

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

Return Service Requested



Myrtle Grove  
United Methodist Church  
Mailing Address:  
P.O. Box 3225  
1030 N. 57th Avenue  
Pensacola, FL 32516  
Phone: 850-456-7463/7464  
Fax: 850-456-1897

**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:**  
Isaac Richardson  
**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  
**Librarians:**  
Lou Hulien Brown  
Carol Laguens

**Our Vision Statement:**  
*“Every member a good neighbor.”*

# Notes from the Grove

A monthly publication for  
**Myrtle Grove United Methodist Church**

**Web:**<http://www.atthegrove.church> **Email:**[church.office@mgumc.org](mailto:church.office@mgumc.org)

*Volume 17, Issue 12* *December 2020*

## Senior Pastor’s Note

“Merry Christmas!”

Every year around this time, I have a familiar experience. I’m out shopping, and I’ll go through the checkout line, and pay for my stuff. When the cashier hands me back the change, they’ll say “Happy Holidays,” or perhaps even “Merry Christmas.”

I realize that this comment is not always motivated by the cashier’s genuine interest in whether or not I enjoy my holiday. I’m aware that they may be saying this because they’ve been told to. But at least once every year, I have a cashier who looks me in the eye and says “Merry Christmas,” and really means it and it changes my whole day.

There really is something genuine to this whole idea of Christmas cheer. As Dec. 25th draws near, people warm up just a bit. If you’re out and around on Christmas Eve, you’ll notice that people are friendlier than on any other day of the year. Folks warm up when they are mindful of the Christ child’s birth, and make an extra effort to practice the virtues the angel’s sing of - “peace on earth, goodwill towards men.”

When Christ entered our world, he didn’t come to brighten our Decembers, but to transform our lives. It can be hard work to practice good will towards one another. John the Baptist’s message was that as we prepare for Christ to come into our lives, we can start to change our ways.

The Gospel accounts of Jesus’ ministry provide the blueprint for loving our neighbor in a busy and complicated neighborhood. Christ made a point of seeking out the broken and disenfranchised people of his day - the lepers, prostitutes and tax collectors - and he saw the value in each one of them and in so doing, He helped them recognize the value in themselves.

This Christmas Season, let us recognize that just as faith is a decision, good will towards people is a series of decisions that work themselves out not in temporary holiday cheer, but in the details of everyday life.

Blessings,  
Pastor Riley

## Our Purpose Statement:

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

## December Birthdays

- |                          |                       |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 - Betty Jackson        | 27 - Elise Benson     |
| 4 - Tom Helton           | 27 - Josh Toquohty    |
| 6 - Michael Lee          | 28 - Sarah Matthews   |
| 6 - Maxine Lea           | 29 - James Rueff, Jr. |
| 7 - Frank Benson         | 30 - Brenda McHatton  |
| 7 - Mary Carrick         | 30 - Katie Hewett     |
| 10 - Lee Bateman         |                       |
| 12 - Ardis Riddell       |                       |
| 12 - Diane Darville      |                       |
| 14 - Jean Kendall        |                       |
| 15 - Beth Herndon        |                       |
| 16 - Carol Laguens       |                       |
| 17 - Teresa Worth        |                       |
| 18 - Bubba Gordon        |                       |
| 18 - Hope Brown          |                       |
| 19 - Kimberly Sturm      |                       |
| 21 - Michael Prouty, Sr. |                       |
| 23 - Anna VanBuuren      |                       |
| 24 - Karl Snyder         |                       |
| 25 - Tom Danks           |                       |
| 27 - Kris Verwey         |                       |



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Each of our four circles, Arbeiters, Joy/Nadine, Guild, and Sisters in Service, are finding the COVID 19 meeting and fund-raising restrictions difficult to work with. Surprisingly enough, each group found a way to accomplish some of their goals. UMW as a whole is having a **NO WORK-Fall Bazaar**. Each of the members usually spends some amount of money for items that they donate to the bazaar (such as bake sale, crafts, foods, drinks, etc.) Instead of the items this year, we are asked to donate the amount we would spend on ingredients or materials to make the items. Our deadline for this is **Nov 30, 2020**.

We are also participating in **Samaritan’s Purse Christmas Child Project**. This is filling a shoebox with items, from a published list, to give to children around the world. The finished shoeboxes will be delivered locally during the week of **16-23 November** or if you are not into shopping these days, you can go on line to [www.Samaritanspurse.org](http://www.Samaritanspurse.org) and they will fill a box for you for \$25. One other project we are doing is helping to fill the gap our lovely Audra Wilson left. We are trying to remember our shut-ins at Christmas. We will be gathering and handing out items to each of those identified within our church. This was a project Audra did each year and often all by herself. Yes, United Methodist Women are finding a way during this very restrictive time...finding a way to be the hands and feet of God and provide for other women, youth, and children. Come join us. We would love to have you visit and hopefully find a circle home to enjoy the fellowship, love, and blessings we share.

Submitted by,  
  
Paddi Cain

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

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

<b><u>Address Change:</u></b> Beverly Harris 7408 Sachem Rd. Pensacola, FL 32506	<b><u>Address Change:</u></b> Ian & Sarah Porter 6010 Bridge Water Circle Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082	<b><u>Deaths:</u></b> Marlene Cooper Devoe Blackwell Connie Carreker Charles Avery Elizabeth Rodgers Lyndon Hudson Janie Brown Joyce Kelly Joyce Jernigan Mildred Hubbard
<b><u>Address Change:</u></b> Marjorie Byrd 7830 Pine Forest Rd., #B9 Pensacola, FL 32526 (850) 572-3400 marjbyrd1492@gmail.com	<b><u>Address Change:</u></b> Vicie Pope-Blocker 100 Mary Powell Dr., Apt. 124 St. Mary’s, GA 31558 1-912-227-2324	
<b><u>New Members:</u></b> James L. Rueff, Jr. (PF) 5914 Strickland Pl. Pensacola, FL 32506 (850) 516-5391	<b><u>New Members:</u></b> Karl & Katherine Snyder (CT) 52 DeLuna Dr. Pensacola, FL 32506 1-540-660-4211	<b><u>New Members:</u></b> Tom & Sharon Cacciatore (OD) 3043 Creole Way Pensacola, FL 32526 (850) 384-6503
<b><u>Baptism:</u></b> Logan Chase Marlow Baptized 10-18-2020 Son of Daniel & Michelle	<b><u>Baptism:</u></b> Bella Rose Zimmerman Baptized 10-18-2020 Daughter of Bob & Lilibeth	<b><u>Change of Address:</u></b> Danny & Jamie Broxson 198 Promenade Ln. Cantonment, FL 32533
If you move, please let the office know your new address.		

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

<b><u>December 1-5</u></b> Bruce Fortner Stevens & Judy Fountain Stephen & Angela Fraley, Jessica Dakota & Autumn Fietze Robert & Marianne Fuller Dakota Fulton Kay Gamble	<b><u>December 6-12</u></b> George & Sally Garner Flo Garrett Nancy Garrett Robyn & Adalynn Garrett Steven & Patricia Geci Alan Gentry Nathon Geri	<b><u>December 13-19</u></b> Nickolas Geri Larry & Theresa Gillespie, Lacey Jessica Gomes Thomas & Rachel Goodloe, Thomas Bubba & Susie Gordon Donna Greene
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**December 20-26**  
Rosemary Greene  
Elrena Greeney  
Wilma Gropp  
Kendyl Haddock  
Justin & Jennifer Hall, Collin & Cora  
Joshua & Mary Hall, Joshua Jr., Bailey, Micah

**December 27-31**  
Brittany Hamner  
Kiersten Hankinson  
Michaela Hankinson  
Robert Hanshaw, Jr.  
Mark Harper  
Beverly Harris

### SCOUT DEPARTMENT

I was so glad we were able to have our annual Scout Sunday just before we were shut down for the virus. We were able to shine a light on a program that has been in our church for over 60 years. We have the oldest Troop and Pack in the regional area. Now we also celebrate the fact that we have girls in our Pack and Troop. Truthfully, we are ahead of the game on that count. As a family pack, sisters have been participating in scout functions at this church for years. Now they can wear the uniforms and receive the awards! The scouts have also reached out to younger children in the past few years and added a “Lion” group for kindergartners. We have one of the largest Lion groups in the area-10 little Lions and their parents. It has been a challenge to find a place in the church where they can meet and still social distance. That is a great problem to have!

While we were experiencing the challenges of holding church during this pandemic, the scouts turned out to perform Flag ceremonies for the Fourth of July, the First Responder’s and the Veterans on their prospective special Sundays. They were a small group each time, but that was necessary to make sure we kept them safe.

This fall we had 3 teachers work with the scouts on their God & Country awards and we look forward to seeing these scouts receive their awards on the next Scout Sunday. The scouts also did a “clean-up” around the church after the hurricane and was able to make a dent on cleaning debris out of the cemetery.

**The scout families will be hosting an outdoor dinner with Santa for all of the scouts and their families on Saturday, December 19 from 2-4 pm.**

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

Submitted by,  
Janet Boston

### Sisters in Service

It has been quite a while since we have been able to serve as the hands and feet of Jesus physically in the Pensacola community. But the Sisters in Service mission circle has tried to work from home during these past 10 months. Thank you all for the past donations of funds and items to be shared with those in need at the Washburn Center for the Homeless, the Gulf Coast Kid's House, the Ronald McDonald House, the HER Foundation for Women Veterans, and a new women's shelter we discovered downtown.

Wanda Rankin has continued to shop and keep in touch with the directors of these various charities during the months of being quarantined. This enabled us to drop off needed supplies for adults and children at these locations as well as sending checks to assist some of them financially during this difficult time. Because of social distancing and the ages of our ladies in the group, we have not been able to serve those in need in person but they have much appreciated our efforts to stay in touch materially. We were contacted by Ronald McDonald House in November asking if we could help provide a meal for those families living there while their children are being treated at Sacred Heart Hospital. We plan on arranging to do that later in December.

Our circle has not held any meetings since February and we last gathered to assist Mission Fishin' at the Reimagine Pensacola event at Bellview Middle School. We sincerely hope to start back to working on site after the first of the year. We will keep you posted on the restart of Sisters in Service meetings on the 4th Thursday of each month and we welcome any new ladies who have a heart for mission work. Feel free to contact Wanda Rankin or Carol Laguens if you have any questions about becoming a SIS member.

Our continued long distance support was made possible by the individual monetary donations from members of our church family and from the profits from our recent coupon book sales. We so appreciate all those who continued to assist us with your gifts this year.

May you and your families have good health and lots of joy during the Christmas holiday season.  
God bless all of you!

Submitted by,  
Carol Laguens

### CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT

The children are looking forward to the holiday season! Please go by Santa's Post Office and pick up a paper that your children can write a letter to Santa and deposit it into the Red Mailbox! There will also be papers that have Santa's phone number and website for the children to enjoy!

There will also be Advent calendars and devotionals for the children and families set up on a table in the Fellowship Hall. I hope everyone picks them up and uses them. We will be observing Advent in the Children's and Youth's Sunday school classes each week with a wreath and devotionals.

We will be holding our first outdoor Christmas party for the children on Saturday, December 12 at 12 noon. It will be a very "Florida" Christmas party that we have dubbed "Grillin' and Chillin' with Santa!" We will be grilling hot dogs and hamburgers and there will be pictures with Santa. We are planning to have special activities in addition to that, so watch the bulletin for details.

The children will be participating in a Christmas Pantomime Pageant on Sunday, December 13 at the 10 am service. We will need angels, shepherds, wise men, and of course Joseph and Mary. This is a perfect program for those kids who do not like to speak or sing. In order to keep everyone on the stage safe, the audience will sing the songs. If you would like your child age 3 and older to participate, they will need to be at the following practices: Wednesday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm. If needed, we will do a run through Saturday, December 13 before the party.

We will end our holiday season with a visit from the Magi on Epiphany Sunday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>. What a good time to look forward too!

We are thrilled to say that our options for the children in church have slowly come back. We have the nursery and Children's Church now and we have even started back with our children's bulletins. In the coming weeks we will start back with the busy bags you have been asking about. We are in need of new acolytes since several of them have moved away. If you have a child in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade through youth ages and they want to be acolytes, let Janet know. Also, if you would like to be a children's church teacher once a month, contact Janet. We need a teacher and some helpers. It is easier than ever and requires very little planning on your part.

While it is awesome to see all of the Sunday School classes begin, we now have a few openings to fill during that hour. We are looking for more children's department volunteers. If God has spoken to you about working with specific age groups, please come see me. A very special thank you to April McDaniel and Joan Carter who are retiring from teaching in the children's department after 27 years and 47 years prospectively! Now that is a legacy!

Watch the bulletin for upcoming Children's Department events!

Submitted by,  
Janet Boston



Church,

It has been a joy to return to some sense of normalcy in so many areas of the church. I think most of us can agree this has been unlike anything anyone has seen. Normally, we would be serving at a Christmas banquet this month, but normal isn't exactly the same this year. But, we endure!

The youth group has recently began the process of returning. While it has certainly been rewarding, it has not been without its challenges. Although I wish most kids could act in a "normal" manner, they are truly making the best out of the situation.

We meet from 6-7, and that is mostly only for the group time of our session, so changes have surely affected us as well. In the future, we have to do more as group - both at church and away.

Most of our yearly winter activities are on hold, but stay tuned for any changes. I want to make this winter special, but I also want to keep students safe. My hope is that we can move on from this in our near future. In doing so, we will be stronger! By the grace of God, we will overcome this.

In his name,  
Isaac

### NUSERY DEPARTMENT

It is so good to have the nursery open again! Please be assured that we disinfect the nursery furniture and toys between every use and watch the children closely so that they do not share toys with each other. All children and workers take their temperature before checking any child into the nursery and even wipe the sign in pen down after each use. Changing diapers is limited to as needed only to limit each child's exposure to germs and all adults wear surgical gloves. For the time being, we are limiting snacks to what parents provide and placing them at the tables where they are restricted and cannot share their food. This has allowed our nursery to be as safe as possible during these challenging times.

We are proud to say that we are prepared for growth with 3 nursery workers that have been background checked and CPR trained. I look forward to the starting of new nursery programs that will encourage our new parents and young families.

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

Submitted by Janet Boston



*Merry Christmas  
To the Congregation of  
Myrtle Grove United Methodist Church!  
From the Staff*