

# Gray Weekly News



Week Leading to Sunday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022

## October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022 is **World Communion Sunday!**

Holy Communion joins us in Christian unity. This sacrament invites us to focus on the holiness of communion with God and one another. On World Communion Sunday - United Methodists, in conjunction with other denominations and believers worldwide, participate in communion to recognize our unity in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. This universal and inclusive connection is the foundation of the special offering for World Communion Sunday.

Your donations support racial and ethnic students in achieving their educational goals and transforming communities. In 2021, World Communion Sunday offerings awarded 242 scholarships and grants. Your generosity continues to provide scholarships, grants, mentoring and training for leadership development. The needs exceed what we can fund and your gifts can further growth and success.

Fifty percent of the offering provides scholarships for graduate students from the U.S. and other countries. Thirty-five percent supports racial and ethnic scholarships for students pursuing ordained ministry (deacon or elder) and includes a mentoring program. Fifteen percent funds Ethnic-In-Service Training Grant for leadership development, recruitment, training, and retention of ethnic United Methodist persons in leadership positions in every level of the church and its ministry.

The United Methodist Church, the world and our communities are in a time of transition. Now, perhaps more than ever, we are called to extend healing and hope which will guide us to becoming a new creation in Christ. Through our gifts and support, we can invest in talented, qualified students from around the globe to transform the world as witnesses for Christ! Learn more about this Special Sunday at [www.umc.org](http://www.umc.org).



## 17<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost

Lam 1:1-6

Psalm 137

2 Timothy 1:1-14

Luke 17:5-10

## News and Notes

### **THIS WEEK**

**Sunday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Please join us on Sundays at 11 am. If you are unable to come in person, you can watch our livestream at [graymemorialumc.org/facebook.com](http://graymemorialumc.org/facebook.com) or [graymemorialumc.org/youtube](http://graymemorialumc.org/youtube), at 11 am or any time after that at [graymemorialumc.org/](http://graymemorialumc.org/)



If you have prayer requests, please contact Norma Adams, Jennifer Skinner or Gail Teems.

You may also call the church office at 850/385-6441 or send a text to 850/933-8469.

### **Prayer Requests**

Nancy Gibbons, Pastor Beth's mother  
Mike Floyd  
Dawn's children and grandchildren  
Kevin Austin  
Derrick and Zariah—praying for a home  
Demarcus  
Ahmed Maamah—recent visitor who requested prayer  
Art and Betty Varnadore



### **GUEST PREACHER: PIPER RAMSEY-SUMNER**

Piper is an Oklahoma-born, Texas-raised pastor's kid with a passion for lifelong learning, community building, and creating spaces for personal and spiritual transformation outside the walls of a church. She has been involved in Christian ministry for over ten years—working in youth ministry, homeless outreach, and intentional communal living.

Piper is a graduate of Southern Nazarene University in Bethany, OK, and she received her Master of Divinity degree in 2020 from Iliff School of Theology in Denver, CO. She is the Cultivator of Fresh Expressions for the Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church where she explores new ways of reaching new people outside of traditional churches. She facilitates Tally Brew Theology, a community that meets here in the Tallahassee area in local breweries and pubs to engage in meaningful dialogue on subjects related to religion and philosophy. She also runs a book club and an online community for those hurt by the church.

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### **LETTER FROM BISHOP CARTER ON JUDICIAL COUNCIL RULING**

We have some good news for anyone seeking more clarity and understanding about the rules for churches wishing to disaffiliate, due to their beliefs over LGBTQ issues.

For several months, we had been waiting for the Judicial Council of the United Methodist Church to rule on how to conduct such departures. And the good news is the Council just confirmed the exact process.

Please let me step back a moment. For those not steeped in the mechanics of United Methodism, the Judicial Council is like the U.S. Supreme Court of our faith. It is comprised of nine United Methodists from around the world – several attorneys, pastors, lay leaders, editors of the Book of

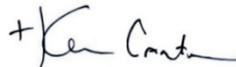
Discipline and former law school deans. All serve as volunteers. They are diverse in their backgrounds, gender, race and geography. They meet twice a year to interpret issues regarding the Book of Discipline to help bring clarity and instruction to the faithful.

The question before the Council was to clarify the applicable and proper language within the Book of Discipline for churches who wish to disaffiliate to follow, and the respective responsibilities everyone has amid the process.

The Judicial Council ruled that the clear answer is set forth in Paragraph 2553 of the Book of Discipline, which contains a step-by-step recipe to handle timing, apportionments, property transfer, pension payments, insurance and other factors. This is proper, as mature Christians share responsibility. Somewhat ironically, it was leaders in the conservative wing of our church who originally wrote Paragraph 2553, perhaps as they envisioned it was progressives who would depart the church. Instead, the opposite is happening, and some conservative leaders are now claiming that Paragraph 2553 is too onerous. In fact, they filed a lawsuit in the government courts seeking to avoid 2553.

They even sued individual pastors and trustees, which we find especially inappropriate (and even cruel) as these are faithful people who are volunteering their lives and livelihoods to serve others. The state court procedures require us to file a response to that lawsuit. And we will do so soon. Indeed, we will ask the state court to dismiss the lawsuit because both Florida courts and the U.S. Supreme Court have for decades consistently ruled with a “deference” or “neutral” approach – that churches like ours have ecclesiastical liberty to settle our property issues internally – guided by the highest authority within our own denominations. We now have a fresh ruling from the Judicial Council that reaffirms exactly that.

Still, amid this new clarity, we also want to make one thing clear on behalf of the Florida Conference: Within the bounds of Paragraph 2553, we extend an open hand of friendship to those churches and leaders seeking to disaffiliate. Our trustees, superintendents and the Episcopal office want to join in a dialogue with you to make this departure as painless, as graceful and as reverent as possible. That door to that dialogue has always been open and remains so now. We hope you will join us in that dialogue.



The Peace of the Lord,  
+Ken Carter  
Resident Bishop, Florida Conference  
The United Methodist Church



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**NORTHWEST DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT REV. WAYNE WIATT  
HAS INVITED ALL TO ATTEND “LIVING THE WESLEYAN WAY”  
ON OCTOBER 21<sup>st</sup> AT ADVENT CHRISTIAN VILLAGE IN DOWLING PARK!**



“For the Wesleys, the Christian life was a way of devotion. Living the Wesleyan way involves practices that both heal and enable us to flourish in life. The spirituality we have inherited as Methodists

is holistic, combining practices of piety and practices of mercy that shape us into a loving people. Love sets us off on our journey, sustains us along the way, and lies before us as our goal. In this day apart, intended for all who seek peace and joy, we will immerse ourselves in these means of grace, rest in God, and receive nourishment for our ongoing journey in Christ.”

The retreat will begin at 8:30 AM. **Registration is \$25 and ALL are welcome.**

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## THE PUMPKINS ARE COMING!

We are once again running a pumpkin patch during October. It is a way we raise funds for various missions of our church. Almost more importantly, though, it is a way for us to get to know and spend time with folks in our community. The pumpkin patch itself seems like a service to our part of Tallahassee. **Our pumpkin delivery is scheduled for the afternoon of Saturday, October 8** (subject to change). Please invite all your friends, family, and neighbors to come help us unload. The patch is supposed to be open noon to dusk every day, and most of us have fun sitting under the tent with friends and selling pumpkins. When we get close to delivery of pumpkins, we'll have a work schedule and hope everybody will sign up to work when they can.

**Our Fall Festival will be Sunday afternoon October 23.** If you know any vendors interested in having a table to sell craft items (or if you are interested in one yourself) please have them call Susan Hutchison at 850-509-4496. Spots for vendors are \$25, and members of our congregation are given the opportunity to have spots for half price. We hope that congregation members will provide items for our bake sale and come out and help with pumpkin patch sales and other jobs at the Fall Festival. We plan to have a bounce house, face painting, and lunch that day. Please help us make it a fun day for Gray members and our community.

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## EVENTS THIS WEEK

Wednesday, Sept. 28	7 pm	Bible Study with Todd Clark via Zoom
Thursday, Sept. 29	10 am 5:30 pm	Bible Study Choir Practice
Sunday, Oct. 2	11 am	Worship Service- Guest Preacher: Piper Ramsey-Sumner
Wednesday, Oct. 5	12 noon	Wonderful Wednesday
	7 pm	Bible Study with Todd Clark via Zoom
Thursday, Oct. 6	10 am 5:30 pm	Bible Study Choir Practice
Saturday, October 8	TBD	Pumpkin Delivery
Sunday, October 9	11 am	Worship Service