



Steve Patton
District Superintendent



David Graves
Resident Bishop

November 2021 Newsletter



From your District Superintendent . . .

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. (Hebrews 11:8)

When I think about the Pilgrims, and their voyage to America on the Mayflower, I'm amazed at the level of uncertainty under which they constantly lived. Just the thought of a two-month journey across the stormy Atlantic on a small ship less than 100 feet long makes me a bit queasy. And before sailing from England, they did not even know their exact destination. They had been given permission by King James to settle in the Virginia colony between the 38th and 41st lines of latitude. That's an area over 200 miles wide. And when they landed at Plymouth, they were well north of where they were supposed to be – not exactly the best way to start a new settlement.

But they believed their mission was ordained by God. What's more, they believed that God was with them and would provide for their needs. And that faith sustained them through considerable uncertainty and hardship. When hardship came, and they were tempted to despair and give up in defeat, God's Word sustained them and the Holy Spirit cheered their hearts. Even when they did not know how they would make it, by faith, they somehow knew they would make it!

Such was the journey of faith for Abraham, the Father of Faith. The writer to the Hebrews tells us that he went out, not knowing where he was going. But he went, all the same. Because faith is the assurance that you have received something, even before you see it. Abraham believed God's promise of a better country, and even though he had no pictures or a map, he went forward. He had faith. And such is the journey of faith for each one of us as well.

We live in a time of great uncertainty. Many of us feel stressed beyond our limits. Some of us have experienced heartaches, set-backs and losses. Our Thanksgiving celebration this year may not look or feel like a scene from a Norman Rockwell painting. But celebrate we must - because God is with us! He has called us to journey with Him. And by faith, we can and will move forward. Even though we don't see our way clearly or know how everything is going to work out – we know that God is with us. We believe the promises of His Word. We feel the power of His Holy Spirit within. And when we gather together at the table, with our families and as the family of God, we will have much to be thankful for!

Steve



Five Hopes For the South Georgia Conference

November 01, 2021

FROM THE BISHOP

DAVID GRAVES

In a new [“Five Faves with Bishop Graves”](#) video message, Bishop David Graves spoke about his hopes for the South Georgia Conference.

Read the full transcript of his video message:

My five hopes for the South Georgia Conference, first of all, are partnering together for mission and ministry. It’s so important that we partner together and focus on our mission and ministry. And then secondly, continue to live into the future, remembering of our faithful past. There’s so much unknown, but we have been faithful in the past, continue to be faithful in the future.

And then continue to be a witness to each community we have the privilege to serve and to be a part of. That’s just so important. Let’s be the witness Christ has called us to be.

And then fourthly, regardless of the denominational decisions that could be made next year or in the next few years to come, that we will be a united body, because we have more that we can do together than separately. And so, if we focus on that, let’s be together in whatever decisions that we have to make moving forward.

And number five, my hope is that we make a difference for Christ in our corner of the world, that we have been, and have the privilege to be a part of.



Encounter

November 19-21, 2021

Registration Open for Youth Retreats Encounter Youth Retreat Set for November 19-21, 2021. [Encounter](#), the annual youth retreat sponsored by South Georgia's Connectional Ministries, is set for November 19-21 at Camp Jekyll 4-H Center Island. Designed for 6th -12th grade students, Encounter will offer passionate worship, relevant Bible study, and a hope-filled time away

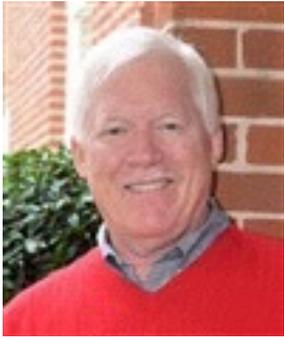
in community with other teens. Online registration is available through November 10. Churches will register as a group. The cost for this event is \$150 per person which includes programming, insurance, food, lodging, and a t-shirt. Adult chaperones with Safe Sanctuary certification must be provided by each church group. For more information, contact Event Coordinator Suzanne Akins atsuzanne@sgaumc.com or (912) 638-8626 ext 107. [Click here to Register.](#)



*Northwest District
Clergy and Spouses
Christmas Party
December 4, 11:45*



Americus 1st United Methodist Church



Be Sure Your Insurance Provides a Bond For the Treasurer

It is important that all churches have employee dishonesty coverage and perhaps a fidelity bond on those who handle their funds (usually the treasurer and financial secretary). Employee dishonesty coverage usually reimburses the church if theft is discovered. A bond would reimburse any clients or vendors who were defrauded. Trustees should check with their insurance carrier to be sure they have this coverage. While you are reviewing and amending your insurance policies, you are strongly encouraged to check on your sexual misconduct and employee practices liability coverage, no matter how small your church is. There have been several instances in South Georgia where this coverage proved vital or where churches wished it had been acquired prior to an incident. --- Derek McAleer

2022 Compensation Forms Deadline December 3

The 2022 compensation forms will close on Friday, Dec. 3 at 5 pm. Please complete the form required by that deadline. **Reminder:** there is no "part 2" this year....the complete form is one step.

Open Enrollment for HealthFlex will be Nov. 3-18.

Updates from the HR Department:

Open Enrollment for HealthFlex will be Nov. 3-18. More info coming soon. Please make certain that you have registered and can sign on to Benefits Access(<https://my.benefitsaccess.org/login>) as it will be needed to make elections this year.

New 2022 HealthFlex rates are online.

Reminder: annual evaluations are coming up in the next couple of weeks. This is a good time to review goals from last year to make sure everyone is on target.

Safe Sanctuaries 101 is now online!

Safe Sanctuaries 101 is now online! We now have the option for volunteers to take the Safe Sanctuaries 101: Basic Volunteer Training as an online course through our Servehub platform. This allows volunteers to complete the course on their own time and then print out a completion certificate to take back to their local church. If you are the staff person or coordinator for children and youth at your local church, you can email your volunteers this link (www.sgaumc.org/online-training) to register themselves or you can provide a list of participants you want signed up for the online training to kelly@sgaumc.com. For questions, contact Allison Lindsey (allison@sgaumc.com) or Suzanne Akins.

Sexual Ethics Workshops

Every three years according to the South Georgia Conference Sexual Ethics policy, any person serving under appointment by the bishop (clergy, local pastors, extension ministers, appointed lay speakers) are required to attend a Sexual Ethics Workshop. These workshops are hosted by the South Georgia Conference Pastoral Counselor.

The new format involves a series of seven videos with a few relevant resources that clergy have three weeks to watch or read at his or her convenience. This is followed by mandatory participation in a virtual collaboration led by Conference Pastoral Counselor Rev. Deborah Wight-Knight as clergy dialogue with their colleagues.

February: <https://sgaumc-reg.brtaapp.com/SexualEthicsWorkshopFebruary2022>

April: <https://sgaumc-reg.brtaapp.com/SexualEthicsWorkshopApril2022>

The cost of the workshop is \$35 per participant to help underwrite the expenses incurred for our new video platform which allows flexibility and collaboration.

Webinar Recordings Available

BOTH/AND: To Be Continued webinar: If you were unable to attend the BOTH/AND: To Be Continued Webinar or just want to watch it again, we have the recording available for 90 days. Email Kelly Roberson at kelly@sgaumc.com. **Watch**

Advent and Christmas resources webinar: If you missed Anne Bosarge's Advent and Christmas resources webinar, we have the recording available. In the webinar, Bosarge gives advice and ideas about plans your congregation can begin making to make Advent and Christmas more meaningful and shared lots of ideas for Bible studies, adult and children's activities, and more.



South Georgia ERTs Needed In Louisiana

In response to the devastation left by Hurricanes Ida and Nicholas, the Louisiana Conference of The United Methodist Church is now extending the invitation to South Georgia Conference early response teams (ERTs). This is a great opportunity to use your training!

Wynnton United Methodist Church in Columbus sponsored one of the first Emergency Response Teams from the South Georgia Conference to Ponchatoula La., for Hurricane Ida relief. The five-member team, who worked from October 3-7, included Northwest District disaster relief coordinator Rev. Glenn Martin, John Denny, Mike Johnson, David Pringle, and Park Simpson. They assisted with roof tarping and chainsaw work. Photos courtesy of David Pringle.



Hispanic Clergy, Spouses Gather For Retreat



Thank you to our clergy serving hispanic congregations in the South Georgia Conference! At the end of September, our five clergy., Jorge Moreno, Talnia Montero, **Noel Perez (Arca del Fuego-Northwest District)**, Felipe Ricardo, and Daniel Medina, and their spouses gathered at a retreat for a time of renewal and networking. We are thankful for this vital ministry!



Revs. Baxter, Duke-Barton To Serve As South Georgia Mission Liaisons

Rev. Shannon Baxter and Rev. Garth Duke-Barton have been tapped to serve as South Georgia Conference mission liaisons.

Rev. Baxter, minister of Missions Outreach Ministries at Isle of Hope United Methodist Church in Savannah, is also now serving as the SGC's United Methodist Volunteers In Mission (UMVIM) Conference coordinator.

Rev. Duke-Barton, pastor of Epworth United Methodist Church in Jesup, is also now serving as Conference Secretary for Global Ministries.



Epworth By The Sea to Reopen

Epworth By The Sea will reopen to the public this fall Epworth By The Sea, which has been closed to the public since Sept. 22, 2020, plans to reopen to the public in late fall 2021. (Anticipate by Nov. 30, 2021) “Epworth is eager to resume normal activities and welcome guests back,” Rev. Racz said. “You have been missed along with the ministry that happens. We have missed our churches, children and youth groups, camps, law enforcement, military, families and individual guests. We yearn to see our campus full of guests and activities once again.” [Video about Epworth reopening!](#) [Flyer](#) about Epworth reopening.



This is a friendly reminder to alert you that Friday, January 7, 2022 will be the last date to enter Discipleship Form information for calendar year 2021. Reminder: the Discipleship Form information will populate fields in their Apportionment Information Review (which they review in January), which then populates materials used by the Cabinet in Appointment making meetings.

We want everyone to have enough time to complete the work and check for errors, so now would be a good time to be sure you are up to date through at least October. If there are edits to make in forms you can make them on your own by using the "edit" button if tyou are working in the current calendar year. Another incentive to go ahead and review before January!

Nov 7, 2021 - Daylight Saving Time Ends

When local daylight time is about to reach

Sunday, November 7, 2021, 2:00:00 am clocks are turned backward 1 hour to

Sunday, November 7, 2021, 1:00:00 am local standard time instead.

Sunrise and sunset will be about 1 hour earlier on Nov 7, 2021 than the day before. There will be more light in the morning.

Also called Fall Back and Winter Time.



Online Basic ERT Recertification - Nov. 13

Wesleyan College Sunday - Nov. 14

Encounter Youth Retreat - Nov.

United Methodist Student Day - Nov. 28

Georgia United Methodist Foundation

Interested in year-end planning and the importance of having a will? Georgia United Methodist Foundation President and CEO Mathew A. Pinson is hosting a 45-minute webinar with Atlanta attorney and author Zoe M. Hicks on Monday, November 15th starting at 12 noon to discuss this topic. You will have an opportunity to ask questions during the Q&A. Registration is not required. Zoe received her A.B., J.D., and LL.M. (Master of Laws in Taxation) degrees from Emory University. She practiced tax and estate planning law for over thirty years, speaking and writing on tax and estate planning topics to lay and professional groups, before moving into inspirational speaking and writing. Additionally, Zoe is a past chair of the GUMF board of trustees. Here is the link to join the webinar via Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84888014127> If you have any questions, please contact GUMF at 770-449-6726 or info@gumf.org



sign-up www.gumf.org/newsletters

Georgia United Methodist Foundation Newsletter

For more information:

GUMF

770-4496726

877-220-5663

South Georgia Conference Offices

The Episcopal, Administrative Services, Ministerial Services and OCM offices.

P.O.Box 7227

Macon, GA 31209-7227



The Northwest District

Steve Patton, District Superintendent

steve@sgaumc.com

706-561-4541

233 - 12th Street

Suite 816

Columbus, GA 31901
