegates would indicate a yes or no vote for each item.

“The Commission shared the study team’s findings and recommendations with the officers of the Council of Bishops in a collaborative effort to jointly explore how this alternative might be utilized to address critical matters until an in person gathering of delegates can be safely convened next year,” said commission chair Kim Simpson.

Some of the concerns mentioned in the report regarding having a virtual session include:

- Lack of infrastructure in some areas, including Internet access, Internet speed, and electricity
- Lack of technology for equitable Holy Conferencing
- Complexity of the legislative committee process
- Concerns about accurate credentialing and verification of identity
- Difficulties in seating reserve delegates properly
- Security of voting
- Safety concerns about regional satellite gatherings

Simpson said the August-September dates in 2022 will mean that General Conference will be one day shorter than planned for 2021; however, these dates were the only option available. Simpson said that the Commission regrets the fact that these dates once again conflict with the

start of the academic year in the U.S. which a group of young adults had asked the Commission to avoid, but there were no other dates available.

### **Bishops call Special Session of General Conference, create timeline for moving forward**

In response to the further postponement of the 2020 General Conference, the Council of Bishops (COB) is calling a Special Session of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church (UMC) to be convened online on May 8, 2021.

[According to the call letter signed](#) by COB President Bishop Cynthia Fierro Harvey, the Special Session will be held in accordance with Division Two - Section II - Article II of The Constitution of The United Methodist Church as recorded in Paragraph ¶14 of *The Book of Discipline* (2016).

The purpose of the 2021 Special Session of the General Conference will be limited to gaining a quorum in order to suspend the rules for the sole purpose of allowing the use of paper ballots to act upon 12 pieces of legislation that would enable the church to effectively continue its work until the postponed 2020 General Conference is held in 2022. While other potential amendments were considered, it was agreed that these 12 pieces of legislation would enable the church to continue its administrative functions appropriately. [Click here to read the 12 pieces of legislation.](#)

All decisions will be limited to paper ballots and confined to the designated twelve (12) amendments to the Book of Discipline in order to fulfill the mandate of ¶511.4.d., which calls for the Commission on the General Conference “to assure full participation of all General Conference delegates,…”

Bishop Harvey stated, “The exclusive use of paper ballots will allow for the fullest participation of delegates from across the denomination. Full participation on the part of all elected delegates is a justice issue that must not be ignored or sacrificed. This is why the convened session online must be confined solely to gaining permission for the mailed in paper ballots.”

The decision to call the Special Session came in conjunction with the Commission on the General Conference’s announcement of a further postponement of the 2020 General Conference to August 2022. The General Conference had been previously postponed to August 2021 due the COVID-19 pandemic. It is now scheduled to take place August 29 to September 6, 2022, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. [Click here to read the Commission’s announcement.](#)

“Our current Book of Discipline was never written with a worldwide pandemic in mind. When we became aware of the need for a further postponement, we knew that some action needed to be taken in order to free the church to operate and continue to fulfill its current mission until we could gather in person,” Bishop Harvey stated, noting that substantive issues related to separation and regionalization should be reserved to an in-person forum where debate, amendment, and discernment could be conducted with integrity and full participation.

The Council of Bishops and the Commission on the General Conference have been working collaboratively to determine the best way for the General Conference to meet and maintain the Church's current commitment to mission and ministry as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the Constitution of the Church, the Special Session of the General Conference shall be composed of the delegates elected to the postponed 2020 General Conference or their lawful successors.

The Secretary of the General Conference will communicate with annual conference secretaries regarding the logistics of the Special Session.

In addition, The Council of Bishops and the Commission on the General Conference have agreed on a timeline of events that will create a pathway for the church in this liminal time. This timeline includes Special Sessions of the Jurisdictional Conferences to be held virtually in July 2021 (for the purpose of retiring bishops, announcing coverage of areas, and determining if or how many bishops will be elected in each Jurisdiction) and regular in-person Sessions of the Jurisdictional Conferences following the postponed 2020 General Conference in the Fall of 2022 (for the purpose of electing bishops, making assignments for the new quadrennium, electing members to General Boards/Agencies, etc.).

Under this timeline, General Boards & Agencies would maintain their current memberships until after the postponed General Conference in 2022.

[Click here to read the full letter](#) sent to the Secretary of the General Conference, the Chairperson of the Commission on the General Conference, heads of delegations to the 2020 General Conference (or successors) and conference secretaries.

---

## **Update on Epworth By The Sea's temporary closure**

**By Joel Willis, *President/CEO, Epworth By The Sea***

As most of you know, Epworth By The Sea has been closed to the general public since September 22, 2020. We will continue to be closed through July 31, 2021, and perhaps longer. When the Golden Ray (a car carrier) capsized in the Saint Simons Sound in September 2019, no one knew that it would be a blessing in disguise for Epworth.

We began 2020 with two strong months of groups at Epworth and many bookings for the rest of the year. The Council of Bishops were scheduled to come in late October of that year. We felt very positive about the year with increased group business.

COVID-19 hit everyone hard in mid-March and all of our groups began to cancel. We basically had no group business for the rest of the year because of the unknown, fear, and the

governmental regulations put in place. All have suffered because of the pandemic, especially churches.

Because of the pandemic, we were approached by the team responsible for removing the Golden Ray wreck from the Saint Simons Sound. They needed a place where the workers would be safe and in a “bubble” to prevent them from contracting COVID-19. They determined that Epworth was the perfect place. We began providing two meals per day on September 8, 2020, at their quarantine hotel in Brunswick. They moved to Epworth two weeks later and have been here since.

We have been providing meals virtually 24 hours per day because of the different work shifts. Our housekeepers are deep cleaning once per week. Our maintenance personnel are handling any maintenance needs and maintaining the grounds. Our office staff are booking groups and individual guests for the time when we will reopen “normal operations.” We just do not know when that will be.

We did not expect The Golden Ray to affect us in any way when it occurred. We expected the virus to last a few weeks and all would be well. I furloughed 43 of our staff at the end of March 2020 and told them we would try to bring them back in two weeks. That is when all groups cancelled or moved their date. Without the combination of The Golden Ray and COVID-19, Epworth would be struggling because of lack of operating income. But we were able to bring back most of our staff and have provided them the opportunity to work.

We like to think that God is smiling on Epworth, but I am concerned about all church-owned conference/retreat centers across the country that are struggling to stay open, closed, or even sold. Many will be very different when COVID-19 is finally over.

Epworth continues to be a “Christian Place for Worship, Study and Fellowship!” We are still holding the Lovely Lane Chapel Service each Sunday. Weddings and funerals are being held. The salvage workers can log onto the chapel service each week and also request spiritual guidance. The Wright Prayer Tower plays hymns each day. The workers leave prayer requests and we pray over them. Our staff continues to provide service with a “servant attitude.” We are still doing what we always have. The only difference is that you have not been able to come to these Holy Grounds.

We continue to make improvements to the facilities. We recently replaced the flooring in The Arthur J. Moore Methodist Museum Library with vinyl wood flooring and we are replacing all carpet in the Booth and Pitts Memorial with the same. This will greatly reduce the mildew odor in the rooms. We have updated the Jones Auditorium with new lighting and a fresh coat of paint. The Turner Lodge and Robertson Inn have mini refrigerators and we plan to place them in the Booth and Pitts motels. Once the salvage workers leave we will replace the carpet in the Robertson Inn with the vinyl plank flooring.

We are looking forward to youth and adult groups on our grounds again. We miss all of you. We miss those accepting Jesus Christ at this place. We miss the great preaching and testimonials. We miss the fellowship that so many enjoy. I feel confident that these workers are experiencing all of this because these are indeed “Holy Grounds”!

We hope and pray to see you soon. Please continue to pray for Epworth By The Sea and our staff. Follow us on social media for updates and photos of your beautiful campus.

In His Service!

---

## **We are uniquely equipped to provide help and hope**

**FROM THE BISHOP  
R. LAWSON BRYAN**

In the continuing effort to keep South Georgia updated on developments related to the postponed 2020 General and Jurisdictional Conferences, I share the following items for your study and reflection.

First, the new dates for the postponed 2020 General Conference have been announced: **Aug. 29-Sept. 6, 2022**, in Minneapolis, Minn.

[See full announcement here](#)

Second, the Council of Bishops is calling a Special Session of the General Conference to be held online on **May 8, 2021**. The purpose is to approve the use of paper ballots to allow delegates to vote on certain legislation which will enable the church to continue functioning in this interim period leading up to the 2022 meeting of General Conference.

[See full announcement here](#)

Third, plans are being made for Special Sessions of the Jurisdictional Conferences to be held virtually in **July 2021** for the purpose of retiring bishops, announcing coverage of areas, and determining if or how many bishops will be elected in each Jurisdiction. Actual election of bishops will be held during regular in-person sessions of the Jurisdictional Conferences to be held in **fall 2022**, following the 2022 session of General Conference.

Please keep the South Georgia Conference delegation in your prayers as they now give focused attention to their role in the General and Jurisdictional Conferences.

With the announcement of this timeline, I have been considering the question: what should laity and clergy be doing now?

If I were serving a local church today I would be collaborating with my church members to ask and answer these questions:

A. Why have so many different kinds of people found a spiritual home in this local church?

In our local churches we have a variety of ages, backgrounds, economic conditions, education levels, and political leanings (Democrat, Republican, independent, and others). How can this be? Why has this local church been attractive to such a diversity of people?

There may be as many answers to this question as there are people in the congregation. That's okay; it is important to identify and itemize the factors that cause a wide range of people to claim this church as their spiritual home.

B. As we reflect upon the reasons this is a spiritual home for so many, what might God be saying to us about God's dream for this local church?

C. What are the areas where you see this dream being lived out currently? Where do you see yourself involved with this dream? Where would you like to be involved in some aspect of this dream? What other persons would you like to collaborate with in pursuing this dream?

D. What next steps might we take to live into this dream? How will we know when we get there? What will people be doing, saying, thinking?

We have work to do, and asking ourselves these questions will keep us moving forward to do that work. The hurting people in our communities are not concerned about when denominational conferences are held; they need help and hope now. **God has uniquely equipped us to provide that help and that hope.**

I am glad that we are Alive Together at the Table for such a time as this.

R. Lawson Bryan

---

## **Camp Connect opens for summer 2021!**

Camp is back! And this time, with a twist. With Epworth By The Sea remaining closed to the public for the 2021 summer, [Camp Connect](#) is packing up and moving 18 miles away to Camp Jekyll on Jekyll Island! Registration is **now open** for all six camps (Bridge Camp, High School Camp, two Middle School Camps and two Elementary Camps). We can't wait to see you on Jekyll Island this summer for a once-in-a-Camp-Connect experience! [More information](#) I [Registration](#)

---

## **Apply today for Camp Connect Leadership Team!**

Applications are now being accepted for the 2021 [Camp Connect](#) Summer Leadership Team. Applications are open to college students who have completed at least one year of college. The Leadership Team will commit to nine weeks of camping ministry which will include serving at high school, middle school, and elementary camps. These camp counselors will minister to hundreds of youth and children throughout the summer while making Christian friendships with other staff members that last a lifetime.

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

Follow Camp Connect on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/CampConnectUMC](http://www.facebook.com/CampConnectUMC).

---

## **Prophet of Deliverance**

### **Spring Quarter: Prophets Faithful To God's Covenant**

#### **Unit 1: Faithful Prophets**

**Sunday school lesson for the week of March 7, 2021**

**By Dr. Hal Brady**

**Lesson Scripture: Deuteronomy 18:15-22**

**Key Verse: Deuteronomy 18:15**

#### **Lesson Aims**

1. Summarize what God said about the prophet and message to come.
2. Explain how Moses' words were intended to guide Israel as God's covenant people.
3. Prepare a set of guidelines for distinguishing true from false teaching today.

The theme of the third quarter is "Prophets Faithful to God's Covenant." These prophets of the Old Testament era warned people who had turned away from God and encouraged the faithful to remain faithful. On occasion, they had even fortified their calls by foretelling God's intent and plans for the future.

Unit 1 is called "Faithful Prophets," and the four lessons highlight the faithfulness of God. In addition, these lessons reveal to God's people their own continuing need to be faithful to Him.

Moving to today's lesson, "Prophet of Deliverance," we have Moses' foretelling of a prophet whom God would raise up within Israel to speak the Lord's words to them. Israel's necessary response would be to obey the prophet. And these words anticipate the line of prophets God would send, culminating in the ultimate prophet, Jesus Christ (see Acts 3:17-26).

Moses had led the children of Israel for 40 years, guiding them through such triumphant moments as the parting of the Red Sea. But he had also led them in the wilderness as he wandered with them and as he shared their consequence (but not their guilt, except for the incident described in Deuteronomy 32:51) of unbelief and failure to trust God. At any rate, the time had come for a transition in leadership. So what respective roles would God and the people have in this transition?

Today's study comes from the book of Deuteronomy, the fifth and final book in what is often called the Pentateuch, the Torah, or the five books of Law. Moses spoke the contents of the book (1:1) and recorded it (31:9, 22, 24). This same book concludes with the declaration that since the book's writing, "no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face" (34:10). Thus, Moses was a prophet of the Lord as well as the lawgiver to God's covenant people.

The book of Deuteronomy witnesses to Moses' farewell speech to the second generation of Israelites. He was preparing them to cross the Jordan River and enter the Promised Land, and they needed to hear the law for the context of their generation (1:1-8).

And we are told that in its function as "second (giving of the) law," Deuteronomy repeats contents from previous instructions to the people (compare Exodus 20:1-17 and Deuteronomy 5:1-21). At the same time, some of the material had special relevance to those who were to enter the Promised Land and drive out its inhabitants (chapter 20).

Deuteronomy 18, from which today's lesson is drawn, is the climax of a series of instructions concerning various leadership positions that would offer guidance to God's people. Reading the directives for a king in Israel will show how different he was to rule as compared to those who ruled other nations (17:14-20).

### **Authority**

#### **Deuteronomy 18:15-18**

While Moses did not specifically identify this "prophet," he did offer some distinguishing characteristics. First, the prophet would be "from among you, from your fellow Israelites," a member of the covenant people. For this reason, the one to come could be expected to be faithful to God's law and not attempt to lead the people into idolatry (see 18:20).

Second, the prophet would be “like” Moses in certain respects. At any rate, all true prophets must be “like Moses,” thereby, drawing a line around the range of their teaching and at the same time indicating that Moses was a more than ordinary prophet.

Third, the command “you must listen” implies the next characteristic: that the prophet would be someone who had authority (compare Mark 1:22), someone to whom the people needed to listen to and obey.

Calling Moses a prophet points out the fact that Moses’ words had not lost their significance by the time of Jesus. For instance, a question directed at John the Baptist was, “Are you the Prophet?” (John 1:21), which John promptly denied before pointing to Christ (John 1:26-27). Peter and Stephen quoted Deuteronomy 18:15 in Acts 3:22 and 7:37, respectively, in declaring its ultimate fulfillment in Jesus.

However, an earlier fulfillment, closer at hand for Moses’ audience, was found in the man Joshua. As you know, Joshua was the one who became the leader of Israel after Moses’ death. When the people listened to him, things went well (Joshua 6). But when they trusted their own human nature, unpleasant consequences resulted (Joshua 7). Interesting to note that the names Joshua and Jesus both mean “the Lord is salvation.”

Point! Moses’ successor was to be like him in the sense that their messages from God would be 100 percent in unison. However, the successor may or may not have a personal style like that of Moses. While cultural styles or methods may change, what never changes is the Word of God.

The late Bishop Mack Stokes put it this way:

*“The tree of Protestantism roots in the Bible. In that soil alone does it flourish. Every time we try to plant it somewhere else, it withers away and dies.”*

This promise of a coming prophet was rooted in a request made by the Israelites when God spoke to them at Horeb (another name for Mount Sinai). After God spoke, the people expressed extreme fear and trepidation at hearing “the voice of God” in that terrifying setting. They pleaded with Moses to speak to them instead of having the Lord do so, lest they die (Exodus 20:19-21).

And these people had reasons to be fearful. God had instructed them to gather at the foot of that mountain and had given strict commandments regarding how close they could get to it – with dire consequences for disobedience (Exodus 19:12, 13, 20-24). To top it all, the scene had been marked by a mighty display of thunder, lightning, fire, smoke, the weird sound of a trumpet, and the shaking of the mountain itself (Exodus 19:16-18). And it was then that God spoke to these people the “Ten Commandments.”

Verse 17 states, “The Lord said to me: ‘What they say is good.’” This further summarizes what the Lord said to Moses at Mount Sinai. Because of the people’s legitimate fear of God, Moses continued to serve as the mediator between God and the people.

While verse 18 clearly suggests Joshua's role in Israel, God also pointed to spiritual leadership beyond both Moses and Joshua. God would make sure that the people did not have an excuse to imitate the detestable practices of other nations (Deuteronomy 18:9-14). Prophets chosen by God would provide access to the "words" of the Lord.

Legitimate prophets spoke only what God told them (see 1 Kings 22:14). These prophets proclaimed the words of God boldly and often at the risk of their own well-being. And the Old Testament prophets foreshadowed the ultimate prophet, Jesus – the one who became "God with us" (Matthew 1:22,23).

Writing in her book "Old Testament Prophets for Today," Carolyn J. Sharp, Associate Professor of Hebrew Scripture at Yale Divinity School, says that "Christian interpreters since New Testament times have argued that the Hebrew Scripture point in myriad veiled ways to the identity and mission of Jesus as the Christ." So Moses' words foreshadowed the many prophets God would send, leading ultimately to Jesus' own ministry.

### **Accountability**

#### **Deuteronomy 18:19-22**

To "listen" to the "words" God speaks through his appointed messengers implies obedience to those words. If obedience is not the result, then one had not truly listened. And the consequences for rejecting God's words is that God calls the disobedient person to account. Perhaps the most extreme example of God's judgment for failing to hear and obey comes in the form of the Assyrian and Babylonian exiles.

Verse 20 makes clear that any prophet who speaks in self-presumption, or in the name of other gods, will be put to death. That prophet is a false prophet (compare Matthew 7:15).

Moses gave God's people two tests to use in determining whether a person's claims to be a prophet of the Lord was legitimate.

The first criterion was to verify the content of the alleged prophet's message. Was it consistent with the previously revealed word of the Lord? If it did not measure up to that divine standard, then the prophet's teaching had to be rejected and the man himself judged as a false prophet.

And closely related to this criterion was the nature of a person's character. For example, the prophet who is "like" Moses will be characterized by humility (Numbers 12:3). In other words, the content of character had to match the content of message.

The second criterion is seen in the phrase "speaks in the name of other gods." To do so clearly violates the first commandment (Exodus 20:3). This same test was outlined by Moses in Deuteronomy 13:1-5. We are told that the test included additional caution regarding an alleged prophet's ability to perform impressive signs or wonders. Such a person was to be rejected if

those wonders were accompanied by encouragement to worship other gods. Thus, idolatry proved the person to be a false prophet, no matter how spectacular his sign or wonder may be.

How faithfully did Israel carry out the command to put false prophets to death? Apparently, not very well, for false prophets seem to have become more prevalent after the nation divided in 930 BC. One principle proponent of false prophets was King Ahab of Northern Israel (reigned 874-853 BC) who promoted the worship of the false god Baal and his consort Asherah. The king encouraged prophets who claimed to speak for these deities, and those prophets and their idolatry flourished.

Point! False prophets were allowed not only to live but were encouraged to advise! Consequently, their messages resulted in much damage to the spiritual welfare of God's covenant people (Matthew 24:11).

A more modern example of a false prophet is Jim Jones of the so-called People's Temple. He led 918 of his followers to commit suicide in Guyana in 1978. Without doubt, the followers of Jones suffered greatly for having believed the instructions of this false prophet. Most certainly, Jones didn't have the best interests of his followers at heart.

Though it would take some time and patience, the people could always recognize a "false prophet if what a prophet proclaims in the name of the Lord did not come true." However, it is important to add that just because an individual's prediction does come true does not in and of itself validate that person as a true prophet of the Lord.

Important! The test of true prophecy in this passage is the fulfillment of the prophet's word.

One scholar stated that no doubt the higher Hebrew prophecy is interpretative, not prediction, has insight rather than foresight (of particular events), and is concerned chiefly with morality and religion. However, the confirmation of prophetic interpretation, insight and truth would be in events. The true prophet in Israel was (and always will be everywhere) the interpreter of the contemporaneous mind of God.

Thus, at the retirement of Moses, he was given a word by which to reassure the covenant people that they would still be led by the Lord and his chosen prophets even after the 40-year tenure of Moses. Moses had taught the Israelites what they needed to know in living as God's covenant people, and he wanted to make certain that they wouldn't engage in practices that would enslave them to the gods of the people around them. Moses wanted the people to be delivered from these influences and fully committed to the Lord as their only God.

And certainly, this is no less true for Christians!

### **Action Plan**

1. What are some ways to spot false teachers or false prophets in the church? Read Zechariah 13:1-6; Matthew 7:15; 1 Corinthians 12:28-29; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; Revelation 2:20.
2. Review the characteristics of a true prophet.

### **Resources for this lesson**

1. “2020-2021 Standard Lesson Commentary, Uniform Series, International Bible Lessons for Christian Teaching,” pages 233-240.
2. “The Abingdon Bible Commentary” by D.R. Scott, pages 332-333.
3. The New Interpreter’s Bible Volume II, pages 429-432.

*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](http://halbradyministries.com)).*

---

## **Prophet of Conquest**

### **Spring Quarter: Prophets Faithful To God’s Covenant**

#### **Unit 1: Faithful Prophets**

#### **Sunday school lesson for the week of March 14, 2021**

**By Dr. Hal Brady**

**Lesson Scripture: Joshua 5:13-15; 6:1-5, 15-16, 20**

**Key Verse: Joshua 6:2**

#### **Lesson Aims**

4. Following the death of Moses, to summarize Joshua’s role as God’s chosen servant in leading the Israelites to their promised inheritance.
5. To review how God’s plan, Israel’s faith and obedience led to victory.

As we enter the book of Joshua we are introduced to the divinely appointed leader who is to guide the people of Israel into their promised inheritance. So, when Moses died, God put Joshua in his place.

Now, we often think of Joshua’s role as a military commander before we think of him as being a prophet – if we think of him that way at all.

Was Joshua a prophet? First, he was Moses’ successor, and Moses was called a prophet (Deuteronomy 18:15).

Second, God spoke through Joshua to give direction to Israel, and that is one characteristic of a prophet (Hebrew 1:1).

Third, Joshua challenged the people to put away their idols and commit themselves fully to the Lord (Joshua 24:28), a common task of prophets.

And Joshua may be considered a prophet forerunner of Christ. The names “Joshua” and “Jesus” both mean “the Lord is salvation.” Jesus is the Greek form of Joshua. As Joshua led ancient Israel into the promised land of Canaan, Jesus leads generations of God’s faithful people into the promised land of Heaven.

We are told that the first mention of Joshua in Scripture is in Exodus 17:8-16, a context not long after the exodus and the parting of the Red Sea. So by the time of today’s lesson text, Joshua had witnessed many mighty works of God.

The book of Joshua begins with God’s exhortations to Joshua following the death of Moses. God repeats several times the directive for Joshua to be strong and courageous in fulfilling his sacred duties (Joshua 1:6,7,9,18). Joshua had been assured of God’s presence, just as God had guided Moses (Joshua 3:7). And God’s presence with Joshua also points to Joshua’s calling from God, an event that precedes a true prophet’s ministry.

It is generally agreed that the events recorded in the book of Joshua took place between 1250-1225 B.C., and that the book is named for its chief character, not its author. The book of Joshua traces the Israelite’s entry into the Promised Land (Joshua 1-5), conquests and settlements in it (Joshua 6-21), and covenant renewal (Joshua 22-24).

Christians, we are informed, have come to consider the book of Joshua to fit the category of “history” in the Old Testament’s 5-12-5-5-12 arrangement of its 39 books (five books of law, 12 of history, five of poetry, five by major prophets, and 12 by minor prophets). But to Jewish readers, the book of Joshua was part of the Former Prophets (along with Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, and 1 and 2 Kings). And though the Former Prophets are very different from Latter Prophets (like Isaiah or Hosea), these books are concerned with God’s guiding the people through his chosen leaders. And the first such leader in this section was Joshua, followed by the judges, etc.

Joshua 3-4 records how the Israelites crossed the Jordan River on dry land, much as the earlier generation had crossed the Red Sea on dry land under Moses’ leadership. And after some further spiritual preparation, the Israelites were almost ready for the task of conquering the Promised Land.

### **Special Message**

#### **Joshua 5:13-15**

The Israelites had crossed the Jordan River, and they were now camped between the river and city of Jericho, whose high walls loomed before them. At the command of Joshua, they were to go up against not only this city, but all the cities and nations that occupied the land of Canaan.

In preparation for what was ahead, Joshua had evidently gone out to reconnoiter. He was looking upon Jericho, doubtless considering the best way to capture that walled city. But he soon learned it was not for him to direct the armies of Israel, except as the Lord himself gave instruction.

Suddenly Joshua saw standing before him a man with a drawn sword in his hand. Apparently without fear, Joshua immediately went over to him and asked the question, “Are you for us or for our enemies?”

Based on Joshua’s initial reaction to the appearance of the armed “man,” there is no reason to think he looked extraordinary in any way. But putting two facts side by side yields an extraordinary scene: (1) Joshua’s question indicates his uncertainty regarding whose side the man is on, yet (2) Joshua “went” up to this armed man anyway! The scene is therefore one of confidence in the protective presence of the Lord. As to the answer to Joshua’s question, he was about to find out that the answer wasn’t a simple “us” or “them.”

“Neither,” he replied, “but as commander of the Army of the Lord I have now come” (Joshua 5:14). This individual was likely an angel of the Lord, perhaps the same one whom God had promised would go before his people to lead them into the Promised Land (Exodus 23:20-23).

In this passage, we have the “Army of the Lord.” The word “army” is used as a reference to an armed force (Judges 4:15, etc.). The man’s identifying himself as commander reinforces the military overtones suggested by his unsheathed sword and the armed force at his command (compare 1 Samuel 12:9).

Note and this is very important! The man does not give Joshua a straightforward endorsement of allegiance. Whether the man was for or against the Israelites depended upon their faithfulness and obedience to “the Lord.”

Chuck Swindoll often says to university or seminary graduates when he addresses them in commencement messages, “Don’t show me your honors today. Come back in 30 years, and we’ll talk. Today, I’ll congratulate you for the four, five, maybe six years of work it took to graduate. But show me 30 years of faithful consistency, then I will applaud.”

Until the commander of the Army of the Lord witnessed the Israelite’s faithfulness he did not give Joshua a straightforward endorsement of allegiance. The point is, faithfulness and obedience are not options with God. The psalmist stated, “Love the Lord, all his faithful people! The Lord preserves those who are true to him, but the proud he pays back in full” (Psalm 31:23).

Moving on to verse 14b and 15, the posture of “reverence” Joshua adopted should not be seen as indicating worship since angels, as created beings, do not accept worship (Revelation 19:10;

22:8). However, realizing that such a man would not show up just to chit-chat, Joshua's question sought to get to the heart of the man's errands immediately. Joshua's referring to himself as "servant" and to the man as "my Lord" are two more indications of Joshua's great respect for this messenger sent by God.

As we understood, "the commander of the Lord's Army" did not immediately reveal the nature of his visit. His directive simply echoes the scene of the burning bush episode involving Moses at Mount Horeb (Sinai). This incident grants us another link between Moses as God's prophet and Joshua as his legitimate successor (Deuteronomy 18:15; Joshua 1:1-9).

## **Sovereign Plan**

### **Joshua 6:1-5**

The walled city of Jericho was the first obstacle that confronted the people of Israel as they set out to claim their promised inheritance. But how were they to subjugate this walled city when they had no battering rams or other engines of war?

Joshua had previously sent two spies into the city to assess the situation there. And although they had gained entrance, one or more alert members of the populace had informed authorities of their presence and location. However, under protection from Rahab, the spies had learned that the city was in a state of panic because of reports of what the Lord had done to the kings east of the Jordan River (Joshua 2).

To the question of how the Israelites were to subjugate the walled city, we find the answer in Hebrews 11:30, "By faith the walls of Jericho fall, after the army had marched around them for seven days." And it is only by faith that such obstacles as walls are overcome in our spiritual lives.

Surprisingly, the "Lord" himself, not the commander of the Lord's army, addressed Joshua. This could indicate either (1) that the commander prepared Joshua for the Lord to arrive on the scene or (2) that the Lord had chosen first to introduce himself as commander of the army before identifying himself more fully. Either would be in keeping with ways that God had interacted with great men from the past (Genesis 18:1-2; Exodus 3:1-4).

The description of the forthcoming conquest of Jericho in terms of "its kings and its fighting men" reassured Joshua that the victory would be complete. Neither king nor soldiers would escape and we should note that the Lord did not say "I will deliver," but "I have delivered." The victory is so assured that he spoke of it as already having happened.

The promised land was a gift from God to Israel (for example, Numbers 13:1, 2). They had done nothing to earn or deserve it; it was a demonstration of God's gracious treatment of them as his covenant people. And because of this feat, their life in the land was to be different from that of the nations they dispossessed.

Because God was the giver of the land his instructions for taking the land had to be followed to the letter. There was no room for human schemes or military tactics. All was ordered of the Lord and Joshua and Israel had but to follow and obey.

The following are a few notes taken from God's strategic plan to conquer Jericho (read Joshua 6:3-5).

First, the Lord's intent here is that the Israelites would realize that the victory was solely by His might, not theirs. Second, unlike other nations, military success in Israel didn't depend on numbers, technology, or skills. Rather it depended on the Lord's presence, and the Ark of the Covenant would symbolize that presence. Third, obeying God was the key to victory. Fourth, the deviation from the pattern of the six days marked the fact that the "seventh" day would bring a different result. Fifth, armies need ways to communicate, and the trumpets of curved "ram's horns" served that purpose. And, sixth, the shout of the "whole army" in combination with that longer blast would precede the Lord's bringing down "the wall of the city." No other military action would be necessary for God to raze Jericho's defenses. For "everyone" to go "straight" in would keep each other from getting in each other's way.

Joshua 6:6-14 (not in our printed text) records the obedience of the people, the priests, and the armed man to Joshua's orders. The result was the walls came down.

### **Simple Obedience**

#### **Joshua 6:15-16, 20**

Joshua spoke again as though the Lord had already given them Jericho. As we know, this city was being conquered through God's power, not through Israel's greatness or might. Though it had not yet happened, it was as good as accomplished.

Joshua 6:17 (not in our printed text) contains a reminder to spare Rahab and her family because of her protecting the spies previously sent by Joshua to spy out the city. Everything else in the city was slated for destruction.

Now, the importance of following God's direction not only applied to the conquering of Canaan but was to be a central feature of Israelite faith from then on. It was to be the key not only to conquering of the land but also keeping it. The key to remaining in the land would never be found in military might, economic strength, or by mastering the tactics of international diplomacy. It would be found only in continuing to recognize the land as a gift from God and honoring him as the giver in every phase of life. And to fail in this regard would surely mean to forfeit the gift God had given them.

### **Lessons Considered**

The first lesson we Christians would do well to remember is that God's commands are still meant to be obeyed without equivocating. Though Christians may disagree on some particulars,

we know from Jesus that our first command is to love the Lord (Mark 12:30) and loving him involves obedience (John 14:15).

Second lesson, walls are a problem that need to be addressed! Ancient Jericho relied on a wall surrounding the city to protect its inhabitants from invaders. As individuals, many of us have built walls in our hearts and minds for a similar purpose: to protect our self-esteem, guard against challenges to our prejudices, etc. And often such walls end up destroying our relationships with family and others. Sometimes these walls are so strong that only the power of God can break them down. So what are some of the walls in our lives that need to be broken down?

Third lesson, no power can stand against us if we are careful to give God His rightful place in our lives.

### **Action Plan**

3. Have the class discuss the lessons in the “Lessons Considered” section of today’s lesson.
4. What further lessons did class members gain from today’s lesson?
5. What’s the single most important thing you can do today to hold yourself accountable to acting as the Lord desires?

### **Resources for this lesson**

4. “2020-2021 Standard Lesson Commentary, Uniform Series, International Bible Lessons for Christian Teaching,” pages 241-248.
5. “The Abingdon Bible Commentary” by Lindsey B. Longacre, pages 348-349.
6. The New Interpreter’s Bible Volume II, pages 610-613.

*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](http://halbradyministries.com)).*

---

## **John Wesley and the Germans, part 5**

### **JOHN WESLEY MOMENTS**

#### **DAVE HANSON**

The German colonists who traveled to Georgia with General Oglethorpe influenced John Wesley in many ways. One of those ways was to give him guidance in how to deal with women. He actually asked the German bishop for advice in this area. Actually, John Wesley needed a lot of advice in how to deal with women!

The German bishop, Spandenburgh, advised John Wesley to not to talk with women “overmuch.”

Billy Graham and his staff met together early in his evangelistic ministry in Modesto, California. The purpose of this gathering was to plan to avoid problems that had destroyed many such ministries. They published what has been called the “Modesto Manifesto.” The essence of the Modesto Manifesto was:

1. Avoid any financial questions. Billy Graham must never touch the offerings. He will be given a salary. Other expenditures must be honest and above board.
2. Do not talk overmuch with women. Never spend time alone with a woman except relatives.
3. Never hold crusades without the approval of the local ministerial associations.
4. All races must always be welcome.

The German’s advice to John Wesley is still good advice for ministers today.

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

---

### **Retired Clergy Birthdays – March 2021**

3/01 – Ralph Bailey: 9650 Lehigh Ave.; Savannah, GA 31406  
3/01 – Buddy Whatley: 2153 Bold Springs Rd.; Ochlocknee, GA 31773  
3/02 – Gene Yates: 705 Curl Rd.; East Dublin, GA 31027  
3/03 – Ricky Bishop: 292 Timberwind Dr.; Byron, GA 31008  
3/05 – Tim Paulk: 104 Lee Rd. 2153; Salem, AL 36874  
3/06 – Ellison Whitt: 443 Lee Smith Rd.; Ellaville, GA 31806  
3/08 – Jerry Lillard: 253 Paul Lockley Rd.; Lyons GA 30436  
3/09 – Grover Bell: 333 E. 53rd St.; Savannah, GA 31405  
3/10 – Joey Cannon: 146 Callaway St.; Leesburg, GA 31763  
3/15 – Brenda Iglehart: 305 Palm Club Circle.; Brunswick, GA 31525  
3/16 – Joel Dent: 1819 Pine Forest Circle; Dublin, GA 31021  
3/16 – Truett Leveritt: PO Box 15893; Savannah, GA 31416  
3/16 – Vance Mathis: PO Box 222; Bonaire, GA 31005  
3/17 – George Durham: 844 Woods Hole Circle; Statesboro, GA 30461  
3/17 – David Seyle: 304 Causton Harbour Dr.; Savannah, GA 31404  
3/18 – Tom Oliver: 511 Victory Dr.; Waynesboro, GA 30830  
3/20 – Ronnie Culpepper: 2848 Sue Mack Dr.; Columbus, GA 31906  
3/20 – Dan MacMinn: PO Box 1325; Ellaville, GA 31806  
3/21 – Delia Steffen: 128 Cambridge Way; Macon, GA 31220  
3/22 – Beverly Flowers: 390 Brook Hollow Dr.; McDonough, GA 30252  
3/22 – Tommy Mason, Jr.: 7321 US Highway 41; Vienna, GA 31092  
3/23 – Dwight Bishop: 15 Blue Magnolia Dr.; Alapaha, GA 31622  
3/23 – James McIlrath: 748 Old Jesup Rd.; Brunswick, GA 31520  
3/23 – Jimmy Pennell: 2257 S. Lakeshore Dr.; Lake Junaluska, NC 28745  
3/24 – Larry E. Bird: 325 Langston Chapel Rd.; Statesboro, GA 30458-3773  
3/24 – Rob Grotheer: 4 Druid Court; Savannah, GA 31410

## **OBITUARIES**

### **Rev. William Whipple**

William Metts (Bill) Whipple, 89, passed away on February 10, 2021, after a Covid-19 diagnosis following a long illness. He lived his entire life in Georgia until the past year, which he and his wife Elizabeth spent in a care facility in Las Vegas, NV near one of their daughters. He was born in Atlanta, GA on March 2, 1931, to Wendell and Carolyn (Smith) Whipple, and he grew up in Perry, GA. He was an innovative thinker and a passionate advocate for making the world a better place, serving as a pastor, a counselor, and a volunteer.

He enjoyed a happy childhood in Perry with his four siblings. He had a paper route with his brothers for years, and Bill loved to tell stories about delivering important news to the town during World War II. He had a lifelong passion for music, and he sang in the Emory Glee Club, the Choral Guild of Atlanta, and the Atlanta Symphony Chorus. He was a fixture in church choirs until well into his eighties. He especially loved classical music and opera. A creative spirit, he also loved to write, draw, and paint.

He earned a B.A. from Emory University in 1953, a Master of Divinity degree from the Candler School of Theology in 1956, and a Master's degree in Education from the University of Georgia in 1972.

Bill was a member of the South Georgia Conference of The United Methodist Church, and served in pastorates in the Savannah, Albany and Waycross areas. In 1957, he married Elizabeth Bland of Rocky Ford, GA, with whom he had four children. He then worked as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor in Atlanta until his retirement in 1991. After his retirement he served as pastor of Rex Methodist Church in Atlanta for three more years. Bill had a lifelong commitment to helping those in need, which he expressed through volunteering with his church and in soup kitchens, and his vocations of ministry and of vocational rehabilitation counseling in underserved neighborhoods.

Bill is survived by his wife and daughters, Karen Broderick (Joe) of Burbank, CA, Jean Whipple of Fort Bragg, CA, and Marian Rusche (Philip) of Henderson, NV, grandchildren Kelly and Kristen Broderick, Savannah and Max Whaley, Axel and Nick Rusche, and many extended family members. Bill was preceded in death by his parents, sister Barbara, brothers Wendell Jr., Earl, and Kenneth, his son Warren Whipple of Atlanta, and son-in-law Dennis Whaley of Fort Bragg, CA.

Those wishing to honor his life are invited to make a donation in his name to the Atlanta Community Food Bank, [www.acfb.org](http://www.acfb.org). A memorial service will be held on a future date.

### **Rev. Pat Mahan**

Rev. Carl Patrick Mahan, age 61 of Scottsboro, Alabama, passed away Saturday, February 20, 2021, at his home.

A memorial service was held Saturday, February 27, 2021, at Randall's Chapel United Methodist Church Worship Center, where he served as pastor for the last six years. Rev. Todd Henderson, pastor of Arab First United Methodist Church officiated. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to Randall's Chapel United Methodist Church in his memory.

Rev. Mahan is survived by his wife, Kathy Mahan; his children Andrew Mahan and Anna Mahan; his sister, Dixie Hardin; and his two brothers, Mike Mahan (Susan) and D.W. Mahan (Erica); along with several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, Daugherty W. Mahan, Jr. and Norma Hatfield Mahan.

Arrangements entrusted to Scottsboro Funeral Home.

---

## **Scripture Readings – March 2**

### **March 7**

#### ***Third Sunday in Lent***

Exodus 20:1-7

Psalm 19 (UMH 750)

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

John 2:13-22

### **March 14**

#### ***Fourth Sunday in Lent***

Numbers 21:4-9

Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22 (UMH 830)

Ephesians 2:1-10

John 3:14-21

### **March 21**

#### ***Fifth Sunday in Lent***

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Psalm 51:1-12 (UMH 785)

Hebrews 5:5-10

John 12:20-33

---

## **Events in the South Georgia Conference – 3/2/2021 edition**

### **Connectional Ministries' Book Club – March 2**

Connectional Ministries invites South Georgia clergy and laity to join a virtual book club via Zoom. From the comfort of one's home or office – anywhere, really – participants will discuss the week's book, its important themes, and faith. The group's first book is "[How to Be an Anti-racist](#)" by Ibram X. Kendi. Leading the discussion will be Lindsey and Rev. Andrew (Drew)

Young, pastor of Mosaic Church in Savannah. The study will begin March 2 and run through April 6. Find more details and registration information online at [www.sgaumc.org/book-club](http://www.sgaumc.org/book-club).

### **Alive Together at the Table with Bishop Bryan, Zoom – March 3**

Come together at the table with Bishop Bryan for reflections and conversations. How is it with your soul? What is going on in our conference and the general church you need to know? The conversation will begin at noon and will last approximately one hour. We will use the same Zoom link for all of these conversations, so once you register and receive the Zoom link you can save it for future conversations. If you misplace the link at any point, feel free to register again. [Register now](#)

### **Wesley Glen's Abundant Life 2021 – March 6**

Wesley Glen's inaugural VIRTUAL Abundant Life party will be an interactive experience for you and a celebration benefitting Wesley Glen Ministries! Join them by visiting [www.wesleyglenministries.com/abundant-life](http://www.wesleyglenministries.com/abundant-life) or call 478-394-3332 for more information.

### **Connectional Ministries' Book Club – March 9**

Connectional Ministries invites South Georgia clergy and laity to join a virtual book club via Zoom. From the comfort of one's home or office – anywhere, really – participants will discuss the week's book, its important themes, and faith. The group's first book is "[How to Be an Anti-racist](#)" by Ibram X. Kendi. Leading the discussion will be Lindsey and Rev. Andrew (Drew) Young, pastor of Mosaic Church in Savannah. The study will begin March 2 and run through April 6. Find more details and registration information online at [www.sgaumc.org/book-club](http://www.sgaumc.org/book-club).

### **Advanced Lay Servant Ministries Training, Douglas – March 12-13**

Lay Servant training is designed to educate those persons interested in stretching their faith to participate more fully in the ministries of the church. They have three main areas of focus: Leading, Caring, and Communicating. The advanced class, based on Cokesbury's book, "Each One a Minister," by William Carter, is a study of the book of Ephesians and what it teaches about how we are called to use our spiritual gifts. Registration fee for the class is \$40. (Note: Basic Lay Speaking class must be completed before taking Advanced Class.) The class will be held Friday, March 12 from 6:30 until 9 p.m. and Saturday, March 13 from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. at Douglas First UMC. Contact Anne Bosarge for more information. [anne@thechapelministries.com](mailto:anne@thechapelministries.com).

### **UMCOR Sunday – March 14**

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

promote the offering, visit [www.umcor.org](http://www.umcor.org) or call 888-346-3862. [2021 UMCOR Sunday Pastor and Leader's Kit](#)

### **Connectional Ministries' Book Club – March 16**

Connectional Ministries invites South Georgia clergy and laity to join a virtual book club via Zoom. From the comfort of one's home or office – anywhere, really – participants will discuss the week's book, its important themes, and faith. The group's first book is "[How to Be an Anti-racist](#)" by Ibram X. Kendi. Leading the discussion will be Lindsey and Rev. Andrew (Drew) Young, pastor of Mosaic Church in Savannah. The study will begin March 2 and run through April 6. Find more details and registration information online at [www.sgaumc.org/book-club](http://www.sgaumc.org/book-club).

### **Alive Together at the Table with Bishop Bryan, Zoom – March 16**

Come together at the table with Bishop Bryan for reflections and conversations. How is it with your soul? What is going on in our conference and the general church you need to know? The conversations will begin at noon and 5:30 p.m. and will last approximately one hour. We will use the same Zoom link for all of these conversations, so once you register and receive the Zoom link you can save it for future conversations. If you misplace the link at any point, feel free to register again. [Register now](#)

### **UMW Virtual Spiritual Growth Retreat – March 19-20**

You are invited to "Come to the Table for Justice & Hope" for this year's annual UMW Spiritual Growth Retreat. As we gather together at the virtual table, we will explore the question: how do Christian women stand firm in faith and witness in today's chaotic world? The year's speakers are Rev. Earnestine Campbell, senior pastor of Epworth UMC in Columbus, Rev. Christy Bandy, senior pastor of Cairo First UMC, and Bishop R. Lawson Bryan, episcopal leader of the South Georgia Annual Conference. Music will be led by Cameron Rolling, music director at Centerville UMC. For more details, visit [www.sgaumc.org/umw](http://www.sgaumc.org/umw).