



# Newsletter

## More Changes Coming

A WORD FROM SUPERINTENDENT GRANTHAM

As we read the article in the Advocate, it is quite apparent that changes are coming for the Northeast District. Possibly a new DS who will serve this district and one other district. Two new administrative persons who will not be in the District Office, but will serve the remaining three DS's in all of the work formerly done by our own Jodi Atkinson. The District Parsonage will be sold and the District Office here in Statesboro will no longer exist. One way or another, Sheri and I will be moving.

Why these changes? The loss of so many churches to disaffiliation means less apportionment dollars for these previously mentioned services; some where the services of the Annual Conference must be cut. These are changes that some will welcome and others will not.

In the midst of these changes what remains true is, God is God and He still cares about all of us. Jesus died for our sins and this remains true. The Holy Spirit still works in our lives and will continue to do so. The Bible is still the word of God, instructing us in all righteousness and pointing us to the way of following God. It still contains all that we need to know regarding our salvation.

As we develop this new system of operating, we will figure things out as we always do. Methodists always are about finding a "Method" for living out the scriptures and serving God. We have seen the frontiers of faith change throughout the years and we have always adapted to new conditions.

I will be in prayer for you and I covet your prayers for Sheri and me as we go through this time of change together. Prayer is the way we face the uncertainties of change because it grounds us in the unchanging nature of God who is gracious and caring and does not change.

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MARCH 2023

THE *South Georgia* CONFERENCE  
NORTHEAST DISTRICT



## South Georgia Conference Announces District Leadership Restructuring Plan, Proposed Budget Reductions

The South Georgia Conference of The United Methodist Church will be undergoing budget reductions to appropriately plan for financial implications as a result of local church disaffiliations. Based upon recent trends and detailed predictions, the annual conference is seeking to decrease its 2024 operating budget in order to maximize its sustainability and viability as an annual conference.

[read more here](#)



## Disaffiliation Information

The Bishop, Cabinet, Conference Staff, Conference Chancellor, and the Conference Trustees have worked together to develop a timeline around disaffiliations to help guide local churches.

[read more here](#)

With disaffiliation being a topic of concern for some of our local churches, the Cabinet and other leaders worked together to put together a helpful document entitled, "Potential Benefits, Challenges, and Unintended Consequences for Clergy and Local Churches Considering Disaffiliating."

[click here to read the document](#)



### Bishop Graves Calls for Special Annual Conference Session

Bishop David Graves, episcopal leader of the South Georgia Annual Conference, in accordance with ¶603.5 of the 2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline, calls for a special session of the annual conference on Sunday, May 21, 2023. The meeting will begin at 4 pm using the Zoom Webinar platform in conjunction with an online voting system. The sole purpose of the special called session of the Annual Conference\* is to complete the process of ratifying the current requests for disaffiliation of local churches who have met the requirements outlined in ¶2553 of the Book of Discipline and who have met the published South Georgia Conference deadlines.

The special session will consider only matters pertaining to this call; no other business can be considered.

[read more here](#)

### United Methodists to Meet in Charlotte for Worldwide Conference

The Commission on the General Conference announced that the 2024 United Methodist General Conference will be held April 23 – May 3, 2024, at Charlotte Convention Center in Charlotte, North Carolina. “The Commission selected Charlotte as the site that best met our varied needs. We believe that delegates and attendees will be pleased with all the city has to offer,” said Kim Simpson, Chair of the Commission on the General Conference. “Charlotte is a part of the Western North Carolina Annual Conference – but due to the shorter timeframe for planning, both the Western North Carolina Conference and the North Carolina Annual Conference will co-host the event.”

[read more here](#)

# I am Thankful for you!

Written by: Bishop Graves



Dear Friends of the South Georgia Conference,

These are not easy days in our beloved church, and, yet, I find myself thanking God every day for the people He has called me to shepherd and lead. There are wonderful people who make up the South Georgia Conference of The United Methodist Church. Nancy and I continually remark to one another that there is just such a sweet, sweet spirit here in South Georgia.

I am thankful for our South Georgia churches who are focusing on the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

I am thankful for our clergy and laity who are not getting distracted by votes, divisive conversations, and misinformation.

I am thankful for churches who value our connection with one another and are choosing to stay at the table so we can move forward in ministry together.

Just last week, someone shared with me a sermon by Dr. Jimmy Asbell, one of our own South Georgia clergy. In it, he talks about how some of these denominational conversations can be a distraction to our mission, and I couldn't agree with him more. He also reminds us of the wonderful strength of our connection right here in the South Georgia Conference.

I am excited about our church planting and revitalization initiative. Each day I am told of something new springing up here in South Georgia. The Holy Spirit is surely moving among us. God has opened up new windows of opportunity to plant and revitalize churches. With a renewed sense of commitment, I believe God is calling the South Georgia Conference to a new and abundant life.

I want to remind you of the resources we have on our website: "Why I Love Being a United Methodist," FAQs, videos, and more. In addition, we have a newly created "Moving Forward in Mission" page that helps guide church members affected by disaffiliation in whatever direction God is calling them.

I want you to know my commitment is focusing on the people and churches of the great South Georgia Conference and moving forward in this next season of ministry together. God is at work in mighty ways, and I look forward to how we, together as the South Georgia Conference of The United Methodist Church, can change our corner of the world.

In Christ,  
Bishop David Graves



# EVENTS & NEWS

## Epworth by the Sea

**Adventurous Adult Retreat**

May 15-18, 2023

[register here](#)

**Men's Spiritual Life Retreat**

April 20-21, 2023

[register here](#)

**Imagine Day**

April 15 2023

[register here](#)

## Job Announcement

**Director of Music Ministry  
Sylvania UMC**

A Part Time position in charge of the music ministry at a medium sized United Methodist Church. The church has a strong choir program, a men's gospel group, and also performs Christmas and Easter cantatas. There is also a handbell choir.

Interested parties should submit a resume that includes contact information, education background, work experiences, related musical training and experiences, experience with choral music, and any other information that may be appropriate to the position. Please include at least two references, professional and personal, with appropriate contact information.

Applications can be mailed to the church at PO Box 258, Sylvania, GA 30467 or emailed to [admin@sylvaniamfirst.com](mailto:admin@sylvaniamfirst.com).

If further information is required, you may call the church office at 912-564-2747.

[View the application here](#)

**Deadline is March 17th, 2023**



## Coins for Lent

During Lent, many of us are reminded once again to examine our lifestyles and ask, "What can we do for others?" Part of faith formation at any age is compassion and offering a serving heart to our neighbors. These past few years have been challenging when trying to find ways to serve our neighbors while remaining physically distant. This time has also reminded us that we need to demonstrate compassion to others now more than ever. Lent is a good time to commit to giving money to a project that helps those in need. One way to involve the whole family is to collect coins during the season of Lent and then following Easter, donate the money.

[Lent Coin Calendar Guide](#)

## United Methodist Connectional FCU 2023 Annual College Scholarships

Are you or do you know a member age 17-35 who is attending or planning to attend college and attend church in in one of the four conferences? If so, please let them know about your Credit Union's college scholarship program. Four winning applicants, one from each of our four conferences, Florida, North Georgia, South Georgia and Alabama-West Florida will receive a \$1000 scholarship each.

[Learn more here](#)

**Aloha to**  
**Abundant Life!**  
A CELEBRATION BENEFITTING WESLEY GLEN  
**"A Lei'd Back Gala 2023"**

**When:** Saturday, March 4, 2023 5:00PM  
**Attire:** Your Best Luau Wear  
**Mood:** Fun and Festive!  
With emcee, **Ben Jones**  
And get ready to shake a leg with  
**The Grapevine Band**

**Where:** 4580 N Mumford Rd and Live On-Line!  
**Why:** To support incredible adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities  
**How:** [Click to register here](#)  
Dinner, Dancing, Silent Auction, Raffle and more!

## 2023 Prayer Emphasis:

In a focused effort, the South Georgia Conference is centering itself around prayer in 2023. Each month a prayer guide will be developed that contains a specific focus, including a weekly scripture, a breath prayer, and a prayer prompt.

March's prayer guide, written by Revs. Josh Gale, Jon Brown, Sara Pugh Montgomery, and Teresa Edwards

[now available here](#)



## Important Dates

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- March 12      United Women in Faith Day
  
- March 16      Sexual Ethics Workshop  
@ PPUMC
  
- March 14, 16, 21, & 22      Online Basic Lay Servant  
Ministries Training
  
- March 17      St. Patrick's Day
  
- March 24-26      UWF Spiritual Growth Retreat  
at Epworth by the Sea

## BIRTHDAYS

- March 3rd - Janet Carnley
- March 5th - Patricia Salgado
- March 8th - Bill Bagwell
- March 10th - Ruthie Robbins
- March 15th - Sophia Medley
- March 16th - Barbara Sharpe
- March 17th - George Durham
- March 18th - Tom Oliver
- March 20th - Bruce Eaton
- March 24th - Larry Bird

### Georgia United Methodist Newsletter

Check out the latest news at

[www.gumf.org](http://www.gumf.org)

Sign up at [www.gumf.org/stay-connected](http://www.gumf.org/stay-connected) to have the latest news delivered right to your inbox.

To learn more about GUMF's faith-based financial solutions for investing, lending, training, and planned giving, please call

770-449-6726 or 478-256-7130  
(South Georgia) or email [info@gumf.org](mailto:info@gumf.org).

## PRAYERS, CONCERNS, & PRAISES

Peggy MacDonald

Lexy McRae - granddaughter of Rev. Chris Ramsey

The Family of Nona Foster - widow of Vaughn Foster

Missy Brenton - wife of Rev. Scott Brenton

Carol Collins - wife of Rev. Mike Collins

The family of Mrs. Ruth Khaw

The Family of Brenda France

Rev. Mike Huling - retired

Rev. Jeane Strudivant

Rev. Lee Pettis

Rev. Perry Medley

Rev. Ricky Varnell - retired

# Appointment Making Process and the Report to the Bishop and Cabinet

Each year the Cabinet utilizes online tools to help facilitate the appointment making process. The forms below are used to populate these tools and ensure accurate information is used as the Cabinet discusses clergy appointments. Your help in completing these forms in a timely manner is appreciated.

## Appointment Preference: Report to the Bishop and Cabinet

Form sent by: January 4, 2023 | Deadline to return: February 1, 2023

No later than January 4, the District Office will mail to each clergyperson a form entitled "Report to the Bishop and Cabinet" where information relative to the appointment process for 2023 will be recorded. The District Office will also mail a similar report to each SPRC chairperson that solicits similar information. Each party is to sign the other's form after it is completed prior to returning to the District Office. Please remember that the deadline to return forms to the District Office is Monday, February 1.

## Appointment Information Review

Review form made available: January 18, 2023 | Deadline to complete review: January 26, 2023

Clergy Serving a Local Church: [www.sgaumc.org/dashboard](http://www.sgaumc.org/dashboard)

Clergy Serving in an Extension Ministry Position: [www.sgaumc.org/emdashboard](http://www.sgaumc.org/emdashboard)

In order to provide one last snapshot for clergy to review their information prior to the printing of the "Master Move Book," clergy will be asked to login to their dashboard (links above) between January 18 and January 26. There is nothing to complete; it is simply a one-page sheet to review. If there are any changes that need to be made clergy will need to contact their District Office. There are 5 sections to review:

- Charge Membership Information for 2022 (pulled from the December Discipleship Report)
- Charge Apportionment Information for 2022 (pulled from the Administrative Services Office)
  - Appointment Information as of 7/1/2022 (pulled from the Conference Database)
- Compensation Information for 2023 (pulled from the Clergy Compensation Form)
- Sexual Ethics Workshop Last Attended (pulled from the Conference Database, see note below)

Again, if there are any changes that need to be made please contact your District Office. Please note that the Charge Membership and Apportionment Information will be blank for Extension Ministers. The deadline to review this form, and to request changes to be made, is January 26.

## Cabinet Appointment Making Dates

The Appointive Cabinet will be doing the work of appointment making on the following dates. Consultation is a year-round process, and District Superintendents will continue consultations with Pastors and SPRC as needed throughout the appointment making process.

- February 9-10, 2023 (Appointment Making Meeting)
- February 23-24, 2023 (Appointment Making Meeting)
  - March 8-10, 2023 (Appointment Making Meeting)
  - March 28-29, 2023 (Appointment Making/Review)

-Clergy and SPR Committees will begin to be informed of the appointments affecting them when it is appropriate. At the same time, they will be notified when they can share the information with the congregation. Once the congregation has been informed, the information can be shared with others. Please note: Because changes sometimes occur after the projection of an appointment, the only public release of the appointments will be at the conclusion of the 2023 Annual Conference Session.

## Sexual Ethics Workshops

As you may remember, when our Conference Pastoral Counselor went on medical leave, we had to cancel our workshops scheduled for February and April of 2022, and had to postpone future workshops while we planned how to move forward. We are now able to announce plans for our quadrennial Sexual Ethics Workshop, which is being led by our Conference Ministerial Services Office. We are moving to a quadrennial emphasis model like many other annual conferences follow. This means that all clergy will need to attend one of three workshops being offered in the first quarter of 2023 in order to be appointed this June of 2023 (dates to be announced soon). Please note that this will satisfy your requirement for the quadrennium. Part of the workshop will be completed online, and the other part will be completed in-person. Both parts are needed to satisfy the requirement. Stay tuned for more information coming soon.

## Orientation for Moving Pastors

Bishop Graves and the Appointive Cabinet will host a workshop for full-time moving clergy on a date to be announced. Superintendents will release the location and time for this event in the spring. Please remember that this is a mandatory meeting for all moving pastors.

## Preaching Schedule & Moving Day

In an effort to encourage clergy to take a Sabbath break, the Bishop and Appointive Cabinet invite all clergy, especially those who are projected to move to a new appointment, to observe the following:

- Preach in Local Churches as Scheduled – June 4, 2023: For Clergy moving to a new appointment, you are encouraged to make this your final preaching Sunday in your current appointment.
- Pulpit Supply Sunday – June 11, 2023: Clergy are encouraged to coordinate with their SPRC to have retired clergy or lay supply fill the pulpit to preach this Sunday. All clergy are invited to participate in this Sabbath break but clergy on the projected move list are strongly encouraged to do so.
- Moving Day – June 14, 2023

## **Annual Conference Session Information**

### Annual Conference Meeting Dates

The 2023 regular session of the South Georgia Annual Conference is set for June 4-6 at UGA Tifton Campus Conference Center in Tifton, Ga, during which Bishop Graves will fix the appointments for 2023-2024. Also, we have a called session of the Annual Conference set for May 21, 2023, at 4:00pm, to be held by Zoom.

### Annual Conference Materials

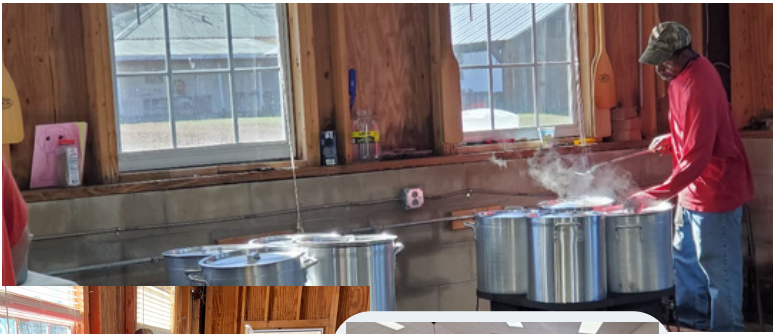
All Annual Conference materials for the 2023 session will be placed on the conference and district websites to download and print or save to an electronic device prior to Annual Conference. The Book of Recommendations will also be available to order at a minimal cost through lulu.com. All clergy for whom we have an email address will receive a notification when Annual Conference materials are available. If an email address was entered during Charge Conference season for the lay member to Annual Conference from your church that person will receive an email as well. However, clergy are requested to check with the church's lay member of Annual Conference to make sure they receive all of the Annual Conference materials. Information will also be included in the district newsletter and conference communications.

### Apportionments

Thank you for your continued faithfulness in giving to the mission and ministry of The South Georgia Conference and The United Methodist Church. The final day to make payments on your local church's 2022 apportionments is January 6, 2023. Payments must be turned into the Administrative Services Office by this date. As a reminder, there are electronic means available in which to pay apportionments.

### Statistical Tables Information

The Statistical Tables will launch on January 10, 2023, and must be completed by February 28, 2023. Statistical tables will be filled out through the new ACstats website. Login information will be emailed to the pastor and treasurer/financial secretary in early January.



Buck Creek UMC held a Barbecue on Feb. 15. They sold over 2000 plates and donated/delivered an additional 1500 plates to the county Soup Kitchen

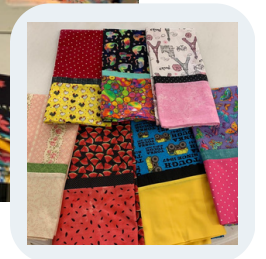


Pittman Park UMC hosted the GSU Men and Women Basketball teams for a low country boil



UMW/UWF held a recent workshop led by Barbara Fisher. The workshop was titled "How is it with Your Soul."

A group of local women from Brooklet United Methodist Church are in the business of pillowcase making. These pillowcases provide sweet dreams for special children in and around our community.



Twin City UMC preschool program has 21 children this year!





Bellville UMC collected and donated these items for the Evans County Food Bank. The church also gave \$300 to the Food Bank.

Statesboro First UMC visited The Lodge at Bethany on Ash Wednesday.



**We hope that you have a happy and safe  
St. Patrick's Day holiday!**