

Greenbrier FUMC focus

BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF GREENBRIER FIRST UNITED METHODIST JULY 1-JULY 17, 2016

Arkansas Annual Conference 2016 “From Revival Flows Discipleship”

“From Revival Flows Discipleship” was the official theme of the 2016 Arkansas Annual Conference and Bishop Gary Mueller used his Episcopal address to encourage us to go back to our congregations to move our people forward to a more joyful discipleship.

There were only two resolutions that came before the Conference for discussion and vote this year. The first, was a resolution to “Encourage the Formation of Accountable Discipleship Groups in the Local Church” passed overwhelmingly. The second resolution

“We need to discover how we form the culture in which we live, instead of being transformed by it.” Bishop Mueller, Episcopal Address

The Conference also voted this year to extend its three-year childhood hunger initiative for an additional three years. Called “200,000 Reasons” because approximately 200,000 children in Arkansas go to bed hungry each night, the program encourages churches to establish food pantries and educational programs. About 34% of Arkansas Methodist churches are involved in some ministry to the hungry.

prompted more discussion as it dealt with the Council of Bishops proposal approved by General Conference regarding human sexuality. The resolution was narrowly defeated sighting that the language used may be interpreted by some as promoting disunity as well as a call for haste in making a decision. The resolution also included suggestions for the study commission makeup which some felt may seem to undermine the work of the Bishops Council. If you would like more information regarding Annual Conference visit with Carolyn Baker or the pastor.

“We can’t be caught sitting in our pews, waiting for an encore of the church of yesterday. We must be the church of today.”

Karon Mann, Laity Address

Church Events

- July 1-31 – CHRISTMAS in JULY to benefit Operation Christmas Child
- July 6th – Youth: Hunger Games at 6:30 p.m.
- July 13th – Youth: Hunger Games at 6:30 p.m.
- July 16th – Men’s Breakfast at 7:30 a.m.
- July 17th – Administrative Council at 4:00 p.m.
- July 18th – Mary/Martha Circle (Adam Hamilton Study: Half Truths) at 1:00 p.m.



Brady Harlan, concentrating on his pencil as he prepares for Youth Choir Tour.

JULY 16TH
7:30 A.M.

MEN'S
BREAKFAST

Wesley Class Meetings

Reclaiming a Forgotten and Essential Small Group Experience

"Jesus is looking for covenant keeping disciples – men and women and children who will put their hand to the plow and never look back."

J. D. Walt

Over the past few months, pastors in the Central District have been talking about rekindling the practice of the Wesley class meeting which was an essential element of truly Wesleyan spirituality. At Annual Conference a resolution was passed encouraging local congregations to form accountable discipleship groups following the Wesley class meeting model. The class meeting is different than a Sunday School class or Bible study where the primary focus is usually on imparting information. Instead the primary focus is on transformation.. As Kevin Watson says in his book, *The Class Meeting*, "The Christian life is not primarily about knowing the right things. It is about living in Christ. Christians, particularly those who are predisposed to participate in a small group, often already know a lot. Jesus came so that we could have abundant life, not merely so that we could have the right ideas about who he is. Class meetings provide a format that helps people actively grow in their faith in Christ together in community, not just study information."

As your pastor begins his sixth year of ministry here, we will be looking at developing these small class meetings and encouraging our congregation and especially those in church leadership positions to be part of a class meeting. We will begin some pilot groups this fall. A couple Sunday School classes have also been asked to consider using Watson's book as curriculum to learn more about the class meeting. If you are interested in having more information you might consider joining one of these classes for the eight week study or visit with the pastor.

"We have no doubt, but meetings of Christian brethren for the exposition of scripture-texts, may be attended with their advantages. But the most profitable exercise of any is a free inquiry into the state of the heart ... Through the grace of God our classes form the pillars of our work, and as we have before observed, are in a considerable degree our universities for the ministry."

- Francis Asbury & Thomas Coke, 1798 *Doctrines and Discipline*

Christmas in July

Getting an early start on Operation Christmas Child

Greenbrier FUMC will be celebrating Christmas in July this summer and inviting you to bring gifts for our Operation Christmas Child boxes that we will put together in November. You can find some "hot" buys during July to fit in the shoe boxes. Things like soccer ball with pump, stuffed animal, toys (small cars, trucks) yo-yo, jump rope, school supplies, coloring books, crayons, markers, toothbrushes and toothpaste, flashlights (with extra batteries) ... whatever you think would be great for kids ages anywhere from 2-14. Use your imagination and think like a kid...but remember it has to fit in the shoebox!

Our Chrismon Tree will be up in the sanctuary the entire month of July reminding you of this emphasis for OCC. You will be able to place your gifts under the tree as you bring them each week. Please don't wrap them, just bring them and place them under the tree. Also to celebrate all the gifts and a job well done we will bring Christmas in July to a close with the longest banana split in GreenbrierFUMC history at our 5th Sunday potluck on July 31st. Don't miss it! Start looking for the bargains! And bring in your shoebox gifts in this month!

Longest Banana Split in the History of GFUMC

That's right we are going to attempt to put together a 30 ft banana split on **Sunday, July 31st** during our fifth Sunday Potluck. We will have one worship service on that Sunday at 11:00 a.m. and then finish off a tremendous month of celebrating Christmas in July with a potluck and banana split. No need to bring desserts to the potluck...we will have plenty of banana split for everyone. Just bring your favorite casserole, meat, vegetables, side dishes, etc to the most exciting potluck that we have had in a long while. Hopefully, with a little help after we share our meal, we will put the 30 ft banana split together in just under three minutes. That's an amazing speed of 10 feet per minute or a foot of banana split every six seconds! Proving once again that GFUMC can do great things when we all work together!

Walk to Emmaus Fall Dates

We are looking for 3 women and 3 men from GreenbrierFUMC to be part of the Walk to Emmaus spiritual retreat this fall. The dates for the fall walks are: **Men's Walk - September 22-25** and the **Women's Walk on October 20-23**. The cost of the weekend is \$160.00 but we can find scholarship money to offset a good portion of that fee if necessary. We need to send in the applications by the end of this month. If you are interested in going please talk to the pastor or Carolyn Baker this month.



Tricia Walker thinking about that 30 ft banana split as she grabs a cup of coffee to keep her going during choir tour.

Youth Update

Some great stuff coming up for our youth!

Youth Choir Tour was AMAZING! What a blessing it was to be in the congregation for their last worship service at Pulaski Heights. What a joy to see Tricia and Lacey singing solos and lending their voices to the choir and Brady pounding on the skins!

Don't forget we are right in the middle of **The Hunger Games on Wednesday nights** from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Every week the lesson revolves around our hunger and thirst for God with a competition every week. Our verse for this study is Matthew 5:6, *"Happy are people who are hungry and thirsty for righteousness, because they will be fed until they are full."* The final prizes to the winning district will be awarded on July 20th!

Don't forget, we will be attending the Methodist Family Health Bridge Walk again this year. It will take place on Friday, **August 5**. This is the official first event for the upcoming 6th graders to go on. They are doing something new this year after the walk for Arkansas youth, we will be attending the **ACCYMs Got Talent at St. James UMC in Little Rock**. The first 15 acts to sign up will be performing that night, our youth fund will pay for the first single or group act that signs up from our church. All acts need to have two performances ready for this. There will be three rounds of five acts with the best in each round performing again in the finals. The grand prize winner will have the opportunity to perform at VERITAS NEXT YEAR!!! The people's choice winner will be voted on by the audience by putting money in their favorite act's bucket. The people's choice winner receives a CASH PRIZE. This is serious y'all! We need to have a big group attend to cheer on our contestant that I KNOW we will have! Mark your calendars!! This will be so much fun!!!!

Of course there is still **Jr. High and Sr. High Assembly** right around the corner on July 25-29 and we have 33 incredible youth going. But before Assembly, we have the first **B.A.S.I.C. Saturday on July 16th**. We will be doing this once a quarter and we will always try to keep it as a surprise as to the destination. What we will do is let you know how much money you will need for it and if parents want to know, we will be happy to tell you what the plan is but we want the youth to practice a little trust and faith and show up without knowing what we will be doing. We will meet at 8 AM on Saturday, July 16 for our first one and see how it goes. The youth will need \$20 and a sack lunch.

Plans are also underway for some small group ministry opportunities this fall with our youth. We are looking for some adults or couples (other than youth parents) who would like to spend some time mentoring and disciplining some of our youth in a small group setting. Adults, be praying about this and if God is calling you to be part of this new ministry with our youth. More on this later but if you think you might be interested talk to Michelle Kirk.

Keep our youth group in your prayers. Pray for them and for their spiritual strength and growth as they strive to be faithful followers of Christ!

"We have been given a seat at the table, but we desperately want to eat the meal before us."
Lauren Lovelady, Youth Address

Financial News

Try online giving this summer

www.greenbrierfumc.org/online-giving

Ah, summer—the time of year when heat exhaustion drives families to the white sandy beaches and salty ocean air of the nearest coast. Baseball season is in full swing, the lake is overcrowded with boats, and sleeping in is a regular occurrence.

Unfortunately, all of this rest and recreation often leaves church pews empty and offering plates even emptier. Summertime requires pastors to confront the touchy subject of money as ministry simply can't afford to take a vacation. Some of our most expensive events occur during the summer....like Vacation Bible School that cost us \$1200 and our youth events like Jr. High and Sr. High Assembly. Of course our electric bills are greater during the summer months as we air condition our building. So please continue to support your church in prayer and giving during the summer months. We have made it easy for you to give while you are away. Please try out our online giving at www.greenbrierfumc.org or you can continue to give through the old fashion way of mailing the church a check.

Here is where we stand at the end of June:

OPERATING BUDGET FOR 2016	\$193,796.00
NEEDED TO DATE	\$96,898.00
GIVING AS OF JUNE 30, 2016	\$92,944.63
DEFICIT TO DATE	-\$3,953.37

We are also getting excitingly close to paying off the new parsonage. All we owe as of today is about \$2260. We should have the parsonage paid off the first of October! Good job church!

Thank you for your faithfulness to God and His church that allows us to continue to reach more children, youth and adults for Christ.

Food Pantry News

To date this year, 200 families have received food assistance. June was a busy month with 40 families being helped. The Kroger Donation Committee sent a \$50.00 gift card for the Food Pantry.

Generous monetary donations enable us to hunt for the best prices on food items kept in stock. Donations of food items are always needed and go quickly. Each family receives about \$60 worth of food.

Canned meats (tuna, luncheon loaf, chicken, hams), 1# hamburger packages and small packages of chicken are always needed. Also needed are peanut butter, Jell-O, Ramen noodles, spaghetti sauce, canned beans (pork & beans or baked beans), soups, broth, and canned fruits.

Thanks for your generous support in helping to feed those that are going through difficult times in Faulkner County.

Miscellaneous Announcements

- **The United Methodist Women** still have a few GFUMC t-shirts available for sale. They are blue and have the cross and flame logo. Sizes include two large and four X large. The shirts are now selling for half-price ... \$6.00 Bargain! You can see them at the Welcome Center but this is the last of the shirts so act fast!
- **Jr. High & Sr. High Assembly** is ALMOST HERE!
One more Adult VOLUNTEER needed!
We have 33 youth signed up to go to Youth Assembly this year, another record year! With that comes a need for more volunteer help. As of right now, we have 4 adults going but we could really use one more female chaperone. The week of Assembly is free to our chaperones!! You will get three meals a day and some amazing quality time with some pretty awesome kids. We need the most help at night during free time and bed checks so technically; you could work during the day and just join us in the evening if work is holding you back. Assembly is July 25-29 and Michelle would need to get you registered by this week if you can join us. Please let Michelle Kirk know ASAP and thank you for considering it.
- **Your pastor will be in West Virginia on vacation** from Tuesday, July 5th to Wednesday, July 13th. He will be there to conduct a wedding for his niece who will be getting married on Saturday, July 9th. It is an exciting summer for the Lyon family as the only two girls of the family will both be married off in the summer of 2016.
- **GreenbrierFUMC** will be a collection point this year (November) for **Operation Christmas Child boxes**. John Welch is the coordinator for our collection site. He will need four people to work on Wednesday, November 16 from 4-7 p.m. and four people to work on Saturday, November 19 from 3:30-6:30 p.m. at our church as people bring their boxes in. The work is simple and John will be glad to give you all the necessary instructions. I know this is a five months away but if you are interested in helping John by filling one of these time slots, go ahead and let him know you will be willing to help.
- Please keep **Lacey Crosby** in your prayers as she is at the Hendrix Youth Institute this week. She will head off to Guatemala in a few days and spend time over there doing mission and ministry. This week she has spent time examining her call to ministry as she has listened to other call stories. She will be back from Guatemala on July 11. We are proud of Lacey and her heart for ministry. Continue to pray for her as she is exploring God's call and purpose for her life.
- Don't forget our **BLESSING BAG program** during the summer months. This could be a great activity for a Sunday School class or a family to help out with. If one class would supply the Ziplock bags or a family would supply the bottled water or juice boxes...another group could supply granola bars and so on, it would make things a lot easier. If your family or group would be willing to do that, contact Cassidy Broadaway. It will help keep our blessing bag ministry going strong.

Upcoming Events

August 5th & 6th - Church-Wide Prayer Vigil

As we get ready for the fall, kick off a new school year, send kids off to college, we want to begin by calling our church to pray. There will be a lot going on and there is no better way to get our church focused. We will start Friday August 5th and care on through Saturday the 6th... You can sign up during the month of July at the Welcome Center!

Sunday, August 21st

New Sermon Series Begins

"Revelation: Glimpses of What's to Come"

Starting on Sunday, August 21st, we will begin a seven week sermon series that will lead us through Chapters 4 – 22. You can use these summer months to be reading through Revelation and asking God to begin to speak to you about some of the key images and how Christ is revealed throughout this book.

