



THE CIRCUIT RIDER

Middleburg United Methodist Church
Editor: Nichole Batten

November/December 2020
Issue 6

We Can Still Celebrate

Two major seasons are before us: Thanksgiving and Christmas (to include Advent). I should add the third: COVID-19 (sorry). Life continues on even in the midst of a pandemic. We are called to the abundant life, so let's celebrate.

This isn't our first epidemic, hopefully it's our last. Catastrophes have always touched our lives. *"Death has come up into our windows, it has entered our palaces, to cut off the children from the streets and the young men from the squares."* (Jeremiah 9:20). Much is at work to thwart the good that God has for us. I want to encourage the people of God to lean into Jesus and celebrate our relationship to God through Him. Consequently, life will be led to celebration. Many of us have been celebrating the ability to gather again weekly and worship together. Something we may have taken for granted.

This year will be different indeed. The goal is the same but this year will be hard for many to celebrate. One hundred and sixteen families from our community will be grieving the lost of loved ones due to COVID ([usafacts.org/Clay County, Florida Coronavirus Cases and Deaths](https://usafacts.org/Clay-County-Florida-Coronavirus-Cases-and-Deaths)). What should our relationship to these people be? Should we celebrate amid such loss and pain?

I still wish you a "Happy Thanksgiving!" We will celebrate Thanksgiving, and seek to instill "an attitude of gratitude" within ourselves and our families. "Merry Christmas!" It can still be merry. We will celebrate Christmas; we must give praise and thanksgiving for the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ. We must sing with joy in thanksgiving for the new things God is doing through Jesus Christ. Yet still, this year's celebration will be different. *"How could we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?"* (Psalm 137:4). We do live in a strange, foreign land, although the houses, the landscape, and the people are familiar. We who look for God's coming already feel like strangers in a foreign land.

There's something we resonate with in the apostle Paul's words: *"For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him, since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have"* (Philippians 1:29-30). God's people know what it is to lament and struggle. Daily we observe a culture unaware of God's life-giving promises, and we experience the reality of "principalities and powers" that defy God's rule of life. But out of the gloom and fear, we still hear Isaiah's invitation: *"Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!"* (Isaiah 2:5). Let us rejoice in the words of Charles Wesley, *Rejoice, the Lord is King* UMH 715:

Rejoice, the Lord is King!
Your Lord and King adore;
Rejoice, give thanks, and sing,
And triumph evermore;
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

In Jesus,

Pastor Devin Sanderson



United Methodist Men

ATTENTION ALL MEN!!

Would you like to learn how to live like Jesus taught us?

Authentic Manhood is:

- Rejecting Passivity
- Accepting Responsibility
- Leading Courageously
- Investing Eternally

It requires:

- Discipline
- Vulnerability
- Trust
- Accountability

*Please consider joining us in one of these important Bible studies just for men. Classes and times are listed below:

A Man and His Design: Mondays, 6 – 7:30 PM, Budington Bldg. - (Craig Van Gundy)

A Man and His Story: Mondays, 6 – 7:30 PM, Study - (Ray Ashcraft)

A Man and His Traps: Tuesdays, 6 – 7:30 PM, Study - (Phil Jacobs)

A Man and His Fatherhood: Tuesdays, 9 – 10:30 AM, Portable - (Tommy Wilder)

A Man and His Work: Thursdays, 6 – 7:30 PM, Budington Bldg. - (James Cooper)



Shoebox Ministry

This Ministry helps boys and girls have a Merry Christmas. You can donate your shoebox with socks, puzzles, toys, and other small items. Have them to the Church by November 8th. We also have a few boxes and flyers in the Church Office.



Just when we thought we had it all worked out....BOOM here comes another backlash. We are going to just erase 2020 as a good year to have our yard sale and move on to 2021. We will be moving it to May of 2021 and will publish an exact date later. Prayerfully, the situation will be more normal and we can be back to some kind of normal.

It is now time to begin getting the toy store stocked up for the Food Bridge Children's Toy drive. We make sure each child gets two gifts. We pretty much emptied it out last year as the list just keeps getting longer. This has been a difficult year for many of our families and they really need our help. A bin will be in the FLC on Sunday's unless we resume worship in the Sanctuary. It will then be placed in the Narthex. You may also drop items by the office. If you would like to make a monetary donation, please make any checks out to the United Methodist Women. We are so appreciative of the support from our church family in making these missions possible.

We resumed our regular meetings in September. We continue to meet in the Portable on the second Thursday of the month at 6:30pm. All ladies in the church are welcome to come and join us.

Jesus did not promise to change the circumstances around us. He promised great peace and pure joy to those who would learn to believe that God actually controls all things.

In Christ,
Judy McNee, President

A red scroll graphic with a black outline and a white shadow, containing text. The scroll is unrolled on the left and right sides, with a small red circle at the top right corner.

A big "THANK YOU" to the congregation for all of the Pastor appreciation blessings. Faith and I feel the love! We greatly appreciate your love and kindness. May God continue to richly bless you all.

Are You a Shepherd?

What picture comes to mind when you hear the word “shepherd”? Probably either the picture of Jesus in a tan robe holding a lamb surrounded by sheep or literally a man with a flock of those animals. Both correct. A shepherd is someone responsible for a group of critters. A shepherd is committed to the care and welfare of his charges because he knows that his flock is in need of security and assurance so that they will be free to live and grow productively. In the case of sheep (or goats, llamas, ducks, etc.), they provide wool, milk (*ok, not the ducks – they provide other stuff*) and meat as well as offspring so they need to be able to drink, graze, and rest to chew their cud without fear of danger. Their shepherd, like an overt Secret Service officer, is ever on the alert. A shepherd’s life is intimately connected with the ones he oversees.

Let’s change that gender pronoun now. A shepherd can be a she. Think Kindergarten teacher. If that doesn’t require hazard pay, nothing does. Most often a *she*, a Kindergarten teacher becomes a surrogate mother for 7 hours a day, ever on the alert for danger, organizing their snacking & eating (grazing/drinking), or keeping up with errant wanderers. Her charges know her voice and the different inflections as she educates them.

In my current Bible study, it was revealed that shepherds in Biblical times weren’t always men, at least adult, sturdy men. Often times shepherds were the elderly or infirm, daughters, or young teens – those who could be released from more physical labors of building and farming to care for the flocks. (Remember David, the youngest son of Jesse, who would one day become king, and Rachel who would one day become wife to Jacob and mother of Joseph. Both were introduced to us in their roles as shepherds.) Although not as grand as a sword-wielding soldier or an elegant person being carried through the streets in a decorated litter, the job of shepherd was nonetheless pretty crucial. Because of the financial feat of raising a successful flock; heck, reduce it down to the minimum – no sheep, no eat – I would say a shepherd rates up there near the top of important occupations.

Jesus is known as our Good Shepherd – for all the above reasons. He loves us, cares for our welfare and knows us intimately. As a keeper of flocks on our farm, I identify with that comparison; I am responsible for the husbandry of my critters. I don’t have to fight bears or wolves as David did, just pesky foxes and snakes. Jesus, on the other hand, has to fight the ultimate enemy to protect us, and is ever on the alert in the spiritual realm to safeguard our worthless selves. Sometimes, I think we just picture Him as that sweet faced man holding a defenseless lamb. We sing sweet songs and we encourage all to come so we can help feed and clothe them, which is what we are *commissioned and supposed* to do. But, every now and then we need to stop and think about the wicked, the ugly, and the unspeakable that Jesus is holding at bay, the very crucifixions we all would be experiencing if it weren’t for Him and His awesome shepherd power – and we need to cry out His praises and worshipfully thank Him with every ounce of our strength. He doesn’t *need* our praise but He appreciates it, He inhabits it, and I like to think it bolsters the strength of His arms as He holds back the waves of sin. He is our Ultimate Shepherd and Wielder of the Rod of our salvation. There is no movie that can even capture half the magnificence and deadly finality of Judgment Day when Jesus returns, His shepherd’s robe ablaze with fire and the sweet face now the determined countenance of our unwavering Redeemer.

Be sure, my sisters and brothers, that you are in the flock.

Thankful for the perfect security of our Shepherd,

**Susan



Sunday School

Children's Classes

10:00 - 11:00 (during church services) for children through sixth grade

11:00 - 12:00 Methodist Kids Fellowship for all children through sixth grade

Music and classroom activities will provide additional Spirit-filled enrichment.

*Nursery can be available if we know ahead of time.

We all know how important Sunday is for us and we hope that you will bring your children and grandchildren so they can enjoy the experience too.

Adult Classes

- 11:00 - 12:00

Open Door - Meets in the Portable

Tea Time - Meets in the Choir Room

- 8:30 - 9:30

Crusaders - Meets in the Portable now

Methodist Kids Fellowship - for children through sixth grade available *for kids whose parents are attending Sunday School or just any children that would like to attend.*

*Music and classroom activities will provide additional Spirit-filled enrichment. Nursery can be available if we know ahead of time.

We would like to introduce our new **Children's Coordinator**: Misty DiGiovanni. Please help us give her a warm welcome!



To help make the transition as smooth as possible since Wendy will be retiring as of October 30th, please email your attendance for Bible Study, Fourth Day, etc. to the church's email or drop by the church office. Also, please have your announcements for the bulletin in to the office via email by Wednesday at 4 pm if possible or drop by the office. Thank you for your help.

A Big Thanks

Watch out Middleburg, I have arrived! (Rick Fife will never be the same.) Now, in order to get here I needed the help of three people: Craig Van Gundy, Roger Murphy, and Pastor Luiz. A big “thanks” is indeed offered to all 3. On September 23rd, 2 trucks and these 3 men showed up. In about 4 hours my household items were packed into 2 trucks and then delivered to my new address on Orchid Ave. At the end, I thought it would be nice to offer them money, if for no other reason to cover their gas. I was surprised when they said no. Their response “donate the money to the Cuban Church. They told me, “the people in Cuba stand in line for 8-10 hours for food, and even then, they are not guaranteed any handout. If they don’t get any, they wait to the next Week. If we can get more money to the Cuban Churches, they can get more food and hopefully reduce the length of time in line. I urge anyone who possibly can, to donate to this worthy cause. I did!

Thanks,
Gary Monson

Our church now has an account set up on Amazon Smile (this is the same as shopping on Amazon but sends a small portion of your purchase as a donation to us if you choose Middleburg United Methodist as your charity. Copy and paste link below:

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/59-1320369>

Help bring joy this season

Buy your gifts at smile.amazon.com
or with AmazonSmile ON in the app
and Amazon donates




Prayer Roll

Scott Ashcraft, Rheta Barber, Dennis Barker, Diane Betz, Joyce Brantley, Crystal Brooks, Courtney Brunelle, Jane Bullen, Meagan Campbell, Lib Creech, Polly Criss, Helen Crotts, David, Church, Danika Davis, Joni DeBusk, Gary Driver, Jeff Driver, Blake Eckert, Rick Fife, Krickett Foschaar, Tony Fox, Carol & Richard Fouraker, Eileen Free, Rev. Ann Godbold, Yvonne Gordon-Owens, Teresa Gross, Annette Hagler, LA & Maxine Hardee, Tom Howard, Darlene King, Paul Lee, Yvonne Lempke, Ernie Lord, Jim Lundy, Bob & Pat Lucas, Bob & Rose Lynch, BeBe Mathis, Debbie McDonald, Gordon McDonald, Linda Monroe, Ellen Moore, Curt Morrison, Linda Morrison, James O’Donnell, Ray Overly, Sam Payne, Doug Pope, Henry Rauch, Bill Roberts, Jody Robertson, Tina Rodgers, Kate Sasso, Robin Scherzer, George Scoble, Tracy Scoville, Dan Smith, Nora Smith, Randall Smith, Joan Spencer, Allan Spencer, Nicholas Spencer, Priscilla Spencer, Jennie Warner, Gracie Washington, Richard Wehrman, Millie Wilkes, Ann Woodard, Trinity Woodley, Sylvia Wooters, Robin Zagora & Family

Servicemen & Women:

Drew Baker, John Behrens, John Brantley, SGT Philip Buchanan, Jerry Dingman, Benjamin Harlowe, Ben Humphrey, Joseph Jankord, Howard Kalick, Caleb Kovach, Lola Lewis, Jarrod Linion, Matt Lippencott, Pete Matisoo, Kayla McClendon, Michael McLeod, Dustin Morrison, Brad Muller, Paul Noland, Vince Preston, Matt Ritter, Sarah Robinson, Alexander Rumrill, Josh Sansoucy, Breena Schmoll, Bret Shockley, Lawrence (Willie) Summers, Tim Sutton, Chris Teagle, Paul C. Trotman, Buzzy Updegraff, Jason & Jackie Warren, Daniel West, and Matthew West

Administrative Council

As the Chair of the Administrative council, I apologize for not having more meetings during 2020. The Coronavirus crisis had pretty much tied our hands as far as getting together was concerned. I have looked at the 2021 calendar and have come up with a meeting schedule for next year.

- * We will have meetings on the 5th Sundays in January, May, August, and October following service.
- * We will have meetings on the 4th Thursdays in March and July at 7 pm.
- * The meeting in November (if needed) will be on the 5th Tuesday at 7 pm.

We look forward to more of the Congregation taking part in the coming year.

God Loves You All, and So Do I,

Don Weeks

I am grateful for the opportunity to have served MUMC for 19 years. I'm not leaving the church, just moving on in a different capacity.

Thank you to my church family for your love and support over the years. I honestly can say that there have been times when I doubt I would have made it without you.

To our volunteers, thank you so much, for your tireless service to the church. Without you, it would be hard to succeed as a thriving church.

Thank you so much,

Wendy



Matthew 19:14 ESV “but Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.

”” Hello to Everyone!!! It is with great honor & sincere gratitude that I have accepted the position as the MUMC Children’s Ministry Coordinator. I love children & especially their significant importance for His Kingdom & the opportunity to get to teach them more about Jesus, God & the Holy Spirit in a variety of ways that will help them learn their importance.

I have been attending MUMC since June 2017 after moving away from Chicago, my home for 32 years, & a very large majority of my family & friends. I am the widow of my dear husband of 32 years, Perry DiGiovanni, a man for which many of you prayed while we were undergoing the process, fruition & complications of a heart & double lung transplant. I want to thank you with my most sincere gratitude for the power of your prayers brought Perry & our family through many, many trials, tribulations & witnessed miracles. I am the mother to 2 adult sons (Michael 34 & Ryan 33) & a child (Ariel/Perry Joseph) who has been in Heaven for 29 years. I have also been recently blessed with a daughter-in-law (Kim) as of September 13, 2020. My parents are Dennis & Ann Barker & are MUMC members.

I’m a registered nurse (licensed in Illinois) for 39 years with an extensive nursing career focus in Maternal/Child Health & have worked in a variety of settings: hospital (ER, antepartum/postpartum & general care nursery; Lactation Consultant); outpatient (OB/Gyn, Pediatric & Family Practice clinics & offices & Hospice triage); Home Health (Prenatal, Postpartum, Newborn, Adult & Pediatric) as well as community health education & programs for all ages (Prenatal/LaMaze, Sibling, Adult/Infant & Child CPR, Breastfeeding, Babysitting, First Aid & many more).

Since June 2017, I have been actively involved in our children & youth ministries (Wed Night KidMin classes, Cookie Crunchers, VBS, Wed Night Youth Amplified & Sun Youth Group, Pumpkin Patch, Mission: PB & J) as well as other service & small group activities.

It takes a village to raise a child & so I know that I will certainly need your prayers, assistance, suggestions, God given talents/ gifts, & resources to fulfill this ministry.

Thank you!

Misty DiGiovanni

Youth News

Greetings! I pray this article finds you all well.

The youth of MUMC have greatly enjoyed being able to meet together in person again, after what had seemed to be unending separation. How great it is to know, that while we were physically separate, God was always close by. He has been holding each of us in his hands this whole time, and has brought us back together with a new freshness and vigor. All of our meetings have been, and will continue to be held with masks, and while maintaining social distancing.

Between online from home, and gathering in person, we have finally completed our Genesis lesson series. With Christmas season creeping ever closer by the week, we will begin a short 4 week series called “See Through Life”, then we will be going through the Christmas story, The Birth of Christ, for December. If you know of a youth 7th-12th grade that would like a place to hang out in fellowship with other believers, we would love to welcome them!

These are the updated times for Youth Gatherings:

- Sundays: 4pm in the Youth Room
- Wednesdays: 6pm in the FLC

I continue to pray for God’s Grace and Peace to reign in each and all of our lives.

God Bless.

-Harry Benedict



November 2020

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|---|---|--|---|----------|
| 1 Sunday School | 2 Prayer Meeting 9 am Bible Study 6 pm | 3 Bible Study | 4 Bible Study | 5 Food Bridge Cub Scouts Clothes Closet | 6 | 7 |
| 8 Sunday School | 9 Prayer Meeting Bible Study | 10 Bible Study Finance Meeting | 11 Bible Study | 12 Food Bridge Cub Scouts Clothes Closet UMW - 6:30 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 Sunday School | 16 Prayer Meeting Bible Study | 17 Bible Study | 18 Bible Study Purple Gang | 19 Food Bridge Clothes Closet Cub Scouts | 20 | 21 |
| 22 Sunday School | 23 Prayer Meeting Bible Study | 24 Bible Study | 25 Bible Study Food Bridge | 26  | 27  | 28 |
| 29 1st Sunday of Advent Sunday School | 30 Prayer Meeting Bible Study | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

Weekly Events:

BIBLE STUDIES/ CLASSES

Sunday: Various morning Sunday School Classes

Monday: 9 am Prayer Mtg - Sanctuary
Bible Study - 6 pm - Portable

Tuesday: Budington - 6 pm

UMM: Various meeting throughout the week.

N.A. Meetings Tues. - 7:30 pm - Mongiovi House
PURPLE GANG: Every 3RD **Wednesday** - Lunch-11:30
Wednesday Nights – Youth: 6:00 pm - Location Varies
Thursdays: Cub Scouts - FLC- 6:30 -8 pm

FOOD BRIDGE MINISTRY

Thursday Drive Thru Distribution - 7:30-11:30am

BOUTIQUE - Thursdays 12-3 pm



December 2020

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Sunday School | Prayer Meeting 9 am Bible Study 6 pm | Bible Study Crafters | Youth & Children Bible Study | Food Bridge Cub Scouts | | |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| Sunday School | Prayer Meeting Bible Study | Bible Study Crafters Finance 7 pm | Youth & Children Bible Study | Food Bridge Cub Scouts UMW Meeting 6:30 pm | | |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| Sunday School | Prayer Meeting Bible Study | Bible Study | Youth & Children Bible Study Purple Gang | Food Bridge Cub Scouts Clothes Closet | | |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| Wreaths Across America Sunday School | Prayer Meeting Bible Study | Bible Study | Youth & Children Bible Study | Food Bridge Clothes Closet |  | |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | |
| Sunday School |  |  |  | Food Bridge  | | |

Weekly Events:

BIBLE STUDIES/ CLASSES

Sunday: Various morning Sunday School Classes

Monday: 9 am Prayer Mtg -Sanctuary
Bible Study - 6 pm - Portable

Tuesday: Budington - 6 pm

UMM: Various meetings throughout the week.

N.A. Meetings Tues. - 7:30 pm - Mongiovi House

Purple Gang: EVERY 3RD Wednesday For Lunch

Wednesday Nights: Youth: 6:00 pm - Location Varies

Thursdays: Cub Scouts - FLC 6:30-8 pm

FOOD BRIDGE MINISTRY

Thursday Drive Thru Distribution:
7:30-11:30 am

BOUTIQUE - Thursday 12-3 pm



Birthdays

- | | |
|---|---|
| 2 Rylen Gerds, James Glaze, Brad Lyda, Shelby Updegraff) Seal, John Webster | 16 Stephany Fenn, Peg Maher, Noel Rucker, Samantha White |
| 3 James Louden | 20 Heather Milam |
| 4 John Foschaar Nichole Batten | 21 Kevin Ossenfort, Cole Russell |
| 5 Derrick Jefferson | 23 Sharon Futch, Angel Smith, |
| 6 Lynn Peaslee Tina Raney | Michelle Eckert |
| 7 Elizabeth Bozeman | 24 Tara Almand, Caleb Frisbee, |
| 8 Melanie Fitzpatrick, Connie Westerwelle | Kendra Baum |
| 11 Gina Hinson | 26 Nancy Long, |
| 12 Paul Ackley | 27 Elle Nordgren, Nan Callahan, |
| 14 Eileen Free | Jane Ward |
| 15 Jimmy VanBoskerck | 30 Patricia Beneduce |

Anniversaries

- 1 Nicolas & Karissa Terrell
4 Kenny & Wendy Brewer
23 Chris & Ruth Paine



Birthdays

- | | |
|--|--|
| 3 Harry Faulkner | 23 Mickey Burns, Jane Hoffman, |
| 4 Joyce Cox, Jim Jordan, Jody Rogers, Allie Wilder, | Gary Monson, Kailee Crehfield, Zarek White |
| 7 Ashlee Thornton | 24 Hope Dmytryk, Richard Fouraker, Annette Hagler |
| 9 Christopher Simpson | 25 Beth McDonald, Noel Starnes |
| 10 Nelda Orcino | 26 Lacey Crist, Gordon McDonald |
| 12 Ann Woodard | 27 Mary Schulte |
| 13 Lydia Scherzer | 29 Polly Criss |
| 17 Susan Hendry | 30 Jody Robertson, Marcia VanBoskerck, Loretta Webster |
| 18 Matt Howard, Christina Smith | 31 Laura Gerds, Selma Stansbury, Sue Woodley |
| 20 Patricia Tuck | |
| 21 Harry Benedict, Nicholas Bogdan, Barry DeMay | |
| 22 Lynn Fullerton | |

Anniversaries

- 7 Tom & Lynn Summers
13 Mike & Clara Bragg
16 Steven & Stacy Spooner
19 Mylon & Amy Pope,
22 Richard & Pam Partridge
23 Elaine & Gary Driver
30 John & Ruth Ann Dickerson



Middleburg United Methodist Church

3925 Main Street
Middleburg, FL 32068

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

Middleburg United Methodist Church

3925 Main Street
Middleburg, FL 32068

Rev. Brian Sanderson, Sr. Pastor

(850) 673-7309

Church Office:

(904) 282-5589

E-mail

middleburgunited@bellsouth.net

Church Office Closed:

**Nov. 11 (Veteran's Day), Nov. 26 &
27 (Thanksgiving), and Dec. 24-Jan.
1st (Christmas/New Years)**

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To: 779-77



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Go in Peace and Love 