

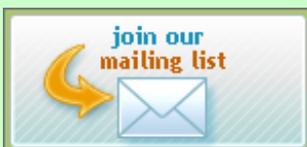
North West District News



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Dear Friends in Christ,

I am currently reading a novel by one of my favorite authors, T. C. Boyle, entitled, East is East. It is the story of a Japanese sailor who jumps ship off the coast of the southern United States. He washes up on one of the small coastal islands of Georgia. What ensues, of course, is a complete clash of cultures and languages that results in some very humorous events and some very tragic ones. Life is turned upside down for the young man and for the native folks he comes into contact with.



I can't help but compare his story to the news stories I am seeing almost every day about refugees and migrant families who have fled their homelands for religious reasons, or to escape the violence of war, and find themselves in a totally strange environment. Everything is new and different. Communication is extremely difficult. Whatever stability and comfort people had in their lives, whatever respect and dignity they enjoyed before are all gone. It was just a few weeks ago that we were celebrating the birth of Jesus and remembering that soon after his birth he had to flee for his life with his parents to a foreign country. Jesus was a refugee at a

very early age.

In every period of history there have been refugees, immigrants to foreign lands for many different reasons. Today the numbers of people and the variety of places and situations of these refugees is unprecedented. Our world faces a huge crisis of displaced persons. As the Church of Jesus Christ, we must do what we are able in these areas of acute need. The United Methodist Church is already providing help in the form of tents, clothing, food and medical supplies for refugees coming to Europe. UMCOR and other agencies are helping where and however they can. We have our own immigration issues in the United States, and, no doubt, we will have more. Compassionate and just solutions need to be found for these folks who have suffered so much and need so much. Many problems and issues will need to be worked out. But let us pray for those whom Jesus called the least of these and work to give them all the opportunities for a full and happy life wherever they find themselves.

We are about to enter the season of Lent. This is the time we remember Jesus' sacrifice for us. It is also the time when it becomes crystal clear that the Christian life is counter-cultural to the values and lifestyle of much of our world. Jesus taught: "love God with heart, soul, mind and strength and you neighbor as yourself," "turn the other cheek," "love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you," "blessed are the poor, the meek, and the peacemakers." The Church is the only place this lifestyle is taught and whose people are called to live it. It may sound like a foreign language to some and craziness to others. But during these weeks of Lent, let's remember that we are citizens of God's Kingdom first. The culture and values of Jesus rule our lives and distinguish our homeland from all others.

Grace and Peace for your Journey of faith,

Bob

NEW DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT ANNOUNCED

With the June retirement of Bob Gibbs, the Bishop has announced his replacement:

Rev. Durwood Foshee, Northwest District Superintendent as of July 1, 2016.

"Durwood Foshee has a history of effective and faithful pastoral leadership in diverse settings across our conference," Bishop



Carter said. "As a native of north Florida, he will develop strong connections with the churches and ministries of the Northwest District, and will help them to engage more deeply with their communities." Rev. Foshee was a very effective member of the executive Committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry, Bishop Carter added.

Rev. Foshee was appointed senior pastor of First United Methodist Church of Coral Gables on July 1, 2011. Prior to coming to Coral Gables, he served churches in Palm Beach Gardens, Palm Coast, Marco Island, St. Petersburg, DeLand and Clarkston, Georgia.

He graduated from Florida Southern College with a degree in music and religion and received his Master of Divinity degree from Emory University. He has been married to Anne for 31 years, and they have three grown children, 3 grandchildren and one more on the way.

LAY SERVANT CLASSES

Lay servant classes are being offered February 12-13 at Trinity UMC, Tallahassee.

Feb. 12, 5-9 PM

Feb. 13, 8-4 PM



Registrants can choose one of the following classes:

- A Preaching Class led by Rev. Ken Hamilton, Pastor at Tallahassee Heights.

- Leadership Principals, led by Terry Fitzgerald using the book "Next Generation Leader" by Andy Stanley.

- Basic class, leader TBA

Cost is \$35.

To register, please email Peggy at flumc-nw@flumc.org

5K/1 MILE RACE

WANT TO WIN \$500 FOR YOUR MISSIONS PROGRAM?

Join Killlearn UMC on March 12, 2016 beginning at 8 AM for a fun 1 mile run/walk or at 8:30 a 5K run/walk followed by a pancake

breakfast. THE CHURCH WITH THE MOST RACE ENTRIES WILL RECEIVE \$500 FOR THEIR MISSIONS MINISTRY.



All race proceeds benefit local, national and international missions programs supported by KUMC.

For more information, call Lauren Page at 893-1116. To

WORKER'S COMP. AUDIT

Please Remember: the Workers
Comp Audit should be
completed online annually.
Report actual payroll for
2015. **Click here after February**
1st to link to the 2015 report.

Must be completed by Friday, February 19, 2016.



FEBRUARY EVENTS IN THE DISTRICT

Sat, Feb. 27 / 7 PM - The
McIlroys (Scotland's
Musical Ambassadors) in
Concert at Waukeedah
UMC.

\$10 Admission

81 Methodist Church Road, Monticello



Bring the family and support our Methodist brothers
and sisters.

MISSIO ECCLESIA CONFERENCE

Discover why and how the people of God can join Jesus on mission! A "Church on Mission" Conference is being hosted by the Florida Conference at Grace Church, Cape Coral on Feb. 17-19.



For more information visit flumc.org/missioecclesiacv.org

SEEKING MISSION TRIP PARTICIPANTS

Killearn UMC invites you to join their APRIL MISSION TEAM TO LEON, NICARAGUA.



The April Mission Team travelling to Leon, Nicaragua April 16-23 will include a light construction project, VBS for children, prayers walks and other venues of service to the Twelve Churches in Leon. If you are interested in serving and would like more information, please contact Sean Fisher by email at sfcattfish@gmail.com or call at 850-933-6680.

FROM THE CONFERENCE: 2016 APPORTIONMENTS

The apportionments for 2016 are now available on the conference website.

To access your 2016 apportionment information:

1. Go to the Conference homepage:
<http://www.flumc.org>



2. Click on the "Monthly Reports" tab at the bottom right of the page.
3. Click on the top link under Monthly Billing Reports: "Click here to download monthly reports."
4. Click on 2016 Apportionment Report in the drop down menu. This link will take you to your 2016 apportionments.

Enter your six digit GCFA number.

YOUTH MINISTRY INSTITUTE

YMI is offering 6 months FREE coaching when you sign up for their two-year Youth Ministry Coaching and Training by March 1.



YMI is an innovative means of delivering high-quality substantive theological training for those on the front lines of ministry.

Contact Steve Schneeberger at steve@yminstitute.com or 407/341-0855 for more information.

SUBMIT YOUR
REPORTS

A graphic of a pie chart with four segments in blue, purple, green, and red, positioned between the words "REPORTS" and "S".

February Report Reminder

Feb. 5 Please remember to enter your *Missional Vital Signs*. Why is this important? It is the only real snap-shot of your church and is used by the conference to determine a number of different things.

Feb. 16 Worker's Comp. Audit

**KEEP LOOKING AHEAD ON 2016
CALENDAR OF REPORTS DUE!**

FEBRUARY DATES TO REMEMBER

5	Missional Vital Signs Due
12-13	Lay Servant Training @ Trinity
16	Workers Comp. Audit
27	Music of Scotland @ Waukeedah

D.S. Bob Gibb's Calendar: 9-11 Cabinet Meeting

SAVE THE DATES:

2016 Florida Annual Conference / June 16-18, 2016 / Buena Vista
Palace Hotel, Orlando

2016 Festival of Wisdom and Grace featuring Dr. Tony Campolo and Dr.
Mickey Efrid / August 1-4, 2016 / Lake Junaluska, NC