

December 2008



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Dearhearts,

I have always liked Luke's account of the birth of Jesus because it involves the shepherds, those everyday folks like you and me. If you have done your homework on Luke 2:8-20, you know that the good people generally looked down on shepherds because their work kept them from observing all the niceties of the Law. But recently, I came across a different take on the shepherds which I think is worth repeating here.

According to William Barclay, these may have been shepherds charged with a special responsibility. He reminds us that the Temple required unblemished lambs for sacrifice each morning and evening. For this purpose, the Temple authorities had their own special flocks and pastured them in nearby Bethlehem. He concludes, "It is a lovely thought that the shepherds who looked after the Temple lambs were the first to see the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."

In this spirit, it is my prayer that those of us whose task it is to shepherd the Lord's flock during this holy season may be gifted with a visit from God's angels. As we go about the work at hand, may we be interrupted with heaven's own song: "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

Sandy and I wish all of you the merriest and most sacred of Christmas seasons. As is our custom, we will honor the demands on our pastors and their families during Advent and Christmastide and afterwards look forward to welcoming you to our parsonage for an open house on Sunday, January 4 from 12:30 to 4:30. We look forward to seeing you at our "Epiphany Party."

Grace and peace,

Rick

Pre-Retirement Seminar Scheduled for January

The Florida Annual Conference Office of Human Resources, in cooperation with The Florida United Methodist Foundation, is sponsoring a pre-retirement seminar "R-10 and Counting," for clergy and spouses who have 10 years or fewer until retirement. The seminar will be held Jan. 5-7, 2009, at the Best Western Resort Hotel, 2000 Hotel Plaza Blvd, Lake Buena Vista, FL 32830.

The three-day seminar is designed to cover a full range of issues facing retirees, including planning for and funding your retirement, living arrangements, relationships, wellness, myths and realities and estate planning. Speakers include: the Rev. Tom Marston, president of the Foundation; the Rev. John Peterson, vice president for planned giving; Christian Burns, associate vice president for planned giving; the Rev. Mark Connor of the General Board of Pensions; estate planning attorney Carla Bryant; and others to be announced.

The seminar is limited to 25 participants, with couples counted as one participant. Fees are: couple: \$175; single: \$125.

All participants will receive scholarships underwritten by the Preacher's Relief Board. Fees include accommodations for two nights, four meals and workshop materials.

Registration information is available at www.fumf.org. **Registration deadline is December 8, 2008.** Please make checks payable to the Florida United Methodist Foundation. For more information, call 866-363-9673, toll-free, or 863-904-2970. E-mail: Foundation@fumf.org.

Church and Pastor Profiles

The church and pastor profiles should be reviewed and updated annually by all churches and all clergy in the Florida Conference. Church Profiles are reviewed and updated by SPR Committees. Pastor Profiles are personally reviewed and updated by the pastor. **Profiles are currently available on-line and should be completed no later than Jan. 23rd.** Though you may not anticipate a move, it is important that both the pastor and church profile be current and up to date by the appointment making session of the Cabinet. These should be an honest reflection of the pastoral ministry and the profile of the church. Look for the button link to the profiles start page on the home page of the Florida Conference Website www.flumc.org shortly after noon on Monday.

Apportionment Payment

January 15, 2009 is the last day for receiving 2008 apportionments. This is not a postmark date, but is the date for receiving monies in the conference office to be included in the 2008 receivables. Any monies received after the January 15th deadline will be credited to 2009. When mailing your payment always include completed giving form, church GCFA number on form and check, mark clearly if the payment is for 2008 or 2009 apportionments.

Mark your calendars for the Annual District Leadership Training Event January 24, 2008 from 8:30am-12:30pm

Please plan to join us for the annual district leadership training at Orange Park UMC. Classes will be offered on Disaster Response/ Recovery, New Church Development, Lay Leader, Trustees, Finance/ Church Treasurer/Financial Secretary, Church Council, The Methodist Way and Spiritual Formation. Conference presenters for this event will include:

Mickey Wilson - Treasurer, Director of Administrative Services
Jeff Stiggins - Executive Director, Congregational Transformation
Mark Thomas - Director of Ministry Protection
Mont Duncan - Executive Director, New Church Development
Sharon Luther - Conference Lay Leader



**SCREAM: Get Ready For The Ride
Orlando, FL**

February 20-22, 2009

The Center for Clergy Excellence is sponsoring this event for young adults ages 18-25 for the purpose identifying, equipping and encouraging emerging United Methodist leadership. The cost is \$25. For more information and to register visit www.screamumc.org

9th Annual Clergy Kids Retreat 2009
"We're All In This Together"

Mark your calendar for a fun weekend at the Warren Willis Camp in Leesburg. The dates are **January 23-25, 2009**. The cost is \$80 per person or \$230 max for family (some scholarships are available upon request). For more information contact: Sally Campbell-Evans at 850-766-0018 or Email: sallycampbell-evans@yahoo.com or Rhonda Kleckner at 352-316-5582 or email rckleckner@hotmail.com.

Kathy's Corner

By Kathy Macaulay



Thanks to all of the pastors, laity and administrative staffs that worked to get the Charge Conference forms into our office by the October 1st deadline. As I write this, the end of Charge Conference season is on the horizon. Some of you are still missing items, mostly the Fund Balance Report, which I will be following up on.

Also, if you have not yet submitted your 2009 Church Officer Mailing List the deadline was November 26, 2008. Instructions for downloading and completing the mailing list can be found on the Conference website (www.flumc.org) with the Charge Conference forms. You may either email the completed list to us at distoff@bellsouth.net or snail mail a hard copy to our office. I know some of you have had difficulty downloading the spreadsheet so if you need assistance, please contact either Faye Johnson or myself. We will be happy to walk you through the process or mail a hard copy to you for completion. The instructions are rather lengthy but it is not as difficult as it appears. The information from the mailing lists is used to update the Conference data base so that your church officers can receive important information from the Conference office. The Conference is moving to more email communication so you are urged to provide email addresses for as many officers as possible even if the church does not use them. As changes (contact information, new officers) occur during the year please submit the changes to our office so that the data base remains up to date. We are here to help you in any way possible so do not hesitate to contact us.

For those of you who have been in the church office for a while you know that the new year brings more reporting Year End Statistical Reports. As the year winds down I encourage you to begin gathering the membership and financial data that will be needed to complete these reports. More information will follow once we know the schedule for the forms to go online and the deadline for completion.



Projector

Woodstock Park UMC is looking for a computer driven projector for use in worship.
If you have one to donate, please contact Chester Plank at 910-1009

Job Opportunities

Florida A and M University

The Wesley Foundation at Florida A&M University is hiring a full-time director of campus ministries. The director's main responsibility is to establish pastoral relationships with students, aiding in their spiritual growth, and to develop strong leaders for the Church. We are looking for an individual with a theological education, a passion for and an understanding of ministry at a historically black college community, entrepreneurial skills, and a desire to share and equip students from a United Methodist perspective. Ordination is not required. Competitive salary and housing is provided. Interested persons should submit a cover letter, resume, list of references and statement about your philosophy of ministry by January 1, 2009 to:

Kelly Moore
Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry
Florida Annual Conference
1140 East McDonald Street
Lakeland, FL 33801
FAX: 863-688-7233
E-mail: kmoore@flumc.org

Florida International University (FIU)/Miami Dade College (MDC)

The Florida Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church is searching for a full-time Campus Minister/Director to start a new multi-campus ministry in Miami, Florida. We are looking for an individual with a theological education, a passion for and an understanding of ministry in a multi-ethnic community, entrepreneurial skills, and a desire to share and equip students from a United Methodist perspective. Ordination is not required. Competitive salary and housing is provided. Interested persons should submit a cover letter, resume, list of references and statement about your philosophy of ministry by December 19, 2008. These may be emailed to: fiuapplication@gmail.com<<mailto:fiuapplication@gmail.com>>

Or mailed to: Search Committee FIU / MDC
Wesley Foundation at UM
1210 Stanford Drive
Coral Gables, FL 33146

University of Miami Wesley Foundation

The Wesley Foundation at the University of Miami is hiring a full-time director of campus ministries. This United Methodist ministry is in the heart of Coral Gables, Florida serving the needs of a multi-national student body. Interested persons should submit a cover letter, resume, list of references and statement about your philosophy of ministry by January 1, 2009 to: umapplication@gmail.com

Or mailed to: Director Search Committee
Wesley Foundation at UM
1210 Stanford Drive
Coral Gables, FL 33146

Interested persons should be ordained Elders or Deacons in the United Methodist Church. Individuals who are probationary Elders or Deacons are also encouraged to apply. A full job description, information about the Wesley Foundation and pictures may be found at umwesleysearch.blogspot.com.

Florida Conference Church Auditor

The Florida Conference is looking for retired or partially-employed people interested in performing church audits on an as needed basis. This person would travel to a church and review the necessary records, complete a questionnaire, and mail the questionnaire, year-end financial statement and other necessary back-up documents to the Conference and who would then prepare a report based on the information they have gathered.

Requirements: Accounting or auditing background; available to work two days a week for at least 26 weeks of the year; have transportation available to travel within the district they live in; and be able to work on own with little or no supervision.

The positions pays \$20/hour plus expenses. Training will be provided. To apply, send resumes to Wendy McCoy, director of Human Relations for the Florida Conference, at wmccoy@flumc.org.



Calendar

December

- 6** UMW District Task Force
- 11** NCD Meeting - 10am - District Office
- 18** dCOM Meeting 10am - District Office
- 24** District Office Closes for holidays

January 2009

- 5** District Office Reopens
- 24** District Leadership Training 8:30am-12:30pm
Orange Park UMC
UMW Officer Training will follow
at Orange Park UMC

February 2009

- 19** dCOM 9am-2pm -- Swaim Memorial UMC
- 28** NE & NW Districts - Safe Sanctuary Training 9am-5pm

**For more information refer to your calendar of reports due.
Found at www.flumc.org under calendar tab.**