

TIME FLIES

A word from Gary Upleger

FAMILY FUN

Children and Youth unite

THRIFT SHOPPE

Set to open this month

GOSPEL

Gazette

SEP 2021

Discerning Opportunity

God calls on us to
recognize change
as a new adventure



CONTRIBUTORS

Rev. David Averill
Senior Pastor

Janet Westlake
Minister of Discipleship

Scott Spradlin
Director of Music Ministries

Dylan Reed
Dir. of Youth & YA Ministries

Debbie Sprague
Secretary & Office Manager

Rheya Tanner
Communications Coordinator

SERVICE TIMES

Early Traditional 8:00am

Contemporary 9:30am

Late Traditional 11:00am

CONTACT

352-383-2005

URGENT AFTER-HOURS: DIAL 2
office@mtdorafumc.org

OFFICE HOURS

Mon–Thu 8:00am–4:30pm

Fri 8:00am–12:00pm

Sat–Sun Closed

ADDRESS

439 E. Fifth Ave.

440 E. Sixth Ave. (mailing)

Mount Dora, FL 32757

SOCIAL MEDIA

 @FirstUMCMountDora

 @FirstUMCMtDora

 @FirstUMCMtDora

 FUMC MtDora

STAY IN TOUCH!

If you have new contact information, if you have become hospitalized or ill, if there is something you need prayer for, or if you have any questions, please contact us at any time.

I want to share a testimony with you.

On my first visit to the church in November, I shared with some members about my experiences at St. John's United Methodist Church in Winter Haven. I said we had a Thrift Store for Missions, but I added I was relieved that First United Methodist Church of Mount Dora did not have one. I responded this way because I understand the sacrifice and time that goes into implementing such an operation. The member responded, "Why not us?"

I did not think much about this conversation until recently. When I arrived in Mount Dora in January, the Executive Committee began to discuss ways to fundraise. I shared with church leadership that it was helpful at St. John's to have multiple revenue streams to support a wide variety of missions. In a February brainstorming session, the Executive Committee latched onto two ideas: a thrift store and a cookbook.

Support for both ideas progressed, and we shared the plans for the thrift store at a town hall in April. The "Fifth Avenue Thrift Shoppe" will likely open this month. It has taken a few more weeks than anticipated due to construction and renovation needs to bring the Christian Education Center (CEC) up to code. The CEC is one of the oldest buildings in Mount Dora, dating to approximately 1910.

The Holy Spirit has led our leadership in this new direction. It is never easy to venture into the unknown. However, my past experience tells me that our church will flourish with this initiative. At St. John's, the all-volunteer thrift store funds nearly 30 mission projects locally and globally, including helping pay connectional giving to the World Service Fund and Mission Support Fund (close to 30% of apportionments).

St. John's raises \$100,000 per year for causes that help it reach out beyond its walls, and help fulfill the Great Commission "to make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19). They also engage their membership in service work that builds relationships and purpose, providing meaningful opportunities to God's kingdom.

This is not the only example I have seen of a thrift store for mission. Many of our leaders visited First Baptist Church of Leesburg's store, which is a significantly larger operation, and supports local outreach to hundreds of needy families each year.

We have a wonderful opportunity to do similar work here in Mount Dora for the Lord. I am excited to be a part of what the Holy Spirit is doing through our combined efforts to be a church is "Loving God. Loving Others."

With Joy on the Journey,
Pastor David Averill



The Holy Spirit has led our leadership in this new direction. It is never easy to venture into the unknown. However, my past experience tells me that our church will flourish with this new initiative.

a thought from
Gary Upleger



When I was growing up, I was one of those children who enjoyed going to school. When summer vacation came around, I was excited for the break—for about two or three weeks. After that I would actually miss the routine and the opportunities for learning. I would start to complain and bug my mom about summer vacation taking forever. On several occasions she said to me, “Enjoy it while you can because the older you get, the faster time goes by.”

I basically ignored the first couple of times she said that. It sound

ed like a brush-off comment to me. Then one day I stopped to think about what she had said. It made no logical sense.

Everyone has the same 24 hours each day. The seconds, minutes, and hours all tick off at the same rate, regardless of your age. It was illogical to think that “the older you get, the faster time goes by.” I expressed this to my mother and all she said was, “You’ll understand when you get older.” That didn’t make sense either.

Well, now that I’ve become a more seasoned citizen, I completely understand what my

mother was saying. When life is full, time goes by quickly.

I’ve been asked so many times if I plan to write a book about either my 35 years as a pastor or the events of the last year of my life. My simple answer is—no. Why? Because there is just too much that has happened in either of them to write it all down. Yes, this has been true even in the last year when I spent so many weeks in the hospital.

What I can say about both these segments of my life is that when life is full, time goes by quickly.

Since time is going by so quickly, I’ll give you a short, quick update. In the last three months I’ve been monitored monthly by the transplant team in Tampa. I have also been receiving special procedures at Shands in which the airways of my transplanted lung are dilated and a special drug injected to help curtail the build up of scar tissue. At this point I am feeling better and am getting stronger. I am currently walking over 10,000 steps

(4.5–5 miles) per day. The goal is get me as strong as possible and get me to my transplant anniversary date (October 31) so I can go through the evaluation process

for a possible retransplant (which might involve both lungs).

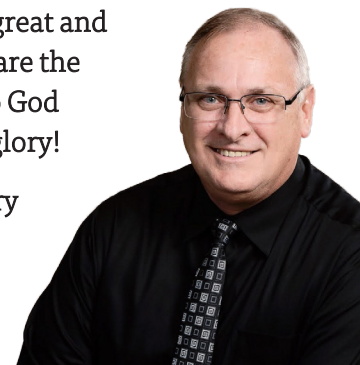
I did not know it at the time, but when the doctors discharged me from the hospital in March, they were not convinced I would survive to even this date. That is due to God’s grace and your many prayers on my behalf. So I am eternally grateful for

your many prayers – as well as the physical expression of those through the many cards, letters, texts and messages you have sent.

Thank you for your faithfulness, love, and support.

God is great and you all are the best! To God be the glory!

—Gary



Preorder Your Cookbook!

The Church Cookbook Committee is proud to announce that it's finally time to preorder *Flavored with Faith*, which contains 388 of our church members' favorite recipes.

To help us determine how many copies to print, we encourage you to let us know if you are planning on purchasing one. Please contact the church office or pick up a preorder form at the head ushers' table. No payment is required at this time.

FLAVORED WITH FAITH IS AVAILABLE FOR A DONATION OF \$15. THE FUNDS RAISED WILL BE PUT TOWARD LAKE CARES FOOD PANTRY AND CARPENTER'S HOUSE.



Saying Goodbye

Our staff has had two departures that leave holes in our hearts.

After 50 years of service, Betty Snowberger has stepped down as our child care supervisor. Betty has been essential in helping our children and their families grow in faith. In some cases, she has cared for three generations of families. Betty is dealing with serious health challenges and appreciates our prayers for her and her family.

Linda Smith served as our youth ministry assistant since Janu-

ary of 2019. Prior to her staff position, she taught on our preschool wing and led a Barefoot small group. She chaperoned several mission trips and retreats. Linda's family obligations have required her to leave her paid position. She remains in our faith community.

If you would like to send a note to Betty or Linda expressing what their ministry has meant in your life, their addresses are in the church directory or you may send your letter to the church office.

The United Methodist Women are ready to get back in the swing of things.

United Methodist Women will have a Kick-Off Potluck on September 28 at 5:30 PM in Friendship Hall. Please feel free to bring your spouse and any other ladies who might be interested in becoming involved in UMW.

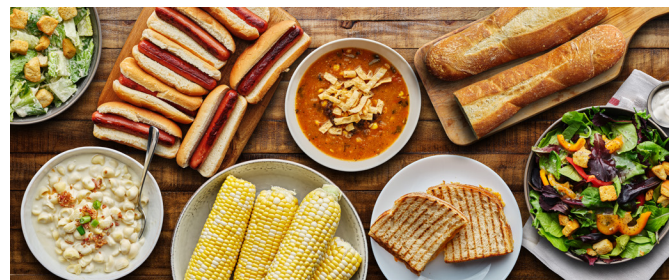
United Methodist Women has long been considered an "older" ladies organization, but, trust me, we're not! We are anything but! UMW welcomes ALL ages of women to membership. Why, there are even teenage circles scattered throughout the country!

Many of our current members were brought to UMW meetings as children by our mothers and grandmothers who wanted to carry on the legacy of UMW. We quickly learned what UMW can and will do to be the "hands and feet of Christ". You, too, can carry on that legacy! We look forward to welcoming you into our Unit.

Blessings,
Marti Poe, President, Mount Dora UMW

Naomi Circle
will meet Sept. 14,
10am in Sanctuary Hall

Hannah Circle
will meet Sept. 16,
1:30pm in the Chapel



Worship MINISTRY MEETS



Celebration Choir

WEDS. AT 7PM / SANCTUARY
Perform hymns and other beautiful arrangements at the Late Traditional service.

Handbell Choir

SUNS. AT 5PM / SANCTUARY
Learn handbell arrangements to perform during Sunday worship and special programs.

Praise Team

THUS. AT 7PM / SANCTUARY
Perform contemporary Christian songs with a live band during the Contemporary service.

Children's Worship Arts

WEDS. 6:15PM / PREK-GRADE 5
Children will learn songs and dances to perform monthly on Sunday mornings and during our Christmas and Spring programs.

CONTACT SCOTT SPRADLIN FOR MORE INFORMATION.

FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

Join us for two family ministry opportunities! These events will blend Footprints and Barefoot ministries and their families.

Beach Baptism Day

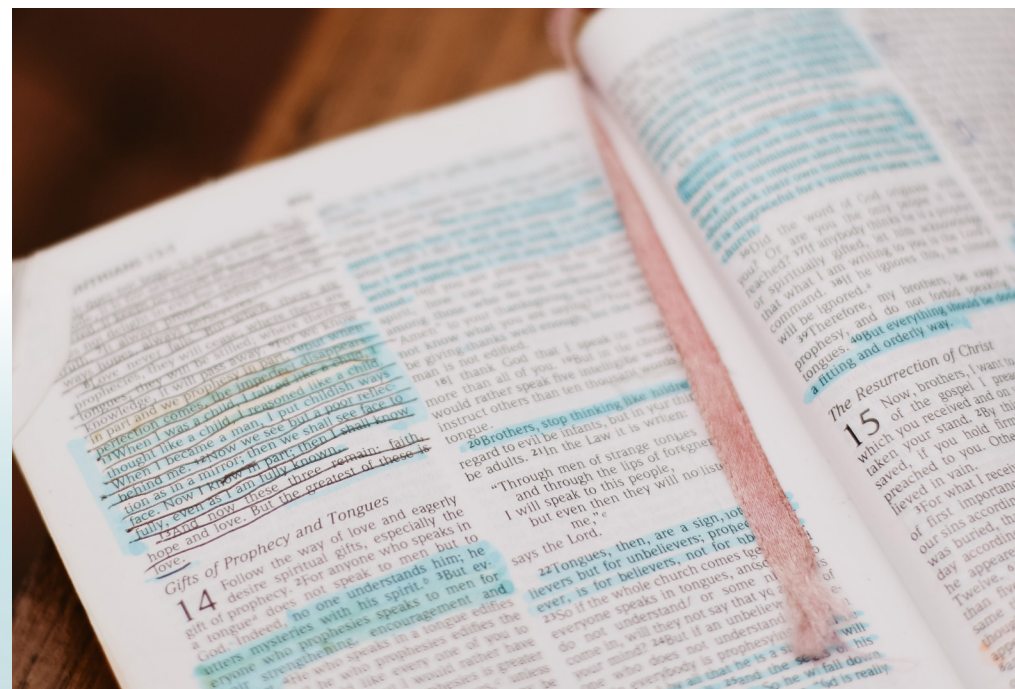
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25 / 10AM

Come to New Smyrna Beach with us and celebrate the students in our ministry who have decided to be baptized! We will commemorate the beautiful day and holy occasion with plenty of beach time together.

Family Ministry Night

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 6 / 6-7:30PM

We invite kids of all ages and their families during this very special Wonderful Wednesday event to join us out on the lawn for an evening of hamburgers, hotdogs, yard games, and giveaways.



JOIN A BIBLE STUDY

It's back to school time—a perfect time to pick up that study Bible and bring it to one of our great Bible Studies

SUNDAY STUDIES

Bible Explorers: 9:30am

Meet in the Chapel. Currently exploring the New Testament.

Carpenter's Class: 9:30am

Meet in the CEC Building. Currently studying Philip Yancey's *What's So Amazing About Grace?*

Upper Room: 9:30am

Meet in Sanctuary Hall. Currently studying the Bible in chronological order

Bible Talk: 11am

Meet in the Friendship Hall. Currently studying the parables of Jesus.

WEDNESDAY STUDIES

Names of God and Other

Bible Studies: 9:30am

Meet in the Chapel. Janet Westlake leads this study following the workbook of the same name. The book is available in the church office for \$10. Daily homework is expected.

The Chosen: 3:30pm (virtual) and 6:30pm (in-person)

Meet in the Chapel. Pastor David leads a study based on the TV series *The Chosen*, the first multi-episode show chronicling the life of Jesus.



Thrift Shoppe to accept more donations before opening

Though there is not an official opening date for Fifth Avenue Thrift Shoppe yet, we will have another donation day on **Friday, September 17** from 10am–4pm. We will be accepting donations of House Wares, Home Decor, Books, and Furniture.

2021 Charge Conference

The annual charge conference will be Oct. 10, 4pm at First UMC of Deland. Contact the office to attend.

Wonderful Wednesdays

Children and youth are welcome to join us starting at 6:30pm for worship and fun!

2022 Flower Calendar

Please add your name to the new Flower Calendar in the Sanctuary to reserve your space to donate flowers.

Exercise Classes MON, WED, FRI / 8AM

Our free exercise class has been moved to Friendship Hall. See you there!



New Membership

Pastor David will be holding a new membership class Oct. 3, 4-5:30pm in the Chapel. Contact the office to sign up.

Helping Others

We are collecting the following items in collection baskets at the main entrance:

- Baby formula for infants in Haiti
- Non-perishable food for Lake Cares Food Pantry
- Greeting cards, stamps, and personal care items for the Oasis prison ministry
- Box Tops for Education for our local schools
- Coins (or bills) for the Carpenter's House for Children

VOLUNTEER WITH US

To learn more about these and other volunteer opportunities, contact Janet Westlake.

LOVE TO COOK?

Consider cooking and serving dinners during Wonderful Wednesdays this fall.

LOVE CHILDREN?

Our nursery needs volunteers to play with pre-school children on Sunday mornings.

LOVE SERVING OTHERS?

Consider helping us deliver communion to our homebound members.

LOVE MEETING PEOPLE?

Our Welcome Center is in need of volunteers on Sunday mornings.

Student Leadership

If anyone is interested in serving as a small group leader, please contact Dylan. We have openings for multiple male and female leadership.



4 Simple Ways to Give

1 Online

Visit mtdorafumc.org/donate to access our quick and easy-to-use giving portal

2 In Person

Drop your envelope in our offering box at the front of the sanctuary on Sunday morning or mail/deliver your offering to the church office.

3 GivePlus App

Download the GivePlus app on the App Store or Google Play

4 Giving Your Time

We value volunteers in our community, those who use their gifts and resources toward the glory of God. Contact Janet Westlake to learn how to volunteer with us.