

First United Methodist Church Messenger

drawing near to the heart of Christ

Newsletter - February 2012

Celebrating and Looking ahead...

Sometimes it is good to get a glimpse of our congregation from another perspective. I recently received this email from one of our winter visitors and want to pass it along to you as a word of celebration:

"Hello. My husband and I attended your morning worship today, and we wanted to let you and your congregation know how much we appreciated the warm welcome extended by every person we met. We were invited for coffee and the famous donuts (soon not for the youth who will be headed to Sunday School), for classes meeting after church, and for our return should we visit again.

While we are moving on to Pensacola next Saturday, we know that if we return to Gulfport next winter, we will definitely return to your church. With such wide range of ages and cultures, your minds, doors, and hearts are certainly open. You have a very impressive list of ministries and the eagerness of people to assist with those.

Several years ago, when I was on administrative council in our home UMC, we viewed a video about being a welcoming church. Your church could have easily been the poster church in that video.

Over the years, we have attended services in many UMC churches, and it always feels like home, and it is easy to see how we are all part of a greater family. Thank you for welcoming us to your worship.

God's blessings to you and your church."

Thank you for your faithfulness and for the intentionality of your hospitality. May we continue to have open hearts, minds, and doors as we invite others to journey with the Living Lord.

Another word of celebration has already been offered by Tom McCormick and the Finance Committee, but I wanted to echo it. We finished 2011 very well financially. We paid 100% of our Conference and District Mission Shares (Apportionments). Through your faithfulness ministry in Mississippi and around the world continues.

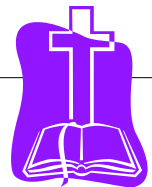
Looking ahead...our pledges for 2012 are about 10% higher than they were in 2011. Thank you for your faithfulness.

As we move into this second month of 2012, we continue toward the heart of God in Christ. We read and hear the Witness of Luke in worship. Many among us are being formed into the image of Christ through small group study and are serving Christ in various and powerful ways.

Are we not blessed? May we continue to be a blessing...under the dome of God's watchfulness and care.

Our Christian Sympathy...

...to Nancy Mozingo and family in the death of her husband, J.P. Mozingo.
...to Doug Luke and family in the death of his sister, Sherry Amy.
...to Gary Karl and family in the death of his father, Gary Karl, Sr.
...to Anna Mae Carr and family in the death of her husband, William Carr.
...to the family of Annice Edwards who died January 23, 2012.
...to Fay Barrett and family in the death of her mother, Frances Nobles.



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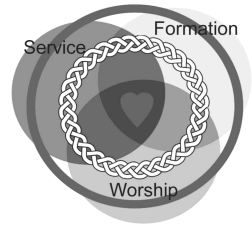
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Worship - Formation - Service

under the Dome of God's watchfulness & care

Formation and Service - *Chris Ray*

The beginning of the year brings lots of new things. Geneva Dummer is the new co-shepherd of Formation. Roger and Rebecca Brunell are the new co-shepherds of Service. We welcome them into these new roles as we look to build on the foundations built by George East in Formation and Susan Lenes in Service last year.



Formation:

- ◆ Long-term Disciple Bible studies are on-going.
- ◆ Invitation to the NT (Short-term Disciple Bible study) led by Chris Ray Tuesday nights 6-7:30 cost is \$12. Per person.
- ◆ Beth Moore Bible Study - starts Monday, January 23, at 1:30 p.m. in the church library. This study will last eleven weeks. If you are interested in participating please notify Susan McCormick or Margaret Jackson.
- ◆ Lenten Lunches will start on Ash Wednesday, February 22nd. Lunch at 11:30 and there will be a service at noon and an evening service at 6:30. The Lenten lunches will continue each Wednesday at 11:30 through March 28. We need groups or individuals who are willing to make a light lunch to contact Chris Ray.

There are many other formative opportunities in the works, if you have any questions or suggestions please see Chris Ray or Geneva Dummer.

Service:

- ◆ We continue to help staff volunteers at the Salvation Army with the cold weather shelter.
- ◆ We will continue our partnership with Feed My Sheep and provide a sack lunch every 3rd Sunday.
- ◆ WI Smith fund: this is the fund that helps those needing assistance in paying utility bills.
- ◆ Costa Rica: June 2-9, 2012. If interested please see Chris Ray

Thank you to Sisters in Service for leading the church in the coat drive in January.

There are many other service opportunities in the works, if you have any questions or suggestions please see Chris Ray, Roger or Rebecca Brunell.

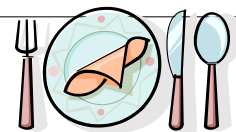


Would you like to know more about our Costa Rica Mission Trip? Join us on Thursday, February 23 at 6:30 p.m. in the lower level of sanctuary building for our mission trip meeting.



2012 Flower Calendar The 2012 flower calendar is located in the hallway of the church office. Please stop by and sign up for your special date to place flowers in the sanctuary. The cost is \$40.00.

The **Sassy Seniors** will go on the road to Captain Al's (11268 Lorraine Rd) on Wednesday, February 15th at 1:00 p.m. For reservations call Ada Reid, 864-4721, or email her at slntonsr@cableone.net.



On Ash Wednesday we will begin our Lenten Lunch series with a light meal at 11:30 and a service of ashes and repentance at noon. That evening at 6:30 we will have an identical service of ashes and repentance for

those who cannot attend the midday service.

Scriptures for February

2/5	Luke 4.38-44	Healing & Quiet Place
2/12	Luke 5.1-11	Called to Follow
2/19	Luke 5.27-32; 13.1-9	Called to Repent
		The Stories We Tell for Lent
2/22 Ash Wed.	Luke 4.1-13	Jesus' Baptism & Temptation
2/26 Lent 1	Luke 9.28-43	Transfiguration & Healing
3/4 Lent 2 (Communion)	Luke 16.19-31	Rich Man & Lazarus
3/11 Lent 3	Luke 9.51-56; Luke 10.25-37	The Good Samaritan
3/18 Lent 4	Luke 16.1-15	The Shrewd Manager/Unjust Servant
3/25 Lent 5	Luke 8.26-39; Luke 15.1-32	Gerasene Demoniac & Prodigal Son

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Minister to Families with Children and Youth

- Ryan George

The ball dropped. Did you see it? January 1st at precisely midnight, with Lady Gaga and Mayor Bloomberg watching, it fell. (Yawn...) Exciting isn't it?

I'll be honest; I looked up who was there as I wrote this. I didn't see it because I was in bed asleep. I didn't see the public figures. I don't know who else was on the program. My attention was elsewhere. I knew I was going to be preaching on the first. I knew a good night's sleep was more important. I choose what was important to me.

The dropping of that ball didn't matter to me. Dropping the ball in other areas does demand my attention. I don't want to drop the ball that lets me get to know my kids more this year. I'm going to work on the ball where I spend time *with* them, not just *near* them (although, there's even room for improvement there). There are balls where I'll hear their stories, kiss skinned knees, and see them learn to ride bikes. There's the ball where they'll drive cars. A ball for dating advice. Ball: cry with them over heartache and point them to something that will last longer. Ball: walk them to their dorm room, down the isle, and into the delivery room. These are balls that I don't want to drop, so I pay attention.

With my girls being 7, 5, and minus 13 weeks, I don't have to worry about all these balls this year. But the ones I pay attention to this year influence which I'll witness later. With no guarantees, I'm hoping that if I'm present for balls at age 5, they'll let me be present at age 15, 25, 50 and the balls in-between and beyond. And I don't want to be there solo. I most certainly want my wife to be there, but I want you to be there too.

These aren't different balls. If I bring my kids to church and teach them the importance of it, even when it's awkward, even when they don't have friends, when they're angry with everyone (including me)... I'm showing them it's an important ball. And what if the church structured itself to say more than "come here" or "don't do that"? Imagine the church feeding into activities that were easy for my family to gather around. Fun at times, serious at times, vacillating between meaningful and lighthearted. These balls are in the same mindset, paying attention to this "family ball" benefits that "church ball" and vice versa.

Keeping families connected is what the ministries here at Gulfport First United Methodist Church are trying to do. Not take more time from the family, but to make more time for it. Not just to pull you apart less, but put you together more. So as events and activities are mentioned, try to make a few, and let the church draw near as the family draws near.

Please Pray for....



...Tyler Schultz, grandson of Gene and Betty Schultz, who is in the U.S. Air Force.

...Brister Bishop, son of Wade and Ruth Bishop, who is in the U.S. Navy.

...Josh Sallee, Navy CB deployed to Afghanistan.

Upcoming at Arts Under The Dome:

Saturday, February 4, 7:00 PM:

Legendary cowboy balladeer and guitarist **Don Edwards** has spent over four decades enthraling audiences worldwide with authentic

Western music. He has made a major contribution to the preservation and celebration of traditional cowboy music.

Saturday, February 18, 7:00 PM: Jazz

trumpeter **Dominic Farinacci** and jazz pianist **Aaron Diehl** were discovered by Wynton Marsalis and were invited to join his Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra. They have gone on to tour with Marsalis and other major jazz artists and play the major jazz festivals and venues.

Sunday, March 4, 7:00 PM: The exciting world music ensemble **Festival of Four** dazzles audiences with their international repertoire. The celebrated musicians consist of a flamenco guitarist from Spain, a classical guitarist from the U.S., a Czech-born mandolin champion, and a Chilean flutist.

Tickets to all concerts are \$15 adults, \$10 students, available at the door or in advance from the church office. You will find information and links to artist websites and music at www.arts.fumc-gulfport.org, where you can also purchase tickets. You may also call 863-0392 for more information. Come find out why folks from all over the Mississippi Gulf Coast – as well as Hattiesburg, Mobile, and the New Orleans area – buy season tickets and drive over for our concerts.



The Messenger
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William T. McAlilly – District Superintendent
Andy Johnson – Pastor

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www.fumc-gulfport.org

Gifts Given

In loving memory of J.C. Mozingo
Given by: Dr. and Mrs. G.B. Flagg, Betty Brown

In loving memory of J.P. Mozingo
Given by: Dr. and Mrs. G.B. Flagg, Betty Brown,
Eddie and Beulah Upchurch, Dennis and Becky Brooks

In loving memory of Chester and Hazel Goodyear
Given by: John and Rebecca Amos

In loving memory of Juanell Meek
Given by: J.C. Meek

In loving memory of Sherry Amy
Given by: Betty Brown

In loving memory of William Carr
Given by: National Assn. of Intercollegiate Athletics,
SA Insurance Services Inc., Mrs. B.F. Walton, Jr.,
Robert E. Miller, George and Mary East, Jr.,
Don and Ruth Lewis, Sabra Wilson, Joan and Robert Suddarth,
John and Patty Sneed, Carroll and Jane Kemp, Jr.,
Barbara and Bob Clower, Susan and Darrell Painter,
Dr. Fauzia F. Quddus with the
Children's Center of Gulfport, Inc.,
Tom and Nancy Holderer, Sherman and Celia Muths,
National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust

In honor of Barby and Laurel White, Harry and E.A. Allen,
Barry, Cathy and Lizzy Cottrell, Tom and Susan McCormick,
Frank and Christy Moseley, Nancilee Peaks, Jane Anderson,
and Pat and Jeanette Smith
Given by: Carter and Penny Bise

In honor of Joyce and George Leonard
Given by: Arthur and Lois Rogers,
and Randy and Vicki Williams

In honor of Josephine Davis
Given by: William and Kay Capelle

In honor of Irv and Donna DePierne
Given by: J.C. Meek

In honor of Catherine Barnes and George Leonard
Given by: Gary and Eleanor Batey

In honor of Susan McCormick
Given by: Barby White

In honor of Tony and Jeanie Pollard
Given by: The Wesley Searcher Sunday School Class

DIVORCE & GRIEF RECOVERY WORKSHOPS



FUMC's ongoing community outreach programs begin Thursday, January 19th and run for ten weeks. Over the past twenty years, these programs have helped hundreds of hurting people in our community get their lives back together.

The **Divorce Recovery Workshop** offers support for persons who are going through the upheaval of a divorce or separation. Participants hear local counseling professionals speak on divorce issues, and spend the remainder of the time in sharing and discussion.

The **Grief Recovery Workshop** offers a caring environment for persons dealing with the aftermath of the death of a loved one. Participants are given the opportunity to share with one another and to hear speakers on various aspects of grief.

Broken Rainbow is a program for children dealing with divorce or grief issues. It is suitable for children ages six and up.

All programs meet at 7:00 p.m. in the Education Building. The workshop fee is \$30, which includes a book. Children of Divorce and Grief Recovery may attend Broken Rainbow at no extra cost. Pre-registration is not required except for Broken Rainbow. Child care is available upon request. For more information, call Catherine Barnes at 229-6851.



Thank you to our February Ushers

Walter Taylor, Penny Bise, Roger Brunell, Mary Gordon, Samuel Gordon, Jerry Hlass, Connor Lowery and Preston Reeves.

Thank you to our February Nursery Workers

February 5: Ruth and Wade Bishop; February 12: Carter Bise and Kellee Caldwell; February 19: Cathy Cottrell and Jenny Ray; February 26: Robin Carraway and Lou Hare.



Thank you to our February Greeters

February 5 - Mark and Marilyn Leiker, Susan McCormick, Kaye and Rachel Bernheim
February 12 - Darren, Darby and Lindsay Raybourn, Cindy McDougal
February 19 - Wade and Ruth Bishop, Kellee and Reid Caldwell
February 26 Andy and Donna Brown, Roger Brunell and Rebecca Kershaw-Brunell