



**December 2013 Newsletter**

# *North East District*



## *Merry Christmas*



Dear Colleagues in the mission of Jesus Christ:

This is one of my favorite pictures. My son David and I are looking through the infant nursery window at his first born child, Ellie, within an hour of her birth. Observe his face; it radiates joy. He is intensely and immediately alive. His "aliveness" generates a moment of deep connection. We are present to wonder and love. This was a holy moment.



"In the beginning the Word already existed. He was with God, and he was God... Life itself was in him, and this life gives light to everyone." The Gospel of John 1: 1, 4 NLT

John Ortberg once observed about himself that he could divide his life into two parts: living ... and waiting to live. Not so with God, who is moment by moment immediately and intensely alive. Present. Present to all creation. Present to us. God radiates life. God is light. God is love.

Not all moments radiate joy. Last Friday afternoon I joined the congregation gathered to celebrate the life of Gary Doles, the late husband of Jan Richardson. These moments of song and prayer, poetry and prose, were most terrible and beautiful; achingly sad, yet immediately and intensely alive. Present. Present to God. Present to one another. Connected. This was a holy moment.

Of the many, many things that Christmas is, and Christmas means, it surely means LIFE! Perhaps one way of understanding sanctification is this: to be increasingly, moment by moment, alive in Christ. Present. Present to God. Present to one another. Connected.

"The glory of God is [a human being] fully alive." Irenaeus.  
I hope for you more holy moments in this Advent/Christmas season.

Glory!

*Tim*

## **In the District**

**NEW CHURCH DEVELOPMENT CORNER**

Rev. Dr. Stephen R. Herbert, VP-Exec. Director



The North East District's West Side Vision ministry team progresses toward new ways to reach the unchurched on the west side of Jacksonville.

The process exists in three stages: the Design stage, the Implementation stage, and, the Planting stage.

The Design stage is the process of identifying the needs on the west side of Jacksonville and the resources that can be realistically expected to support those ministries. The initial Design team session was held Saturday and Sunday, September 21-22 at Lake Shore UMC where the team identified 18 ministry needs that exist in the west side and 12 strong resources that can be counted on to support ministry efforts meeting those needs. We then narrowed the list of 18 down to the top three: Young Adults/Youth (Leader: Sally Burroughs) , New Worship Opportunities (Leader: Rev. Rafe Vigil), and, Families with Disabilities (Leader: Rev. Steve Herbert).

In October and November these three teams held their initial meetings exploring ministry strategies. Sunday, November 24, the Design Team reconvened for its second session. The three ministry teams shared their progress to-date and next steps toward providing new ministries in these three areas on the west side.

The three Design stage ministry teams will continue to refine their focus and begin developing specifics ministry goals and strategies to achieve those goals. The three ministry teams composing the Design team will meet for their third large group session Sunday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> to share, further evaluate each team's focus, and commit to the next stage of development.

**Northeast Florida Mission Prayer Gathering***Celebrate Jesus*

You and your church family are invited to join us at the next **Monthly Prayer Gathering** for the Northeast Florida Mission to be held on **Monday, December 9, from 7-8 pm, at Christ United Methodist Church**, 400 Penman Road, Neptune Beach, FL 32266; Phone (904) 249-5370. We will pray for our churches, pastors and leaders, the communities around our churches, and the teams that will come to help us visit our neighbors during Mission Week next summer (June 21-28). All are invited to come pray, even if you are not part of a host church!

Blessings,  
Marilyn Coppenhaver  
Executive Assistant  
Celebrate Jesus, Inc.

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**Important Reminders from the District**

Annual Assessment Process for 2013 -Due December 1, 2013 is still available online at [www.flumc.org](http://www.flumc.org) under the Ministries Tab: Center for Clergy Excellence. Appointed Clergy and the Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee should meet annually to complete this process. The report should be sent to the District Office. [Click Here](#) for more information.

Continuing Education - Complete in conjunction with the Clergy Assessment Process; [Click Here](#) for the CE form.

Church and Pastor Profile forms are available on the conference website December 1, 2013. The deadline for completing the church and pastor profile is Friday, January 31, 2014.

Year End Statistics reports will go live on the conference website January 2, 2014. Deadline for churches to enter final statistics is January 31, 2014.

The District Office Ministry Team would like to thank all of our Pastors, Church Administrative Assistants, Church Leadership and everyone for their diligence in all areas of kingdom work this past year.

We wish you and your family a Blessed Christmas and a Prosperous New Year!

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**Leadership Training Event  
"Leading with Spirit"**

Saturday, January 25, 2014  
Lakewood UMC  
6133 San Jose Blvd.  
Jacksonville, FL 32217

**Schedule**

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

All Pastors, and Church Leadership especially newly elected leaders are encouraged to come join us this year for training opportunity to "Lead with Spirit".

There will be various workshop sessions with topics centered around our theme. Topics such as: Finance 101, Child Youth Protection Policy; Trustee Training; Clergy Assessment; Staff Parish Relations Training; Spiritual Guidelines for Engaging & Interacting as Fellow Believers; Black Church Initiative; Florida United Methodist Children's Home; Branching Out: Letting the Spirit Lead, Starting and Strengthening United Methodist Men in the Local Church, and more!

The sessions will be led by Florida Conference leaders: Harold Lewis, Director of Justice & Multicultural Ministries; Craig Smelser, Controller; Icel Rodriguez, Director of Global Missions; Janet Earls, Congregational Vitality Specialist; Dan Jackson, Director of New Church Development; Wayne Wiatt, Executive Director, Office of Clergy Excellence; LaNita Battle, Claims Manager, Ministry Protection; Melissa Cooper, Program Coordinator, Life Enrichment Center; Stephen Hartsfield, Florida United Methodist Children's Home; Charissa Jaeger-Sanders, Grace Works Studios, Bruce Seidner, Dan Stanley, and Michael Maxwell, Mandarin UMC.

Vendors will be available from Cokesbury; NE District Community Outreach Ministries; NE District New Church Development; Florida United Methodist Children's Home; Campus to City Wesley Foundation (CCW); DLC Nurse & Learn; Grace Works Studios; Methodist Children's Village; Sulzbacher Center.

Register on line so that we can plan accordingly. [Click Here](#) to Register.

**Travel the Holy Land with Bishop Carter: May 12-21, 2014**

I am excited about the pilgrimage planned for May 2014 with my friend, the beloved teacher Bob Tuttle, and friends from across the Florida Conference and beyond.



We will walk the shores of the Sea of Galilee, study the scriptures in the synagogue in Capernaum, pray on the Mount of Beatitudes, and renew our baptisms at the Jordan River. We will then make our way to Bethlehem, and conclude our time together in Jerusalem, where we will enter the Old City and follow the Way of the Cross.

I invite pastors, teachers, and members of our churches to join us in this profound experience of travel, study, worship and fellowship. There is no way to adequately describe the power of the Holy Land for a disciple of Jesus Christ. Here you will rediscover the reality of the garden, the cross, the empty tomb and the Risen Lord. [Click Here](#) for all the details.

I hope you will make this pilgrimage with us May 12th - 21st of 2014  
The peace of the Lord,

Bishop Ken Carter  
Florida Conference  
United Methodist Church

## Around the Conference

### Apportionment Deadline is January 10, 2014

Apportionment payments for 2013 must be received either at the Conference office or in the lockbox at Regions Bank by Friday, January 10, 2014. This is not a postmarked by date, but is the last day by which monies must be received in the Conference or our bank lockbox to be included in 2013 apportionments receipts. Any payments received after that date will be applied to 2014 apportionments. Any payments received between January 1 and January 10 must be clearly marked as to which year they are to be applied.

All apportionment payments should be accompanied by a completed Remittance Report.

The Remittance Report is located on our website at [www.flumc.org](http://www.flumc.org) :

- \* Click on the "Administration" tab
- \* Select "Financial Services" from the list
- \* Click on "2013 Apportionment Giving Report Forms"
- \* Select one of the two versions of the Giving Report listed at the bottom of the page

Complete the Remittance Form with the following information:

- \* Church Name
- \* GCFA Number
- \* Preparer contact information
- \* Allocation amounts for each fund

Any amounts due for Ministry Protection and Health and Benefits at the end of the year will continue to show as outstanding on your statement in 2014. To ensure proper processing of these payments and avoid errors, payments should contain the following information on the check, check stub or statement:

- \* Church Name
- \* GCFA Number
- \* Invoice Number (include all letters and any 0's)
- \* Allocation amounts for each invoice

Also take note of the billing address for each of these types of payments. The last 4 numbers after the zip code are different for each and very important to include to ensure your payment is processed properly.

To be included in the Florida Annual Conference "Report of 100% Churches," 100% of 2013 apportionments must be received by January 10, 2014, and all outstanding Ministry Protection and Health and Benefits obligations must be received by December 31, 2013.

## United Methodist Volunteers in Mission Team Training

January 11, 2014

10:00-4:00

John Wesley UMC

1689 Old St. Augustine Rd - Tallahassee, FL 32301

Are you interested in leading or participating on a mission team from your church? Do you want to lead or participate on a team to Haiti, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Africa, Sager Brown or somewhere else here in the states and be the hands and feet of Christ?

UMVIM Mission Team Training prepares volunteers to be part of a Volunteer in Mission team, to projects in the United States and around the world. The training will help the Leader know their role, as well as help the team members to understand their roles on the team. You will learn the "ins and outs" of organizing a mission trip from recruiting the team, to picking the location, getting support, staying safe, planning the work and much, much more. You will also enjoy a wonderful time of fellowship and connection with other "mission-minded" folks.

Not sure if you're ready to be a part of a team? Come and learn what it takes - you will be well informed and a better team member!

Cost is \$30 per person and \$40 per couple. Individuals receive a Team Leader Manual and we ask that couples share one. Lunch is included.

Please register online at: [www.flumc.org/UMVIM](http://www.flumc.org/UMVIM)

For more information, please contact Greg Harford (800) 282-8011 x 195 or by email [gharford@flumc.org](mailto:gharford@flumc.org)



## ***Health Care Tax Credit Could Put Funds in Churches' Pockets***

### **What This Means in Dollars and Cents**

Your church may be eligible for a significant health care tax credit, which is delivered in funds to you, and the Conference wants to help you collect it.

According to the IRS, small employers enrolled in denominational health plans are eligible for the credit, which includes minister health plans. Because of the complexity of the tax credit regulations, we have contracted with the CPA firm of **CliftonLarsonAllen LLP (CLA)** to help identify and prepare the filings for all eligible churches. They will be in contact with many of you on the Conference's behalf.

### **How It Works**

We will be working with CLA first to identify those organizations that, due to their size, clearly will not qualify for the tax credit. CLA will be in contact with each of the remaining organizations to gather additional information to identify those who will qualify, as well as the potential amount of the credit. There will be specific payroll information and data on hours worked that will be required. If your organization does qualify for a credit CLA will complete all the necessary forms to file with the IRS on your behalf and will work with you to get them filed in a timely manner.

The fee to complete the filing and file for the tax credit, which will only be charged to the entities that actually qualify and file for the tax credit, will be \$500. I expect that most qualifying churches will receive a significant return on investment.

### **Questions**

If you have any questions regarding this process, please contact me at 863-393-1427, or Tori Lehman, Engagement Principal at CLA, at [tori.lehman@claconnect.com](mailto:tori.lehman@claconnect.com) or 863-680-5627.

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## Employment Opportunities/Classified Ads

### Worship Leader

**Highlands United Methodist Church** on the Northside of Jacksonville is looking for a Christian male or female, who is experienced on piano/keyboard, who loves to praise God, and has a passion and some experience leading a congregation and a praise band/singers/small choir - in worship. Basic requirements: weekly rehearsals with a choir/chorale group for anthems and special music during worship, coordinating with the pastor on the selection of praise music for congregational singing in worship, an Easter and Christmas music program, and other musical work as required for other church events. This is a paid, part-time position @ \$200/week. We estimate 10-12 hours a week. Anyone who is interested is asked to call Frank Fitzsimmons 904-382-6510.

### Seeking Employment

Seeking employment as Administrative Assistant, Project Manager/Coordinator, Marketing Assistant/Coordinator or any area where my professional skill set may be utilized in a church or Christian organization. Highly organized, detail oriented, and extremely computer literate, with experience in web development and graphic design (a plus for weekly bulletins, worship music displays and website updates.) Outstanding pastoral references upon request. Visit [www.TalenaMathis.com](http://www.TalenaMathis.com) to view my work portfolio and [emailme@TalenaMathis.com](mailto:emailme@TalenaMathis.com).

### Items for Donation

**Memorial UMC** has a supply of candles (Cokesbury 007397) they would love to give to a church that can use them. Contact Mary Ramirez at [mary@mumconline.com](mailto:mary@mumconline.com) or call 904-261-5769.

### District Calendar of Events

#### December 2013

18 & 19 dCOM Meeting, Swaim UMC  
24-31 District and Conference Offices Closed

#### January 2014

- 1 Happy New Year - District and Conference Office Closed
- 2 Year End Statistical Report live on conference website
- 16 District Committee on New Church Development, 10AM District Office
- 25 District Leadership Training Event, 8:30AM Lakewood UMC
- 27 District Leadership Council Meeting, 7PM