



South Central District

November 2010 Newsletter

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Dear South Central,

Giving 'thanks' with a strange 'thank you'

Two men were walking through a field one day when they spotted an enraged bull. Instantly they darted toward the nearest fence. The storming bull followed in hot pursuit, and it was soon apparent they wouldn't make it.

Terrified, the one shouted to the other, "Put up a prayer, John. We're in for it!"

John answered, "I can't. I've never made a public prayer in my life."

"But you must!" implored his companion. "The bull is catching up to us."

"All right," panted John, "I'll say the only prayer I know, the one my father used to repeat at the table: 'O Lord, for what we are about to receive, make us truly thankful.'" (Source Unknown)

When I read this anecdote, I immediately thought of all of those times when I have struggled to give thanks! I struggled because I didn't receive something that I thought I should, then I struggled because it wasn't what I thought I should have received. I struggled because I wasn't expecting to receive something I received. I struggled with the timing. I struggled with the knowing or the uncertainty or something. In the final analysis, I'll admit, I really struggle with the inability to reduce the abundance of God's goodness to the finitude of my gratitude. If it fits, Lord . . . if I want it, need it . . . if, if, if! Maybe the writer of Psalm 9 began in this way, in an effort to shake off some of the encumbrances of human limitations and express thanksgiving with the spirit instead of merely words:


*I will give thanks to you, LORD, with all my heart;
I will tell of all your wonderful deeds. Ps. 9:1 NIV*

I hope we will tell the world about the deeds of the Lord, using words, but not limiting ourselves to them. During this season of Thanksgiving, give people an opportunity to witness our thanks

Billing Info for :
 WORKER'S COMPENSATION
 PROPERTY & CASUALTY
 HEALTH INSURANCE
 PENSION
**2011 Apportionments
 Now Available**



**Missional
 Vital
 Signs**



**Journal Online
 click here**



**2010 Florida
 Annual Conference Event**

**join our
 mailing list**



through the joy of our service. Give them a chance to see us as thankful in February without turkey-laden tables, as we are in November. May we live perpetually in a spirit of thanksgiving, even when the calendar date doesn't provide a reminder. Maybe we'll be able to say (without the bull) and for what we are about to receive make us truly thankful!

Have a blessed and happy Thanksgiving!,

Rev. Dr. Sharon G. Austin

District Superintendent
 South Central District

Prayer Concerns:

- Rev. Tom Hughes (ret.) battling cancer
- Raphie, daughter of the Rev. Raphael Dessieu (Faith Community Haitian, Tampa) with health concerns
- Rev. St. Clair Moore experiencing the death of his sister and injury of his nephew.

→ SC District 2011 Annual Leadership Training

Saturday, January 22, 2011 from 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

First UMC of Brandon, 120 N. Knights Ave., Brandon, FL 33510

"Working Wisely: Being the Best You"

Pastors, Lay Leaders, Members of SPR, Trustee's, Finance, Lay delegates, Pre-School staff, Council Chairpersons and all other ministry leaders in your faith communities come for a NUTS AND BOLTS of application in your ministry areas. There will be breakout groups for specialized areas of ministry lead by district and conference leaders. Registration will be online soon. Topics include:

- Reporting updates
- Best Practices in Ministry
- Finance, Ministry Protection, SPR, Disaster Recovery, and more
- Time and money savers
- Resources

**Working to maximize stewardship of time and resources
 with the goal of increased participation by District Pastors and Leaders.**

→ Church and Pastor Annual Profiles

The final submission date for profiles is February 18, 2011

Church and Pastor profiles forms will be available on the conference website beginning the first week in December 2010. Church and Pastor Profile forms should be reviewed and updated annually by all church SPR Committees and all Clergy in the Florida Conference. Though a move may not be anticipated, it is important that both the pastor profile and church profile be current and up to date at the appointment-making session of the cabinet. It should be an honest reflection of the pastoral ministry and the profile of the church. If a pastoral consultation is scheduled with the DS, the Church and Pastor Profile should be completed online no later than one week prior to the consultation. We will be communicating more specific details directly to Clergy and SPRC Chairs in the near future.

→ 2011 Appointment-Making for Pastors

If you are anticipating a move in 2010, you need to call the District Office for a Consultation Time with the District Superintendent as early as December, but no later than January 15. If a move is anticipated, you must request a Pastor's Appointment Advisory form from our Administrative Assistant and bring it with you to your Consultation. There is also a form to request "Limited Itineracy" if needed.

→ Black Church Symposium

December 11, 2010 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Life Enrichment Center in Fruitland Park

Clergy, Laity, Young Adults and Youth, Join us for a day of praise and worship, preaching, presentations and panel discussion.

Guest presenters include:

Bartley Temple UMC - Mass Choir

Dr. Kevin James - Pastor Palma Ceia UMC - Tampa, FL

Dr. Fred Allen - SBC21 - Nashville, TN

Reverend Candace M. Lewis - Path1 - Nashville, TN

Any many more... [\[Click Here\]](#) for details and registration.

Sponsored by the Center for Congregational Excellence Black Church for Congregational Excellence.



We thank Dr. Kevin James and the members of Palma Ceia UMC for hosting our tri-district black pastors/key leaders conference Sunday, November 7th. Now, we thank them for generously making six scholarships available for persons who need assistance in order to attend the Black Church Symposium. Please contact [Laurie](#), in the district office if you need assistance!

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I know that many of you may have organized and participated in services to honor and recognize the clergy at your particular church and for this I am extremely thankful to each of you.

Our clergy leadership often only hears negative comments and they really need and appreciate encouragement from the congregation for them to continue to be our shepherds and spiritual leaders. I encourage each of you to continue to reach out and find time to say "Thank You" to your pastor(s).

I have been in many congregations in the past that have presented their pastor with either a monetary gift or something for the entire family to enjoy at Christmas. A covered dish dinner (which seems to be a United Methodist standard) with congregational members speaking from the heart to say "Thank You" is also a great acknowledgement to our pastors.

Whatever your congregational leadership might decide to do will be okay as long as you do make the effort to acknowledge your clergy leadership.

Yours in Christ,

John Reeve

District Lay Leader, South Central District

→ Our Giving Tree: giving life to missions

Ten Thousand Villages Sale November 13, 14, 17

First United Methodist Church, 72 Lake Morton Drive, Lakeland, FL 33801 :: 863-686-3163

Our sale will open to the public on Saturday, November 13, and for the United Methodist Women's conference that will be held at the church. Other dates of sale: Sunday Nov. 14 8:30 a.m. to 1:00



p.m.; Wednesday evening 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. The location of the sale will be room B-2, next to Our Giving Tree.

Our Giving Tree is the gift shop and bookstore at First United Methodist Church of Lakeland. The purpose of the bookstore is to GIVE. One of the ways that the store contributes to missions is to buy products that assist persons who couldn't ordinarily earn a living, through fair trade organizations that support them, such as Equal Exchange Coffee, the Women's Bean Project and the Beacon of Hope in Nairobi, Kenya.



This fall, Our Giving Tree will be featuring products from Ten Thousand Villages for a special sale (November 13, 14 and 17). Ten Thousand Villages works with over 130 artisan groups in more than 38 countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East to bring fair trade jewelry, home decor, gifts and more. As one of the world's oldest and largest fair trade organizations, they build long-term relationships with artisans that are based on mutual understanding and respect. Fair trade enables artisans to earn a fair wage and provides the opportunity for a better quality of life.

→ 2012 General Conference of the UMC

The General Conference of the United Methodist Church meets every 4 years and is a world-wide gathering of Methodists. The decisions made during the General Conference affect the social policies of the church and how we govern ourselves. The Book of Discipline is amended at the General Conference.

The 2012 General Conference is a 12-day event and will be held at the Tampa Convention Center, with us, the Florida Conference, as the host conference. 1,000 delegates from all over the world will be in Tampa from April 23 to May 4, 2012. These delegates represent their conferences located throughout the world. In addition to delegates, there will be 5,000 to 6,000 observers and guests attending the General Conference. As the host conference, our role is to prepare for all the people arriving and to provide volunteer greeters during the General Conference. May we all be inspired to keep the 2012 General Conference in prayer that God's Holy Spirit will use this time to renew and re-energize the church for its ministry.



→ Elections for General & Jurisdictional Conference Delegates

During the upcoming session of the Florida Annual Conference, members will be electing persons to serve as delegates to the 2012 sessions of the General and Jurisdictional Conferences of the United Methodist Church. Serving the Church as a delegate is an awesome responsibility. Decisions are made which effect every congregation throughout the United Methodist Church. It is hard work. It is rewarding work. What follows quickly sums up some of the important information you need to know now as we begin the discernment and discovery process leading up to the election of our delegates. [\[Read the rest....\]](#).

→ New website for "Pooped Pastors"

Rev. Dr. Steve Brown, Key Life Network

When I was a pastor there were very few "safe places." There were those who wanted to help me build a mega-church, double the giving, increase the vision, make me effective, etc., etc., But most of them had their own agendas and were often more interested in their agendas than in mine.

So we decided to do something different. We decided to create a "safe place" for pastors and pastors only. This website is all about you. It's a place where you can come and have fellowship with other pastors...real pastors with "dirt under their fingernails." We don't have an agenda except your agenda and a desire to come alongside and "hold up your arms." We're not trying to get something out of you, to get you to sign anything or to solicit funds. We honestly want to give you a gift.

I'm cool with a "purpose driven" life, church and ministry...but this isn't that. This website will grow and develop as we listen to you...not the "experts" who know what's best for you. It is my prayer that you will come here often and that, when you do, you'll notice the smell of Jesus.

In His Grip, Steve Brown www.poopedpastors.com

→ Clergywomen Gathering before Clergy Day Apart

Sunday, November 14, Lady Lake UMC, 6:30 p.m.

All clergywomen are invited to come on the Sunday evening prior to the Clergy Day Apart for a time of prayer and discussion regarding how to continue our work toward a more inclusive and diverse general/jurisdictional conference delegation. The gathering will be on Sunday evening, November 14, from 6:30 to 9 or 9:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall of Lady Lake United Methodist Church, 109 W. McClendon Street, Lady Lake, FL 32159. If you can make it earlier, several plan on meeting for dinner at 5 p.m. at Ramshackle Cafe in Leesburg (1317 N. 14th Street, Leesburg, FL 34748). For those of you who would like to stay at the LEC, remember that a special rate of \$20 per person is available that night. Reservations should be made directly with the LEC.

→ Clergy Day Apart 2010: November 15

Life Enrichment Center, Fruitland Park

Bishop Timothy Whitaker and the Clergy Excellence Team invite all active clergy to come and join us in a day focused on connecting with God and one another. The day will include worship, breakout sessions, Q&A with the Bishop, lunch and unstructured free time. Check-in and refreshments will begin at 9:00 a.m., and the event will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., with lunch available at the Life Enrichment Center or off-site. Please contact Rev. Emily Oliver with questions at emily.oliver@flumc.org. Registration [\[Click Here\]](#).

→ Lay Servant Ministries Advanced Training

January 8 & January 15, 2011 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
First UMC of Lake Wales

The course is on "Lay Pastoral Care Giving". Attendance is required for both days to receive LSM certification. It is open to everyone, you do not have to be a Lay Servant Minister to participate. Registration forms are available on the Florida Conference website [\[click here\]](#). The cost is \$28 and includes all course materials plus lunch each day. Please register by December 29, 2010.



Lay Servant Ministries is seeking two certified Lay Servant Ministers to serve as co-directors of Lay Servant Ministries in the South Central District. For more information about these positions or the training, please contact Sheila Clark, SC District Director of Lay Servant Ministries at 813-340-7543.

→ Methodists United in Prayer

Ministry with Cuba

Next opportunity to travel to sister churches in Cuba is during 2011 District Conferences. Feb 25 & 26 - Sierra Maestra - travel would be from Feb 23 to March 2; March 4 & 5 - Santiago & Guantanamo - travel would be from March 2 to March 9

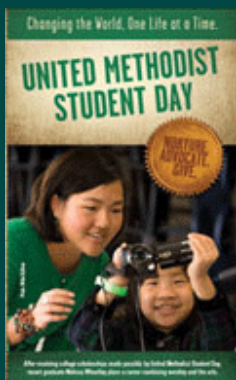
- The Methodist Church in Cuba has not yet told us the # of religious visas that we can count on for these caravans but we need to be prepared to send up to 4 persons per district because we need to send the Visa request form 3 months before the actual travel date. Churches who wish to send members to any of these 2 caravans must send a completed Caravan Application form

(email Renee if you need one) for each person and send to Renee Kincaid [email] by November 10th. Along with this Application, Renee needs to receive a copy of the church's current-date U.S. Treasury travel license and a copy of the middle page of the proposed traveler's passport (Passports must have a date that does not expired before 6 months after the trip. Thus, passports must not expire before August 2011). If the church needs to apply for a new or renewal of the travel license, please contact Renee for information.

Bishop Ricardo Pereira, Methodist Church in Cuba, has been invited by Bishop Whitaker to speak at the Communion Service - June 2011 Annual Conference. The Florida Conference will host Bishop Pereira during the Conference which will be at the Convention Center in Tampa. Rev. Jacquie Leveron will translate for Bishop Pereira. The MUIP Task Force has extended an invitation to Bishop Pereira during the days prior to the Annual Conference for planned activities. Plans will be discussed of the Task Force meeting in April 2011 once Bishop notifies the time he plans to be in Tampa.

Future plans: We'll be exploring ways for those interested in travel near to their sister churches in Cuba through UVMIM.

→ United Methodist Student Day



November 28, 2010 (Can be celebrated at anytime)

Music as ministry of healing: Nearly every one of us can recall a song that made us stop for a minute and listen with a smile. United Methodist Student Day scholarship recipient Maria Payne considers it her calling to create those moments for the people who need them the most. "I might have never gotten involved in music without my church," she commented. That early interest in music followed Maria to college. She did not want to play solely for entertainment. Maria sought to use her music to serve others. Then she learned about Shenandoah University in Winchester, Va. A United Methodist-affiliated school, Shenandoah offers a music therapy program.

When we United Methodists support United Methodist Student day, we open the door for persons like Maria and minister to the people she will touch. Call (888) 346-3862 today to order envelopes and other resources so your congregation can participate in this churchwide offering. They will be sent at no cost to your church! You can also place an order for the 2011 Special Sunday materials! Find more at www.umcgiving.org/specialsundays.

GBHEM will start accepting loan applications for winter/spring term on December 1, 2010. Scholarship applications for the 2011-2012 academic terms starting in fall 2011 will be available on-line starting on January 4, 2011 via the GBHEM website, www.gbhem.org. Applicants are encouraged to apply early, as funding is limited.

→ Youth Leader Training, Fellowship & Spiritual Growth

January 24 - 26, 2011 :: Warren W. Willis UM Camp in Fruitland Park
Keynote Speaker: Hank Hilliard from the General Board of Discipleship in Nashville
Worship Leader: Patrick Willis, Former member of the Summer Camp Praise Team

Workshops, networking, fellowship, and fun for Adult leaders of youth. (Paid, volunteer, full-time or part-time.) How Much? \$30.00 (meals, lodging, and program fees). Register at <http://www.flumc2.org/registrations/register/27> or send payment to: Gathering/Heidi Leab, 450 Martin L. King Jr. Ave., Lakeland, FL 33815-1522.

For more information, contact: Dave Sippel - Director of Ministries with Young People
Direct Line: (863)393-1442 or email: dsippel@flumc.org. See our flyer [Click Here].

→ Wesley Study Retreat 2011

The retreat will be based at Oxford University in Oxford, England, June 21 - 30, 2011
The John and Charles Wesley retreat was created by Mr. and Mrs. B. W. Simpkins of Cocoa, Florida so

that United Methodist ministers might recapture the spirit that formed the great Methodist movement. Travel, housing, breakfast and most dinner meals are provided by the retreat. Participants will travel from Oxford to visit the Wesley sites such as Epworth, Bristol and City Road, as well as many others, hearing presentations by local Wesley scholars. There will also be several days in London, where we will worship at Wesley Chapel and visit Wesley's home.

Each participant must have five (5) years of active ministry remaining in the Florida Annual Conference. There is an application fee of \$300.00 per person. The retreat this year will be led by Bishop and Mrs. Bob Fannin. There is space for eight (8) participants. The retreat is available to clergy and their spouse or individual clergy. This is an opportunity of a lifetime. Please [CLICK HERE](#) for the application, complete the application and return it to the Center for Clergy Excellence by December 15, 2010. The mailing address for the Center for Clergy Excellence is 450 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue, Lakeland, FL 33815 or you may email your application to Winnie Dean at wdean@flumc.org. If you have any questions, or need further information, please call the Center for Clergy Excellence direct at (863) 393-1417.

→ 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 noon, July 22nd, 2011, at Florida Southern College in Lakeland.

Anyone involved in church music or worship planning, both traditional and contemporary, adults or youth, are invited to join us. This year's theme, "The Best Table," is based on Rev. Jan Richardson's graphic of the same name. During our 2011 Church Music Workshop, we are going to "linger at the table and savor every scrap" as we seek that foretaste of the Heavenly Banquet that awaits us, give thanks that Jesus shared his last meal with his disciples and showed us how to remember, and welcome everyone to the Banquet Table. Clinicians for the workshop will be Adult Choral Clinician Joel Raney renowned composer and pianist; Organ Clinician Steve Strite, Director of Music and Worship at Bradenton Christian Reformed Church; Handbell Clinician Blanche Marie Lewis, director of the Magic of Bronze and Ascension Lutheran Church Handbell Choir in Casselberry; and Workshop Pastor, Rev. Lisa Degrenia, Senior Pastor at Community UMC, DeBary.

We are asking all pastors in the conference to forward this information to the music and worship leaders in their church 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 (coming soon), please visit our website at: www.floridafellowship.org or contact Joan FitzGerald, Workshop Chairperson, at joan.fitzgerald@verizon.net.



The Fellowship of United Methodists
in Music and Worship Arts

→ The Lockmiller Christian Education Award

Nominations must be returned to the UM Foundation by November 28, 2010

All of us have been helped along in our spiritual journey by leaders who took the time to teach us about the boundless love of God. One of our donors, Mrs. Alice Lockmiller, understood the importance of fostering spiritual formation in children and youth. As part of her charitable trust, administered by the Foundation, she set up a Christian Education Awards Program. The awards program offers a \$500 award to the best Christian Education Leader in the Conference, and a \$1,000 award to the best Christian Education program in the Conference. We would like to ask each you to help us find these outstanding people and programs.

To help with the process, please use this [announcement poster](#) and [interactive nomination](#) form to submit nominations from local churches. Please tell us why a particular program or teacher is making a significant contribution to the religious life of the children and youth of the church. We all know people and programs that are especially deserving. Please help us take this opportunity to honor them.

→ 37th Annual Secretaries Seminar - Register by December 15

The PAUMCS (Professional Association of United Methodist Church Secretaries) will hold their annual seminar February 25-27, 2011, at the Life Enrichment Center in Fruitland Park, FL. This year's theme is Safety and Knowledge, according to registrar Louise Urquhart. Seminar activities will begin Friday afternoon at 4 p.m. and continue through Sunday morning worship. The cost for the entire weekend (workshops, materials, 2 nights' lodging, meals, and snacks) is \$185 for a single room or \$150 for a double room. Some scholarships may be available. [Registration deadline is December 15, 2010.](#) For more information, [\[click here\]](#). For registration forms, [\[click here\]](#). For scholarship information, [\[click here\]](#).

→ Asbury Theological Seminary and Asbury University announce first annual Wesleyan Studies Summer Seminar June 2011



This seminar is being established to develop and support research, writing and publication in the broad field of Wesleyan studies. The seminar will promote the work of serious researchers. There are no tuition charges for the seminars, and participants will have access with full privileges not only to the B.L. Fisher and Kinlaw libraries (including significant electronic databases), but also to their special collection holdings in Wesleyan and Methodist studies. The staff of the Wesleyan Studies Summer Seminar will also help to make arrangements for free housing at the Asbury Inn for each participant throughout the seminar. Asbury Seminary will pay the airfare for international researchers. Beyond this, all other personal expenses (travel and food for example) will be the responsibility of the researchers, though the Seminary will provide a common meal on the evening of each seminar. [\[click here\]](#) for more information or to apply. [CLICK HERE FOR MEDIA KIT.](#)

→ Real Ideas Conference March 3-4, 2011 at Van Dyke UMC Tampa

We live in uncertain times. People are looking for concrete answers. They're searching for hope and clarity in a culture of confusion. Where will they turn for help? Your church? Yes! The local church is the hope of the world and now is our golden moment of opportunity to connect with a confused world. But how can your church do more with less?





At the Real Ideas Conference we'll share positive and practical ideas from our 25 years of learning through success and failure. No matter where you are or the size of your church, you will be inspired and informed to go to the next level at Real Ideas 2011. For more information, visit the [\[webiste\]](#).

This is our fifth year of Real Ideas. Dozens of churches across the Florida Conference, as well as several from Georgia and Alabama have benefitted from Real Ideas. We have received very encouraging feedback and wonderful stories of positive change in churches. This is a practical conference dealing with the nuts and bolts of effective ministry across all areas of church life. Clergy, staff and laity leave each year with ideas and inspiration to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world

→ Mid-Year Clergy Moves in the SC District

Please welcome and pray for the following clergy and congregations who will experience mid-year moves effective January 1, 2011 (in most cases):

- Ed McWilliams (ret. SC Conference) currently serving as interim at First, Seffner
- Deborah Mak (on Leave) moving from First, Seffner to First, Dundee
- Mark Reynolds moving from First, Dundee to Christ, Lakeland
- Jack Jackson (and by virtue of the move, Rev. Anna Jackson) leaving Christ, Lakeland and accepting a professorship at Claremont School of Theology, CA
- Andy Sistrunk moving from the Van Dyke North Campus new church start to First, Deland second campus new church start
- David Huff moving from Blanton and Trilby UMCs as he leaves the Connection and moves to the former Trinity UMC, Wesley Chapel

→ What We Can Learn From The Ritz-Carlton about Radical Hospitality

Congregational Transformation blog



Posted on 10/18/2010 by Jeff Stiggins.

Earlier this week members of one of our District Congregational Excellence Committees shared how they sent mystery guests to worship with congregations. Each mystery worshiper then answered questions regarding their experience. The most surprising discovery was that while they were usually greeted by the ushers and others, whose role was officially to greet them, many mystery guests reported feeling ignored, as if unseen, by the rest of the congregation. These guests often left worship feeling unwelcomed despite the scripted "Hello's" from those trained to greet them! This would not have happened at the Ritz-Carlton. [\[Read the blog post....\]](#)

Classifieds

Choir Director - part time: First UMC of Fort Meade is hiring a choir director. Primary responsibility is to work with the choir and congregation to assure the success of a worshipful music ministry. For more details please visit our website www.ftmeadeumc.org, call us at

(863)285-9059; or email admin_assistant@embarqmail.com.