



Wholeness for our Clergy, Congregations, and Communities

November 2017 Newsletter

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Dear (Contact First Name),

I feel sure that most of you have heard about the efforts of the East Central District and the larger Florida Conference to provide hospitality to refugees coming to Central Florida from Puerto Rico. It was Jose' Nieves, Associate Pastor at First UMC, Kissimmee from whom I received a passion-filled email several weeks ago about the folks in Puerto Rico who are reeling from their experience with Hurricane Maria. Homes destroyed, schools shut down, an infrastructure that includes electricity, adequate supplies of food, clean running water, safely navigable roads, yanked away. Many, many folks are still living with that reality, and thousands of them are making their way here to Central Florida.



"What can we do?" Jose' wanted to know.

What can we do indeed. And who is we? In this case "we" includes those of you who are reading this piece. Usually I use this column for a personal or theological reflection. I think this is the first time in two and a half years that I have used it for a direct appeal for a financial contribution, as I am now.

[EC District Website](#)

[Job Opportunities](#)

[UMC Website](#)

[UMW Trumpet Sound](#)



Here's part of an email that I received from Jose' this afternoon:

Today there are 1,100 refugee students from Puerto Rico in Osceola and 1,400 in Orange so far. We are partnering with the Osceola School District with five regional orientations for families coming from PR. We had one at our church and it was great! I have some supplies (backpacks, gift certificates, etc.), but they won't be enough for all events. So far we have been able to raise about \$10,000 locally, and we need much more than that. Please advise.

The need for school supplies for incoming students who bring with them very little is one dimension of our efforts to extend hospitality. There are also needs for food and housing and basic supplies for personal needs. And so I am coming to you. The need is great. If you have given to this cause already, thank you. If you have not yet given for this need, or if you might be able to do more, please pray about how God is leading you to respond.

[Click HERE](#) to donate.

I promise you that all funds donated will go to extend hospitality and support to our Puerto Rican sisters and brothers who are transitioning from being our neighbors from afar and becoming our neighbors right here in Central Florida.

Grace and Peace,

Bob Bushong
District Superintendent
East Central District

In the District

Missional Vital Signs (MVS) Due the 10th of Every Month



The conference stopped sending out monthly reminders in May. However, MVS reporting never stopped. They are due by the 10th of every month. [Click HERE](#) for the page to report your MVS. This page can be bookmarked and used each month. You will need to enter your GCFA code.

Fall Clergy Meeting Rescheduled!

January 30, 2018 - Asbury UMC, Maitland

The Fall Clergy meeting has been rescheduled! January 30 is the new date for the meeting that was cancelled in September due to Hurricane Irma. We are asking everyone who is planning on attending to register, even if you had registered for the September meeting.



Rev. Jason Micheli, Executive Pastor at Aldersgate UMC in Alexandria, VA will join us for our time together and share his experiences after being diagnosed with a rare form of bone Cancer. He is also the author of *Cancer is Funny: Keeping Faith in Stage-Serious Chemo*. [Click HERE](#) to register.

All Full-time clergy serving in the local church are expected to attend. Please make this time together a priority in your schedule. If you absolutely cannot make it due to a previous commitment, please call Dr. Bob Bushong to request to be excused.

A Message from Kim & Melanie Lee, District Lay Leaders

Kim and I joined our Sunday school class recently to see the movie, "Same Kind of Different As Me." In one scene Denver, a Black, recalcitrant homeless man, goes to dinner with Ron, a White, successful art dealer and reluctant volunteer at the homeless mission. The two were carving out terms of a future friendship when Denver asked Ron to explain how White people fish. He didn't get the catch-and-release concept. Ron told him that sometimes you fish for food, but sometimes it's just for sport. Denver made it perfectly clear he didn't want Ron to be fishing for him as a friend while planning on releasing him later.



As a church, are we catching and releasing?

A few weeks ago, I filled in for Rev. Rodney Wallace at Broadway UMC. My talk was about Fresh Expressions and how they differ from other new ministries. I believe the main difference lies in the follow through. We can "catch" new people with interesting programs. We can help people in need. Both are worthy endeavors, but are they enough? If we are not forging deep friendships with the people we touch, we might be catching and releasing. Jesus expects so much more. Jesus taught us to be fishers of people. He also taught us to go out and make disciples. We can't just catch and release. We need to catch and guide and love and witness. We need to follow up and follow through.

7 Steps Toward Making Disciples

In his blog, Bishop Carter lays out 7 steps toward making disciples. All focus on building relationships with people. The process requires time, prayer, and lots of follow-up. Through Fresh Expressions we can bait the hook, throw out the line, and reel in souls for Jesus. But then the real work begins, making those souls into disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. That's the Fresh Expression difference!

Lay Action:

Broadway UMC hosts *The Word on Broadway*, which puts on musical productions to entertain concert-goers and raise money for under-supported charities.

Loving the Laity,
Melanie and Kim Lee

Send your Lay Action stories to: melaniebushlee@gmail.com

Enroll Now in No-Cost FLUMC Member Benefits

The Florida Conference Now Offers a One-Stop Shop for Your Healthcare Needs



A one-stop shop for your healthcare needs.

Member Benefits, the FLUMC Private Health Exchange is a **no-cost** service available to you and your church staff to help you choose the products and services that best suit you. **Member Benefits** is about **ease of use** and **choice**...for anyone connected to our Florida United Methodist Conference. *You can even open an HSA with Member Benefits.*

We hope that **Member Benefits** - along with the \$1,000 annual healthcare stipend increase per family size - will help uncomplicate your 2018 healthcare decisions.

Click [HERE](#) for a Member Benefits flyer and for a detailed Summary of Research and Changes to Clergy Benefit Program for 2018 click [HERE](#).

Questions? Email Marilyn Mollica mmollica@flumc.org or Lois Durham ldurham@flumc.org.

Fall Charge Conferences End November 12

ECD DS Dr. Bob Bushong presided over five Church Conferences from October 1 through October 29. On Sunday, November 12 at 4:00 pm, Dr. Bushong will preside at his sixth and final cluster Conference in the ECD. First UMC, Clermont is the Conference host; 950 7th Street in Clermont. We thank all who helped make this year's Charge Conferences so successful!



2018 leadership should be entered into the Church Dashboard within seven days of your Conference. [Click HERE](#) to get the different tutorials. Click on the Leadership link once you are there. There are videos and also printable guide sheets. **Important** - Leaders email addresses and phone numbers should be entered.

Do you have a new leadership role in 2018? Are you wondering what that means? Cokesbury sells Guidebooks for \$3.99 for many different leadership roles in the United Methodist Church. [Click HERE](#) to see what they offer.

News from Lay Servant Ministries



Dear friends, we pray that this would find you doing really well. It seems like just yesterday we were evacuating, stocking up on supplies and preparing for really bad weather. Then it happened! As we recovered and are still recovering, we see God in the midst of all that we are doing to take care of ourselves and family and our neighbors in the community. Being a "SERVANT" has never been more evident.



Looking Back: We celebrated the following in our

Ministry:

Two of our training events which were rescheduled from September were held in October with wonderful participation. Our adult classes at First UMC, Kissimmee was a two-day event with great experiences. Thirty-four were in attendance with sixteen attending the Basic course in English and Spanish; and, the others renewing or taking an Advanced course for the first time. Lay Servants on the MOVE! We thank our pastors, Rusty Belcher, Wayne Cook and Edwin Santos, for their graciousness and support.

Then our Youth event was held on Saturday, October 28 at Montverde UMC, the first event for Youth in our district. Pastor Nicole Logan, Nate Guterias, Ted Eckbreth and the congregation at MUMC: we are so thankful for your help.

We are beginning to receive Lay Servant Annual reports and with that some hiccups. If your report is incorrect/needs amending etc., you will receive a call/letter sharing with you how you should be reporting going forward. It was expected that this first year would be a bit confusing, but overall so far it has been pretty good. Thank you all for being attentive to what you were required to do.

This is a good place as any to say to our District staff on our behalf and on yours, how much we appreciate ALL that they do in general but, specifically for our ministry. Thank you! Thank you!

Looking ahead:

This is the month of Thanksgiving and also the start of the BUSY life in our churches. Please take time to put into practice some of what we have been learning at our training - as we *Care, Lead and Communicate* to others, God's love and his Grace. We have much work to do, dear friends, and we know how to do it.

So as we leave we wanted to ask something of you, the Lay Servants of the EC District. On Wednesday mornings at 9:30 am, could you/would you pause from whatever you are doing and join us in prayer? Let us start with us. The visual of us all praying at the same time on that same day...hm, well you think about it.

"Take my life! Lord, put me to doing your work and your will in the world so that the lost and hungry souls may be attracted to your love and mercy and be drawn into the embrace of your love. Amen."

(Adapted from a Guide to Prayer/Upper Room Books)

Joyfully serving with each of you in His Vineyard,
Lynn & Jim

To read this article in Spanish, please [click HERE](#).

For more information, please contact: Jim Boesch 407-721-0416
jimboesch68@gmail.com; or Lynn Campbell 407-520-0272
lzdcamp1951@gmail.com.

Innovating Spiritual Movements with Brian McLaren *Collective Church, DeLand - November 18, 2017*

The conference Fresh Expressions team invites you to join us on Saturday, November 18th from 9:00am to 4:00pm in Deland at Collective Church for an inspiring one-day intensive with acclaimed writer,



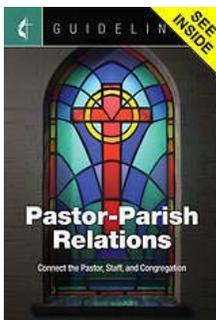
pastor and emergent spiritual leader, Brian McLaren.

Brian will discuss themes relevant to Fresh Expressions from his recent book, *The Great Spiritual Migration*. Following conversation with Brian, we will workshop next steps in our own projects. This intensive will be of particular value to those who have existing knowledge of Fresh Expressions or have participated in a Spark Day and are looking for next steps in starting, growing or supporting a Fresh Expression of church. The cost for the day will be \$29 per person. [Click HERE](#) to sign up! Limited space is available, so be sure to sign up soon.

Experience this intensive in the context of Collective, a Fresh Expression of how church is being redefined in the Florida Conference, an incubator for spiritual community that reaches new people in new places and in new ways. Local Lunch and Artisan Coffee will be provided.

[Click HERE](#) for the event flyer. Questions? Email freshexpressions@flumc.org.

Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) Training



The Annual East Central District Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) Training Event will provide you with the effective tools needed in your responsibilities. Dr. Bob Bushong our District Superintendent will facilitate. There will be two trainings offered, pick the location or date that is convenient for you.

Pastors, SPRC Chairpersons and Committee Members, Lay Leaders, and Lay Members to Annual Conference are strongly encouraged to attend this important training event. **Please register** by clicking on the link under the training you would like to attend.

[Click HERE](#) to purchase the Pastor-Parish Relations guidebook from Cokesbury.

Tuesday, November 28, 2017

6:30pm - 8:30pm

Lakeside Fellowship UMC

121 N Henderson Lane

Sanford, FL 32771

[Click HERE](#)

Thursday, November 30, 2017

6:30pm - 8:30pm

New Horizon UMC

400 Orchid Drive

Haines City, FL 33844

[Click HERE](#)

2017 Connectional Giving Deadline Information

Apportionment payments for 2017 must be received in the lockbox at Regions Bank or paid on line by Friday, January 12, 2018. This is not a postmarked by date, but is the last day by which monies must be received in the Conference or our bank lockbox to be included in 2017 apportionments receipts. Any payments received after that date will be applied to 2018 apportionments. Any payments received between January 1 and January 12 must be clearly marked as to which year they are to be applied.



[Click HERE](#) to access the Remittance Report on the Conference website.

To be considered a 100% connectional church in the Florida Annual Conference Journal, 100% of 2017 apportionments must be received by January 12, 2018, and all outstanding Ministry Protection and Health and Benefits obligations must be received by December 31, 2017.

Do you still have Flood Buckets?



At this point we are delighted to report that the majority of urgent needs for flood buckets as a result of Irma have been met - which is great news! However, we also know that there are churches who still have these items and don't know what to do with them, don't have room to store them, don't want to store them etc. - and just want to send them somewhere.

First, we want to encourage churches to use the buckets locally if at all possible. Often there are many small ministries in a community that need these kinds of resources after a disaster, but they don't always know where to find them.

If they cannot be used locally, please contact: Mike Kirila (260)466-8622 kirila@tampabay.rr.com. Mike is a wonderful volunteer who will work with you to figure out what to do with your buckets, etc.

Be sure to contact Mike by November 20th. After that, we simply won't have the capacity to collect these items. Thanks for your help and for all you do to support this ministry.

Pam Garrison
Office of Missional Engagement
Florida Conference of The United Methodist Church

Support your Local Campus Ministry

Connect with Stetson Wesley

Stetson Wesley is in the midst of an exciting transition with innovative new programs, Fresh Expressions of ministry on campus, and plenty of ways to get involved. Check out the new website (www.StetsonWesley.com) and like them on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/StetsonWesley>). Look out for exciting events coming up soon!

If Stetson Wesley meant a lot to you during your time at Stetson University, please stay connected with the Alumni network. [Click HERE](#) to register, so that you can receive our alumni newsletter, attend alumni events, and learn about ways you can volunteer on campus or mentor current Stetson students.



Questions? Contact Interim Co-Directors Caitlin White or Rev. Ben Collins at stetsonwesley@gmail.com or 386-742-9423.

Provide a Tuesday Night Meal at Wesley UCF



We are looking for people to sponsor or help provide a meal. [Click HERE](#) for more information and to sign up.

At Wesley we believe that a lot of connections and great conversations are made during our meal time. It has become a HUGE part of our ministry and something that our students really look forward to each week. Many of our students don't have the resources to have a delicious home cooked meal while away at college and

through your help this has been made possible. Connecting with each of you has also allowed our students to develop new relationships with individuals and churches so that one day they, too, can give back to the community. You may sign up for a week to bring a meal or even send in a monetary donation to cover the cost (\$200-\$300) of a meal for that week. You are such a big blessing to our students and we are so thankful for your donations!

Erwin Lopez,
Director, CFL Wesley
erwin.lopez@flumc.org

Around the Conference

Ware Trust Spiritual Formation Grant Applications Due Nov. 15

The Spiritual Formation Ministry of the Florida Conference has been entrusted with the responsibility of discerning and dispersing funds from the Ware Trust. The intended recipients are Florida Conference ministries which reflect spiritual formation or ministry initiatives. **For more information and an application, [click HERE](#).**

#pictureAdvent

How do you #pictureAdvent?

Join Christians around the world as we all celebrate **Advent**, the season when we prepare our hearts, minds and souls for the coming of Christ!

This year, let's be sure we don't rush through this special season straight to Christmas. Advent is a special time, and LECFamily want to help you make it a special experience for yourself, your family, and your church. Here are a few ways to make this Advent season one to remember:

[#pictureAdvent](#) Photo-a-Day

We want to share our Advent celebration with all our friends and family, so we're inviting you to use each day's theme to inspire a daily photo. Post each day with the theme and #pictureAdvent so we can all be inspired together! [Click HERE](#) for more ideas and resources from the LECFamily.

#PICTUREADVENT
PHOTO CHALLENGE

Take a photo each day during Advent & share to your social media platform of choice with #pictureAdvent!






Dec. 3 / Awaken / Mark 13:33-37	Dec. 15 / Light / John 1:6-8
Dec. 4 / Comfort / Isaiah 40:1-4	Dec. 16 / Name / John 1:19-22
Dec. 5 / Plants / Isaiah 40:5-8	Dec. 17 / Baptism / John 1:23-28
Dec. 6 / Sheep / Isaiah 40:9-11	Dec. 18 / Home / 2 Samuel 7:8-11
Dec. 7 / Faithful / Psalm 85:8-13	Dec. 19 / Love / Psalm 89:1-4
Dec. 8 / Wait / 2 Peter 3:13-15a	Dec. 20 / Blessed / Luke 1:46-48
Dec. 9 / Messenger / Mark 1:1-3	Dec. 21 / Generations / Luke 1:49-55
Dec. 10 / Water / Mark 1:4-8	Dec. 22 / Good News / Rom. 16: 25-27
Dec. 11 / Tree / Isaiah 61:1-4	Dec. 23 / Promise / Luke 1:26-30
Dec. 12 / Garden / Isaiah 61:8-11	Dec. 24 / Child / Luke 1:31-38
Dec. 13 / Change / Psalm 126	Dec. 25 / Holy Family / Luke 2:1-14
Dec. 14 / Rejoice / 1 Thess. 5:16-24	

Sign up for daily devotions at
WWW.PICTUREADVENT.COM




Pastoral Internship for 2018



Are there **young adults** in your church who want to explore pastoral ministry? If so, please [Click HERE](#) for the Summer Internship Application to give them.

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:

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

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

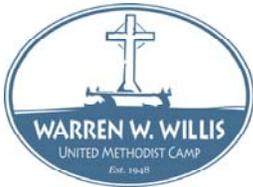
[Click HERE](#) for the Summer Intern Program Description.

If interested, please email or mail an intern job description for your church. Contact the Office of Clergy Excellence if you have any questions about the program.

Holly Finley hfinley@flumc.org

Rev. Sara McKinley sara.mckinley@flumc.org

Warren W. Willis Retreats



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.

[Clergy Kids](#): Jan. 12-14, 2018

[Confirmation Retreat](#): Feb. 16-18, Mar. 2-4, & Mar. 16-18, 2018

[Connect](#): Nov. 10-12, 2017

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

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

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

A Message from Rev. Melissa Cooper

I want to thank you so much for being a part of LECFamily in the last few years. Since 2011, LECFamily has grown into a ministry that has reached thousands of participants around the world, both with our on-site camps as well as through our online resources and in-person trainings and workshops.



This dream God laid on my heart in 2011 has become more than I could ever have imagined. Hearing stories from your families about how our events and resources have enhanced relationships and faith are what have kept this ministry growing year after year.

Part of growth is change, and LECFamily is going to be going through some changes soon. Last year, the Life Enrichment Center and Warren Willis camp merged to become one ministry. With that merge, our program staff merged as well and we have worked this year to envision what a unified program experience will look like moving forward, integrating all our combined ministries to strengthen each of them and grow new ones as well.

While LECFamily has been my primary work for its first six years, it's time for new leadership and new vision to plan LECFamily's next six years and beyond.

[Click HERE](#) to continue reading.

Easter Pilgrimage to Italy with Bishop Carter: 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.

From Bishop Carter: "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," and more.

For more information, a brochure with a detailed itinerary and online registration, [click HERE](#).

District Calendar of Events

[Click Here for a Printable Calendar](#)

November 2017

November 4: UMW Conference Annual Meeting; Lakeland
 November 10: Veterans Day Holiday - Conference and District Offices Closed
 November 12: Cluster Church Conference 4:00pm First UMC, Clermont
 November 18: Fresh Expressions Workshop - Collective, DeLand
 November 23 & 24: Thanksgiving Holiday - Conference and District Offices Closed
 November 28: SPRC Training - Lakeside Fellowship UMC, Sanford
 November 30: SPRC Training - New Horizon UMC, Haines City

December 2017

December 11: Clergy Retiree Christmas Luncheon - District Parsonage
 December 21: dCOM 9:00am-4:00pm Asbury UMC, Maitland (materials due Nov. 30)
 December 25: Christmas Day - Conference and District Offices Closed

2018

January 2018

January 12 -13: Candidacy Retreat
 January 30: Fall Clergy Meeting - Asbury UMC, Maitland

February 2018

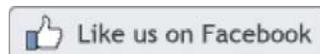
February 3: Called to Serve - First UMC, Oviedo
 February 22-23: Missio Ecclesia - First UMC, Lakeland

June 2018

June 7 - 9: Annual Conference - Florida Southern College, Lakeland

July 2018

July 13 - 14: Candidacy Retreat



East Central District, (407) 636-9240, Office Hours: Mon-Thu 9-4, Fri 9-2,
 2221 Lee Road, Suite 21, Winter Park, FL 32789

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