

Myrtle Grove United Methodist Church
P.O. Box 3225
Pensacola, Florida 32516

Return Service Requested



Myrtle Grove
United Methodist Church
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Office Hours:

Mon-Thu, 9:00 am - 3:00pm
Closed Noon - 1:00pm Lunch
Closed Friday

Pray for Your Staff:

Senior Pastor:

Riley Richardson

Choir Director:

Jamie Broxson

Youth Director:

Jonathan Abbott

Pianist:

Patsy Dean

Church Secy./Receptionist:

Cheryl Johnson

Finance Secretary:

Connie Boyd

Education Director:

Janet Boston

Mothers Morning Out:

Carrie Disouryavong

Membership Secretary:

Vernon Ard/Cheryl Johnson

Librarians:

Lou Hulien Brown

Carol Laguens

Notes from the Grove

A monthly publication for
Myrtle Grove United Methodist Church

Web:<http://www.atthegrove.church> **Email:**church.office@mgumc.org

Volume 18, Issue 12

December 2021

Senior Pastor's Note

Dear Church Family,

Luke 2:12 – “This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” 16 – So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

In all of the activities and events of this Christmas season, the verses above give us a sense of the very first Christmas morning. A time of excitement, yet serenity, a time of anticipation, the realization of the most blessed Gift that could ever come to humanity, Jesus Christ, the Son of God!

We are living in a day when it seems that the word “Christmas” is constantly under attack as we as Christians are encouraged to feel somehow “guilty” when it comes to this particular time. Well, let me say in as loud a “voice” as I can type... “I'M NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL”. Romans 1:16 – “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek”.

I want to sincerely encourage you to remember to keep Christ pre-eminent (first) in all you do and say while going through your Christmas activities.

It is important to remember that great ministry opportunities exist at this time of year. Many people struggle with depression and loneliness as memories of what “used to be” fill their minds.

By keeping Christ first, we can be sure to reach out to those around us (yes, even those who are rude) with the true message of Christmas and that is that Jesus Christ came to earth to seek and to save that which was lost. He came to serve, not be served!

Take time as well to be faithful to Church, as well as remember to pray and read the Word and you will be ready in ways you never dreamed possible.

We have many events here at the Church during the Christmas season and you may stay updated with all that is happening by visiting our website at (www.atthegrove.church) and reading the bulletin at Church.

Be sure to invite a friend! Christmas is one of the best times of the year to invite someone to attend Church with you. Ask the Lord to help you think of a few people right now to invite to church so they too can hear the message of Christ at Christmas!

May God richly bless you at Christmas!

Pastor Riley

December Birthdays

4 - Tom Helton
6 - Maxine Lea
7 - Frank Benson
7 - Mary Carrick
10 - Lee Bateman
12 - Ardis Riddell
12 - Diane Darville
14 - Jean Kendall
15 - Beth Herndon
16 - Carol Laguens
17 - Teresa Worth
18 - Tom McLeod
18 - Bubba Gordon
18 - Hope Brown
19 - Kimberly Sturm
20 - Becca Moulder
21 - Michael Prouty, Sr.
23 - Anna Van Buuren
24 - Karl Snyder
27 - Kris Verwey
27 - Elise Benson
28 - Sarah Matthews
28 - Cathy Prouty
29 - James Rueff
30 - Brenda McHatton
30 - Katie Hewett

Our Vision Statement:

“Every member a good neighbor.”

Our Purpose Statement:

“Our Journey - Knowing, Loving, Serving, Sharing.”

Some Words from the Education Director

You may have noticed a slow steady growth in our attendance on Sunday mornings. I am sure you have heard the wiggling and giggling that happily means we are adding to the numbers of children at the service. The nursery is growing and we are making almost 20 busy bags each week with new themes that go with what they are studying in Sunday School and Children's Church. It is exciting to see new young families coming to MGUMC!

Thanks to Emy Bennett and her incredible volunteers. The Silver Patrol continues to visit approximately 30 seniors from our church family every month. They are working hard to insure that no one from our church family feels forgotten. In November they delivered 30 fruit/snack baskets to our seniors! This month they will be delivering Christmas gifts from the UMW and help the UMM deliver their gifts to the widows. We will be having a Silver Patrol Christmas Party on Thursday, December 16 at 10:00 am. It will include a Christmas Communion program for those that cannot attend on Christmas Eve or do not drive at night.

The next Ladies' Prayer Breakfast will be Saturday, December 18th at 9 am. If you would like to participate in this program, please contact me for more information. Usually the date is on the third Saturday of each month (during the school year) at 9:00 am. Nursery is available. I would also encourage you to invite your praying friends to participate regardless of whether or not they attend our church. Unity at a time like this is vital to our community.

Thank you to everyone who made **All Saint's Day** so special for the families of our members who passed away over the previous year. A special thank you to Chuck Boyd for the AV work, Jonathan Abbott for helping me with pictures and Dr. Cannon for ringing our bell. We also recently honored our **Veterans**. It was really nice to see them participate in the service. Thank you to the children for passing out our gifts to all Veterans present. Thank you to Kim Sturm and Richard Cannon for their beautiful solos. Thank you to Troop 2 and Pack 2 for their Flag Ceremony with Bob Zimmerman. We really enjoyed RC Miller and Lisa Toquoty's videos. The slide show was awesome and I appreciate everyone who was able to get information to me on their service. We added a lot of people this year!

We also celebrated **Harvest Sunday** on November 14. The Children's Department set up a display to showcase the donations brought by the children, youth, scouts and nursery. They donated over 110 pounds! Way to go kids!

National Bible week was celebrated on Sunday, November 21st. We passed out new Bibles to a few people and gave out prize bags to the children and youth who brought their Bibles. Also, bookmarks to all of the adults who brought their Bibles.

The **Wednesday night classes** for the fall term are over and we will resume again on Wednesday, January 12th with new classes. If you have suggestions for classes, let me know.

Thanks to all of the volunteers who helped with the annual "**Hanging of the Greens**". Our church will be beautiful for the Christmas/Advent Season. Santa's Post Office is in the fellowship hall and you can place your Christmas Cards in the appropriate boxes for your church friends. There will also be a mailbox where the children can mail their letters to Santa! Another table will be set up with Devotional guides for everyone in the family (children, youth, adults, seniors and even family devotionals). Take what you need!

The Angel Tree is up in the Fellowship Hall. The Angels represent children and youth in our church and scout programs who need assistance with Christmas. We are asking for one outfit, one toy and an age appropriate book. There will be no names, but the sex and age of the person. All the participants remain confidential.

This year during the **Advent Season**, we will be featuring multi-generational families in our congregation. We have many families that represent 2-3 generations and we want to celebrate them by allowing them to light the Advent Candle in the Sanctuary each week.

The youth will also have several Sundays in December where they will be "hanging out" after church. Watch the bulletin for details and prepare to stay after church. Lunch will be provided.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

Saturday, December 4: 1-3 pm Christmas Crafts for all children and their families sponsored by Pack 2

Monday, December 6: 6:00 pm Scout Christmas Party

Wednesday, December 8: 6:00 pm "Dinner with Santa" Children's Christmas Party

Saturday, December 11: 6:00 pm The Teacher and Volunteers Christmas Party

Thursday, December 16 :10:00 am Silver Patrol Christmas Party and Communion Service

Saturday, December 18: 9:00 am Ladies' Prayer Breakfast

Sunday, December 19: Children's Christmas Pageant during 10:00 am service

Friday, December 24: 5:00 pm Christmas Eve Service (Nursery provided)

Please keep an eye on the bulletin for other events and any calendar changes. Thank you for your volunteer spirit and prayers for our church programs! I also post things regularly on our website: atthegrove.church and Myrtle Grove Neighborhood Scoop on Facebook. Check it out

Submitted by Janet Boston, Education Director, (850) 456-7463, X5, jlbpensmgumc@gmail.com

Addresses & Other Changes, New Members, Baptisms, Transfers, & Deaths

Telephone Number Change

Nancy Bowman
850-542-7285

If you move, please let the office know your new address. Also, if your phone number has changed, please let the office know.

Reminder to All Sunday School Classes, Groups and Scouts

We ask that you be sure to clean up the room(s) that you use whenever you are here. There is a vacuum in the custodian's closet (M5) for you to use. Please return the vacuum when you are finished. Thank you for helping to keep the church clean.

December Prayer List

Dec. 1-4

John & Barbara Boyden
Christopher Bradbury
Wanda Branin
Tabatha Bray, Jonathan Daniels,
Bo Law
Betty Brooks
Keith & Lisa Brooks

Dec. 5-11

Greg & Hope Brown, Abigail, Adalyn,
Amelia
Hobey & Louise Brown
Bill Brown
Danny & Jamie Broxson, Cameron,
Grace
Gerald Brunelle
Lynda Brunelle

Dec. 12-18

Chelsea Brunson
Chase & Mary Bryant
Kimberly Bryson, Ava, Samantha
Shane & Bethe Buckles
WG Bunn
Tom & Mary Buntin
Robert Burns

Dec. 19-25

Sue Burr
Amy Bushey
Anthony Bushey
Charles Bushey
James & Tina Bushey
Jim & Marge Byrd

Dec. 26-31

Tom & Sharon Cacciatore
Clark & Paddi Cain
Richard A & Judy Cannon
Travis Carey
Mary Carrick
Jason Carson

Sunday Activities

Sunday School 8:30 am
Worship 10:00 am
Prayer Team 4:00 pm

Worship Service Opportunities

Wednesday Activities

Youth Elevate - 6:00pm
Small Groups - 6:00pm
Choir Rehearsal - 7:15pm

Nursery Department

This month we said good-bye to Tiana Crup, who joined the food service industry. Good Luck Tiana! We will miss you! We are also welcoming Katherine Sears who has joined the team and will be working with Miss Amanda in the three-year-old room. Welcome Miss Katie!

I hope you will take the time to look at the Nursery bulletin board in the hallway. Each month we will feature a new theme and list the birthdays of our children and workers! Happy December Birthday to Aria and Gracie! Thank you to Miss Tina and Miss Tiona for their hard work. We also want to thank our workers, Miss Tiona and Miss Amanda for cleaning the hallway restrooms, and Children's Department Sunday School classes and the Children's Church room and bathroom!

We recently welcomed Grace Broxson into her debut in the nursery. She is a joy and we pray she is feeling better soon. We also were glad to see Aria Sturm back after she was feeling sick over the last several weeks. Glad to have our sweet girls back and feeling better! We also wanted to say welcome to Brantley's parents Cody and Tabbie and tell them how happy we are to see them each week in the service.

We eagerly await new babies and we recently featured Adelyn Few born into the Devon and Chasity Few family. The Few family has also had another baby and his parents have recently started attending our church. Congratulations to Shaun and Sarah on the birth of Cameron Carter Few. Siblings are CJ, Makenzie and Kiley. Thanks to our new "Welcome Program", we gifted both sets of the proud parents with a swaddling cloth featuring scripture to bless the new baby.

Snacks will be provided for your child. If they cannot eat Cheez Its, Cheerios or pretzels, please let the nursery attendant know. They will also have apple juice available to them. If you want your child to have snacks specific to them, please include them in your diaper bag. The workers also need to be aware of any feeding schedule of bottle babies. Please list any allergies (particularly food) on the gold allergy sheets and make sure you give them to the attendants.

If you or your group are in need of a nursery for your special event, please let Janet know! We are ready for you!

Scout Department

The Scout Department is proud to say that there will be 10 scouts earning their God & Country Awards after completing their programs during the Wednesday Night Community Classes this fall term.

The Troop and Pack have also performed several Flag Ceremonies on Sundays such as Veterans Sunday and First Responders Sunday. They always do a great job.

Let's do a little bragging on our children and youth! Abbi received her medal for Soccer at the Perdido Bay Center. She scored twice and assisted once. Breylin was named the top reader in the first grade at his school. Kloe and Rowan were named the male and female Senior Patrol leaders for Troop 2. Sawyer made A/B Honor roll and his flag football team won the Championship. Hayden was on A/B Honor Roll. Ava made A/B Honor Roll. Violet's teacher said her cursive is greatly improved. Way to go Scouts!

We are also very happy that we have scout families attending our church: the Sears family, the Coon family, the Price family, the Glass/Brown family, the Hogan/Marlow family, the Audorff family and the Few family. I hope I didn't miss anyone. This is the first time in many years that so many of our church family joined the scouting program.

If you would like information on a scouting program for your son or daughter (grandson/granddaughter) in grades K-12, please contact Janet at jlbpensmgumc@gmail.com or (850) 456-7463 x5 or on Facebook.

Thank you for supporting our scouts!

So proud to be the home to the oldest scout groups in the regional area!

Wednesday Night Community Programs

We just ended our fall term for the Community Program. I hope everyone enjoys their holidays! We will resume classes in our winter term on Wednesday, January 12th at 6:00 pm.

Thank you to Jim Reynolds, Pastor Riley, Barbara Boston, Sharon Hogan and all of the children and youth leaders and nursery workers. You worked hard to make the fall term so welcoming to our community and church family. Thank you!

We are presently working on our winter term line up of classes. We have had several suggestions and requests for specific classes. If you have a suggestion for a class or would like to share your hobby or passion with others, please let Janet know. The nursery will continue to be available during classes.

Janet Boston
Education Director
(850) 456-7463 X 5
jlbpensmgumc@gmail.com

United Methodist Women

Dear Myrtle Grove Ladies,

Whether or not you have ever attended a local UMW meeting, you are a part of the United Methodist Women at Myrtle Grove. Because each of you is part of us, I want to share some information with you regarding our future. The National Organization (especially) of the United Methodist Women has, for a number of years, been leading us into a more and more liberal stance in their expenditures of our money, their political leanings and statements, and their spiritual direction. Due to this, we at Myrtle Grove have decided to withdraw from the National, Conference, and District UMW. This action has been approved by our Myrtle Grove UMW Executive Board, our general UMW membership and our pastor.

Below is the letter we will be sending to them to let them know about our plans. As of January, we will become "Wesleyan Women" and will answer only to ourselves. The biggest change you might notice is that we will only be meeting 4 times a year with each of our Circles being in charge of one meeting. We will meet on the first Tuesday of February, May, August and November of 2022. Our meetings will all be at 10 a.m. here at the church. The individual Circles will decide on the program and if they wish to provide lunch.

Our final "UMW" meeting will be this December 7 at 10a.m. with a Christmas program and a potluck luncheon. We invite each of you to join us for more discussion about our upcoming changes. Please come, especially if you have questions or comments about this.

Here is the letter we will be sending:

December 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

The Myrtle Grove United Methodist Church's United Methodist Women have voted to disengage from the National, Conference and District United Methodist Women's groups. We have felt un-represented in the financial expenditures, unheard in the political leanings, and uninvolved in the spiritual direction that, especially, the National leaders are taking this organization. Therefore, we wish to let you know that we will no longer be part of this as of January 2022.

We plan to have a local organization where we can spend our money on local missions that we approve, where we can incline our help politically as we desire, and where the spiritual direction will be driven by our Bible based church.

We will miss the many years that we were part of a larger organization that was built on a Biblical foundation and in which we felt at home.

May God bless your work where it glorifies Him.

Sincerely,

Beth Herndon

Myrtle Grove UMW President, 2021.

CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT

On Sunday, November 14, the children passed out gifts to all the Veterans that were present during the Veterans Sunday service. They also brought (along with the nursery, scouts and youth) over 110 pounds of food for the Elijah's Pantry on Harvest Sunday. They celebrated National Bible Week by bringing their Bible and receiving prize bags. We also passed out some Bibles to children who did not have any at home.

The last Sunday of November was the start of our **Advent Season**. This year, you will be seeing something special. We will be featuring multi-generational families during the lighting of the Advent candles. It will be fun to see the children with all of their family members.

The Christmas Season will also be made more festive in our department with the addition of a seasonal bulletin board in the hallway that will feature the children and recognize their birthday! We will begin with a Christmas presentation. Make sure you come by and take a look!

The children will be singing for their annual **Christmas Pageant** on Sunday, December 19, at 10:00 am. We will be practicing in Sunday School and a paper with the lyrics to the songs will be sent home so that you can practice with them as well. There will be a called in person practice sometime the week before the performance. Please watch the bulletin and parent notes for details.

If you or your family needs assistance from the **Angel Tree** this year, please let me know so that I can be sure that your child(ren) will be included. All of this is totally confidential and no one will know the participants on the tree. In the fellowship hall, **Santa's Post Office** will be ready to accept letters from all the children. There will also be a table set up for Advent devotionals for the children, youth and families.

All of the families of the church are invited to have **"Dinner with Santa"** on Wednesday, December 8, at 6:00 pm. We will have dinner and take pictures with Santa. There will also be other activities as well. Mark your calendars!

If you like **Christmas Crafts**, everyone is invited to participate in a craft day on Saturday, December 4 from 1-3 pm. They will be in the fellowship hall. All sorts of crafts will be made and everyone is encouraged to participate!

Breylin Few was named the best reader in the First Grade at his school. Lacey Gillespie, Abigail Barnhill Coon and Zion Barnhill all received medals for their participation in their soccer programs. Abbi scored 2 goals and 1 assist during the season. Zion's team was undefeated. Sawyer Price made A/B Honor Roll and his Flag Football team at Redeemer Lutheran won the Championship. Hayden Brown made A/B Honor Roll.

If your child or grandchild has anything that they have accomplished, let me know and we will put their name and accomplishment in the newsletter and bulletin. This can certainly include school, scouts, athletic projects, etc.

Watch the bulletin for upcoming Children's Department events!

Janet Boston, (850) 456-7463 x5
jlbpensmgumc@gmail.com



Merry Christmas Everyone!

This is one of the best times of year as we prepare to receive the greatest gift God has given us in the form of sweet baby Jesus. As I was spending time with my nephew the other day, who is going on 10 months, I couldn't help but think about his future and the life he has ahead of him. I'm sure Joseph and Mary had some of the same thoughts even with the knowledge of knowing how special Jesus' life would be. So much excitement in the unknown of a young ones future. I can't help but have the same excitement with our young program and kids in it. This December will be full of all kinds of fun as usual, but it will also be a bit different as I challenge them with the 30 Hour Famine. On Dec 17th, we are going to have our Famine. During this time, the Youth will go on a 30 hour Fast. 30 hours is significant because that is the average time children in third world countries go between meals. During this time, the kids will be presented with several lessons and be challenged to live some time out of their comfort zone in a way that I've found with other youth an impactful weekend. During this time, I ask the church body prayers for our Youth and the College Leaders. Along with the Famine, we will be having a mission project to collect items for necessity bags for Bright Bridge formerly Richards Memorial and warm clothes drive, such as socks, gloves and coats, for the Washburn Center. We will also be going caroling and taking cookies to our shut-ins and those that could use an extra dose of Christmas Spirit. If you have someone that you would like the Youth to visit, please let me know. I hope everyone has a wonderful Christmas and an amazing start into the New Year!

G.O.E -Jonathan



United Methodist Women Continued from Page 3

The UMW met on Tuesday, November 2nd, at 10:00a.m. in the chapel. At this meeting we elected our officers for 2022 and they are: President Beth Herndon, Vice President Judy Cannon, Secretary and Communications Maureen Dunbar, and Treasurer Elise Benson.

A list of our Shut-ins was passed around and the members present signed up to bring gifts which we will bring to our December meeting. The program was given by the Joy-Nadine Circle. They gave three readings from devotionals about *Serenity*, by Norman Vincent Peale, and a reading from a little book called *How to Get to Heaven from Your House*. We also enjoyed a reading and a guessing game about the *Bible in Song*.

We had a lot of discussion about our plans for next year. See article on page 3. I hope our members will come on December 7th at 10:00a.m. to be updated on the new changes and plans. There will be a potluck luncheon following the meeting. We signed up to give gifts to our Shut-ins and we are bringing them in that day for the Silver Patrol to distribute. If you want to give a gift to the Shut-ins, Beth Herndon has the list (850-324-5224). There is a \$10 limit. They must be wrapped or placed in a decorative bag and the tag should read that this a gift from the United Methodist Women of Myrtle Grove UMC. Also, we are to bring in our **NO WORK BAZAAR** donation. Remember that we are still about serving Jesus Christ through missions and a supportive fellowship for our members and our church family.

Sisters in Service

We wish to thank everyone in our church family who purchased coupon books or made donations of funds and supplies for our ministry to the needy in Pensacola. We were finally able to make a trip to the Washburn Center for the homeless (Covid prevented us from going during the past 18 months) in November. We took 14 pots of hot chili, 125 lunch bags of snacks, a large assortment of warm clothing, towels and laundry detergent, and various toiletry items. The recipients of these supplies were very grateful and we could not have served as the hands and feet of Jesus without your help. Now we will begin to restock in preparation for our next visit in the new year. FYI: The items we **ALWAYS** need are toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, and never worn men's (they prefer boxers) and women's underwear.

May you and your families be blessed during the Christmas season as you have blessed others!

Submitted by,
Carol Laguens

Library News

We hope you all are enjoying the "Free Books" cart outside the door to the kitchen. Remember to stop by if you need a new daily devotional to use in 2022. We also had a variety of AAA travel materials donated that may guide you on any upcoming trips you may have on your calendar.

We would like to highlight a book that the library received recently entitled "We Will Not Be Silenced" by Erwin W. Lutzer. It discusses how to respond courageously to our culture's assault on Christianity. "Dr. Lutzer prepares you to live out your convictions....And tells how you can show compassion and gentleness to those outside the faith without affirming their beliefs."

"If I could, I would put this book into the hands of every Christian in America," says Dr. David Jeremiah. Claim the words of Joshua 1:9. You will find this book on the shelf at #261(LUT).

Submitted by,
Carol Laguens