



The
United
Methodist
Church

The Beacon

CALVARY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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2016 Chili Cook Off

Get ready, set, go!!! The time has finally arrived to get serious about entering the Annual Calvary Chili Cook-off to be held on January 15th. If you think you have the winning recipe, be sure to hurry and sign-up on the entry sheet posted on the bulletin board as there is a limit of 10 entrants.

If you aren't planning on entering the contest, be sure to plan on attending the dinner and bring your friends as it's going to be a fun-filled evening with good food, entertainment, suspense, and above all, a lot of fellowship. See if you can guess who the winners will be!!!

Contact Diane Rood, 993-2586, if you have questions concerning the dinner.

PROGRESSIVE DINNER CANCELED

Due to various bumps in our road to 2016, we must cancel the New Year's Eve Progressive Dinner, HOWEVER, Robin & Jamie Stowers have graciously invited all to their home, for a social time, including appetizers. We are asking those who attend, to bring their favorite appetizer to share. Drinks will be provided.

We'll munch and have social time, from 9:00 PM - 11:00 PM, after which we will move to the church to participate in the Candlelight Gathering at 11:30 PM.

Please join us for an opportunity to shed the cares of 2015, and welcome 2016, with a renewed heart, mind and soul.

If you have questions, please contact Robin Stowers or Nancy Walker.

Sunday Worship

8:15 a.m. Blended

11:00 a.m. Traditional

9:30 Sunday School

Cookbooks are Finally Here!

We finally have cookbooks! Please contact Sally Cook or Peggy Clark to purchase one for \$8.00 each, or if during office hours, you may contact Sue Mikell in the office for one. Start the New Year with new recipes.

Pennings by Pastor Esther



Do you feel your life is all it can be? Do you yearn for life to be fuller? A friend once recited this poem to me:

*There once was a cautious gal, who never romped or played;
She never drank, she never smoked, from the path she never strayed.
So when she passed away the insurance was denied;
For since she never really lived they claimed she never died!*

Of course, I don't think these behaviors describe quality living, but I do think most people want to experience life as fully as possible. This has always been the case. Even two thousand years ago, Jesus recognized our universal yearning for life when he said, "I have come that they might have life and have it more abundantly."

And, of course, "romping," "playing," and "straying from the path" have little to do with how fully one experiences life. Abundant living is more about how we love the other people on this planet, how we care for ourselves and how well we honor our God. It has to do with joy and laughter, kindness, forgiveness and peace. It means taking time for what is truly necessary.

One man was asked if he believed in life after death. His wife spoke first. "Life after death?" she said. "He doesn't even believe in life after dinner!"

I believe in life after death. But I also believe in life before death. Abundant and full and beginning today.

Happy New Year!

Blessings and Peace, *Pastor Esther*

Finance Corner

FLOWERS: It is truly a blessing to be able to honor a loved one who has either passed away or for a special person(s) in our life that is celebrating a birthday, anniversary, etc. by arranging to have flowers placed on the altar for them. In January of each year, a new flower calendar is placed on the back wall of the sanctuary where you can reserve a date(s) to purchase the flowers. As of January 1, 2016, the cost of altar flowers will be \$30.00 per basket.

As a reminder and in order to continue to comply with IRS rules, it is necessary to identify the use of the flowers after the Sunday worship service as follows:

1. When submitting your payment, please submit a separate check and annotate that it is for "flowers".
2. If you are taking the flowers to a hospital, nursing home, etc., please annotate "flower donation" on your check.

This ruling includes flowers not only purchased for Sunday worship, but for Easter Lilies, Christmas poinsettias or any other special event.

You can contact Sue Mikell, 272-4210, if you need further guidance concerning flowers.

Also, 2016 Offering Envelopes are available for pick up on Sunday, December 6th, in the hall. Please pick up your box then.

A Word About the Refugee Crisis

Kenneth H. Carter, Jr.
Florida Area Resident Bishop

December 7, 2015

Dear United Methodist Sisters and Brothers in the State of Florida:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, whose perfect love casts out fear, and who comes to us in the stranger.

As United Methodist Bishops assigned to Florida, we offer a pastoral response to the destructive consequences resulting from the war in Syria and the rise of ISIS. Our hearts break over the violent terrorist attacks in Africa, Europe and the Middle East, and the awareness of the increasing number of vulnerable families, women, and children, who are fleeing Syria in search of safety. We are aware that many of those seeking freedom are Syrian Christians. As we approach Christmas, we remember that the Gospel of Matthew, written in Syria, tells the story of the Holy Family who flee the violence of their own home.

We call upon our churches to welcome our brothers and sisters, of all faiths. We also are reminded that the re-settling process of a refugee in the United States often takes eighteen to twenty-four months and includes a screening process. We take seriously the need to balance security with hospitality.

We invite our communities to join our Christian sisters and brothers in prayer and advocacy on behalf of this growing international crisis.

Let us pray:

- For an end to the conflict in Syria and the surrounding area.
- For those seeking safety in the surrounding areas of Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Europe, and the United States.
- For a lasting peace which will enable refugees to return home in safety.
- For those who serve our country by assisting refugees in passing through our security processes, that they will be strengthened with wisdom and understanding.
- That our communities will continue to welcome those in desperate need.
- That refugees will truly find “sanctuary” among the many sanctuaries where we gather to worship God.
- That our nation may model moral leadership before the nations of the world.

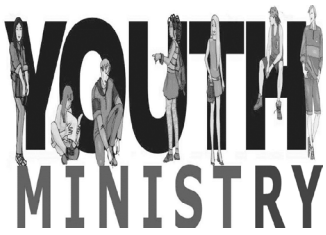
Rev. Jack Amick, Assistant General Secretary for International Disaster Response, United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), has noted that since its founding 75 years ago, UMCOR provides assistance to all. He said, “The stories we hear about Christian communities being persecuted break our hearts. But, as Jesus’ story of the Good Samaritan reminds us, all human suffering should break our hearts such that we take action regardless of human divisions and labels of race, creed, religion.”

As advocates and partners addressing this refugee crisis, we give thanks for the work UMCOR is doing, in providing space heaters, mattresses, blankets, soap, diapers, and sanitary pads as a first response to basic human need. We also trust that our local churches, over the coming years, will partner with ecumenical relief organizations in resettling displaced families and welcoming them, in the name of Jesus, into redemptive communities of peace, safety and hope.

The peace of the Lord,

Bishop Kenneth H. Carter, Jr.
Resident Bishop, Florida Conference

Bishop Paul L. Leeland
Resident Bishop, Alabama-West Florida Conference



***** YOUTH NEWS *****

Here at Calvary we have a warm loving accepting youth group where all youth can be a part. We hope each of you had a warm loving Christmas and that the New Year brings you endless blessings and joy!

The Christmas skits this year took place on Sunday December 13 at both services. The youth worked hard on their parts and brought both meaningful insight of the birth of Jesus and humorous takes on some of the silliest parts of the Christmas season. We hope you enjoyed the program and thank you for your support of the youth.

Through the school year we take part in service projects such as "Souper Bowl Sunday" to help the homeless or those in need of food with Calvary food pantry.

This year "Souper Bowl Sunday" is February 7. We are asking for all to bring a can of soup and one dollar that Sunday! Let's top last years collections of nearly 200 cans of soup and \$150 for our food pantry here at Calvary.

Our Youth Group is open to all 'Rising' Sixth Graders through High School seniors. We would love for any and all youth to come and share in Christian fellowship! Our regular meetings take place on Wednesday evenings 5:30 till 7:00. During that time we also enjoy pizza or tacos and hamburgers, and sometimes steamed lobster. And if we are real lucky, Burrito Brothers!!

If you have any questions, or need additional information, please speak with Youth Director Fran "The Man" Ronan or his PA, George Clooney. We hope to see you real soon!

Email FTMYD@hotmail.com 904-272-4210

Fran "The Man" Ronan

Cuba Updates

Here are the dates for travel for 2016. I would like to see a group of us go from Calvary. You just don't get the whole picture until you see it for yourself.

Remember that the Cuban government requires that each of our trips be tied to an "event;" but the reality is that most (or all) of our travelers' time will be spent with their sister churches. The trips are typically a week, though shorter trips are now possible. Expenses run around \$1,000, and we ask each church to make a love offering to their sister church of \$1,000 if possible.

Exact dates will come later, but here are our six travel opportunities:

May – Seminary Graduation

Need expressions of interest: January
Need commitments by: March

September – Women's Conference

Need expressions of interest: April
Need commitments by: June

June – Annual Conference

Need expressions of interest: January
Need commitments by: March

October – Men's Conference

Need expressions of interest: May
Need commitments by: July

July – Youth/Young Adults Conferences

Need expressions of interest: February
Need commitments by: April

Please spread the word and let's energize our Cuba ministry like never before!
Blessings, George Reed

North East District Leadership Training “The Servant Church”

Saturday, January 23, 2016 8:30AM-12:50PM
Beach United Methodist Church; 325 7th Avenue N.
Jacksonville Beach, FL 32250

All pastors, church staff, church leadership, especially newly elected leaders, and laity are strongly encouraged to attend this leadership training. This training will provide you with tools and resources for effective leadership. Along with our awesome facilitators who will inspire and challenge you. Don't miss the opportunity to attend this FREE leadership training event.

Session One (10:00 a.m.-11:10 a.m.)

- Child Youth Protection Policy with LaNita Battles, Florida Conference Ministry Protection, Claims /Risk Manager
- Developing a Long-Term Strategy to Being a Missional Church with Gary Tiller, Executive Director of Ministry, Beach UMC
- Finance 101 with Tony Prestipino, Florida Conference Treasurer
- How to Deal with Difficult Church People with Rev. Dr. Harold D. Lewis, Sr--This course will be a 2 hours 20 minutes class and participants are encouraged to stay for the entire presentation.
- Men Serving the Community with Michael Maxwell, NE District UMM President and Bruce Seidner
- Pastor Parish Relations (PPR) Training 101 with Rev. Tim Smiley, NE District Superintendent

Session Two (11:40 a.m.-12:50 p.m.)

- Finance 201 with Tony Prestipino, Florida Conference Treasurer
- Impacting the Portside Community with Gary Tiller, Executive Director, Beach UMC
- Men Serving the Community with Michael Maxwell, NE District UMM and Bruce Seidner
- Pastor Parish Relations (PPR) Training 201 with Rev. Tim Smiley, NE District Superintendent
- Trustee Training with LaNita Battles, Florida Conference Ministry Protection, Claims/Risk Manager

Schedule of Events

8:30AM-9:00AM	Gathering & Refreshment
9:00AM-9:45AM	Welcome & Worship (Tim Smiley) Speaker: Rev. Jerry Sweat
9:45AM-10:00AM	Break
10:00AM-11:10AM	Session One
11:10AM-11:40AM	Break
11:40AM-12:50PM	Session Two

Plan to be there early to pick up your name badge, informational map and to enjoy morning refreshments.

Please register on-line at www.flumc.org so that we can plan accordingly.

Extra Mile Giving

If you are like me, the Advent season is the time for reflection on the meaning of Christmas and the possibility of “extra mile” giving. Our first priority is to our local church. And if you have a sister church in Cuba, that too should be high on your list.

But having satisfied your priorities there, perhaps you are looking for other ways to support Kingdom work.

Please consider our Cuba ministry. The Advance is an official program of The United Methodist Church for voluntary, designated contributions. Through The Advance, you may choose to support particular, approved mission programs or mission personnel with financial gifts. One hundred percent of all Advance giving goes to the chosen mission project or ministry. Contributions to the Advance are tax deductible. Cuba opportunities include:

- Advance # 100070 - supports Methodists United in Prayer (formerly Cuba/Florida Covenant) by covering travel costs for Cuban Christians visiting Florida and ministries related to the Covenant.
- Advance # 100135 - supports the Cuba Methodist Seminary.
- Advance # 100140 - supports retired pastors of the Methodist Church in Cuba.
- Advance # 110030 – supports the purchase of house churches for new church planting as well as emergency repairs to existing facilities

You may place your donation in the offering plate (just note the Advance number) or you can send it directly to the Florida Conference:

450 Martin Luther King, Jr. Ave.
Lakeland, FL 33815

Please keep the Cuba ministry in your prayers through this holiday season.

-- and a good time was had by all.

On Saturday, December 19, 2015, we experienced our first cold morning of the Winter, but you immediately felt warm, when you entered Calvary United Methodist Church. It was a very special morning. We had the monthly breakfast, thanks to Diane & Larry Rood, with approximately 30 people in attendance. That was followed by a Christmas program for 14 children, featuring Barbara Hoose, reading a biblical version of “Twas the Night Before Christmas.” The poem was interspersed with hymns sung by all attendees.

At the end of the program, Santa greeted the children, as they left the sanctuary, on their way to the Fellowship Hall, to sit on his knee. Each child received a stocking containing goodies and got their picture taken with the jolly man.

Bill Walker was responsible for seeing that Santa got to the church on time for the event.



More pictures on Page 8

Dress A Girl

Want to be a part of the mission fields without leaving your home??

Recently I heard about a wonderful ministry called “Dress a Girl Pinewood.” This year, in 2015, Pinewood Presbyterian Church set a goal of making and delivering 200 dresses to girls in third world countries. They met that goal and have set a new goal for 2016 to make 400 dresses.

I’m looking to be a part of this wonderful ministry and enlisting the help of Calvary. What??? You don’t sew? That’s ok, the material needs to be cut out so those who do sew can have it ready to put together. Did I mention they also make little dolls to put in the pockets? Maybe you are artistic and can paint the faces on the dolls. MAYBE you are someone like me who loves to iron... now that’s a lost art!

In other words, there is something for everyone. I have contacted the facilitator of this ministry, Connie Gooden and she said that we can arrange for her to come to our church and do a demonstration of putting these dresses together.

Let’s make 2016 a year to be a blessing to little girls that don’t even have a dress to protect them not only from the elements but also from predators that would otherwise snatch them up. Please contact Diane Rood at 904-993-2586 if you are interested in becoming a part of something beautiful!



Below is an insert from their Facebook page:

“God’s love and protection are so worth sharing and so is this...

A FEW PIECES OF FABRIC BECOME A LITTLE GIRL’S CLOAK OF DIGNITY AND LOVE

A clip here, a line of stitching there, and two plain old pieces of fabric are formed into a delightful dress for a little girl.

Not just any little girl, mind you. A girl who has nothing: no other material possessions to her name. This girl is one of millions of children who live in such abject poverty that her parents are forced to make choices between essentials such as food or clothing, and food inevitably wins out. She often also lives in a world where she finds herself preyed upon at an early age, particularly if she’s inadequately dressed.

So, to answer the question posed in the photo above, figuratively the type of dress this fabric will become is a cherished dress. No matter what the pattern of the material, no matter if it has pockets, or ruffles, or not, each dress these girls receive will be treasured as most likely their first personal possession and quite often even their first item of clothing.

It will become her cloak of dignity, her cotton suit of armor to provide her with at least a modicum of protection, and it will become a message that says she is cared for by her family as well as by people across the globe.

This is the type of dress the material became physically.”



More Santa Pictures



Recipe of the Month

Charles' Cookies

submitted by Sarah Ferguson

Ingredients

1 cup Crisco

1 cup sugar

1 egg

1 1/2 cup All Purpose Flour

1 tsp baking soda

1 tsp cinnamon

1 1/2 cup Oats

3/4 cup finely chopped nuts

1 tsp vanilla

Instructions

Cream Crisco and sugars.

Add egg and beat well.

Sift together flour, soda, cinnamon and add to creamed mixture.

Add oats, nuts and vanilla.

Roll into balls and place on cookie sheet- mash with sugared press.

Bake at 325° for 10 minutes.

If you would like to share one of your favorite recipes, please put it in the "newsletter" box by the office or email it to newsletter@calvaryumcop.org and we will do our best to feature it in next month's Recipe of the Month section.



Calvary United Methodist

112 Blanding Blvd
Orange Park, FL 32073-2621



Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8AM - 12PM
Phone: 904-272-4210 Fax: 904-276-1367
Email: calvaryumcop@att.net
Web address: www.calvaryumcop.org



We support our family and friends in the military with prayer.

Over Seas Assignments

Aaron Ermer
Alex Fogel
Bobby Price

Daniel Richardson
Rae-Ann Tello
Ronald Mark Tello

U.S. Assignments

David Chapman
Tyler Crabtree
Christine Davies
Matt Ellison
Jonathan Emler
James Ferguson
Brian Fuller

John Haney
Joseph Haney
Josh Haney
Mario Hernandez
Shannon (Hause) Kizer
Christopher Mills
Brian Perkins

Gene Register
Maverick Stowers
Robbie Taylor
Ali Varong-Ellison
Aaron Williams



January Birthdays

- 2nd Logan McGaha
- 3rd Sheri Hatch, Becky Zeiman
- 4th Matthew Bonner
- 8th Kenneth Wilds
- 9th Walter Bonner
- 11th Kay Porterfield, Lloyd Stone
- 14th Sarah Ferguson
- 16th Taryn Fenwick
- 17th Charlene Bennett, Charlie Locke
- 22nd John Dyszel, Lorie Lambing
- 23rd Walker Stowers, Wyatt Stowers

The Beacon is published monthly by Calvary United Methodist Church.

To submit items, please e-mail to newsletter@calvaryumcop.org, or leave in the office marked "newsletter", or leave your submission in the slot marked NEWSLETTER outside the office door.

Items for the February issue are due by **January 15th.**

Check your email for a copy of *The Beacon*. Let us know if you would like to be included in the email listing.