



*Wholeness for our Clergy, Congregations, and Communities*

## February 2017 Newsletter

### In This Issue

[Called to Serve Training](#)

[Tom Bandy](#)

[Alice Williams](#)

[Lay Servant Ministries](#)

[The F.A.I.T.H. Coalition](#)

[Year-End Stats Reporting](#)

[March 31st Reports](#)

[Mission Trip for Senior Citizens](#)

[FL Five Day Academy](#)

[PAUMCS](#)

[LECFamily](#)

[Warren W. Willis](#)

[UMC FCU Scholarships](#)

[2017 Sinclair Scholarships](#)

[Sponsor a Pastoral Intern](#)

[Summer Pastoral Internship](#)

[District Calendar](#)

### Quick Links

[Calendar of Reports](#)

[EC District Website](#)

[Job Opportunities](#)

Dear Claudia,

I suspect the word "theology" may have a dry, academic, perhaps even forbidding sound to the ears of many people who hear that word. Theology sounds like some dull, archaic, intellectual endeavor having to do with thinking about God. It strikes me that that's often the experience to which we in the church reduce theology, to a large extent: something to be dealt with in a Ph.D. dissertation, theoretical notions about which seminary professors give lectures and write books, but not something that in any appreciable, significant, meaningful way is related to real life.



I'm a United Methodist because of how our denomination views theology. In the United Methodist Church theology isn't just an intellectual exercise. It's not just a way of talking about or even understanding God. Much more than this, theology is an attempt to live with God.

To grasp Christian theology means to endeavor to live lives that reflect our relationship with God. Christian theology isn't simply an exercise in which we reflect upon the ideas of Jesus. Rather, it builds on

[UMC Website](#)[UMW Trumpet Sound](#)

that reflection and becomes an intentional effort to put the way of Jesus into practice. That effort takes the form of a process, an ongoing journey of faith.

In the Old Testament Book of Genesis there's the journey of an old couple named Abraham and Sarah. Abraham and Sarah ventured forth, not knowing where they were going - not just in a geographical sense, but also spiritually. Abraham had been promised by God that he would be the father of a great nation "even though he was old." And, by the power of God, Abraham and Sarah were given a child and the family that became the nation of Israel was born.

There was the journey of the exile and much later, the journey back home. The feelings, questions, and struggles of those journeys are portrayed with powerful and deep language in many of the Psalms.

The New Testament portrays a journey of its own. Did you know that the meaning of the word disciple is one who learns from and follows someone else? Discipleship in the New Testament is a following after Jesus. It is a journeying with Jesus.

The gospel writers even organized their thoughts about Jesus with his travels as an outline. Jesus is always on a journey . . . he's always on the road . . . he doesn't settle into one spot for very long . . . he's always on the move to somewhere else. He does what he needs to do, he says what he needs to say, he spends time with the people with whom he needs to spend time, and he moves on to other places and people and events.

Over and over again, the scriptures paint the picture of a God who beckons, who calls forth, a God who evokes, nudges, pushes and encourages people on a journey of faith.

So, how is it with your journey? That's an important question for us to keep at the forefront of our lives, an important question for us to keep at the center of our prayer lives. There's a song that was popular years ago called The Journey Is Our Home. For followers of Jesus that title makes a true statement. We are those who are at home on the journey, wherever it leads us.

Grace and Peace,



Bob Bushong  
District Superintendent  
East Central District

## *In The District*

### **Annual ECD Called to Serve Training Event**

*Saturday, February 4, 2017; 7:45am-1:00pm; First UMC, Oviedo, FL*

**A Training Opportunity for All Local Church Laity...  
Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend!**

This FREE district wide learning event is designed to inspire and equip laity, lay staff, and clergy. The event includes a wide selection of classes to help folks grow and connect with other UMs throughout the East Central District. Expand your understanding of local church ministry. Learn and share new ways to be God's light in your community! Classes are filling up quickly! [Click HERE](#) for a listing of sessions.



Keynote Speaker  
**Bishop Ken Carter**  
"Who is My Neighbor?"

On-line registration ends at Midnight February 1st. [Click HERE](#) to register now!

#### **Schedule for the Day:**

7:45 AM Hospitality Gathering & Registration in the Gymnasium  
8:30 AM Gather in Sanctuary  
8:45 AM Welcome from Rev. Dr. Bob Bushong - Sanctuary  
8:50 AM Keynote: Bishop Ken Carter  
9:45 AM Dismiss to class sessions  
9:50-11:10 AM Session I (80 minutes)  
11:15-11:35 AM Break-Snacks available - Gymnasium  
11:40-1:00 PM Session II (80 minutes)  
1:00 PM Dismiss from Session II

### **A Morning with Tom Bandy**

*February 25, 2017 - First UMC, Winter Park*

**Making Mission Inside Come Together  
Who Is Your Neighbor? How Do You Connect with Them?**



Join  
**Tom Bandy**  
February 25, 2017  
8:45am - 12:30pm  
8:30am - Gathering with lite refreshments



### [First UMC](#)

125 N. Interlachen Ave Winter Park, FL 32789

The East Central District presents a morning with Tom Bandy. This is truly a unique opportunity--one that pastors and anyone involved with evangelism, missions or worship won't want to miss. Tom is the author of the 71 Lifestyle segment descriptions in MissionInsite's Mosaic Application Guide. He will demonstrate how you use that information in your church's local mission field. MissionInsite can be a wonderful ministry tool; come and learn how to use it. This information is for clergy and lay. Tom will have a Q&A session at the end of his presentation.

Tom is an internationally recognized consultant, conference speaker, and leadership coach for Christian organizations and faith-based non-profits. He is the president of Thriving Church Consulting, LLC. [CLICK HERE](#) to read his bio and a list of books by Rev. Bandy.

[CLICK HERE](#) to register for this event.

### **A Message from Alice Williams, District Lay Leader**

I've just about decided that there is nothing better than witnessing "God Moments". You know what it's like. You're in a particular place, at a particular moment when you know beyond a doubt that what is taking place is more than coincidence or chance. These moments may be dramatic or they may be quiet. You may play an active part in the moment or simply act as a witness. No matter what the circumstance, these are moments where you are keenly aware that God is present and at work. It seems the more I look for God Moments the more they seem to appear. What strikes me most about these moments is that they often involve everyday folk living into their "gifts and graces" in a way that is used by God to meet a need.



I'm a big fan of gifts and graces! We each have them, those God given talents, skills, and abilities that are often referred to as our strengths. And we can choose to put them to good use or not. I may be wrong about this but my sense is that the more we open ourselves to allow the Holy Spirit to move within us and to use our gifts the more they will in fact be used and the more God Moments we will see. And the more we encourage others to identify and use their gifts the more often they too will find themselves in a God Moment!

There are two catches to this whole business of using gifts and graces though. First, you have to be aware of what your gifts and graces are. Sometimes a strength or gift will be so strong within you that you simply can not deny it, in other instances it may take a little exploration to find out what your gifts are. Two great tools to help you identify your gifts and graces are through the Spiritual Gifts Inventory ([Click HERE](#) to get a free inventory sheet) and by taking a preference assessment such as Strength Finders 2.0 ([Click HERE](#) to purchase the assessment). Both of these will help you to gain insight into the gifts and graces that God has given to you. The categories that these tools provide are by no means the only types of strengths you may have, but they are a good starting place to begin to gain insight into your giftedness.

One thing that I am absolutely convinced of is that whatever gifts you have, God will put them to amazingly good use if you will simply make them available. And that's the second catch, you have to be willing to free them up for use. Simply put, you have to be willing to let God use your gifts. I suspect that more than once you've

probably had an urge, or felt a nudge, to do something and then thought better of it because you didn't think the timing was right or that you had the "right" skill set. And perhaps you were right - or perhaps you were selling yourself short on what God could do with what you have to offer!

A dear friend once told me that the things that really excite us, or that truly break our hearts, are our true callings in life. I think these passions are not as random as we may think. And that the more we lean into them and are willing to free up our gifts and graces to be used for them, the more we will see God at work within and around us.

My hope is that you will take time over the next few months to explore what your gifts and graces are and how God might be calling you to use them! I also hope you will continue to look for the God Moments in your life - the more you seek them the more you'll see them!

-- Alice

## Lay Servant Ministries Weekend of Learning

*March 24 & 25, 2017 - Christ Hispanic UMC*



### A Weekend of Lay Leadership Learning . . . Servant Leadership Equipping Encounter

Join Jim Boesch, Lynn Campbell, Ana Velez, Lennie Burke, and Host Pastor Miguel Velez for this dynamic event. Basic LSM and Advanced LSM courses will be taught in English and Spanish.

**Save the Date! Registration coming soon.**

## The F.A.I.T.H. Coalition: Righting the Wrongs in Volusia County

*March 27, 2017, 6:30pm - Peabody Auditorium*

### Righting the Wrongs in Volusia County

Did you know a Volusia County elementary student was arrested for possessing an old fashioned pencil sharpener? Did you hear about the local student who sleeps in the bed of a work truck each night because he is homeless? Did you know your Volusia tax dollars support a walk-in clinic for those without adequate insurance at Halifax Health?



The work of doing justice is a Biblical mandate, but completely overwhelming for one person or one church to do alone. In Volusia County, justice is being accomplished by a coalition of over 30 interfaith and ecumenical faith communities, together known as F.A.I.T.H. (Fighting Against Injustice toward Harmony). F.A.I.T.H. has been active for years, and consistently corrects injustice, works with elected officials, holds officials accountable to promises, and gives voice to the voiceless.

Every year F.A.I.T.H. holds their Action Assembly. This is a public event to which all F.A.I.T.H. congregations, the public, and the media, are invited. The Action Assembly is the most important night of the year for our Justice ministries. It is when F.A.I.T.H. congregations recreate Nehemiah's "Great Assembly" in scripture by gathering the

community together to address public leaders and ask them to act on issues of injustice in Volusia County. This year's Action Assembly will be held on Monday March 27, 2017 at 6:30pm at the Peabody Auditorium, 600 Auditorium Blvd, Daytona Beach, FL 32118.

F.A.I.T.H. churches include: Bethune-Cookman University, Coronado Community UMC - New Smyrna Beach, Tomoka UMC - Ormond Beach, and Stewart Memorial UMC - Daytona Beach. Additionally, Dr. Bob Bushong will be attending to support.

[Click HERE](#) to learn more.

Questions?

Email Jessica Robillard at [jessica@thedartcenter.org](mailto:jessica@thedartcenter.org) or Rev. Brian Johnson at [brian.johnson@tomokaumc.org](mailto:brian.johnson@tomokaumc.org)

### 2016 Year End Statistical Reporting

*Deadline: 5:00 pm, Friday, February 10, 2017*

Please visit the [Year-End Statistics Instructions](#) website as you begin preparations for reporting your church's end of year statistics. You will find everything you need for reporting:

- Instruction Guides
  - Church Guide for EOY and EZRA Reporting (Login Instructions & Password)
  - Church Table Directions (help text)
  - New Church Development and Year End Statistical Reporting
- Step by Step Overview of the Year-End Reporting Process

**Online reporting began January 3, 2017. The deadline for submitting Year End Statistical Tables is 5:00pm Friday, February 10, 2017.**

Thank you for your help in telling our churches' stories through statistics.

### Reports Due March 31st



As a reminder, the following reports are due into the district office by March 31st. Please mail all reports together to the district office: East Central District 2221 Lee Road, Suite 21 Winter Park, FL 32789

Report	Committee Responsible
<a href="#">Child Youth Protection Policy</a>	SPRC
<a href="#">Fiscal Responsibility &amp; Management Policy</a>	Finance
<a href="#">Clergy Employee Conduct Policy</a>	SPRC
<a href="#">Adoption of Employee Conduct Policy</a>	SPRC
<a href="#">Annual Parsonage Report</a>	Trustees

The following reports are submitted online - do not send a hardcopy to the district. You can locate them on your church dashboard under forms.

Report	Committee Responsible
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Fund Balance

Finance

Disaster Recovery Resource Survey

Disaster Coordinator or Trustee

The church needs to get a [Local Church Employee form](#) signed by each employee and keep in their personnel file -- the district does not get them.

You can find instructions and other pertinent information by clicking the link(s) above or clicking on [Calendar of Reports](#) accessed on the Florida Conference website.

Please submit copies only, originals should remain in the church office. For assistance, please do not hesitate to email Betty Sims: [flumc-ec2@flumc.org](mailto:flumc-ec2@flumc.org).

### **Mission Trip for Senior Citizens**

*October 28 - November 4 - Baldwin, LA*

Would you like to go on a mission trip-one that doesn't require a passport, shots, or hard labor? A team is being formed to travel by bus to Baldwin, LA. The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) has a large Depot there where supplies donated by churches are prepared for shipment to disaster areas. The dorm and dining hall facilities on campus can handle up to 200 volunteers a week who do jobs on campus and in the community.



The First United Methodist Churches of Orlando and Winter Park have sent teams during the last fifteen years. Folks work all year making cloth school bags and collecting specified items for the kits and flood buckets warehoused at the Depot. Fabric and sewing equipment are available for making school bags.

If you would like more information about becoming a team member, taking on a project of collecting items the team can take to the Depot, or having a program about this opportunity for service and fellowship, please call Sue Cepull at 407-859-0468 or email at [sue@cepull.org](mailto:sue@cepull.org).

## Around the Conference

### **Register Now for the Florida Five Day Academy: March 5-10, 2017**

REGISTRATION is open for the Florida Five Day Academy! The Florida Five-Day Academy For Spiritual Formation publishes a brochure for the upcoming Academy. To download a copy, click on the following link:

[2017 FIVE-DAY ACADEMY BROCHURE](#)

### **Florida Chapter PAUMCS 43rd Annual Seminar**

*February 17 -19, 2017 - LEC Fruitland Park*

If you are a church secretary, administrative assistant, membership secretary, office administrator or serving in any administrative role, you won't want to miss the 43rd Annual Seminar of the Florida Chapter PAUMCS (Professional Association of United Methodist Church Secretaries). Held at the Life Enrichment Center in Fruitland Park, Florida, this seminar offers a chance to renew and refresh. We invite you to attend and be a part of an amazing weekend away from your desk. Come ready to learn and share about your role in our churches. As the front line of our churches, we want you to get all you need to continue to serve well. Not a member of PAUMCS? [Click HERE](#) for a membership application!



**Cost for the three-day seminar** ([scholarships](#) available to defray costs):

Seminar and Meals Only: \$85

Meals and Lodging: Single Room--\$195; Double Room---\$160

[Click HERE](#) for more information and flyer. To download a registration form,

[Click HERE](#). Questions? Lynn Campbell [lzdcamp1951@gmail.com](mailto:lzdcamp1951@gmail.com)

## LEC Family Programs



Want to help create meaningful experiences for your church's families this year? Want to encourage your parents to be more active in their kids' spiritual lives? Be sure they know about [LEC Family programs!](#)

[Dad and Me Weekend](#) - April 21-23, 2017

[Grandparents and Me](#) - June 19-22, 2017 & July 10-13, 2017

[Family Camp](#) - July 7-9, 2017 & July 14-16, 2017

[Mom and Me Weekend](#) - September 15-17, 2017

Questions? Email Rev. Melissa Cooper [Melissa@lecfamily.org](mailto:Melissa@lecfamily.org).

## Warren W. Willis Retreats & Summer Camp

Check out Warren W. Willis for many opportunities to reflect and fellowship.

[Confirmation Retreats](#) - February 24-26, March 10-12, & March 24-26

[Created By God](#) - April 28-30

[Summer Camps](#) - June - August

[Plan your own retreat!](#)



## Apply Now for UMC FCU Scholarships for College Bound Students

The Florida United Methodist Connectional FCU is once again offering scholarships to 17-35 year-old college-bound students in our connection. Four winning applicants, one from each of our four conferences - Florida, North Georgia, South Georgia and Alabama-West Florida - will each receive a \$1,000 scholarship. [CLICK HERE](#) for complete rules, an application, and full essay submission criteria. **Deadline for submission is April 28, 2017**



Applicants must be a credit union member in good standing.

Eligible credit union members are: 1) members of the United Methodist Church in this conference, 2) employees of a United Methodist church or agency, or 3) an immediate family member of a UMC FCU member.

For additional questions, contact the Marietta, GA branch at 800-282-9368 or the Lakeland, FL branch at 866-687-2126.

## FUMF Now Accepting Applications for 2017 Sinclair Scholarships

*Deadline: March 20, 2017*



The Florida United Methodist Foundation is now accepting applications from first-year, college-bound United Methodist students for the 2017 Sinclair scholarships, and we need your help to spread the word.



Applicants must be full and active members of a Florida United Methodist Church, have a record of church and community service, and have a grade point average of 2.5 or higher or academic

performance that indicates ability to succeed in college. They must also be planning to attend a Florida or United Methodist college or university this fall.

Scholarship awards range from \$2,000 to \$3,000 and are renewable for up to three additional years for students who remain in good standing. **The deadline to apply is March 20.**

A [scholarship application](#) and other required forms are available for download on the foundation's website. [Click HERE](#) to download a promotional flyer to share with your church or eligible student. More information is available by contacting Nadara Brock at [nbrock@fumf.org](mailto:nbrock@fumf.org) or 866-363-9673, ext. 7113, or visiting [www.fumf.org](http://www.fumf.org).

Below are several stories related to the scholarship, providing more information about how they benefit and support students:

[Scholarship recipients are driven, thankful](#)

[Sinclair Scholarship recipients offer hope for the future](#)

[Scholarship helps make dream of college a reality](#)



## Sponsor a Pastoral Internship for 2017!

Do you serve a church committed to shaping the next generation of pastoral leaders?

Here are the quick facts for hosting an Intern:

**Internship Dates:**

Monday, May 29, 2017, through Friday, August 4, 2017

**Intern Training Day:**

Friday, May 26, 2017 (students and supervising pastors)

**Intern Reflection Day:**

Monday, August 7, 2017 (students only)

**Hours:**

30 hours/week as scheduled with supervising pastor

**Housing:**

Provided in congregant's home, if needed

**Salary:** \$3,000.00 (\$1,500 host site, \$1,500 Office of Clergy Excellence)



[Click here](#) for a more detailed program description or to read an extended [article](#) on the Conference website.

**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. Thank you!

Holly Finley at [hfinley@flumc.org](mailto:hfinley@flumc.org)

Rev. Sara McKinley at [sara.mckinley@flumc.org](mailto:sara.mckinley@flumc.org)

## Summer Pastoral Ministry Internship Program



ARE THERE YOUNG ADULTS IN YOUR  
CHURCH WHO WANT TO EXPLORE



## PASTORAL MINISTRY?

If so, please [Click HERE](#) for the application for the 2017 Summer Pastoral Ministry Internship Program and encourage them to apply!

Please feel free to contact the Office of Clergy Excellence if you have any questions about the program.

Holly Finley at [hfinley@flumc.org](mailto:hfinley@flumc.org)  
Rev. Sara McKinley at [sara.mckinley@flumc.org](mailto:sara.mckinley@flumc.org)

## District Calendar of Events

[Click Here for a Printable Calendar](#)

### February

February 4: Called to Serve Training Event - First UMC, Oviedo  
February 17-19: PAUMCS Annual Training Seminar - LEC  
February 20: District and Conference Offices Closed for President's Day  
February 25: Tom Bandy - First UMC, Winter Park

### March

March 18: UMW Day Apart; 10:00am-1:00pm; Palm Coast UMC  
March 23: dCOM 9:00am-4:00pm Asbury UMC, Maitland  
March 24 & 25: Lay Servant Ministries Weekend - Christ Hispanic UMC  
March 26-31: Children's Week, State Capitol

### April

April 1: FUMCH Day on Campus  
April 4: District Leadership Team Meeting - 4pm - District Office  
April 14: District and Conference Offices Closed for Good Friday  
April 27: dCOM 9:00am-4:00pm Asbury UMC, Maitland

### May

May 18: dCOM 9:00am-4:00pm Asbury UMC, Maitland  
May 20: Run4Life4Miler - FUMCH  
May 29: District & Conference Offices Closed for Memorial Day

### June

June 8 - 10: Annual Conference - The Buena Vista Palace Hotel & Spa  
June 15: dCOM 9:00am-4:00pm Asbury UMC, Maitland

### July

July 4: District and Conference Offices Closed for Independence Day  
July 13-16: Mission U; Bethune-Cookman University; Daytona Beach  
July 14 - 15: Candidacy Retreat, Lakeland

### August

August 17: dCOM 9:00am-4:00pm Asbury UMC, Maitland

### September

September 4: District and Conference Offices Closed for Labor Day  
September 8-10: UMW Conference Spiritual Retreat; LEC, Fruitland Park  
September 21: dCOM 9:00am-4:00pm Asbury UMC, Maitland  
September 23: "Mission Sampler;" Sanlando UMC, Longwood

September 26: District Leadership Team Meeting - 4:00pm - District Office

**October**

October 19: dCOM 9:00am-4:00pm Asbury UMC, Maitland

October 21: UMW District Annual Meeting - First UMC, Clermont

**November**

November 4: UMW Conference Annual Meeting; Lakeland

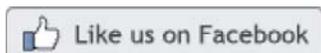
November 10: District and Conference Offices Closed for Veterans Day

November 23 & 24: District and Conference Offices Closed for Thanksgiving

**December**

December 21: dCOM 9:00am-4:00pm Asbury UMC, Maitland

December 25: District & Conference Offices Closed for Christmas



East Central District, (407) 636-9240, 2221 Lee Road, Suite 21, Winter Park, FL 32789

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