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Hi, just a reminder that you're receiving this email because you have expressed an interest in The Gulf Central District or you are in a leadership role at your church. Don't forget to add ds-gc@flumc.org to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox!

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January 2018



A Word from our District Superintendent

January 2018 - District Newsletter

Happy New Year and Happy Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday.

I hope this year has gotten off to a great start for you. As 2018 begins, I find myself both hopeful and concerned. As I read the headlines and listen daily to the political and social rhetoric I hear harmful name calling, alternative facts and justifying of harassing and abusive behavior. This causes me great concern. I am concerned that I am not doing enough to be a light in the midst of what seems to be a growing cloud of darkness. Do you ever think and wonder what more could you be doing as a follower of Jesus to bring light and life in the midst of a larger societal darkness?



I am hopeful as I turn to scripture and am reminded of what I can do!!! The prophet Micah found himself in the midst of a similar society and raised similar



questions. Micah 6:8 gives us clear instructions. "He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? We are called to DO JUSTICE, LOVE KINDNESS and MERCY and to WALK HUMBLY with OUR GOD!!! I am also encouraged by Dr. King's words and actions. "Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that." Will you join me in 2018, being a light in the midst of darkness? Will you also join me as we continue in great mercy ministries in our district and also begin to be intentional in engaging the work of JUSTICE throughout the Gulf Central District. I will be sharing more about our District's intentional plans to engage Justice issues in future newsletters.

In Christ's Service,
Candace

Please see the link below to resources from the General Commission on Religion and Race related to Racism <http://www.gcorr.org/category/resource-types/discussion-guide/>

Clergy Meeting January 16, 2018 10AM -2 PM

The first Clergy meeting of 2018 will be held at St Paul UMC 1498 Rosery Rd. NE Largo, FL 33770. We will meet in the Christian Life Building on the North West Corner of the intersection of Rosery and Highland.

[click here to register](#)

2018 Gulf Central District-wide Training Event Pastors & Church Leaders - Announce & Plan to Attend

When: January 21, 2018 3-6 PM

Where: Palm Harbor UMC

1551 Belcher Rd - Palm Harbor 34683

Focus: Intentional Discipleship

Guest Presenter
Rev. Junius B. Dotson
Discipleship Ministries, Nashville, TN
Author of "[Developing an Intentional Discipleship System: A Guide for Congregations](#)"

- Is your church looking for ways to grow?
- Ways to reach those untouched by Christ?
- Ways to reach your community?
- Ways to make Disciples?





- **Ways to be obedient?**

Then Join us!

Learning Sessions Include:

Intentional Discipleship. A 2-part session focuses on creating an intentional discipleship system (or pathway) - unique to your church's context - with solutions & strategies to meet the challenges of making disciples in the 21st century.

Communicating across... Our glimpse of heaven is beautifully diverse. Join the conversation on how to reach across generations, cultures, race and economics to build relationships and invite new friends into a relationship with Christ.

Fresh Expression with a Slant. Yes, we are "bought" into the Fresh Expression movement. BUT-how do they become self-sustainable? is it "church"? how does it support my church? Explore the next level of questions in creating a Fresh Expression.

Welcoming the New. A real story of revitalization: Established church revitalizes itself through reaching out in new and relevant ways to its community.

Servant Hearts on the Move. Learn proven approaches to identify and engage your church's servant hearts into service for Christ.

Leading through Change. How many times does the church start a visioning process and nothing changes. Hear how one church is building a new vision, bringing their congregation into the conversation and making it happen.

Low Risk Start to Ministry. We see the needs of our community. How do we build relationships to meet those needs AND share Christ's story? This session focuses on how to get started in Social Justice and Mercy ministry while sharing the Good News with those working with us and those we are reaching out to.

[Click here for a flyer](#)

[Click here to register](#)

Thank you, Thank You, Thank You!
- to the churches that paid 100% of their
2017 Apportionments we had over 65%
of our churches pay 100%. Our 2018
goal is to have at least 80% churches
paying 100%.





*Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that.
Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that. Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.*



[For More Information click here](#)



SAVE THE DATE:

**Learn together! More information soon.
Come as a team, as a church, as a district, or another group.
Our guest: Rev. Dr. Martyn Atkins, Chair of Fresh Expressions UK, Team Leader and Superintendent Minister of Methodist Central Hall. He will share about resourcing renewal of the church, the emerging future, and discipleship and the people called Methodists.**





Stay up to date on the information by visiting www.flumc.org/hungerpreventionandchildrensadvocacyfloridaadvocacydays
 Follow us on Twitter at #FAD2018
 More information coming soon!

Easter Pilgrimage to Italy with Bishop Carter slated for April 2018

Led by Bishop Carter, travelers will visit Venice, Assisi, Siena, Florence and Rome while studying the Gospel of Mark and the legacy of Peter during April 3-12, 2018.

"I am excited about our spiritual journey to Italy in 2018. As we visit the stunning cities of Venice, Assisi, Siena, Florence and Rome, we will be immersed in the rich traditions of the Christian faith. We will learn more about the gospel of Mark in Venice and the legacy of Peter; we will read the dialogues of Catherine of Sienna and the meditations of Dante; and we will reflect on the renewing vision given to Francis of Assisi. In Rome, as we visit the Sistine Chapel, we will consider the legacies of the most recent Popes, especially John XXIII, Pope John Paul II and Pope Francis. And in each setting we will be inspired by the world's great art and architecture. I hope you will join friends from across Florida on this Easter pilgrimage."



The Peace of the Lord,
 Bishop Kenneth H. Carter, Jr.
 View more information [online](#) or in this [downloadable brochure](#).
[Click here](#) for online registration.

Missional Vital Signs

Applause! Thank you to all of our District Churches who faithfully each month submit their "Mission Vital Signs" to the Conference. Have you ever questioned if it really matters whether you submit them or not? Does anyone ever look at them? Are they of any value?



Mission Vital Signs (often called MVS) are very important to the District and Conference. Just like with any statistic, they are a "window into" how your church is doing. We recognize they don't tell the whole story-the story of the great things your church is doing. They do give us insight into whether something great is happening that we need to share across the Connection...or, if the church is experiencing some new challenges that may need some extra help. With the growing size of our district, using tools such as MVS becomes the best way for the District and Conference to quickly get a sense of a church's health or vitality.

MVS gives the District and Conference insight into how a church may be answering Christ's commandment that we go and make disciples (The Great Commission, Matthew 28: 16-20):



- Are we inviting and welcoming the ones we know and the ones we don't know into church?
- Are we leading new people (adults and children) into baptism and professions of faith?
- Are we growing in our faith evidenced by our regular worship and strengthening spiritual disciplines evidenced by monetary generosity, small group participation in learning more about the faith, and our service to God and others by being Christ's hands and feet in our communities?

Your work as the local church is critical-critical to God's call and the United Methodist mission: to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. We, the Gulf Central District is here to support you in your critical work of making and growing disciples.

[MVS](#)

ARE THERE YOUNG ADULTS IN YOUR CHURCH WHO WANT TO EXPLORE PASTORAL MINISTRY? 2018 Summer Pastoral Ministry Internship Program

If so, please give them the attached application for the 2018 Summer Pastoral Ministry Internship Program and encourage them to apply!

DO YOU SERVE A CHURCH COMMITTED TO SHAPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF PASTORAL LEADERS?

If so, please sponsor a Summer Pastoral Intern for 2018!

Here are the quick facts for hosting an Intern. Attached is a more detailed program description.

Internship Dates: Monday, May 28, 2018 through Friday, August 3, 2018

Intern Training Day: Friday, May 25, 2018 (Students and Supervising Pastors)

Intern Reflection Day: Monday, August 6, 2018 (Students Only)

Hours: 30 hours/week as scheduled with Supervising Pastor

Housing: Provided in congregant's home, if needed

Stipend: \$3,500 (\$1,500 by host site; \$1,500 by Office of Clergy Excellence, plus an additional \$500 from the Office of Clergy Excellence IF the Intern attends both the Orientation and Reflection Days)

If interested, please email or mail an Intern Job Description for your church. Please feel free to contact the Office of Clergy Excellence if you have any questions about the program.

Holly Finley at hfinley@flumc.org

Rev. Sara McKinley at sara.mckinley@flumc.org

Office of Clergy Excellence

450 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave.

Lakeland, FL 33815

863-688-5563 x134

[Click here for more info](#)

New Room - Lakeland February 1, 2018

We don't have a content problem. We have a connection problem. We don't have a program challenge. We have a process challenge. If discipleship will bear the fruit of God's Kingdom in our churches we must get beyond our shallow sociological approaches and into the deep end of the discipleship pool. We must have banded discipleship. Expect to delve into the classical Wesleyan practices of Class Meetings and Band Meetings and come away with practical strategies to implement back home.

[More info Link](#)



Five Day Academy For Spiritual Formation: Seeking Sabbath, Sabbath Keeping

Registration open for Florida Five Day Academy March 11-16, 2018, Life Enrichment Retreat Center 4991 Picciola Rd Fruitland Park faculty Marjorie Thompson & Rabbi David Horowitz. For additional information go to:

www.flumc.org/fivedayacademy



Irma Relief

Update of FLUMC response to Hurricane Irma

As you know Hurricane Irma was massive. You can see it in the photo. But that is not the end of the story.

Over the last 60 days there has been an outpouring of relief work by many of you and the people with whom you work. Thank you for what you did in Christ's name all across Florida! We at the Conference have been gearing up for a long-term response. Here are some important facts about the damage and where we are:



* There have been 2.7 million FEMA registrations. This is the most ever in any one state following a disaster. This represents more than a third of the state's households.

* There were 254 insurance claims filed by United Methodist Churches in Florida (40% of our churches).

This storm was very big.

But We Are Bigger!

* UMCOR, our connectional United Methodist Disaster Response organization, just awarded us our first grant for \$1 million to get our Recovery work up and going.

* With this money, our Conference Disaster Response Coordinator, Pam Garrison, and her team are beginning to hire for the long-term disaster recovery. There will be 5 sites across Florida:

- The Florida Keys
- Naples
- Central Florida
- Tampa Bay area (which will incorporate the ongoing work following Hurricane Hermine)
- Jacksonville Area (which will incorporate the ongoing work following Hurricane Matthew)

* For the next five years, we anticipate we will be hosting construction volunteer teams of 300 - 400 per month who will help with the rebuilding for uninsured and under-insured homeowners with an additional 100 volunteers per month who will assist in hospitality, meals, housing, etc. This work will start in January.

* A group organized in the East Central District is coordinating a hospitality response for students and their families immigrating from Puerto Rico since their schools will not be opened this year following Hurricane Maria. Click [HERE](#) to donate online and help our brothers & sisters from Puerto Rico. An UMCOR grant is in the works to aid in this work.

* We have a goal to supplement the grants that UMCOR will give us by raising an additional 4 to 5 million through individual donations and grants to help local churches and the communities that surround them.

There are many of you who have jumped in to help with getting this effort up and running.

The Bishop has requested that all Florida United Methodist Churches take up a Christmas Eve offering for the Hurricane Irma Relief Fund.



Donate here to the Florida Conference Hurricane Irma Fund to help churches and the neighborhoods that surround them. Volunteer to bring yourself or a team to help with the recovery. Together, with God, we are bigger!
#flumcWeAreBigger

UMVIM Training - January 27, 2018

Are you interested in leading or participating on a mission team from your church? Do you want to lead or participate on a team to Haiti, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Africa, Sager Brown or somewhere else here in the states and be the hands and feet of Christ?

UMVIM Mission Team Training prepares volunteers to be part of a Volunteer in Mission team, to projects in the United States and around the world. The training will help the Leader know their role, as well as help the team members to understand their roles on the team. You will learn the "ins and outs" of organizing a mission trip from recruiting the team, to picking the location, getting support, staying safe, planning the work and much, much more. You will also enjoy a wonderful time of fellowship and connection with other "mission-minded" folks.

Not sure if you are ready to be a part of a team? Come and learn what it takes - you will be well informed and a better team member!

Cost is \$29.95 per person and \$39.95 per couple. Individuals receive a Team Leader Manual and we ask that couples share one. Coffee, juice and lunch are included. Katherine Lain (800) 282-8011 x. 146 or Greg Harford (407) 924-4485 or by e-mail at gharford@flumc.org.

[Click here to register](#)

Warren W. Willis is not just for Summer Camp

...although that is an amazing time! Click on any of the following links for information on the wonderful programs you and your church can attend.

[Confirmation Retreats](#): Feb. 16-18; Mar. 2-4; Mar. 16-18; Oct. 5-7

[College Connection](#): Jan. 26-28, 2018

[Connect](#): Oct. 19-21, 2018; Nov. 9-11, 2018

[Created By God](#): April 20-22, 2018

[DARE to Lead](#): Feb. 16-18, 2018

[Plan Your Own Church Retreat](#): Who doesn't love WWW? Why not plan your own retreat?



Thank you for your help in reporting the [statistics](#) of our churches' progress in 2017. This year, because we are in a new quadrennium (2017-2020), the General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA) made changes to the data local churches are asked to submit. The most important changes for you, as a church in the Florida Annual Conference are:

Line numbers will not match the lines from last year.

The GCFA has made several changes for the 2017-2020 collection period. Please refer to the table comparison attachment for a visual representation of the lines GCFA has added, subtracted or broken out, to better

understand your ministry reporting requirements. If you need assistance interpreting or understanding the table changes, please contact your District Office.



In addition to the reporting/line number changes, there are new questions this quadrennium.

New Questions:

- Professions of Faith from confirmation classes
- Online Viewing - weekly average
- Clergy Health Costs (one of the following)
 - Clergy Health Supplement
 - Church Insurance Participation

Please consult the Church Guide for Ezra, for helpful information and instructions for reporting statistics. You can also consult Table 1-3 Comparisons 2013 & 2017 for New Quadrennium changes to statistical forms. These two documents should be printed out and referred to as you complete the report.

2017 Year End Statistics Reports is 5pm February 9, 2018.

Online reporting starts January 2, 2018. [Click HERE](#) for detailed information.

Disaster Recovery in the Florida Conference is actively recruiting for Construction Coordinators, Case Managers, Volunteer Coordinators and Volunteer Family Advocates for the following areas:

- Naples
- Tampa Bay (Pinellas and Hillsborough counties)
- North East Florida (Jacksonville and west)
- Sebring/Lake Placid/Moore Haven
- Marathon and lower Keys



Please send resumes with cover letter and minimum salary requirements to: mmollica@flumc.org.

Cornerstone Wonder Walk 2018



Nurturing Bodies • Developing Minds • Fostering Hope Through Christ...One Child at a Time

[Click here for Flyer](#)

District Calendar

2018 HOLIDAY SCHEDULE



January 1	New Year's Day
January 15	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
February 19	President's Day
March 30	Good Friday
May 28	Memorial Day
July 4	Independence Day
September 3	Labor Day
November 12	Veteran's Day
November 22	Thanksgiving
November 23	Day After Thanksgiving
December 24	Christmas Eve
December 25	Christmas Day

January 2018

16 Clergy Meeting 10 AM St Paul UMC - [registration link](#)

21 - Learning Extravaganza at Palm Harbor UMC 1551 Belcher Rd. Palm Harbor [Click here for detail and to Register](#)

STAY CONNECTED:



The Gulf Central District, 727.585.1207, 1498 Rosery Road North East, Largo, FL 33770

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