

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/Cheryl Johnson

Librarians:

Lou H Julien 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

Volume 18, Issue 1

January 2021

Senior Pastor's Note

Greetings in Christ,

I don't know about you, but I'm excited about the New Year!

The Bible says in Jeremiah 29:11 “For I know the plans I have for you” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Now, I realize, of course, the context of this Scripture applies to the Nation of Israel, yet I do believe that we serve a God who is “the same yesterday, today and forever.”

As we look ahead into the year 2021, there's not a person among us who can be sure of what the future holds. For that matter, there's not a person among us who can even say for sure that God will give them another breath to breathe!

Yet, for those of us who have put our full trust and hope in God, either way, we come out on the winning side! For those of us who know Jesus, we look forward to His return, and while it may sound a bit cliché, we've read the end of the book and we win!

We must know and understand that God has great things planned for those who love Him and serve Him. We don't need to live in fear, even in those times we may not understand God's ways.

The Bible says: Matthew 6:33-34 (KJV) 33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. 34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

When Jesus gave these words, it wasn't for people who were living in the “lap of luxury”. These words were for people who were under the oppression of Roman rule. They were often quite concerned about their safety and provision for their families. Yet, Jesus reminded them to put Him first and He would take care of them.

God has great things for this Church in 2021! He also has great things for you and your loved ones in 2020! Yet, I believe it is vital that we look forward in faith not in fear!

2 Timothy 1:7 (KJV) 7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

If God knows the plans, then surely He knows how to lead us in the days ahead! I would encourage you to listen for His “still, small voice” as you navigate the unknown future.

His plans for you are good!

May you have a vision-filled New Year!

Pastor Riley Richardson

Our Purpose Statement:

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

SOME WORDS FROM THE EDUCATION DIRECTOR

A special thank you to those that helped out so much during this past summer. The volunteers who set up and were videotaped for VBS and the virtual Sunday School. Thank you Carol Laguens, Clark and Paddi Cain, Connie Few, Isaac Richardson, Barbara Boston and Pastor Riley. Our church and our many eager volunteers have shown over the past several months just how resilient MGUMC really is, even in the face of great difficulty.

It was an incredible relief to finally see everyone in person during the month of July. It is true that we certainly had to make changes to how we were used to doing things, but it has been worth it to insure everyone felt safe. It has been nice to see the various groups such as UMM, UMW, scouts, etc. coming back to their regular meeting times. You cannot keep the bride of Christ down! It has also been nice to see other groups coming back such as the Neighborhood Watch, TOP's and even potentially AARP.

The shutdown of the state certainly encouraged the more “out of the box” side of our brains. We enjoyed a very different idea of graduation, Easter Egg Hunts, VBS, Sunday School, etc. We even managed to do a few new things like posting our active duty military members on our website and sending them “military” Bibles as a gift on Armed Forces Day. Speaking of military, it was fun to collect pictures and information on our veterans who have passed on and make a display of the information on our website over the Memorial Day holiday. We sent out letters and gift cards to the teachers during Teacher Appreciation week so they would not feel forgotten. We kept in touch with our children and their families by sending out their Sunday School materials and materials during Christian Family Week. While we waited for Sunday School to begin again, we enjoyed passing out homemade coffee mugs to all the Grandparents on Grandparent Sunday. Fall brought many fun things like the Children's Sabbath and our first ever First Responder's Sunday. We have received many thank yous for the cards and gift certificates that we were able to distribute at the local fire house, EMS, Sheriff's Department and PPD. I would be remiss if I did not mention the awesome video that you all made yourselves for Pastor Riley to celebrate Pastor Appreciation Sunday (thank you Chuck)! I suppose the strange year that we have had in 2020 just made All Saint's Day all the more poignant this year. The addition of pictures and bulletins specific to each family was a needed addition. Rounding out the fall with Veteran's Sunday, National Bible Sunday, the 50th Annual Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service and the beginning of the Holiday Season has made 2020 a very busy year already! The week of Thanksgiving we delivered Thanksgiving fruit baskets to all of our shut-ins and nursing home residents. We have tried to keep in touch with them by phone and occasional gifts, but it is time to resume a regular visit with them (of course without close contact). The Girls of Grace put up a “Giving Thanks” tree and it soon filled with hand prints like leaves that told all of us what we are all thankful for this year. Thank you as a church family for all of the great donations of everything from furniture to clothes that we were able to pass along to families in need in our church and community, especially Jim Rueff who went shopping with me! Thank you also to the Lion's club who gave us gifts of pantry food, cleaning supplies and toiletries that we passed along to a very needy community. Thank you to Sharon Hogan who has dutifully passed along produce boxes and lunches to our church and scout families. If I neglected to mention anyone, I am so sorry. We have been so busy that sometimes it is hard to keep up with all of our volunteers. Just know that you are appreciated and loved!

We are looking at the start of a new year and an end to the Christmas holiday season. We had a table full of Advent devotional material for children, youth, families and adults. Something for everyone. We had an “Angel Tree” for the children in our church and scout programs. I am pleased to say that thanks to a very generous donor who picked up the last 10 children on the list, we ended this program very early in the season and was able to help 25 children and youth have a very Merry Christmas! Finally, we also had Santa's Post Office again this year. If you still have not picked up your Christmas cards, please do so as soon as possible. All of the Santa letters have been properly delivered to the North Pole!

We celebrated Christmas with the Children and their families at a party we called “Grillin’ and Chillin’ with Santa!” It was an outdoor cookout thanks to April and Travis McDaniel. We had approximately 60 people come and go during the afternoon. They had a giant slide and a petting zoo. The alpaca was as popular as Santa! We also offered free Santa pictures taken by Sharon Hogan. Thank you Sharon and Richard! Although I took a tumble off the concrete, the show went on Sunday morning. Thank you to Richard, Chuck, Riley, Jamie, Patsy and all of our parents and grandparents who helped so that I didn't have to run around. Thank you also to Brianna Marlow who played along and acolyted in an angel costume! During the month of December, the Silver Patrol and a few other volunteers also delivered gifts to the shut-ins and widows courtesy of the UMW and UMM. The Education volunteers celebrated the season with a dinner, a few games and some great entertainment. Thank you to Connie, Barbara, Chasity and Merriah for making our special treats to honor the volunteers. If you did not receive yours, please see Janet.

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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

Address Change:

Bernadette Masker
2314 Fred Rd.
Venice, FL 34292

Deaths:

Charles A. Bennett, Sr.
Gladys Odessa Wilson
Harold D. Burr

Address Change:

Sue Wing
2032 Southwind Circle
Pensacola, FL 32506
(850)723-9561

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.

January Prayer List

January 1-2

Chris Harris, Heather Johnson
John Johnson, Chris Harris, Jr.,
Ashleigh Harris, Haleigh Harris, Aleigh
Harris, Chance Harris
Markese Harris
Cody Harvison
Geraldine Hatcher
Robert Hayes

January 3-9

Jeffrey & Holly Hedden
Leon & Renee Hedden
April Hedrick
Tom Helton
Hal Hem
Darrell & Lori Henderson
Paul & Barbara Henderson

January 10-16

Beth Herndon
Cliff & Helen Herndon
Robert & Ariel Hewett
James & Katie Hewett, James &
Nathan
Sharon Hogan
Dennis & Sheila Holley
Sam Hood

January 17-23

Keith Horne
Tara Horton
Russell Hubbard
Ray Huffman
Bart & Sherry Hulien, Reese, Charles, Camile
Peggy Hurst

January 24-31

Ronnie Marie Ingram
Joe Irvin
Bob & Louise Irvin
Betty Jackson
James Jennings, Miranda, Joseph
Michael & Sara Jinnett

SCOUT DEPARTMENT

We are looking forward to Scout Sunday after the first of the year. Right now we are in the middle of re-chartering. That is the annual process of registering the scouts and leaders. It has always been a minimal fee, but this year they are raising the amount of the annual registration fee. This will cause financial difficulties for families who have more than one child and maybe even an adult volunteer in their family. Due to so much COVID, unemployment and other financial factors, families are having to make some very hard choices. If you would like to help with these higher registration fees, please see Janet.

I am pleased to say that the Troop (middle school and high school students) has seen more scouts coming and they all have an interest in becoming Eagles! There are 10 young men and women participating at the troop level now. One of our scouts, Evynn Blackmon plays for a select football team and his team is moving on to participate in a regional championship-GO EVYNN!!

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

Submitted by,
Janet Boston, Scouting Coordinator



SOME WORDS FROM THE EDUCATION DIRECTOR CONTINUED FRFROM PAGE 2

The Wednesday Night programs will begin again in January after school starts. I am hopeful that we will be able to host classes for the community again. I will keep everyone posted. 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 48 years prospectively! Now that is a legacy! We are also looking for a once a month Children's Church volunteer leader and 2 helpers. So easy-the new format requires no real prep time on the part of the teacher.

I am also on the lookout for some Magi or Wise men for Epiphany Sunday and a John the Baptist for a whole other project. I know the acting hams are out there—call me! In January, we are looking forward to Epiphany Sunday, Baptism Sunday and Human Relations Sunday (one of the 4 special Sundays we celebrate with the United Methodist Church. Remember last year that I asked you to send me information on what you are doing in this community. We learned so many great things about each other. This year I am going to add to that list. If you do anything as a volunteer, let me know. If you know of someone and you know that they will not share on their own, be a tattletale and let me know. It does not just have to be something you do with an organization. It can be something you do as a family or an individual. If you want to remain anonymous, we can do that too! I am always excited to hear about these kind of things!

I realize that this has been a really long article, but it has been a really long time since I last filled you in. Keep safe and keep up the good work! Thank you for your volunteer spirit and prayers for our church programs!

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

CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT

As always, the children of this church loved the holiday season! In addition to having a station where they could write a letter to Santa, they also had Advent calendars and devotionals just for them. Perhaps the best was the annual Christmas party. This year it was called "Grillin' and Chillin' with Santa!" We grilled hot dogs and hamburgers and had pictures made with Santa, courtesy of Sharon Hogan and Santa himself (you know who you are)! We also had a petting zoo with an awesome alpaca that was as popular with the kids as Santa-sorry Santa! I think it was the dopey look and the big eyes! (On the alpaca I mean-not Santa!) It was all topped off by a giant bouncy slide. We entertained about 60 people. Thank you to all of the elves that made it happen: Travis and April McDaniel, Connie, Barbara and the parents and grandparents that came and watched over the kids while I rested my bum leg. I forgot to bounce on the slide and not on the concrete! Lol

The children also put on a Christmas Pantomime Pageant the next day. We had 13 children participate in the program. That meant that there were at least 6 kids that have not been back to church since the pandemic started. Now that is our little Christmas miracle. Thank you to all of the adults who helped make this event happen: Richard, Chuck, Pastor Riley, Jamie, Patsy, Sharon, Barbara, Connie, Dannie, Lilibeth and any others that I missed. Although I was a little fuzzy on medication, things went the way you would expect a children's program to go. From a few glitches in the videos (my fault) to angels who decided to sit and play on the stage-classic children's Christmas program with a pandemic twist! We will end our holiday season with a visit from the Magi on Epiphany Sunday, January 3rd. 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. We have the busy bags and the clipboards for notes back on the resource table behind the AV booth. If you have a child in the 3rd 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 will require 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 48 years prospectively! Now that is a legacy!

I am sorry to say that Blue Lake has cancelled the Children's Winter Retreat again this year. I know the kids love to go, so hopefully we will be out of Coronaville by this time next year.

So I am ending on a proud and positive note. One of our children, Cameron Broxson participated in a PATS program (program for gifted students) where he completed a project on "How the Tilt of the Earth Affects our Seasons". In the process of doing this project, he was able to interview Meteorologist Allen Strum from Channel 3 news. Way to go Cameron! Keep me posted about the things our children are doing and I will put them in the newsletter as well!

Watch the bulletin for upcoming Children's Department events!

Submitted by,
Janet Boston



Greetings in Christ!

You got this!

We often hear those words, and while they are words of encouragement to give it your best, I think those words can have even more meaning.

When we remember the words of the Apostle Paul in Philippians 4:13 (NIV) 13 I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

In other words, it's more like "you got this...through Him who gives you strength!"

We can often forget that we are only living and breathing as a result of God's blessings in our lives. As you begin this year of 2021, I just want to remind you that whatever you may face, God WILL go before you!

We live in a world full of turmoil and strife where it seems we have walked away from the commands and blessings of the Lord. I would encourage you to be a young person who will stand firm for the ways of God even in a day where there are challenges on every hand.

This world needs young people of character, integrity, and vision for a future with God's hand leading and guiding. We need people like YOU!

Take a stand for Jesus in your studies, social media, and family. You will be amazed at how the Lord will bless you as honor Him.

Just remember that whatever 2021 may bring, with God's help, you got this!

Blessings!
Isaac Richardson, Youth Director

NUSERY DEPARTMENT

The Nursery staff had a good time at a special luncheon where we discussed many ideas for the younger families at MGUMC. They are excited about being a part of this church. Their input as young parents has been essential to the potential growth of this program. If you have some positive ideas for programs that can be offered through the Nursery Department, please let me know.

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 your special event, please let Janet know! We are ready for you!

Submitted by,
Janet Boston

WEDNESDAY NIGHT COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

I wish I had better news, but it looks like the Winter Fall Term 2021 for the Community programs on Wednesday nights will again be a much smaller version of what we have come to expect for our weekday program. To **start** out, all of the adult Bible classes will be combined for one large study in the sanctuary where they could social distance properly. This is how we started the Fall 2020 term. Hopefully, we will be able to change that a few sessions in and everyone can go to their regular classes. Watch the bulletin (I will also send out emails) each week to see what other classes we can offer. There will continue to be classes for the youth and children as well.

We are hopeful that soon we will be able to come back on Wednesday Nights to a full roster of classes! If you would like to teach something that you enjoy whether or not it is cooking, sewing, art, sign language, book clubs, scrapbooking or whatever, please see Janet. Remember, if you enjoy a hobby, then others may as well. It doesn't have to be a "teaching" experience, it can be a group activity that you all enjoy together. **I will keep you posted on what you can expect based on what we are told by the state and the Methodist Church concerning our classes on Wednesday Nights.**

If you can play an instrument such as the guitar, violin, piano, drums, etc., give me a call.

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

