



# The Spire



**First Methodist Church of Lake City**  
To make disciples of Jesus Christ who worship passionately, love extravagantly, and witness boldly.

Celebrating 186 Years !  
Volume 52, Issue 124



the **Lord**  
is my  
**Strength**  
and my  
**Shield**

Psalm 28:7



## Springtime's Joy

Everywhere we look spring has come alive;  
Periwinkle, daffodils, hastas growing on the hill.  
Many flowers blooming and bees are zooming.  
Cause spring has sprung, while all natures sings, bringing forth its young.

There's no doubt that God has put love into springtime;  
Springtime is like a new beginning that has come alive.  
Just like the hope that has grown within my heart;  
Just like the sunshine of His Word can cause much faith to thrive.

When we grow in grace, we grow to be like Him.  
When we grow into Jesus, into his power and his might.  
The more seeds we sow, the more in Him we'll grow;  
Growing forth in his goodness and mercy within his light.

Marvelous are the blooms of springtime's joy;  
Just like the joy of Jesus blessing our hearts as we pray.  
The joy of Jesus shines when we praise him.  
The joy of the Lord is our strength, as we trust each day.

Susan Y Nikitenko  
April 16th, 2016

**A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK....**

## Wednesday Nights in the Summer

I am told that in the past many of the things that we do here at First Methodist go on hiatus during the summer. This was true for our Wednesday night gatherings.

**Oh friends, please don't let it be so!**

Guys if we want to build a church that is consistently making a difference for the kingdom, then we're going to have to build a church that is consistent in it's gathering. That means we can't stop gathering just because the summer is here and somebody might be out of town. If we're going to have a Wednesday night service with a meal, then we need to have it all year long. That might mean we have fewer people as no one can come every week. People have vacations and all sorts of reasons to be gone. But why should the church stop offering such a thing?

As your pastor, I would love to authoritatively declare that the hiatus status for the summer has been lifted, and we will, henceforth, have a meal every Wednesday night. I would love to declare that. Unfortunately, it doesn't work that way. I can't declare that you will come. I can't declare that you will help. But here's what I can tell you.

It is my intention to be here every Wednesday night that I'm not out of town, all year long. It is my intention that we have a meal available every Wednesday night, all year long (except when it conflicts with other activities such as around Christmas or Easter.) And if you haven't been coming to Wednesday night, you're missing out, and maybe it is time to start.

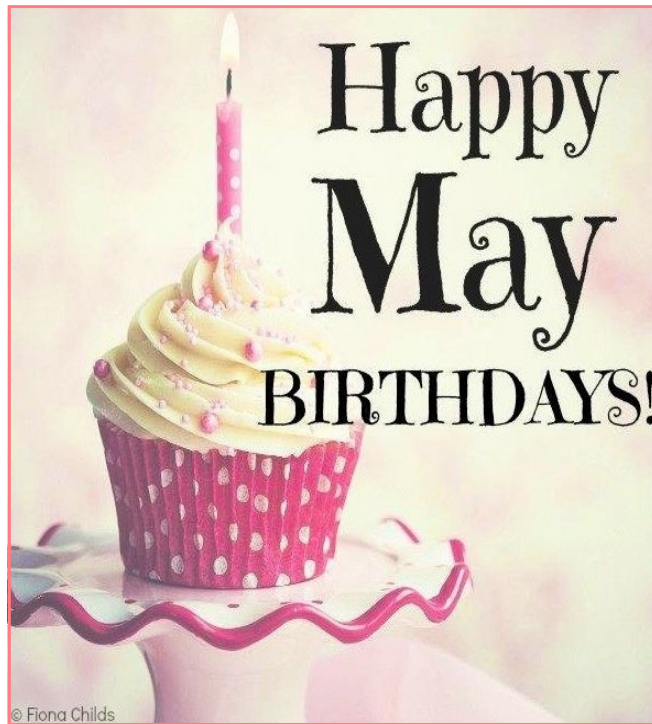
It's one of my favorite days of the week. It's a midweek reminder of what's important in life. Slowing down for one evening and sitting around the table and enjoying a meal with my church family. Wednesday nights have long been a priority for me, long before I was ever a pastor. There were times when Wednesday night has been a more important gathering in my life than Sunday morning. And that's why I prioritize being there. Even on a week where I don't feel like I need to be there. Because if I'm not coming, I can't guarantee it will continue happening. So, I want to support it with my presence so that it's always there and available. Because even when I don't think I need it, there may be someone who's having the roughest week of their life. And they need to get together with their church family and being encouraged and strengthened.

So, I come because I know I need it. But I also come because I know someone else might need it. And if I'm not coming, if I'm not supporting it with my attendance, it could die out and not be available for that person that's so desperately needed it.

If you would like to help with the meals on Wednesday night during the summer, talk to Pastor Tim. If you have a Bible study or a class you would like to see added to the offerings on that night, discuss it with Pastor Tim. Now let's build our church with consistency starting this Wednesday night.

**May Birthdays**

- 3 Melissa Barber  
 5 Lavon Leszkiewicz  
 6 Terry Reiter  
 7 Morgan Gabey  
 Chad Stevens  
 8 Carol Stevens  
 9 Kathy Smith  
 10 Steve Stafford, Sr.



- 12 Deonna Willis  
 Annabelle Barber  
 14 Haley Willis  
 18 Harden Yancey  
 21 Martha Jane Carter  
 Jennifer Pitman  
 26 Paul Wengert  
 28 Nicole Lee



**HAPPY  
 BIRTHDAY**

**June Birthdays**

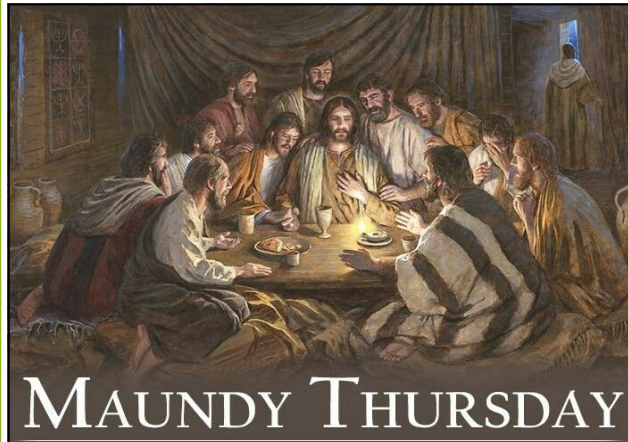
- 1 Connie Bennett  
 Ivey Carter  
 12 Tara Bailey  
 13 Grant Stafford  
 19 John Willis  
 20 Joyce Ogden



- 22 Willene Giles  
 24 Sid Whichard  
 27 Gordon Summers  
 28 Ryan Gabey



### MAUNDY THURSDAY LOVE FEAST



A HUGE, HUGE thank you to Beth Willis and her team who worked tirelessly in making the Maundy Thursday Love Feast a success with 100 people in attendance including guests from Bethel Methodist. Her team included: Donna Giebeig, Julie Davis, Martha Jane Carter, Martha Maxwell, Martha Rine, Kathy Smith, Jan Wheeler, Blaine Wheeler, Gigi Register, Caroline Stevens, Joyce Ogden, Stephanie Foreman, Joan Williams and Patti Summerlin. Many thanks to Hope & Jeff Crawford for help with setting up the tables.

A giant thank you to Blaine Wheeler, with the assistance of Martha Rine, Carl & Cindy Dempsey and their children Carl, Cindy, Matt and Jennifer for all the time they put into decorating for Easter. We can't forget Pastor Tim either. Thanks for leading our congregation through Holy Week. We appreciate all of you!



## FLORIDA CARE PORTAL

1st Methodist Church is a member of the Florida Care Portal. This is a national non-profit organization that has churches working with local care organizations to help local families with needs.



By joining Care Portal, First Methodist Church will have the opportunity to give the congregation a powerful way to not only meet urgent needs, but also build new relationships in the community. Each time the church responds whether with food, clothing, or a bed, it opens the door to connect with families who might otherwise never walk through the church's doors. These personal connections can naturally lead to invitations to church services, small groups, and ministries, allowing the church to grow while living out its faith in action. Care Portal has proven to make churches more aware of the needs around them and makes it easier to respond, all while creating opportunities to share Christ's love in tangible, relational ways. For First Methodist, it's a chance to meet new people, serve them in their moment of need, and invite them into the life of the church.

Our latest support comes from helping a new family that moved in to Lake City. The family was homeless and was actually living in a tent. The United Way assisted them in finding housing. The Care Portal request was for a bicycle and a fan. The family did not have a vehicle, and the Dad was getting around town looking for work using an older bicycle. We shopped at Walmart and purchased a new bicycle and we also purchased a window fan. Having a second bicycle helps the mom get around as well until they are able to afford a vehicle.

In speaking with the family, the need was actually much more. The family was not yet on food stamps so we contacted the Christian Service Center and a box of food was donated. At the time the Care Portal request was released, a request through Sleep in Heavenly Peace was also released requesting a bed for their 10 year-old daughter. She was sleeping on an air mattress. The bed was delivered on Monday April 13th and included a quilt donated by Lady of the Lake Quilt Guild.

**MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

*make a difference*

## CRAFT CLUB

Our Crafters meet in Fellowship Hall on Thursdays at 5:30-7:00 p.m. and are currently making special gift items.

Join us for a relaxed fellowship while we enjoy creating these special gifts. It's open to everyone!



## MINISTRY OF THE MONTH

Each month our church will be focusing on different ministries within the church to bring greater awareness and involvement. For the month of **May**, we will focus on **Sleep In Heavenly Peace**. In the month of **June**, we will focus on our **Local Mission** efforts. This includes Residing Hope Children's Home, the Florida Care Portal, and our two teddy bear initiatives.

You will hear more about these ministries on Sunday morning. And you are encouraged to find a way in which you can support them. Perhaps that means a financial gift. If so, just mark your check or giving envelope with the name of the ministry or simply put "ministry of the month." Perhaps it is a ministry you want to be more hands-on with. Through the month you will hear of different opportunities and meet the leaders. Be sure to talk with them and find out how you can be a part of the great work being done here at First Methodist through these ministries.

### **Ministry of the Month for May**

#### **Sleep in Heavenly Peace**

SHP is a national organization that seeks to provide beds for children in need. Our local Lake City chapter has been doing that for almost 4 years now. They normally hold a bed build one Saturday a month at the Christian Service Center. On that day, all the beds are constructed, but not assembled. Then bed deliveries are made every week, normally on Thursdays. Sometimes they also deliver on Tuesdays. Volunteers gather the pieces and bedding material. These are taken to the recipient's home and the bed is assembled and set up.

SHP needs about \$60,000 a year to maintain their current level of bed production. They need donations of new twin bedding. They need volunteers at the bed build. Our next build is coming up on May 23<sup>rd</sup> (Subject to change). And they need volunteers to help with deliveries weekly. Check out the article on page 10 for additional information.

Are you starting to see how you can get involved? Bob Santos is the director. Find him at church on Sunday and let him know of your desire.

### **Ministry of the Month for June**

#### **Local missions**

This church supports several local missions.

The **Christian Service Center** seeks to provide assistance with food, clothing, household items, medications, and partial help with utility bills. The resale gift shop, open two days a week, helps support the food pantry through its proceeds. Throughout the year, they host special events to further care for neighbors—offering Christmas gifts and food baskets, back-to-school shoes for children, and an annual garage sale to support ongoing services.

**Residing Hope**, formerly The Florida United Methodist Children's Home, is now a diverse ministry that includes therapeutic residential care, foster care, independent living assistance, Montessori education for the community, and counseling services in multiple counties.

**The Florida Care Portal** is a national nonprofit organization that has churches working together with local care organizations to help local families with need. Needs are posted in a centralized database by government agencies, such as the department of children and families. We keep money on hand to meet these needs financially. And we often get an opportunity for a much more personal connection. Read about a family that recently received help on page 5.

**The Pregnancy Care Center (PCC)** in Lake City, FL, provides free confidential services for unplanned pregnancies, including pregnancy tests, ultrasounds, and parenting resources. Operating Mon–Fri, they offer support, including baby items and classes, until the child is 24 months old.

In the past, this church has been faithful to support these different ministries here in our area. We have donated funds. We have helped volunteer. And we have provided for specific needs. Would you consider partnering with some of these as well?

(Below are pictures from the Ministry Expo held in March. It was a great way to showcase the various ministries and show what they are doing in our church and community).

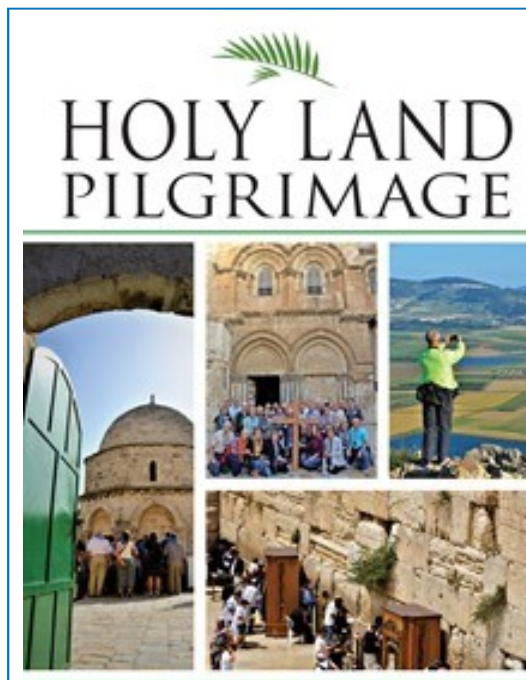


## IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF JESUS

Have you ever dreamed of walking in the very footsteps of Jesus? You have that opportunity. A group from this church, led by Tim and Staci will be joining with leaders from our Global Methodist connection here in Florida and traveling to Israel in February 2027. We will go to many of the sites mentioned in scripture as we immerse ourselves in Jewish culture.

It is true that there are certain security concerns to take into consideration when traveling to the Middle East, especially right now. This trip is being arranged and led by Pilgrim Tours in conjunction with our annual conference staff. We feel confident in the precautions and plans provided. That's why Staci and I have personally committed to going. If you're not so sure and would like to have a conversation about the trip, come see me.

If you would like to attend, it's not too late. But it soon will be. So, talk to Pastor Tim and get signed up so you don't miss out on this wonderful opportunity.



The dates are February 18-27, 2027.

Some of the stops include:

- Galilee
- Jordan River Baptismal Site
- Magdala
- Capernaum
- Bethlehem
- Jerusalem
- A worship service on the Sea of Galilee
- Masada
- Jericho
- Emmaus and much more

Kindly scan the QR code or follow the link below to register and submit your deposit. We look forward to having you join this meaningful journey.



Explore, Reflect, Connect



[www.pilgrimsunited.com](http://www.pilgrimsunited.com)



[info@pilgrimsunited.com](mailto:info@pilgrimsunited.com)



424-599-2166



Pilgrims United Tours

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Hey Kids....

School's out for the summer! This year our Vacation Bible School (VBS) will be held on Wednesday nights in June @ 5:30-7:00 p.m. (That's June 3, 10, 17, and 24.) Come meet in the Fellowship Hall for dinner, then stay for the fun!!

Playground games, music, crafts, and more!



## BACKPACK MINISTRY

Backpack Ministry at Summers Elementary School



The backpack team is working on some ideas for the future. Pastor Tim wants the programs of the church to involve more people young and old. When appropriate, this may even include those receiving blessings from the church. One idea is to include the children or youth in assembling the weekend meals. Another is to have children or youth color scripture cards to be included in the meal packets. We would also include an uncolored scripture card for the child receiving the packet to color and return to the church.

For the last couple of years, the backpack team has been purchasing the food, with a couple of items being provided through the Christian Service Center. However, the Pastor would like us to include more people, so look for more information and a collection basket this Fall as we prepare for school to resume. We will be accepting donations of child size single serve food items such as crackers, chips, breakfast and granola bars, juice boxes, Yahoo, fruit snacks, pudding cups, cookies, Chef Boyardee individual meals, slim Jim snacks, etc.

Thanks for your help and donations large and small.

The Backpack Team



## SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE

If you're looking for a cause that helps children, this is the one for you!!!! Sleep in Heavenly Peace is a national non-profit ministry that gives children a safe and comfortable place to lay their heads at night and is for children living in Columbia County.

The beds are delivered complete with a mattress and bedding. If you would like to donate new twin sheets (twin only NOT twin XL), comforters or thick quilts and shams (matching sets would be great) please drop by the church office during the week. The office is open Monday-Thursday 10a.m – 3p.m.

Monetary donations are greatly appreciated. Please make your checks payable to Sleep in Heavenly Peace and add FL-Lake City in the check notes to make it specific for our Lake City Chapter. The mailing address is:

**Sleep In Heavenly Peace**

**PO Box 2905**

**Phoenix, AZ 85062**

Checks can be dropped off at our church office, or donated on-line at [shpbed.org](http://shpbed.org).

These past few months have been very busy for our chapter. We had a bed build on March 14<sup>th</sup> at the Christian Service Center. We built 20 beds and had a good turn-out of volunteers and a great weather day. We also had a bed on April 25th with a great turn-out and built another 24 beds.

We also had been invited to an event run annually by the Columbia Builders Association. "Build My Future" is a national program meant to introduce High School students to a career in the trades. It was held at the Lake City Fairgrounds on April 1st. Representatives from 13 companies and organizations demonstrated their trade to students. High Students from 3 high schools in the area had a hands-on experience to learn about the trade. Electricians, Plumbers, members from FDOT, Clay Electric, and other groups presented their trade with the goal of teaching students about a possible career. For Sleep in Heavenly Peace, students were introduced to working with sanders, impact drills, drill presses and mallets. In conclusion they ended up building 10 beds. The students learned about several tools, but they also helped fellow students.

We always have a need for more volunteers. We can use help with Media Support, helping to obtain Sponsorship and donations.

**Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to an even greater year of helping our kids!!**

**Please volunteer and join the team, or join us for a future bed build!!!!**

**NO KID SLEEPS  
ON THE FLOOR  
IN OUR TOWN!**



SHIP



SHIP



## OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Operation Christmas Child or “Shoe Boxes for Children” works all year round to provide special Christmas gift boxes for children! First Methodist Church offers YOU multiple opportunities to show your love for children in need. Our church gathers “goodies” all year round which we then pack at a packing party which will be scheduled for early fall, individuals may also wish to go on line at [samaritanpurse.org/occ](http://samaritanpurse.org/occ) to have them pack and send a box for you, OR may pick up pre-folded boxes and enjoy filling boxes themselves to return to the church office for bulk sending!



At this time we are collecting goodies for children ages 2-4, 5-9 and 10-14 to pack into colorful Christmas boxes of shoebox size. All kinds of goodies will fit including school supplies, jump ropes, balls, dolls, toy cars/ trucks, sox and various personal care items. Shoe Box gift ideas and information will be available in the Church Narthex, Office and Fellowship Hall. Enjoy your shopping and have fun looking for great bargains of fun!

## ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Each year, all the churches in Florida that are a part of our denomination gather in June for a worship celebration and our legislative session. Our pastor is required to attend. And we get to send one representative from our church as a voting delegate for the legislative matters. Doc Bloodworth is normally our lay delegate. Because of some health challenges, Doc has stepped down from that position this year and the church council has voted to empower Robin Green to represent us at this conference.

But you get to come too!

**Friday & Saturday**

Did you know that?

**June 5-6**

An annual conference can be attended by any of us or all of us.

With our past denominational affiliation, I never recommended that. These sessions were, at worst, divisive, and at best, just downright boring. But praise God, not anymore! There will be meaningful worship. There will be heavenly fellowship. And there will be some of the best rock-solid Christian teaching you can find. I wish every last one of us could attend.

The conference will be in Oviedo at the Methodist Church there on **Friday and Saturday, June 5-6**. If you feel God drawing you to attend, talk to Pastor Tim.



HELPING HANDS MINISTRY

This new ministry is designed to assist our members with some small chores and tasks that they are unable to complete themselves at home.

If you are in need of assistance or would like to be one of these offsite volunteers, please call the church office @ 386-752-4488 or speak with Pastor Tim or Chris Costello.

INTERCESSORY PRAYER GROUP

Our dedicated group of prayer warriors meet every **Tuesday morning @ 10 a.m.** in the youth room in Fellowship Hall.

They would love to have you join them!

Please call the office if you would like more information @ 386.752.4488.

MONDAY NIGHT LIFE GROUP

Each week a few of us gather for a life group on Monday evenings at 6 PM in the youth room.

What is a LIFE group?

Living

In

Fellowship



That's why I spell it LIFE group. Our main purpose is to support and encourage one another during the hard time of life while celebrating the good times. We live life together - open and in front of each other. There's also a Bible study component. We are working our way through the book of Acts, looking at the power and the person of the Holy Spirit. And sometimes we eat together too! If you want more information, talk to Pastor Tim. Or simply show up Monday night at 6 PM.



*Mother's Day*  
*May 10, 2026*



As a way of honoring our Mothers, and other special women in our lives, we are compiling a special "Mother's Day" Booklet which would be part of our worship bulletin on Sunday, May 10th. By using this form, each of us can participate. Under the appropriate headings (In Memory of:, In Honor of: list the name (s) of women special to you. She may be your mother, grandmother, teacher, scout leader, or friend. Place the form in a pew envelope along with one dollar (\$1) for each name submitted. Your name, and that of the person (s) you honor will appear in the booklet on Mother's Day. With this project, we can honor and perpetuate the memory of friends and loved ones through our church.

**Deadline is Monday, May 4.**

Donor's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Amount paid \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory :

In Honor :

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# MAY



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 
3 Communion Guest Rev. Jay Therrell Worship 11 am	4 	5 Outreach 6 pm	6 Wednesday Meal Bible Class All Ages 5:30 pm	7 Nat'l Day of Pray Grief Share 5:30 p.m. Craft Club 5:30 pm	8	9
10 Worship 11 am 	11	12	13 Wednesday Meal Bible Class All Ages 5:30 pm	14 Grief Share 5:30 p.m. Craft Club 5:30 pm	15 	16
17 Men's Fellowship 9:15 am Worship 11 am Graduation Reception 12:15	18	19 	20 Wednesday Meal Bible Class All Ages 5:30 pm	21 Grief Share 5:30 p.m. Craft Club 5:30 pm	22	23
24 Worship 11 am ----- 31 Worship 11 am 5th Sunday	25 	26	27 Wednesday Meal Bible Class All Ages 5:30 pm	28 Grief Share 5:30 p.m. Craft Club 5:30 pm	29	30

# JUNE



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 	3 Wednesday Meal Bible Class All Ages VBS!! 5:30 pm	4 Grief Share 5:30 p.m. Craft Club 5:30 pm	5 Global Annual Conference (Details page 12)	6 Global Annual Conference
7 Communion Worship 11 am	8 	9	10 Wednesday Meal Bible Class All Ages VBS!! 5:30 pm	11 Grief Share 5:30 p.m. Craft Club 5:30 pm	12	13 
14 Worship 11 am	15	16	17 Wednesday Meal Bible Class All Ages VBS!! 5:30 pm	18 Grief Share 5:30 p.m. Craft Club 5:30 pm	19 	20
21  Worship 11 am	22	23 	24 Wednesday Meal Bible Class All Ages VBS!! 5:30 pm	25 Grief Share 5:30 p.m. Craft Club 5:30 pm	26	27
28 Worship 11 am	29	30				

*Father's Day*  
*June 21, 2026*



As a way of honoring our Fathers, and other special men in our lives, we are compiling a special "Father's Day" Booklet which would be part of our worship bulletin on Sunday, June 21st. By using this form, each of us can participate. Under the appropriate headings (In Memory of:, In Honor of: list the name (s) of men special to you. He may be your father, grandfather, teacher, scout leader, or friend. Place the form in a pew envelope along with one dollar (\$1) for each name submitted. Your name, and that of the person (s) you honor will appear in the booklet on Father's Day. With this project, we can honor and perpetuate the memory of friends and loved ones through our church.

**Due in church office by Monday, June 15th**

Donor's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Amount paid \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory :

In Honor :

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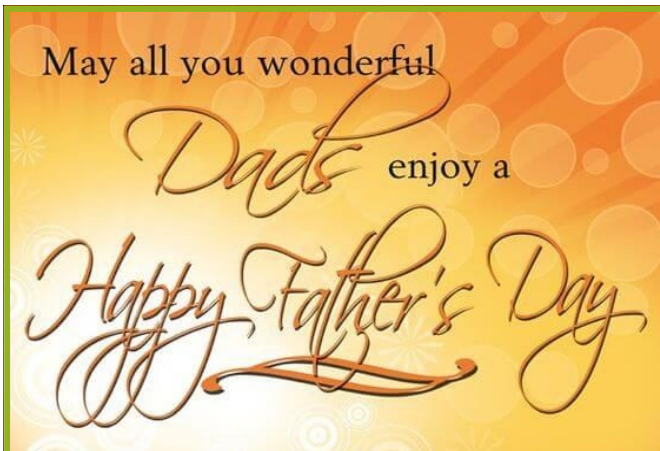
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## WELCOME OUR NEW YOUTH PASTOR AND HIS FAMILY

We are David and Hannah Amerson, and we are grateful to be joining this church family along with our daughter, Freya.

This move has been a significant step of faith for our family. We prayed for God's guidance, and as He made the way clear, we followed His lead.

David came to know the Lord at a young age and later served in missions with Youth With A Mission in the Amazon and Eastern Europe. He has a heart for those who feel lost or unseen and has most recently been involved in youth and young adult ministry. He also enjoys creative problem-solving and good conversation.

Hannah has walked closely with David in ministry over the past two years and shares a deep commitment to serving others. Currently a full-time mom with a background in pharmacy, she enjoys baking, gardening, and serving in church childcare.

As a family, we are excited to be here, to get to know you, and to be part of what God is doing in this community.

In Him,

David and Hannah Amerson



## WEDNESDAY NIGHT MEALS

The meals planned for May are:

- May 6 Cinco de Mayo Meal
- May 13 Chicken Fingers, Mac-n-Cheese
- May 20 TBA
- May 27 BBQ Cook Out



Meals for June are TBA. Check out your Sunday bulletin each week for the upcoming menu.

*Enjoy food, fun and fellowship*

## STUFFED WITH LOVE MINISTRY

The popularity of our stuffed animal collection activities will continue sometime this summer with Stuff the Ark!

**Watch for more information in the Sunday bulletins.**

Thanks to everyone for supporting this new ministry as we give to children in need of some Love in life.



## WORSHIP ATTENDANCE FOR MARCH AND APRIL



March 1	91	April 5	201
March 8	88	April 12	87
March 15	98	April 19	84
March 22	82	April 26	72
March 29	100		
		Maundy Thursday Love Feast	100
		Good Friday	40

"Look, the winter is past,  
and the rains are over and gone.

*The flowers are springing up,  
the season of singing birds has come."*

Song of Solomon 2:11,12



**GRIEF SHARE**

If you are grieving for any reason and need support to help you then please join us for this program. It is open to anyone and everyone in the community.

The program will meet on **Thursdays from 5:30-7:00 p.m.**

Please call the office if you would like more information @ 386.752.4488.

**MEN'S FELLOWSHIP**

There will be a men's **pancake breakfast** on **Sunday, May 17 @ 9:15 am** in Fellowship Hall. All men and male youth are invited.

**UPCOMING MILESTONE!!**

**May 17** will be a special celebration Sunday. We will be celebrating our confirmands and the diligent work they have done over the past few months.



We will, also, celebrate the high school graduation of Giovanni Tonetti and all the work he has done in his scholastic career.

**Church Staff**

**Senior Pastor:** Rev. Tim Dunavant

**Children's Pastor:** Martha Rine

**Youth Pastor:** David Amerson

**Worship Leader, Pianist:** Amelia Tompkins

**Choir Director, Organist:** Avery Wallace

**Audio/Visual:** Rusty Bailey, David Smith, Karl Plenge

**Administrative Assistant:** Lee Gober

**Custodian:** Hope Crawford

**Grounds Keeper:** Austin Reiter

