



The Florida  
Conference  
Of The United  
Methodist Church

## South Central District

# May 2011 Newsletter

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Dear Laurie,

### Are We About The Right Business?

*And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? Luke 2:49 KJV*

I recently heard the commencement speaker at my daughter's graduation share a story about a hapless but passionate soldier. In the tradition of the former lovable television character, Gomer Pyle, the soldier in the story was always just a bit late reporting for duty and his efforts were always subpar, at least according to his sargeant.

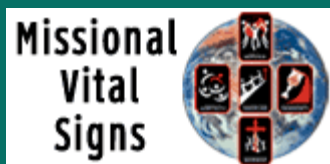
He remained in the military and some years later received an assignment overseas where he once again served under the command of his former sargeant. The dimwit soldier saved his unit from the onslaught of the enemy while serving on solo patrol one night. When the enemy came upon him, he being startled responded with all of the weapon power at his disposal. Later, when his incredulous sargeant asked how he accomplished the feat, he responded by saying, "everything is different when you're in business for yourself."

The account of this 'hapless become hero' soldier was intended to drive home a message that would wed the pride and responsibility of new graduates with that of relief from their parents' payrolls. The message was one of rising to the occasion and doing what needs to be done when one is responsible for oneself.

This understanding of being in business for oneself led me to reflect upon our understanding of pastoral appointments in The United Methodist Church. Despite our Connectionalism, there seems to be an increasing climate wherein some

## District Calendar

### Quick Links



The question has been raised "where do I get one of those church roadside signs?"



Well, your question is answered. [\[Click Here\]](#) to Cokesbury's signage catalogue.

congregations expect pastors to 'storm the hill' and do battle against their prolonged apathy, waning vision and lack effectiveness. Likewise, there are some pastors who expect their new appointments to become the crowning achievements in their resumes, even if that achievement is not reflected in the legacy of their current crowns.

Rarely will we hear a soldier say, "I took out the enemy on my own while my commanding officer and troop were clueless." I also don't think that my daughter or most college graduates will say that they accomplished their degrees on their own while their families stood idly by. Congregations should not expect pastors to ride into their new appointments on July 1st like knights in shining armor and pastors should not consider pastoral appointments as a deserved next career step of one's station in ministry or an insult to the same. Pastors and congregations are not in business for themselves, but they are partners in the business of the Kingdom!

**Rev. Dr. Sharon G. Austin**

District Superintendent, South Central District

## → Prayer Concerns

Prayers are requested for Cheryl Blume of Tampa, the mother of Rev. Michelle Blume of Lutz, FL. Cheryl Blume is a 10-year cancer survivor and recently had a biopsy. Rev. Blume asks for prayers for a clear screening.

Healing for the mother of the Rev. Sabrina L. Tu



## → Annual Conference District Training Sessions

Held at the following times and locations. If you have been chosen as a District Lay Member to Annual Conference, please plan to attend one of these sessions. More information will follow via email.

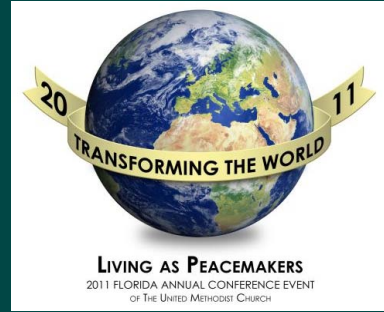
Sunday, May 15 @ 2:00 p.m.

Wesley Memorial UMC, 6100 Memorial Highway, Tampa FL 33615  
813-886-8536

Saturday, May 21 @ 9:00 a.m.

Trinity UMC, 402 W. English Street. Plant City FL 33563

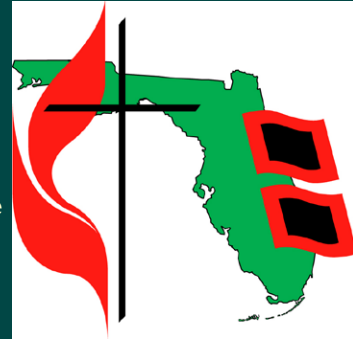
813-752-9316



## → Disaster Recovery: Churches Should Wait Before Responding To Tornado Damage

By Pam Garrison, Manager of Disaster Recovery | April 29, 2011

As news continues to pour in on the devastation and loss of life from the tornadoes that ripped through the south, many have asked how they can help. We are in communication with our partners, UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) and UMVIM (United Methodist Volunteers in Mission), and they are in touch with the affected conferences to offer support and assistance when requested.



At this time, we are being asked to stand by until the needs assessment process is completed. Please do not begin collecting material donations and supplies until we know exactly what, if anything, is needed.

The only volunteers requested at this time are those who have been certified as Early Responders for both the Florida Conference and UMCOR. To learn more about this process, please visit [www.flumc.org](http://www.flumc.org) or contact the Disaster Recovery Ministry of the conference at (800) 282-8011 Ext. 148 or [DisasterRecovery@flumc.org](mailto:DisasterRecovery@flumc.org).

As Christians, our hearts go out to hurting people and we want to "do" something. Until we have been invited by the local authorities to provide volunteers or resources, the very best thing we can do is pray.

We also invite you to give generously to US Spring Storms 2011, UMCOR Emergency Advance #3021326. When you give to this UMCOR Advance, you can be assured that 100% of your donation goes to those who have been affected by the storms. To learn more, please visit [www.umcor.org](http://www.umcor.org).

As more information becomes available, it will be posted on the website at [www.flumc.org/DisasterRecovery](http://www.flumc.org/DisasterRecovery).

## → Volunteers wanted for Annual Conference

There are many opportunities for you to serve.

The Florida Conference of The United Methodist Church is looking for volunteers for the 2011 Annual Conference being held May 31 thru June 4 at the Tampa Convention Center. With over 720 churches represented, it is a great way to connect and learn about what the Lord is doing in Florida, and throughout the world.

### Volunteer Opportunities

**Greeters:** Meet and greet members upon arrival and provide directions to meeting spaces (Must be able to stand for four hours).

**Guest Services:** Answer questions and provide information to guests and members

**Expo:** Help vendors unload/load booths, monitor the Expo floor, provide information and assistance (Might require some light lifting)

Ushers & Worship Ushers: Needed for Plenary sessions and Worship services

Time Commitment: Four hour blocks of time on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday.\*

Many of these volunteer needs will also be needed for General Conference, April 24-May 4, 2012.

If you are interested, please [\[Click Here\]](#) to Enroll and to choose which position/s and time/s you would like to volunteer for. You may pick as many time schedules and positions as you'd like!

If you have further questions or need help signing up, call Sandy Lovern at 800-282-8011 Ext. 197 or email [SLovern@Flumc.org](mailto:SLovern@Flumc.org).

\*Please be advised these are volunteer positions, no food or lodging will be provided.

## → Clergywomen Gathering at Annual Conference

Tuesday, May 31 at 6:00 p.m. at Hyde Park United Methodist Church  
500 W. Platt Street, Tampa, Florida 33606

Due to some changes in the schedule of events at Annual Conference, the Clergywomen Gathering will be a dinner this year held on Tuesday, May 31 at Hyde Park United Methodist Church just a few blocks from the Tampa Convention Center. We encourage you to come for a time of connection with fellow clergywomen after the Clergy Worship Service. A nice dinner buffet is planned for you with plenty of time to catch up with others and hear a few words about "Living as Peacemakers". We hope you will attend the workshops and meet the delegates during Wednesday's lunchtime when we would normally meet.

Cost: \$18.00 Reservation Required <http://www.flumc2.org/registrations/register/53>

Dinner includes a pasta buffet, salad and fruit bar, dessert and beverage.

All reservations must be made online and paid via PayPal.

For information contact: Michelle Colan at [mcolan@flumc.org](mailto:mcolan@flumc.org)

Reservation deadline: Monday, May 23, 2011

## → "People of Color" join us for a welcome reception!

Tuesday, May 31, 2011 from 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Palma Ceia United Methodist Church, 3723 W. Bay to Bay Boulevard 33629 (813) 837-1541

The 169th session of the Florida Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church will convene in Tampa, Florida. A welcome reception will be held on Tuesday, May 31, 2011 for 'People of Color' at Palma Ceia UMC. Clergy and their spouses and lay delegates and their spouses are invited. The purpose of this reception is to get more acquainted over a fellowship meal. It will be held in the Fellowship Hall from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The cost of this meal is \$5.00 per person at the door. However, advanced reservations are required by May 15, 2011. Please contact Dr. Kevin M. James for reservations and/or information at: (727) 743-2801 or at [rev.james@palmaceia.org](mailto:rev.james@palmaceia.org).

## → Do You Love Golf and the Gospel?

Tuesday, May 31 starting at 8:30 a.m.

If you love golf and the gospel, then the Third Annual Celebrate Jesus Golf Classic may be for you!



The 2011 Classic, held in conjunction with the 2011 Florida Annual Conference in Tampa, will be on Tuesday, May 31, 2011, at the Summerfield Crossing Golf Club in Riverview, Florida. More about the course is available [\[Here\]](#). All you need to join us for an 8 a.m. check-in and 8:30 a.m. shotgun start is included in our brochure.

Celebrate Jesus, Inc. is a non-profit organization with a vision to "awaken passion and equip people to share the gospel and reach neighbors for Jesus Christ." All proceeds from the golf classic will benefit Celebrate Jesus, Inc.'s work and its 2011 missions in the

Lakeland and Ocala areas. For information about our ministry and organization, visit our website at [www.cjmission.org](http://www.cjmission.org). If you have any questions, contact Tournament Director Rev. Tom Willetts at [pastortom@embarqmail.com](mailto:pastortom@embarqmail.com) or 239-634-7608.

## → Office of the Black Church offers selection of seminars and workshops

The Office of the Black Church, part of the Center for Congregational Excellence, is designing and developing workshops that equip, endow and empower local churches to engage in effective ministry. See their list of offerings for 2011 [[Click Here](#)].



## → Free Summer Camp Scholarships Offered to Churches

(who have not sent campers in over two years)



The Florida Conference Board of Camps and Retreat Ministries is excited to invite you to send children, youth or even grandparents to camp this summer on us! We greatly appreciate your church's connectional ministry giving, and this is one way to receive it back in ways that will bless the children and youth in your neighborhood and/or congregation for years to come. The first 100 requests we receive from the pastors of churches in the Florida Conference who have not sent a child or youth to summer camp in the past two years will receive \$400 to send one or more campers this coming summer (\$400 per church). For further information on our summer camp programs you can visit the website [www.flumcamps.org](http://www.flumcamps.org).

## → Celebrate Jesus 2011 Summer Missions

Changing lives, Changing churches, Changing you  
Lakeland Area Mission - June 18-25, 2011  
Ocala Area Mission - July 16-23, 2011

There are neighborhoods just like yours with people waiting to feel a touch from God. There are people just like you who want to share God's love with others, but they are afraid and don't know how to begin.



Celebrate Jesus Missions offer opportunities to get out into the neighborhoods and share the love of Jesus in invitational ways. No experience is necessary! Volunteer missionaries (that's YOU!) stay at a host church and work with that church family to offer acts of kindness and prayer to their neighbors. Activities include handing out free gifts to neighbors, offering free car washes, delivering homemade goodies to local businesses, giving out cold water bottles at parks.....you'll learn new skills to try at home!

Complete an application and send it to our office. Applications available at [www.CJMission.org](http://www.CJMission.org). Come as an individual, couple or family. Application fee: \$150 individual; \$50 for each additional family member. Celebrate Jesus Inc., PO Box 3386, Orlando, FL 32802-3386. Phone: (407) 893-7305; E-mail: [celebrate.jesus@CJMission.org](mailto:celebrate.jesus@CJMission.org).

## → Rekindling the Flame of the Laity Conference

June 30 - July 3, 2011 Lake Junaluska Assembly, North Carolina

This laity conference will provide an opportunity to experience Jesus Christ and to grow in the Christian Faith and relationship through great preaching, Bible study, inspiring singing, special music, and Christian fellowship as families.

This family experience will focus on the theme of "Christ's Mission and Ours." Adults, college students, youth and children will join together for this weekend of inspiration, information and fellowship!

Download and print the [Rekindling the Flame](#) brochure (PDF).

## → 55th Annual Church Music Workshop July 17-22, 2011

Florida Southern College, Lakeland, Florida

The Florida Chapter of the Fellowship of United Methodists in Music and Worship Arts is pleased to announce that our 55th Annual Church Music Workshop will be held from Sunday afternoon, July 17th through Friday noontime, July 22nd, 2011, at Florida Southern College in Lakeland.

Forward this information to the music and worship leaders in your and encourage them to take this opportunity to connect with other church musicians and worship leaders in the conference and be renewed. For more information and for registration information, please visit their website at: [www.floridafellowship.org](http://www.floridafellowship.org) or contact Joan FitzGerald, Workshop Chairperson, at [joan.fitzgerald@verizon.net](mailto:joan.fitzgerald@verizon.net).



## → Wisdom and Grace Conference

August 8-11, 2011 Lake Junaluska Assembly, North Carolina  
For those needing CEUs...!

This conference at Lake Junaluska offers a professional track workshop; participants earn one CEU. This year's leader is Brian Jones, Senior Research Engineer, Interactive Media Technology Center, Georgia Tech. Entitled "Technologies to Support Aging-in-Place," Mr. Jones will cover advanced technologies that have the potential to help older adults remain in their home longer, while reducing the need for constant on-site supervision by both professional and family caregivers.

Participants will learn about technologies for: 1.) monitoring independent ambulation (daily activities), 2.) providing medication reminders and adherence, and 3.) assisting with social communication. A portion of the workshop will introduce the future of such technologies providing: wellness coaching to maintain health; tools for self-management of chronic conditions; and the potential to enable clinicians to provide more personalized care through better understanding of the individual's behavior and needs. Demonstrations of some products currently available in these categories will be provided to help participants understand how they function.

Additionally, the conference preacher is Dr. Leonard Sweet. For more information and/or to register, go to <http://www.lakejunaluska.com/wisdom-and-grace/>

## → HELP WANTED

St. Andrew's UMC is seeking to fill a full-time secretarial position. Computer skills, knowledge of publishing software or willingness to learn, general office skills, helping and cooperative spirit, love for people and a strong faith in Christ are needed. Position is available May 1. Contact St. Andrew's UMC for application, 3315 Bryan Road, Brandon, FL 33511, 813-689-6849, [www.standrewsbrandon.org](http://www.standrewsbrandon.org).



## District Calendar of Events

- May 1: Reoccurring Monthly Reports
- May 1: Announcement Sunday
- May 3: National Teachers Day
- May 8: Mothers Day
- May 15 - April Missional Vital Signs entry deadline
- May 30: Memorial Day - District and Conference Offices will be closed
  
- June 1: recurring monthly reports
- June 1-4: Annual Conference
- June 15: May Missional Vital Signs entry deadline
- June 19: Fathers Day
- June 21: First day of Summer



Latest Conference News

[2011 Conference Calendar of Reports Due](#)