



North East News

Dearhearts,

Playing off the deist's image of God as a clock-maker and creation as a clock, Doctor D. J. Wagner, a professor friend of mine who is well-versed in quantum physics, quipped, "The universe is not so much like a great clock as a great thought." We exist because we are constantly on God's mind. In a sense, we enjoy God's gifts, not merely "fresh every morning," but every moment. So, while I enjoy the New Year as an excuse for all those football games, the notion of a new year itself is not exactly a big deal for me. I am always rejoicing in the fact that God is forever making all things new. (Revelation 21:5)

Having said this, there are certain "administrative" realities to the new year that we have created for ourselves. So, allow me to encourage all of the new local church officers (and also their colleagues continuing in office) to attend the Local Church Leadership Training Event on Saturday, January 19. It is at a new location this year, so plan to go to Orange Park UMC, 2051 Park Avenue.

I also want to thank those who have finished the year just past by meeting their goals and finishing up their apportionments. By the same token, I want to encourage all our congregations to do their best from the beginning of the new year. Churches that give a "tithe" from their offerings each month do well with meeting their commitments.

At the same time, I will have to mix my metaphors a wee bit as I point out that January 1 marks the time when our "mid-year" appointments take effect. So, a new year's greeting to some pastors in new assignments: Frank Fitzsimmons at Good Shepherd UMC; Nick Godun at Isle of Faith UMC; Mike Moore at First UMC, Starke; and Louis Tremblay at Florahome UMC. We welcome them to the North East in some cases, and to new assignments within the District in others.

While I am at it, I want to thank one of our retired pastors, Al Brock of Penney Farms, who served as interim pastor at Starke, so that we could move Mike Hutcherson to First UMC, Jacksonville back in September. And to wish Skip Parvin well as he takes disability leave to deal with some medical problems; Skip is staying in Jacksonville and will be able to continue his work with the District Committee on Ministry. When you see one or another of these folks, let them know that they are welcome and appreciated.

Grace and peace,

Rich

January 2008

Local Church Leadership Training Event

Please join us for our
Annual Local Church Leadership Training Event

When: Saturday, January 19, 2008

Where: Orange Park UMC

2051 Park Avenue

Orange Park, FL 32073

We will begin with refreshments at 8:45am, then move into the sanctuary for a time of worship. We will have two sessions of classes this year. The first session will begin at 10am and the second session will begin at 11:30am with a snack break in between.

Note: Not all classes will be offered at both sessions.

For reservations please contact your local church office.

Featured Classes and Speakers

Celebrate Jesus—Martha Gay Duncan - Assistant Director, Celebrate Jesus, Inc.

Disaster Response/Recovery—Pam Garrison and Marilyn Swanson— Conference Storm Recovery
Will Clark— North East District Disaster Response Coordinator

New Church Development—Charles Hubbard - Executive Director, N.E. District New Church Development

Lay Leader—Ed Chappell— North East District Lay Leader

Trustees—Mark Thomas— Director, Florida Conference Ministry Protection

Outreach Ministries—Pam Hall— Executive Director, Community Outreach Agency

Church Council—Tim and Mimi Howard— Mandarin UMC

The Methodist Way— Jeff Stiggins —Executive Director, Florida Conference Congregational Transformation

Finance/ Church Treasurer/ Financial Secretary—Bob Parlet and Debbie Frendahl— Orange Park UMC
This class is an in-depth training and participants will need to attend both sessions.

Campus Ministry—Derrick Scott - Director, Access 218, a ministry for students and young adults at Crossroad UMC
This class will only be available during Session 1.

Local Church Children's Home Representative Training— Bess Bussey, United Methodist Children's Home
This class will only be available during Session 2

Clergy Pancake Breakfast



It's time again for our most popular mandatory meeting of the year. The Clergy Pancake Breakfast!! Plans are a little different this year. The clergy at Faith UMC have graciously volunteered their services and facilities to host this year's breakfast, so we will be having one meeting blending all the clergy from the district. Please make plans to attend on Tuesday, February 5, 2008 from 9am-11am at Faith UMC located at 4000 Spring Park Road in Jacksonville, FL 32207. Please RSVP to the district office at 904-396-3026 or distoff@bellsouth.net no later than Friday, February 1.



To the churches in the North East District, thank you for your generous Christmas gift. We appreciate all your hard work throughout the year, and always appreciate you remembering your district staff during the holiday season. We are richly blessed by having all of you in our lives. Have a blessed 2008!
Debbie, Gentry, Kathy and Roy

Sandy and I deeply appreciate your gifts this Christmas Season. Of course, we are aware of the expressions of affection and care that come to us routinely from the clergy and laity of the District, and all those freely given words and gestures make your gifts now even more precious.
Thank you very much,
Rick and Sandy Neal

Mid-Year Moves!

Good Luck in your new appointment!!
Nick Godun at Isle of Faith UMC in Jacksonville
Frank Fitzsimmons at Good Shepherd UMC in Jacksonville
Michael Moore at First UMC in Starke
Louis Tremblay at Florahome UMC in Florahome

Mentors Needed!

There will be a mentor training on Tuesday, January 15th from 10am-2pm in Lakeland at the Conference Center. Please, please make an effort to be certified or recertified as a mentor. We have a severe shortage of mentors in the North East District.



Pastor and Church Profiles are online and are due January 15th!!!!
Year End Statistical are online now and due on February 15th!!!!
Go to www.flumc.org and look for the icons below



Calendar

January

- 2** District Office Reopens
- 8** District United Methodist Men Meeting– 6pm
Location TBA
- 19** Leadership Training Event– 8:45am
Orange Park UMC
- 21** Martin Luther King's Birthday– Office Closed

February

- 5** *Clergy Pancake Breakfast– 9am
Faith UMC
- 9** Celebrate Jesus Information Gathering-10am
First UMC, Starke
- 11** Celebrate Jesus Information Gathering– 7pm
Riverside Park UMC, Jacksonville

*Mandatory