



North East News

May 2006

North East District

Florida Conference
Newsletter

United Methodist
Church

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Dearhearts,

Let me quickly remind you that several important happenings are on the horizon, among them the Clergy Day Apart at Marywood on Thursday, May 4; the District's Annual Conference Orientation at Fleming Island UMC on Tuesday, May 16; the District Committee on Ministry meets on Thursday, May 18; and the announcement of appointments on Sunday, May 21. Check the calendar and other articles for details on these and other matters of interest.



In a more reflective mode, let me tell you about my box compass. It's an artifact from the last days of sailing ships in the 1880's. As the name suggests, it is a compass held in a wooden box by "gimbals" so that no matter how the ship rolls, the compass will remain as nearly level as possible. Originally, the box had a wooden lid to protect the compass, but that disappeared before it came into my hands.

The lid undoubtedly was lost when the Aquarius, the square rigger with the compass aboard, foundered on the shoals off the end of Long Island. The area claimed so many ships that, at a later date, the Ambrose Light Ship was moored there to warn ships away from the shallow water. A light ship is a floating lighthouse that is used where the more familiar lighthouse cannot be built. After nearly fifty years, a hard-hat diver from a Coast Guard Buoy Tender was working underwater on the anchors for the light ship, and found the remains of the Aquarius, the compass among them. He brought it up, cleaned it off, and found to his amazement that the compass was still in working order!

After retiring from the Coast Guard, the former diver came to live in Spring Hill, Florida, and attend First Church. When I helped his nephew with some problems, he gave me the compass in appreciation for my efforts. The compass was still working then, and still is today. It is pointing faithfully to the magnetic North Pole as I write this article. Through the happy days on the Aquarius, through the turbulence of the storm, through the lonely, forgotten time on the bottom of sea, and down to this time in its place of honor, the compass has been constant. It reminds me of the promise found in Isaiah 58:11, "The Lord will guide you continually."

So, as you and I travel along the path of faithful discipleship, let us remember that God's guidance is there to see us through thick and thin.

Grace and peace,

District Calendar

Happy Birthday!!

May

- 4 Clergy Day Apart
- 6 Lay Speaking Class, Faith UMC
- 11 Grant Researching and Calendaring Web Seminar
- 13 Lay Speaking Class, Faith UMC
- 16 Annual Conference Orientation, Fleming Island UMC, 7PM
- 21 Clergy Appointments Announced
- 29 Memorial Day, District Office Closed

June

- 1-3 Annual Conference, Lakeland Center
- 10 Conference Disaster Training Event, NE District, Location TBA
- 11 Camp Amp, Session One
- 18 Camp Amp, Session Two
- 25 Camp Amp, Session Three
- 27 Clergy Moving Day

July

- 4 Independence Day, District Office Closed

August

- 25 Lay Speaking, Lakewood UMC
Spanish class available
- 26 Lay Speaking, Lakewood UMC
Spanish class available

September

- 4 Labor Day, District Office Closed

Mark Garvin	05/02
Neo Garvin	05/02
Jim Walker	05/06
George Dzyndra	05/10
Candy Martin	05/14
Rick Neal	05/17
Candace Lewis	05/20

Reminder

Please remember, Annual Conference Orientation will be held Tuesday, May 16th, 7:00pm at:

Fleming Island UMC
7170 US Highway 17, South
Green Cove Springs, FL 32043
(904) 284-3366

See You There!!

FYI...

Laurence Coles is the new district representative for Habitat for Humanity/Habijax. We thank him for his gracious service.



Florida Conference enters age of e-learning



April 8, 2006 News media contact: Tita Parham*
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An e-Review Feature
By J.A. Buchholz**

LAKELAND — The Florida Conference has taken one more step into the electronic age by launching its new online learning ministry and first electronic (e) course.

The course provides training for members of church Staff Parish Relations (SPR) committees and can be accessed through the e-learning link on the Florida Conference Web site. The training module is designed for novice computer users, as well as those who have more experience using the latest technology, and the site provides an online tutorial to help participants get started.

The goal of the online learning ministry is to give leaders in local congregations opportunities to gain information and knowledge in an easily accessible and convenient way. Coordinators also hope the ministry will provide learning resources to a greater number of people. The online courses will be an option for church members who can't attend or wait for similar training typically offered once a year in their district. They will also help reduce travel time and costs.

**Additional courses on church finances, stewardship, trustee responsibilities, teacher training and leader development will also be offered. The second course is almost complete.*

***You can try out e-learning by visiting the conference website.*

Announcements

New Life Community UMC is currently seeking a church office administrator/manager. 30-35 hours per week, salary is negotiable depending on skills & experience.

The Village Christian Academy at New Life Community UMC is currently seeking an after-school program director. Requires experience working with elementary age children.

The Village Christian Academy at New Life Community UMC is currently seeking full and part time child care teachers and assistants, kitchen staff, and van drivers. Summer camp opportunities are also available for both part time and full time.

Anyone interested in any of the positions listed above should contact Dr. Barbara Green at (904) 764-7847 or you may fax your resume to (904) 768-0877.

St. James UMC, Palatka is currently seeking a part time keyboardist for 9:30 worship services. For more information, please contact Rev. Hardy Sandlin at (386) 328-1461.

St. James UMC, Palatka is currently seeking a part time pianist for the 8:30 and 11:00 worship services. For more information, please contact Rev. Hardy Sandlin at (386) 328-1461.

Riverside Park UMC is currently seeking a part time youth coordinator. Candidate must be energetic! Prepare & conduct weekly youth programs, recreation & devotions; coordinate and lead special programs and mission trips; provide positive Christian role model. For more information, contact Rev. Wayne E. Williams at (904) 355-5491 or drwaynewilliams@aol.com.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AGENCY

UPDATES



1. CAMP AMP CURRENT NEEDS

#1 FINANCIAL DONATIONS! Our "Honor Roll" of churches who have so far sent donations in is GROWING!! Bless You!

AND.....the Leadership Teams for each of the 3 weeks is in place...Praise God!!

But we need every church to be involved - every little bit helpsbecause our campers can't pay, all the money must come from you, our connectional NE District Churches

COOK TEAM (wk. 2 only)

CANOES & ACCESSORIES (donated or loaned canoes)

Clean, Used LINENS - Twin fitted sheets, pillowcases, blankets

BOY/GIRL SCOUTS or UMM - Nature trail needs maintenance before camp starts

BIBLES - Please, No KJV, they are really hard for kids to read, & we want every camper to have one

Please share these needs with your congregation - in Sunday Bulletins, Newsletters, & during announcements. Please add us to your church's prayer list, too!

AND - remember, every elementary school in our NE District has received info on Camp AMP. Follow up to add your church's PERSONAL Invitation to your area's needy children.

Session 1 = June 11 - 16. Session 2 = June 18 - 23 Session 3 = June 25 - 30

Rising 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders (on free/reduced lunch program)

2. GRANTS: We have several churches that COA is working with who are exploring a new grant offering by the White House Faith Based Initiatives Office. It funds after school and/or summer camp programs for children and youth. It is aimed at providing tutoring for students who are from a Title One school (45% of all students receive free/reduced lunch). The deadline is May 12th, so call for more info.

3. BACKPACKS: I wrote to you a couple of weeks ago about The Bishop's Initiative For Children, which will again this year receive donations during Annual Conference. We have been allocated 540 backpacks, which will be available at Annual Conference for those who have signed up for some. Last year our participating churches wished they had more than the 25 allotted per church.

Please consider using these backpacks as a means of connecting with the kids in your neighborhood, or by partnering with a local elementary school, who can always make sure they are given to economically disadvantaged kids. We are offering these backpacks, loaded with an array of school supplies, to about 22 churches. There will be 25 backpacks per church, or less if you don't need that many.

It will be first come first served, on who gets them. There will be only one designated pick-up day DURING ANNUAL CONFERENCE. If they are not picked up that day by your church, I will have to let them go to another church on the waiting list. If all of our allotted 540 backpacks are not reserved by a NE District Church, then I will need to release the reminder to another District. Please call 396-0073 if you would like your church to receive 25.

4. VOAD: As an officer in the North Florida Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), I have been asked by the North Florida Red Cross to discuss with you possible churches who might be interested in discussing the use of your church as a post-incident short-term shelter. Additionally, Volunteer Jacksonville has asked me to ask the Southside of the river churches in Jacksonville to consider being a post-incident shelter for unattached volunteers who would be coming in from the rest of the US to help us. Neither of these requests would involve any financial cost to the host church - RC & VJ cover all costs. Call 396-0073 if interested.

5. UNF SBA: Community Outreach Agency is currently being considered by the Small Business Administration at the University of North Florida for a commendation to the White House Faith Based Initiatives Office in Washington as an example of how government money can be put to good use serving the needs of citizens. What a wonderful reflection this is for our District churches and your ministries. This shows we United Methodists are a people who love their neighbor and serve their needs as a response to the grace given to us through Jesus Christ. Through each church's support of Community Outreach Agency (on your apportionments as #880), COA brings not only help and guidance on specific outreach projects, but it also brings visibility to every one of our churches in our community.