



Atlantic Central District



District Newsletter

August 2015

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TRANSITIONS PART ONE

The book of Ecclesiastes says,
"There is a time for everything".....

Really?

The book goes on to say,
*....."and a season for everything
under heaven",*

Really?

I say "*really*" because as I travel around to churches there is a similar theme I hear and this is it: *We need to get more families so we can get back to the way we were.*

The book of Ecclesiastes goes on to say:
*"There is... a time to be born and a time to die,
a time to plant and a time to uproot."*

To this I hear churches saying, NO! NO! I just want it to happen without any pain not like the pain birth, dying, planting and uprooting brings.

I have suggested a book to the new pastors moving into our district entitled **Transitions - Making Sense of Life's Changes**, by William Bridges. As I have worked through this book again it struck me this is what the Ecclesiastes passage is talking about - transitions. Bridges gives some helpful advice about the nature of transitions in our lives, organizations and churches. There are three phases (1) *an ending*, (2) *a neutral zone*, (3) *a new beginning*.

In this article I will focus on the *ending*, next month's article on the *neutral zone* and *new beginnings*. First, Bridges points out ... "*change* is situational. *Transition*, on the other hand, is psychological". He goes on to say,



Without a transition, a change is just a rearrangement of the furniture. Unless transition happens, the change won't work, because it doesn't "take". (p xii)

Many churches say to me, can you, the Conference, send someone to help us - what they are really saying is - send someone to help us "*rearrange the furniture*". That is, we really do not want to go through the pain of dying, planting, uprooting or being born again (labor pains).

I try to say to them, they first need to deal with reality - they are in transition and rearranging the furniture isn't going to do it. If they really want to become more vital, then they must go through real transition. Bridges say it this way:

To become something else, you have to stop being what you are now; to start doing things a new way, you have to end the way you are doing them now; and to develop a new attitude or outlook, you have to let go of the old one you have now. Even though it sounds backwards, endings always come first. The first task is to let go. (p80)

This process is something we know about - don't we? It is repentance, letting go of our sin, accepting Jesus and His forgiveness. This act of repentance, justification, is an act of letting go of our efforts to save ourselves.

Just as we struggle with repentance many churches struggle with repenting, letting go, and allowing God to do a new thing. Whether your church is struggling, maintaining, or growing, where is it that God is calling you to "*let go*" so a new blessing can happen? It may be if you are maintaining, letting go of doing "it" the same way. It may be if you are growing, letting go of the way volunteers and staff do ministry and make decisions.

Let me close with Jesus' ultimate letting go, "*Father not as I will but as you will*". May we pray this prayer for ourselves and our churches as we seek to be in mission to our community and the world.

In God's Love and Peace
Gary

IN THE DISTRICT

Could your church use a Courage Grant?

In order to assist local church in their commitment to making faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, the Atlantic Central District Committee of Church Development makes **Courage Grants** available. The **Courage Grant** enables church to develop innovative ministry beyond existing ministries of the church. Up to 50% of the funds needed for the project can be approved for a courage grant, with the commitment of the local church matching the allocated amount.



To receive the application, contact the District office at (772)299-0255. Grant applications are then taken to the Leadership Council for their review and approval.



As an extension of the Florida Conference and local UMCs, we are grateful to partner in ministry with you to young adults attending **Florida State University and Tallahassee Community College!**

We are looking to connect with as many **FSU Wesley Alumni** as we can to keep them updated on how the ministry is impacting local churches and beyond. Two of the easiest ways for alumni to stay in the know is through our FSU/TCC Alumni Page at: <http://on.fb.me/1dZLoLY/>, or join the email list on the alumni page of our website: www.fsuwesley.com.

FSU Wesley will be saying farewell to the Chapel of the Upper Room on September 26th - 27th, 2015 and we are inviting all alumni, family and friends to celebrate with us prior to its demolition in November. A new, multipurpose building will be built in its place and used for worship, meals, events, offices, and meeting spaces. If you would like more information, check out the news page of our website: www.fsuwesley.com. Also, be on the lookout for an invitation in the mail!

We would appreciate it if you would share this information with your congregation, as we know many of our alumni relocate once they've graduated. **FSU Wesley Alumni** are living and serving in each district of the Florida Conference - whether as clergy, lay leaders, worship leaders, youth leaders, church members, or church volunteers. We would love the opportunity to come and share some of the wonderful things happening in this ministry, and would appreciate if you could provide potential dates when we can come and speak about the vibrant ministry at **FSU Wesley!** To do so, please contact Christina Pacelle at Christina@fsuwesley.com or (850) 222-0251.

AROUND THE CONFERENCE

R-10 Retirement Seminar for Clergy

Sept. 14-15 "R-10 and Counting"

a comprehensive financial planning seminar for clergy couples planning to retire within the next 10 years, will be held Sept. 14-15 at First United Methodist Church in Lakeland.



Registrations will be accepted July 6-Aug. 31, but prospective retirees are encouraged to register early because participation is limited to 30 couples.

This year's event will cover a range of topics critical to retirement planning, such as investments, clergy taxes, social security, insurance, housing issues and estate planning.

Mark Conner, benefits educator and certified financial planner with the United Methodist General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, will provide tips and information to help attendees anticipate their retirement income. The foundation's Tom Wilkinson, vice president of church relations and new business, and Pam Hicks, vice president of business and administration, will join Conner in leading sessions, along with other guest presenters who are specialists in their respective fields.

The program takes place Sept. 14, 1-8 p.m., and Sept. 15, 7:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. Dinner Sept. 14 and breakfast and lunch Sept. 15 will be provided. The cost is \$50 for single participants and \$75 per couple, including meals, workshops and materials. Participants must pay for their lodging, but the foundation has negotiated a rate of \$99 at Hyatt Lakeland Center for Sept. 14. Reservations may be made through the foundation office.

Clergy may register online at www.fumf.org or download the registration form and mail it to the foundation offices. More information is available by contacting Nadara Brock at 866-363-9673, extension 7113, or nbrock@fumf.org.



Reaching Next Generations

Nineteenth Annual Lay Servant Ministries Training Event

Join us on beautiful Lake Griffin August 21-23 as we enjoy both a relaxing and stimulating weekend, learning from great teachers about how we can reach, train and equip leaders and disciples of the Next Generations. Learn about exciting initiatives for church planting, new and fresh expressions for doing church among the unchurched, setting up and implementing a discipleship system, mentoring and developing new leaders, and growing into God's best vision of you.

We will be having classes on Fresh Expressions, the Lay Missionary Planting Network (from Path 1), Building A Discipleship Process (also from Path 1), The Next Generation Leader, and The Me I Want To Be (a John Ortberg class).

These classes will be held at the Fruitland Park Life Enrichment Center on August 21-23, 2015.

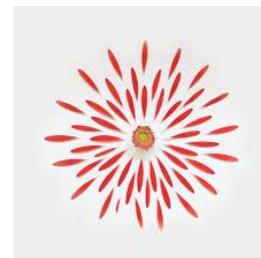
If you have any questions, contact Rod Groom by return email, or telephone (941-356-4566). Much information can also be found at the Lay Servants website, <http://flumclsm.org>.

Visit our website at <http://flumclsm.org> for registration information. Questions? Email us at info@flumclsm.org

Celebrating 35 Years of Amazing Grace 35th Annual Clergy Mates' Retreat

Calling all mates of Florida UMC Conference Clergy!

Please make plans now to join with other mates at the 35th Annual Clergy Mates Retreat, November 5-7 at the beautiful LEC in Fruitland Park. The fall is such a great time to renew friendships, make new ones and connect with our Lord and Savior. Come enjoy the camaraderie of your sisters and be inspired by daily messages, fun, food and good fellowship. For more information, contact Amy Hill at amy12481@hotmail.com or Amanda Britt at aejbritt7@yahoo.com.



When: Thursday, November 5, 2015 to Saturday, November 7, 2015

Where: FL UMC Life Enrichment Center, 4991 Picciola Road, Fruitland Park, FL 34731

October Retreat Dates Announced by Florida UMM

Waking to God's Dream - UMM Fall Retreat - Weekend #1

October 9-10, 2015 - "Waking to God's Dream"

Friday and Saturday only. Speakers include:

- Dick Wills - Retired Memphis Conference Bishop
- Dale Locke - Lead Pastor, Community of Hope UMC - Loxahatchee, FL
- Russ Graves - Florida Conference Lay Leader
- Community of Hope UMC Praise Band -

Partnering With God - UMM Fall Retreat - Weekend #2

October 23-25, 2015 - "Partnering with God"

Friday through Sunday morning. Speakers include:

- Rev. Ed Diaz - Founder, 71:17 Ministries - Lakeland, FL
- Dr. Max Wilkins - President, The Mission Society - Norcross, GA
- Lighthouse Worship Band - Coral Gables UMC - Coral Gables,

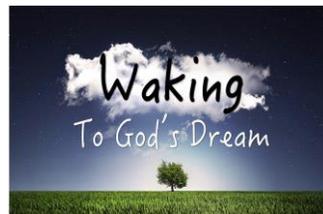
\$165 per person includes room, meals and program.

\$62 Saturday only with lunch and dinner.

Family Campground Camp Site: \$44.00

Program: \$41 per person

Meals: \$48 per person



[Click here](#) for registration information

Great Expectations for Boomers & Beyond

One of the fastest-growing population segments is those beyond 50. Churches are struggling to keep up with and address the unique needs and wishes of this group. As a result, the Beyond 50 Ministries of the Florida Annual Conference and First United Methodist Church Winter Park (FUMCHWP) have partnered to present a special statewide event, Great Expectations for Boomers & Beyond.

This statewide conference is especially for:

- People 50 years of age and beyond.
- Members of the clergy interested in starting or improving their 50+ programs.
- Laity involved in leading ministries for those beyond 50.
- Anyone who wants to learn more about addressing the needs of this rapidly expanding population.

WHEN: October 22 - 24, 2015

WHERE: First United Methodist Church - Winter Park

Cost: \$125 per person

Note: Early-bird registration by September 1st is \$100.

Questions: Rev. Gary Rideout, 407-644-2906x223, garyr@fumcwp.org



For more information [Click here.](#)

To register for the event go to [Register](#) or contact Kathy Marshall at 407-644-2906 ext 224

CALENDAR

August

- 11th Facilitators meeting - Asbury UMC, Vero Beach - 10:30 a.m.
- 17th South End New Clergy Meeting - First UMC, Port St. Lucie - 10:00 a.m.
- 18th North End New Clergy Meeting - Suntree UMC, Melbourne - 10:00 a.m.
- 31st dCOM - First UMC, Port St. Lucie - 8:30 a.m.

September

- 2nd Clergy Meeting - all clergy - Lakewood Park UMC, Fort Pierce - 9:30 a.m.
- 7th Labor Day Holiday - office closed
- 17th Leadership Council - Lakewood Park UMC, Fort Pierce - 10:00 a.m.