



## DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

November 2017

I have enjoyed the 5 church conferences I have attended. The theme this year is along the lines of taking the necessary risks within our church and within the community to *"make the Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven."*

To take risks means we need to have faith. To have faith is to be courageous, even subversive. Jesus' favorite form of teaching was a parable. Eugene Peterson says in The Contemplative Pastor: *"Parables subversively slip past our defenses."* (p.33)

Peterson goes on to say:

*God does not impose his reality from without; he grows flowers and fruit from within. God's truth is not an alien invasion but a loving courtship in which the details of our common lives are treated as seeds in our conception, growth, and maturity in the kingdom. Parables trust our imaginations, which is to say, our faith.*

Here is one of Jesus' parables:

"The Kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough." (Matt. 13:33)

How might this teaching be understood in your church and community that surrounds your church?

As Peterson's comments, *"he [God] grows flowers and fruits from within."* What is God whispering to you about you, your church and your community?

Here is another parable:

"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field." (Matt. 13:44)

Talk about risk!

As you pray, talk with each other, and imagine what if we (blank) did this, might God's Kingdom come alive?

Here is our last parable:

"Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish. When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away." (Matt. 13:47-48)

What questions does this parable bring to mind?

As you gather together in your church over the next month or two, here are some questions that might promote your imagination and subversive Kingdom actions.

1. What is going well in our church? (strengths, areas of effectiveness, etc.)
2. What could be better in our church? (weakness, challenges, etc.)
3. What should we be doing to address #2?
4. How can we better maximize our strengths, talents, assets, etc. (#1)?
5. What risky ministry within or outside the church would create a Kingdom gain?

Peace and love,  
Gary

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## THE WAY FORWARD

As the process of The Way Forward Commission unfolds, it is important to offer opportunities to provide updates and information and provide a space for questions and discussion around this important work. The recent Bishop's Gatherings around the Conference offered one venue and opportunity for this. There has been an ongoing discussion about providing more information as it becomes appropriate and available in an effort to be as transparent as possible.

In response to this, Rev. Alex Shanks, who has been serving in a support role to Bishop Carter as a project manager of the Commission, has offered to come and meet with pastors throughout the Conference and provide an update as well as hear your concerns and respond to questions as he is able.

Listed below are the events and their locations with the hope that you will find one convenient for you:

**AC/East Central – Tues Nov 28 (morning) 9 – 11:30AM, at Ocoee Oaks**  
**AC/Southeast Central – Tues Nov 28 (afternoon) 2:30 – 5PM, at Trinity Palm Beach Gardens**

Some of you may be wanting support in responding to questions that folks in your congregations are directing toward you. This is an opportunity to bring along some key leaders from your church to be a part of this information sharing and question and answer time. There will be an additional opportunity in the future for your congregation to participate in a process that is being developed for local church use. You will hear more about that as time goes on. In the meantime, we wanted to be sure to offer this opportunity to hear this update and involve some of your leadership at this point in time.



To the Clergy and Laity of the Florida Annual Conference:

Thank you for what you have already done and for your willingness to continue to be a part of the short-term relief and long-term recovery efforts. God will use these efforts to further extend our witness into our communities.

We encourage churches to continue to give to UMCOR. 100% of donations go to relief work. We do know there will be needs beyond those for which UMCOR can care. To that end, the Cabinet has established the [Hurricane Irma Fund](#), which will help to repair local churches in the Florida Conference and rebuild the communities that surround them in the spirit of Isaiah 65. The funds will be distributed by the Bishop and Cabinet with accountability to the Council on Finance and Administration. We would like to ask you to prayerfully consider taking up a special offering for this fund, or you and your churches can donate now through this [link](#).

Bishop Ken Carter



Is your community home to a lot of retiring Boomers who are unchurched? Have you discovered that Baby Boomers may be a key group to target in outreach and evangelism programs?

For information and resources for you ministry, including dates for upcoming webinars:

[Office on Aging & Older Adult Ministries](#)

And be sure to check out our Facebook pages:

[Growing Up Boomers](#)  
[God Loves Older People](#)

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### **ARE THERE YOUNG ADULTS IN YOUR CHURCH WHO WANT TO EXPLORE PASTORAL MINISTRY?**

If so, please give them the attached application for the 2018 Summer Pastoral Ministry Internship Program and encourage them to apply!

DO YOU SERVE A CHURCH COMMITTED TO SHAPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF PASTORAL LEADERS?

If so, please sponsor a Summer Pastoral Intern for 2018!

Here are the quick facts for hosting an Intern. Attached is a more detailed program description.

Internship Dates: Monday, May 28, 2018 through Friday, August 3, 2018

Intern Training Day: Friday, May 25, 2018 (Students and Supervising Pastors)

Intern Reflection Day: Monday, August 6, 2018 (Students Only)

Hours: 30 hours/week as scheduled with Supervising Pastor

Housing: Provided in congregant's home, if needed

Stipend: \$3,500 (\$1,500 by host site; \$1,500 by Office of Clergy Excellence, plus an additional \$500 from the Office of Clergy Excellence IF the Intern attends both the Orientation and Reflection Days)

If interested, please email or mail an Intern Job Description for your church. Please feel free to contact the Office of Clergy Excellence if you have any questions about the program.

Holly Finley at [hfinley@flumc.org](mailto:hfinley@flumc.org)

Rev. Sara McKinley at [sara.mckinley@flumc.org](mailto:sara.mckinley@flumc.org)

Office of Clergy Excellence

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Thank you!

Love In Christ,

Sara

[\[email.brtaapp.com/files/tables/emails/1867071/files/SummerInternProgramDescription20\]\(http://florida-email.brtaapp.com/files/tables/emails/1867071/files/SummerInternProgramDescription20\)](http://florida-</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

[18.pdf](#)

[SummerInternshipAPP2018](#)

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## SAVE THE DATE

Please save the date for next year's Missio Ecclesia event. We had such an incredible gathering in the spring of 2016 at Grace Church with Deb and Alan Hirsch. This time we will gather on February 22 and 23, 2018, at First UMC in Lakeland. Dr. Martyn Atkins, a renowned church leader in England and a key movement collaborator in the work of Fresh Expressions, will join us as we explore what it means to be a church on mission. More information will be forthcoming soon. I hope clergy and lay leaders will make every effort to attend this important gathering.

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## Global Ministry

Your church can be a part of Christ's global mission of The United Methodist Church by entering into a covenant relationship with a missionary. The United Methodist Church has a 280 year legacy of sending missionaries, "from everywhere to everywhere" – all supported by local churches.

Presently, 311 missionaries are serving in 60 countries including the U.S. Every year, many are commissioned and are in need of support through covenant relationships with local congregations. Here is how your church can enter into a covenant relationship with a missionary:

**Missionary support would come from your church, through offerings of \$5.00 per member per year. One hundred percent is designated for missionary support.**

1. Your church welcomes the missionary to visit and bear witness to Christ's saving ministry where he/she serves. They become part of your extended Christian family. The Holy Spirit ministers with both congregations across the miles, cultures and languages.
2. The missionary is committed to stay in touch with your church on a regular basis, through intercessory prayers, letters, email and video links. Your church is committed to do the same.
3. Your church and the missionary can agree to your church sending a mission team to where he/she serves.

Let me introduce you to our newest missionaries in need of covenant relationships:

Jonathan and Satomi McCurley – Japan

Janet Horman – Florida, USA

Michael Zdorow – Russia

Charles Mulemena – Brazil

Jim and Bernice Keech – Central Asia

William Llanos and Rocio Barcnas – Argentina

To support one of our missionaries spreading the good news of Jesus Christ, go to [flumc-missions.org](http://flumc-missions.org) and click on the "Missionaries" tab or contact the Office of Missional Engagement at (800) 282-8011 x. 346 or by email at [irodriguez@flumc.org](mailto:irodriguez@flumc.org).

As we remember our baptism and receive Jesus Christ into our lives, we are all called as missionaries in service into His Kingdom.



### **Easter Pilgrimage to Italy with Bishop Carter slated for April 2018**

**Led by Bishop Carter, travelers will visit Venice, Assisi, Siena, Florence and Rome while studying the Gospel of Mark and the legacy of Peter during April 3-12, 2018.**

**As we visit the stunning cities of Venice, Assisi, Siena, Florence and Rome, we will be immersed in the rich traditions of the Christian faith. We will learn more about the gospel of Mark in Venice and the legacy of Peter; we will read the dialogues of**

**Catherine of Siena and the meditations of Dante; and we will reflect on the renewing vision given to Francis of Assisi. In Rome, as we visit the Sistine Chapel, we will consider the legacies of the most recent Popes, especially John XXIII, Pope John Paul II and Pope Francis. And in each setting we will be inspired by the world's great art and architecture.**

**Our ten-day fellowship with each other will be April 3 – 12, 2018. For a detailed description of our itinerary and registration, please visit our website at [www.flumc.org](http://www.flumc.org) and click on this link: <http://www.flumc.org/opportunitydetail/8868904>**

**I look forward to sharing the experience of travel, study, worship and fellowship with you on this wonderful, life-transforming pilgrimage in April!**

**The Peace of the Lord,**



**Bishop Kenneth H. Carter**

**View more information [online](#) or in this [downloadable brochure](#). [Click here](#) for online registration.**

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#### **COKESBURY CARES**

One of the ministries of the United Methodist Publishing House, called "Cokesbury Cares," is in place for just this time, following storms, disasters and devastation. This ministry gives churches who might have experienced loss immediate and free resources for worship and church operations, such as UM Hymnals, Bibles, offering envelopes, recording resources, and even curriculum and other resources as needed. I have attached the list of resources available along with the application. The process is simple, easy and quick. Please let us know how we can be of assistance during this time, this season of rebuilding and encouragement.

[cokesbury cares church supply.doc](#)    [cokesbury cares 1.docx](#)

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## NEWS FROM OUR HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE

**Open Enrollment begins November 1<sup>st</sup>. Not sure what plans are available in your area or what plans will best fit your individual healthcare needs? Schedule a phone call with a licensed Benefits Counselor with Member Benefits today at no cost to you and restore your peace of mind. Please see the attached information for more details. Member Benefits is available to all clergy, church staff and congregations.**

[flumc open enrollment 2018 member benefits.pdf](#)

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## **Calendar 2017**

### **November**

4th - Church Conference - Titusville area churches  
6th - dCOM - 8:30 a.m. - First UMC, Vero Beach  
7th - Church Conference at Scott Chapel at 6:30 p.m.  
10th - Veteran's Day Holiday - District office closed  
12th - Church Conference - 3:00 p.m. at UMC of the Palm Beaches  
14th - Church Conference - 6:00 p.m. at Community UMC, Daytona  
18th - Church Conference - 10:00 a.m. at First UMC, New Smyrna Beach  
18th - Church Conference - 2:00 p.m. at Stewart Memorial  
19th - Church Conference - 1:30 p.m. at First UMC, Ormond Beach  
23-24th - District office closed for Thanksgiving  
28th - The Way Forward meeting at Trinity UMC, Palm Beach Gardens - 2:00 p.m.

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