



May 2021 Newsletter

Rev. David Thompson, District Superintendent
Jane Seaman, Administrative Assistant
Resident Bishop: Lawson Bryan



Phasing out the Pandemic – Phasing in our Participation

As our Georgia Governor Kemp has rolled back many of the COVID-19 restrictions, including the elimination of bans on large gatherings, and the vaccine rollout is well underway, we will want to keep the most vulnerable and the most anxious in our minds. Just as we are “phasing out” the pandemic, I would encourage you to “phase in” your church’s loosening of restrictions. Many of you have appropriately begin to do so. Thank you.

Begin by loosening the restrictions on social distancing slowly but intentionally. Begin adding back elements of worship gradually instead of all at once. Use this “phased in” approach by adding elements back to your worship services and other church activities, monitoring them as you go along. Keep a keen eye on what COVID numbers are doing your local community and be flexible.

This will, hopefully, meet the needs of those who want to push ahead with getting things “back to normal” while also letting those who are more vulnerable and more anxious know that you are moving slow and monitoring the situation. Give those in this latter group plenty of time to return; be patient. Some may have health concerns; some may have trust issues. Gently encourage them and keep them informed of the precautions you are taking. Communicate extensively as you phase in just like you did during lockdown.

Use common sense and an abundance of caution. Consult regularly with local health officials as you move back into worship. Monitor your process.

Thank you for all you are doing to care for your congregations. Continue to follow the CDC guidelines and continue to pray for the end of this pandemic.

Because of Christ,

David W. Thompson, Superintendent

RESOURCES

Lay Ministries (LSM and CLM)

The 2021 dates for Lay Ministries - [Lay Servant Training](#) and [Certified Lay Ministry](#) - have been posted on the [conference website](#). For more information, contact Anne Bosarge, Associate Director, Office of Congregational Development, at anne@thechapelministries.com or 912-262-1331. here: <https://www.sgaumc.org/certifiedlayministrytraining>. Have questions about Lay Ministry Training? E-mail anne@thechapelministries.com for more information. [Certified Lay Minister Training Brochure](#)

2021 dates for Lay Ministries (LSM and CLM)

2021 Online Classes using the Zoom Platform:

Online Advanced Lay Servant Ministries
May 4, 6, 11, 13
[Register here](#)

Online Basic Lay Servant Ministries
August 17, 19, 24, 26
[Register here](#)

Online Advanced Lay Servant Ministries
Sep 14, 16, 21, 23
[Register here](#)

(Note: Basic Lay Servant class must be completed before taking Advanced Class)

2021 In-Person Training

Basic Lay Servant Ministries, Vidalia First UMC, Vidalia
October 1-2 [Register here](#)

Advanced Lay Servant Ministries, Vidalia First UMC, Vidalia
October 22-23 [Register here](#)

Basic Lay Servant Ministries, Richmond Hill UMC, Richmond Hill
November 5-6, 2021 [Register here](#)

Adv. Lay Servant Ministries, Richmond Hill UMC, Richmond Hill
November 19-20, 2021 [Register here](#)

In-Person Registration Fee: \$40 (includes lunch on Saturday)

District Board of Missions New Ministry Grants

The Coastal District Board of Missions is dedicated to supporting new initiatives that extend the life of the church into our communities. The grants offered are meant as a supplement to assist with the funding of the project. Support in the way of connection with churches that are doing ministry well in that area can also be arranged, as there is expressed need. To make a request for a grant, please submit a detailed plan of the project to Jane Seaman (jane@sgaumc.org). The plan should include both time tables and a budget (which should show all the avenues being explored to fully fund the project). You may be asked to meet with the Board of Missions as a

Improve your church's web presence: (UMCom) A new screencast series will show you how to improve your church's web presence. You'll learn the steps for building, upgrading and getting your website discovered online. Begin with part one, which guides you through identifying the needs of your audience. [Watch now](#)

Online worship permissions extended to July 31

The United Methodist Publishing House is extending full permission to all churches for use of its copyrighted worship materials through July 2021. Due to the extraordinary challenges that churches face, the publisher is assuring easy access to essential worship aids. [Read press release](#)

Next Alive Together at the Table with Bishop Bryan conversation is May 11 at noon

Our [Alive Together at the Table with Bishop Bryan](#) discussions are an opportunity for laity and clergy to come together via Zoom for reflections and conversations. Join us May 11 at noon. [Click here for more information.](#)

Safe Sanctuaries 101 is now online!



We now have the option for volunteers to take the [Safe Sanctuaries 101: Basic Volunteer Training](#) as an online course through our Servehub platform. This allows volunteers to complete the course on their own time and then print out a completion certificate to take back to their local church. If you are the staff person or coordinator for children and youth at your local church, you can email your volunteers this link (www.sgaumc.org/online-training) to register themselves or you can provide a list of participants you want signed up for the online training to kelly@sgaumc.com. For questions, contact Allison Lindsey (allison@sgaumc.com) or Suzanne Akins

FEMA to Help Pay Funeral Costs for COVID-19-Related Deaths

In early April, FEMA will begin providing financial assistance for funeral expenses incurred after Jan. 20, 2020, for deaths related to coronavirus (COVID-19) to help ease some of the financial stress and burden caused by the pandemic. We know many churches across our Conference have been impacted by the loss of members of the church family. This information may be helpful for someone qualifying for assistance during a difficult time. FEMA's mission is to help people before, during and after disasters. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused immense grief for so many people. FEMA affirms their commitment to help with funeral and burial expenses that many families did not anticipate. There are certain criteria that have to be met to be eligible for COVID-19 funeral assistance. For more information and for details on eligibility and how to apply, you can direct people to www.fema.gov/disasters/coronavirus/economic/funeral-assistance. --

Allison Lindsey, Director: Office of Connectional Ministries
South Georgia Annual Conference UMC
Email: allison@sgaumc.com
Office/Cell (912) 393-5524

Leading the Local Church: Trainings for Leadership Positions & Committees

We've put together a great series of [leadership training videos](#) to help equip local church leaders. [More information](#)

- Safe Sanctuaries 101 | Allison Lindsey, Suzanne Akins & Annie Paulk
- Meetings That Matter | Ann Smith
- S.H.A.P.E | Allison Lindsey & Suzanne Akins
- Unleashing Creativity | Anne Bosarge
- Team Building | Allison Lindsey & Derek McAleer
- Staff Parish Relations Committee | Bishop Bryan
- Local Church Finance Committee | Derek McAleer
- Local Church Trustees | Derek McAleer
- Stewardship | Derek McAleer

Please be advised that Epworth By The Sea's campus will continue to be closed to the general public through July 31, 2021. The work involved with dismantling and removing the Golden Ray wreck from the Saint Simons Sound will require the continued sequestrations of the salvage workers because of COVID-19. The north and south gates of Arthur J. Moore Drive will continue to be closed and no pedestrians or bike traffic will be permitted. Security will be on site 24 hours/day to ensure the safety of the workers. The Lovely Lane Chapel worship service will be allowed each Sunday from 8:45-9:15 a.m.



Conference News

Bishops Cancel May 8 General Conference

The Council of Bishops has canceled its call for a special virtual General Conference on May 8, which would have been just long enough for a quorum of delegates to suspend the rules so delegates could vote by mail on legislative items. During their April meeting, the bishops will discuss results of listening sessions and discern a possible new timeline. [Learn More Here](#)

2021 South Georgia Annual Conference to be held Virtually

Bishop Lawson Bryan, in collaboration with the Annual Conference Program Committee, the officers of the Annual Conference, and the Cabinet, announces that the 2021 South Georgia Annual Conference session will be held virtually. The virtual clergy session is set for **Tuesday, June 1, 2021, from 10 am - noon**, and the one-day virtual annual conference session is set for **Monday, June 7, beginning at 8:30 am**.

In addition to the business sessions, an online **Retiree Recognition Service** will take place Tuesday, June 1 at 7 pm to honor and recognize clergy retiring in 2021. An online **Memorial Service** to remember clergy and clergy spouses who have passed away in the past conference year is set for Thursday, June 3 at 7 pm.

Those approved for provisional membership or full connection at the clergy session will be commissioned or ordained in a local church setting on **Sunday, June 6**. The Commissioning and Ordination Service(s) will be live streamed so the entire conference may share virtually in this important worship experience. More details about all of these events are forthcoming.

SGA CONFERENCE GATHERING | October 9, 2021

In addition to the June annual conference session, Bishop Lawson Bryan has set Saturday, October 9, 2021, as a post-General Conference gathering. Our hope is that this gathering will take place in person at a conference-central location to be announced at a later date. However, if it is not yet safe to do so, Bishop Bryan has asked that all members plan to gather virtually. Find more information at www.sgaumc.org/annualconference

What the second round of PPP loans means for churches and how to get one

(Discipleship Ministries) Joe Park, CEO of Horizons Stewardship, has been a reliable source exploring the Paycheck Protection Plan (PPP) offered through the U.S. government. The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 (CAA) includes \$284 billion dollars for a second round of Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) Loans for which churches and nonprofits are eligible to apply through participating banks. Your banker may be slow to begin to accept applications. [Download PDF](#) | *South Georgia Advocate* story: ["What churches need to know about the new round of PPP loans"](#)



Congratulations to Lydia Ellen Thompson and Ashton Basil Owens who were married April 9 at Wesley Gardens Retreat in Savannah. Lydia is the daughter of [Rev. David Thompson](#) (Coastal District Superintendent) and [Rev. Jennifer Thompson](#), (Wesley Monumental, Congregational Life Pastor - Coastal District).

Mathew Pinson Elected GUMF President/CEO

The Georgia United Methodist Foundation Board of Trustees has unanimously elected Mathew Pinson as the Foundation's next president and CEO, effective July 1, 2021. Pinson will succeed Rev. Keith E. Lawder, who is retiring after serving as the Foundation's president since 2016. Pinson is passionate about serving The United Methodist Church. He has served on the Board of Directors of Wespeth Benefits and Investments and the General Council on Finance and Administration; served as a delegate to six General Conferences and five Jurisdictional Conferences; chaired the North Georgia delegation and served as Conference Lay Leader for the North Georgia Conference. A native of Newnan, Ga., Pinson is a graduate of Reinhardt University. Before his work at Emory, Pinson served as director of development at Tennessee Wesleyan University.



Make Sure Your Insurance Bonds Your Treasurer

At the upcoming Annual Conference, your Council on Finance and Administration will recommend that local churches make certain their own insurance provides this coverage. You can get the full context of our recommendation by continuing to read this email. If you prefer, you can [go to our website](#) for the same article, or you can download a printable [.pdf of the article here](#). Church Trustees, who normally purchase the church's insurance coverage, will want to talk to their insurance provider. Call Conference Administrator, Derek McAleer at 800-535-4224 | 478-738-0048.

2021-2022 projected clergy appointments announced

Bishop R. Lawson Bryan and the South Georgia Cabinet announce the projected appointment changes as of June 7, 2021. The appointments will be effective in June. [Click here](#)

Appointment update: Rev. Stephen Grantham to serve as Northeast District Superintendent



Appointment update: Bishop Lawson Bryan has announced the projected appointment of Rev. Stephen Grantham as the Northeast District Superintendent, effective June 2021.

Bishop Bryan previously announced that Rev. Jimmy Cason would serve in that capacity as an interim Superintendent, but with the further delay of General Conference and more pastoral moves this year than expected, he and the Cabinet felt it possible to make a regular appointment now.

"I am deeply grateful to Jimmy Cason for his outstanding leadership in South Georgia and for his willingness to serve the Annual Conference as an interim District Superintendent," Bishop Bryan said. "Rev. Stephen Grantham's record of effective pastoral leadership has already been a blessing to local churches. I welcome him to this new opportunity for expanded service to our Annual Conference." [Read more](#)

Birthdays:

Karen Morrison (RS)	1
Diane Horton (S)	2
Richard Turner (P)	3
Lucy Corbitt (WS)	6
Eddie Morrison (RP)	6
Dale Kilhefner (S)	7
Bruce Morgan (P)	7
W. Donald Clark (RP)	14
Wright Culpepper	15
Lori Velasquez (S)	16
Wayne Racz (P)	18
Lindsey Culpepper (S)	20
Franklin Pierce (R)	20
Columbus Burns, III (P)	24
Patty Tucker (P)	28
Sabra Pumfrey (S)	30

Clergy: *If you or your spouse are not listed, notify Jane Seaman at jane@sgaumc.com*



Anniversaries:

Rick & Debbie Turner	6
Ken & Amy Morgan	15
Jeffery & Susan Doke	21
Tommy & Dian McCook	24
J. Michael & Gloria Culbreth	27
John & Gale Haney	29

Please Pray:

- A graveside service will be held at 2 o'clock, Tuesday afternoon, May 18, 2021, at Forest Hills Memorial Park in Elberton, GA for **Rev. John Thomas (Tom) Edwards, Jr.** (Retired - Coastal District), who passed away on Saturday, March 6, 2021. A Celebration of Life service will be held at 2 o'clock Sunday afternoon, June 13, 2021, at Port Wentworth United Methodist Church. A copy of the obituary can be found [here](#).
- Funeral services for Mrs. Shirley Palmer, who passed away on April 12, 2021 and mother-in-law to [Rev. Chance Ward](#) (Goshen UMC - Coastal District), have been changed to a private graveside service for immediate family. A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date.
- Mrs. Marguerite Buchan (widow of Rev. Kerry Buchan - Coastal District) passed away on April 5, 2021 after an extended illness. Arrangements may be announced at a later date. Her obituary is attached.
- Mr. Thomas Harrell, father-in-law of Rev. Josh Duckworth (White Bluff UMC - Coastal District), passed away on Sunday, April 25, 2021. The funeral service will be held at 11:00 AM on Thursday, April 29 at Pine Forest Baptist Church in Sumner, GA, interment will follow in the Pine Forest Cemetery. The family will receive friends on Wednesday from 5:00 PM until 7:00 PM at Banks Funeral Home in Sylvester, GA.

Upcoming Dates to Remember:

Next [Alive Together at the Table with Bishop Bryan](#): April 20 (noon only), and May 11 (noon only). [Click here for more information.](#)

Orientation for Moving Pastors

Bishop Bryan and the Appointive Cabinet will host a workshop on **May 5** for full-time moving clergy. 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.

Preach in Local Churches as Scheduled – June 6, 2021

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 13, 2021

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 16, 2021