

VBS WAS A SUCCESS!  
Photos and highlights

PRAY FOR OUR MISSIONS  
A message about Belize

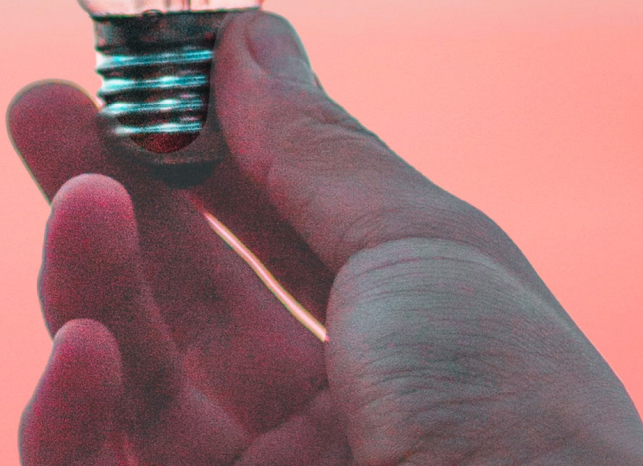
# GOSPEL

*Gazette*

AUG 2023

# V I S I O N 2030

How to be part of the future of our church





## Mount Dora

First United Methodist Church

### CONTRIBUTORS

**Rev. David Averill**  
Senior Pastor

**Janet Westlake**  
Minister of Discipleship

**Jonathan Stoots**  
Director of Music Ministries

**Hannah McMahan**  
Dir. Youth/Young Adult Ministries

**Debbie Sprague**  
**Meria Echavaria**  
Office Managers

**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** 8:30am–3:30pm

**Fri–Sun** Closed

### ADDRESS

439 E. Fifth Ave.

440 E. Sixth Ave. (*mailing*)

Mount Dora, FL 32757

### SOCIAL MEDIA

@FirstUMCMountDora

@FirstUMCMtDora

@FirstUMCMtDora

FUMC MtDora

## You've probably heard me mention Vision2030

more and more frequently over the past few months. But you may not know exactly what this initiative is, or what exactly the Vision2030 Team is working to accomplish. Allow me to give you some background:

Vision 2030 was first recommended to the congregation last September by the Nominations Committee (a.k.a. Committee on Lay Leadership) and The Church Council. Vision 2030 has been tasked with gaining a thorough understanding of our church as it is today, and creating a strategic plan that clarifies our mission, vision, and values over the next five to seven years. The fulfillment of this plan will coincide with the 150th anniversary of our church in the 2030.

To successfully complete this process of long-range planning, we regularly seek your input. As such, the Team is requesting that each of the members, friends, and regular attendees of our church participate in our latest survey of congregational interests and preferences. The feedback from this survey will help us achieve three objectives:

1. to make recommendations that will enhance existing programs
2. to add new programs where appropriate
3. to brainstorm new initiatives to increase participation and engagement.

We will follow up this survey with focus groups with key organizations within the church to follow up on results and receive more detailed feedback.

Looking to the future, in particular, our church needs to be in position to attract those church persons who relocate here as well as make new disciples of those who have roots in the community, but no roots in Christ (i.e., persons without a church home).

Many of you in have received this survey in an email — if you're one of those people who doesn't check their inbox very often, we encourage you to check it. We are also offering a paper version. If you did not receive this email, you can access the survey by scanning the QR code below with your phone's camera or visiting [moundorafumc.org](http://moundorafumc.org) and clicking the "Take the Survey" button near the very top of the home page.

We desire feedback from as many of our church members and friends as possible. By doing so, you are participating in a sacred process of helping this leadership team discern a clearer vision for the future of this church.

Grace and Peace,



David Averill

### Take the Vision2030 Survey

Scan the QR code below to complete a short, anonymous survey to better understand their relationship with our church. The survey will close on August 6.



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# VBS SUCCESS!

What a great week it was to serve at our Hero Hotline VBS. Here are a few highlights from the week:

**105 CHILDREN**

attended at least one day

**93 VOLUNTEERS**

(aka "Very Blessed Servants")

**800 HOURS**

of Community service hours earned by 53 youth volunteers.

**\$400 RAISED**

for the K-9 Unit of the Lake County Sheriff's Department.

With visits from Lake County Sheriff's Deputies, Mount Dora firefighters, military veterans, teachers, and the PAWS pet companion program, we certainly met a lot of heroes!

We responded to the call of God in a big way this year! Know that however you contributed via your prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness, you are a hero for God's Kingdom. Thank you for serving in the name of our Lord, Victor, and Redeemer, Jesus



## ***THANK YOU, MISS ELIZABETH!***

After 35 years of service, Elizabeth Craycraft is retiring from our child care ministry. When you see her around campus, please thank her for her service. We are so grateful for everything she has done for generations of First UMC children.

If you are interested in volunteering in our nursery one Sunday or every Sunday at 9:30 or 11:00 am, please contact Janet Westlake.



## 5TH AVENUE THRIFT SHOPPE

THU-FRI: 10AM-2PM

SAT: 10AM-3PM

 @5aveThriftShoppe

For a list of items you can donate, visit [mdfumc.org/5ave](http://mdfumc.org/5ave)

### Collection Baskets

We are accepting donations of the following items in collection baskets at the front entrance of the Sanctuary:

- Nonperishable food items for Lake Cares Food Pantry
- Baby formula for Haiti
- Personal care items for The Haven.
- Eyeglasses and hearing aids for the Lions Club.



# Are you a Caring Visitor?

Many of us enjoy coming to church regularly to reconnect with our friends and share in our faith. But not all of our church family is able to attend like they used to or want to.

Some are in Assisted Living or Rehabilitation facilities. Some are homebound, or are full-time caregivers to a homebound person. These members are most at risk of feeling isolated and forgotten.

Our Caring Visitors Ministry provides a vital faith connection to these members who otherwise wouldn't have one. Each Caring Visitor is matched with one of these members, and is asked to simply be a friend and prayer warrior that member can count on.

A Caring Visitor is expected to:

- Visiting them at least once a month
- Sending them cards on holidays, birthdays, and special occasions
- Calling them on the phone in between visits
- Praying for them on a regular basis
- Notifying the ministry team of any special needs or concerns they may have.

To receive an application, contact Janet at 352-383-2005 or [janet@mtdorafumc.org](mailto:janet@mtdorafumc.org).

Note: Every applicant is background-checked and trained before being assigned. Caring Visitors are not responsible for providing transportation, medical/legal advice, or financial assistance, and are advised against doing so.



# *An Afternoon of Hymns*

**SUN, AUG 13, 3PM, SANCTUARY.** Myra

Johnson will be performing a piano concert of hymns to raise money for missions. Admission is free, but donations will be accepted. All proceeds go toward the purchase of medicine for an upcoming health event for severely impoverished communities.

Myra is currently accepting requests of favorite hymns to be performed in memory or honor of a loved one or friend. To request a hymn, please email [myragjohnson@gmail.com](mailto:myragjohnson@gmail.com)

## **ON THE CALENDAR**

**Coffee Fellowship**  
**SUNDAYS, 8-10:30AM,**  
**CONFERENCE ROOM.**

**Exercise Classes**  
**MON, WED, FRI, 9AM,**  
**FRIENDSHIP HALL.**

**Women of the New Testament**  
**WEDNESDAYS, 9:30-11:30AM,**  
**CHAPEL.** Subjects include:

- **AUGUST 2:** Priscilla, Lydia, Dorcas, Phoebe
- **AUGUST 16:** Three women Jesus healed
- **AUGUST 23:** Canaanite, Samaritan

**Footprints Faith Olympics**  
**WED, AUG 2, 6-8PM**

**Volunteer with Lake Cares**  
**FRI, AUG 18, 7:30AM, KING CENTER.** Help bag groceries, stand at a table to distribute groceries, and pull a wagon to help clients to their vehicles. Training is provided.

**Wonderful Wednesdays Return!**  
**BEGINNING AUGUST 23, 6-8PM**

**Widowed Support Group**  
**THU, AUGUST 24, 9:30AM,**  
**CHAPEL.** Support one another on the journey of grief. If you are a widow or widower, you are welcome to be part of this ministry.

# ROAD TRIP

A Worship Series on the  
Journeys of Jesus

Join us from July 23 - Sept 3



Our church will spend seven weeks traveling with Jesus from his early days in Galilee, to the cross and beyond. Weekly sermons and daily readings from the Gospel of Mark will serve as our roadmap.

Like impatient kids riding in the backseat, we'll ask many questions: Why is Jesus always on the move? How do we travel with him? Why do some choose not to take that journey? How

did Jesus continue to travel boldly in the face of mounting opposition? Why wasn't the tomb the end of his travels?

You are invited on this journey to read the Gospel of Mark with Pastor David using a reading plan on our website and provided in a bulletin insert in Stepping Stones this Sunday.

## *Blessing of Students and School Personnel*

SUN, AUG 13, 9:30AM. Join us as we pray for our students and school personnel and praying for a safe and productive year.





## **BAREFOOT YOUTH MINISTRIES HAD HAD A GREAT SUMMER!**

Between summer camp at Warren Willis, VBS, and the Youth 2023 Conference in Daytona Beach, the youth group has been busy. One of the most exciting developments has been our record attendance on Sunday mornings. We broke our attendance record three times! From January, the Sunday morning youth program has quadrupled! We are currently looking for people who might be interested in volunteering to help with our Barefoot Sunday group.

Over the summer, our youth room got some major updates. New tables and chairs, a neon cross, decorative lights, and wall décor. The youth basement is decluttered, clean, and ready for Back to Barefoot fall kickoff.

Speaking of Back to Barefoot, we are relaunching Barefoot in the fall. New curriculum, more interactive small groups, and a larger focus on organization and training will all be a part of the Barefoot relaunch. Get ready, because we will relaunch on August 23!

—*Hannah McMahan*

## *Thank You Notes*

-*Betty Steele* wants to thank the congregation for the prayers, the cards, and the calls. They have meant a great deal to her.

-*Marjorie Stevenson* and *Mona Amaral* would like to thank the Singing Saints for visiting. The visit and the music was a great blessing to them.

-We are grateful to the nine students and three schoolteachers helped our regular volunteers serve 58 families at the King Center on Friday, July 21. Thank you for your generosity!

## **Church Directories Are Here**

If you had your picture taken for the directory, stop by the church office to get your copy!





Dear church,

From October 13 to 22, nine of us will travel to Belize to perform some maintenance on the Forest Home Medical & Dental Clinic. It is currently in need of a full repainting, interior and exterior.

The clinic was built in 2003, and consists of two exam rooms, two fully equipped dental operatories, and a dental hygiene room equipped for two hygienists.

Our church has already been involved with over 30 medical, dental, and/or building construction missions in Africa, St. Croix, Honduras, Brazil, Panama, and flood relief in Illinois. Our main focus, however, has been Belize.

My first mission to Belize was in 1991. My only companion was Bill Kennedy, who agreed to be my dental assistant. We were required to be “self-sufficient,” so we brought our own generator, a portable dental unit, and the instruments and materials needed for fillings and extractions.

We saw patients in four villages: Punta Gorda, Forest Home, Mafradie, and San Antonio. Each location had a “clinic” with no doors or windows, no electricity, no running water — only four walls and a ceiling. We had to set up and break down all our equipment each day, and wash and sanitize them all for the next day.

The “clinic” setup in other missions for the first few years was similar. In Africa, our dental chair was a bench with rocks at one end to elevate the head. The rocks were covered with a board and a pillow tied over it for comfort.



It always took me a day or two to quit reaching for the buttons to adjust the height of the chair.

When the villagers knew we were there, we could draw a crowd. We tried to focus on children between 8 and 13, who were getting their permanent teeth. They were extremely good, brave patients, considering they had never been to a dentist.

In the years that followed, airlines began tightening restrictions and transporting medical supplies became prohibitively difficult. We built the permanent clinic in partnership with Palm Harbor United Methodist Church, which was planning to build a medical clinic there. It was nice to work in

a complete operatory, and I could finally push the buttons and get the chair to move up and down.

It has recently had a new roof, new termite-proof ceiling tiles and some new exterior doors. We are looking forward to having the opportunity to maintain and take care of it, so it can be used on medical missions for years to come.

I ask for everyone's prayers for the mission. If you can, please make a donation to the international mission fund. Any amount helps.

Thank you.

*Jim Flach is a retired dentist who practiced in Mount Dora for 45 years. He and his wife have been members of the church since 1980.*





# 4 *Simple Ways to Give*

## **1 Online**

Visit [mtdorafumc.org/donate](http://mtdorafumc.org/donate) to access our quick and easy-to-use giving portal

## **2 In Person**

Drop your envelope in the offering box on Sunday morning or mail your offering to the church office.

## **3 Vanco Mobile App**

Download the Vanco Mobile app on the App Store or Google Play

## **4 Giving Your Time**

Use their gifts and resources toward the glory of God. Contact Janet Westlake to learn how to volunteer with us.