

THE FLAME



The First United Methodist Church of LaGrange



FROM YOUR SENIOR MINISTER

"Humans can be so good, can't they?"

As I reflect upon Lent, I wonder if you have given something up for the 40 days leading to Easter. Maybe it is candy or cocktails, French fries or Facebook. Do you anticipate feeling better if you stick to it? Is it something that you hope will be a permanent change?

There is a farcical movie starring Will Farrell entitled, "Kicking and Screaming." He plays an obnoxious coach of a little girls' soccer team. Toward the end of the movie, he experiences an epiphany. At the girls' big game, he has the team huddle around him and provides them one piece of advice: "Whatever I told you before - do the opposite."

Maybe this year, we should try that. **Instead of simply taking something away from our lives, we also add something.**

Maybe it is adding something that can make our world a better place. Maybe it is writing a handwritten note to someone who spends too much time alone. Maybe it is sticking your head in the kitchen of your favorite restaurant and telling the cooks how much you appreciate the delicious meal that they prepared for you. Maybe it is calling someone in your family to let him know about all the little things that he has done over the years for which you are truly grateful. Or maybe it is making a point to look your spouse in the eyes when she is talking and telling her, with just your look, how truly beautiful she is.

We are all hurting every day watching and reading about the families in Ukraine. We are all anxious about where this will lead. We are all horrified to realize the barbaric, unconscionable damage that one person's actions can have on the world.

Perhaps that is why the picture of baby strollers that Polish women left at their local train stations for Ukrainian moms remind us all of what humanity means. And reminds us how connected we all really are. The image was taken by photojournalist Francesco Malavolta, documenting the refugee crisis.

More than a 1.5 million Ukrainian refugees have poured into neighboring Poland, most of them women and children. The strollers on the train platform are the artifacts of war that we do not talk about. They are not the sorts of supplies mentioned when the Ukrainian president goes on a Zoom call with American members of Congress to beg them for military aid; they are not negotiated in the language of sanctions and artillery. Typically, the leaders who start and end wars are not in a position to understand that strollers are war supplies, too. And yet mothers would know to ask this. Every mother would know.

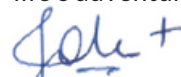


The powerful image spread quickly on social media, with one Twitter user writing: "After all the terrible things we've been seeing this just broke me."

Another replied, "**Humans can be so good, can't they?**"

We are all wrestling with what we can do to help. We are all wrestling with feeling so hopeless that we know what is going on and trying to figure out how we can touch the Ukrainians in some way. Maybe doing a small act of good, right in our towns, right in our own lives will, for a moment, temper our fears and anxiousness. And I hope, when that Ukrainian mom walks off that train and sees that empty baby stroller greeting her, I hope she knows. I hope she knows that behind that beautiful Polish woman who dropped it off is a whole world of people who are praying for her, for her family, and for her country.

Your friend in sharing
life's adventure with Christ.


Dr. John Beyers

**March
2022**



Volunteer Spotlight: Hank Dobbins

Hank Dobbins personifies Philippians 1:6, "...being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to is completion until the day of Christ Jesus." In addition to being an active volunteer with Circles of Troup County, Hank leads our church's **Stephen Ministry**. Stephen Ministers complete an intensive training program to be equipped to provide one-to-one Christian care to people who are hurting.

Hank began his own Stephen Ministry training at the First Presbyterian Church. When LaGrange First launched a **contemporary service** (then known as Morning Glory), he discovered he liked the style of music and informal atmosphere. He began attending regularly and joined the **Seekers Sunday School** class and **Men's Bible Study**. In 2018, Hank transferred his membership to LaGrange First.

Hank and his wife, **Debbie**, have been married for 24 years. They met at Georgia Tech and both began working for the same company after graduation. Hank went back to school at Emory to receive his MBA. He accepted a job at Knology in West Point. LaGrange became the perfect location, close to his office and near the airport for Debbie's work travels. Following his tenure at Knology, Hank spent five years at Synovus before retiring to pursue his love of international travel, outdoor adventures, and cycling. What's next on his travel itinerary? Galapagos Island, Iceland, Patagonia, and Machu Picchu!

When Hank learned that our church would be launching **Realm Connect**, he volunteered to lead the campaign. His information technology background, combined with his belief that "**We Are Better Together!**," made it the perfect fit. Hank has created an online instructional guide to help our members connect through Realm. Visit lagrangefumc.org/realm.

Powerful Tools for Caregivers Workshop

More than 44 million people in the United States are providing either full-time or part-time, unpaid care for a family member or loved one over the age of 18 who is ill or has a disability. The impact on those caregivers is huge — physically, emotionally and financially.



Powerful Tools for Caregivers is a 6 week virtual series (Zoom platform) designed to help caregivers learn to take better care of themselves. It does not teach hands-on care or focus on disease conditions.



Participants will learn to:

- Reduce stress
- Improve caregiving confidence
- Establish balance in their lives
- Communicate their needs
- Make tough decisions
- Locate helpful resources

Mondays, 4.10.22 - 5.22.22

Session 1: 10am-11:30am

Session 2: 4pm-5:30pm

Registration Deadline: 3.24.22

To Register:

<https://hipaa.jotform.com/220586496106157>



Welcome, New Members!



Duffey Gill & Mike Casey



Barbara & Dale Lehman

Blessings in a Bookbag

Feeding the bodies and souls of students

Blessings in a Bookbag is the cornerstone mission of our Youth Ministry. Our youth are dedicated to feed Ethel Kight Elementary students who have food insecurity. Through the Blessings in a Bookbag program, we are able to send nonperishable food items home with children on the weekends. For many of these students, the lunch that they eat at school is the only meal they receive all day.



Blessings in a Bookbag was launched during the summer of 2012 by Anabeth Ivey. A Youth Ministry participant at the time, Anabeth also served as a volunteer at Camp Viola. When parents were picking up the campers at the end of the week, one parent said to Anabeth, "Thank you so much for doing this. I didn't know how I was going to put food on the table." After hearing this, Anabeth knew she had to do something.

That same semester, Anabeth began Blessings in a Bookbag. This new ministry doubled as a mission project as well as a class assignment for her graphic design class. She created graphics to advertise food donations packs, and more. The program began at Mountville Elementary School. When that school closed, Anabeth, with the help of her mom Becky Ivey, connected with Ethel Kight Elementary.

During the first half of this school year (2021-22), our Blessings team has distributed more than 900 meals to students, with an average of 42 students per week. Since inception, the Blessings in a Bookbag mission at LaGrange First Methodist has given out more than 13,000 meals to students.

Each Blessing Bag includes ten items: two breakfast, two snacks, two entrees, two desserts, and two drinks. We include two of each item so that students are able to have one meal for each day of the weekend. On average, each bag costs \$2.25.

The Blessings in a Bookbag program would not be possible without the generosity of LaGrange First Methodist members. During the month of March, collection boxes are located in the Trinity Street entrance, Children's Building, and Welcome Center.





BLESSINGS IN A BOOKBAG

Collection Boxes at
Trinity Street Entrance,
Children's Building &
Welcome Center

SINCE 2012, WE HAVE PROVIDED 13,000+ MEALS TO STUDENTS.

ITEMS NEEDED

Pop Tarts	Ramen Noodles
Protein Bars	Tuna
Oatmeal Packages	Vienna Sausages
Granola Bars	Easy Mac (bowls)
Fruit Cups	Soups
Applesauce Cups	Chef Boyardee
Goldfish	Candy
Cheez-Its	Oreos
Cheese Crackers	Little Debbie's
Popcorn (un-popped)	Juice Box
Peanut Butter Cups	Mini Water Bottles
Peanut Butter Crackers	Fruit Juices (Orange & Apple)

INDIVIDUALLY WRAPPED ITEMS PREFERRED

In addition, adult Sunday School classes have bookbags located in their rooms to collect items throughout the year.



May we remember that "If you give some of your own food to those who are hungry and to satisfy those who are humble, then your light will rise in the dark, and your darkness will become as bright as the noontday sun." (Isaiah 58:10)



Chase and Sara Parmer on their wedding day with their dog, Maisey.



SARA & CHASE PARMER

Sara and Chase Parmer will celebrate their first anniversary on April 17. Chase grew up in our church and joined by Confirmation in 1998. Sara transferred her membership from Bethesda Baptist Church in 2019. Chase and Sara are founding members of our Beacon of Hope fellowship which also is celebrating its first anniversary.

TELL US YOUR LOVE STORY

Chase: Sara and I met through her sister at work, dated for 2.5 years, were engaged for 11 months, and then married last April. I proposed at home one morning before heading to the beach, giving us an outlet for a few days to celebrate before all the busy things associated with planning a wedding began.

HOW DID YOU KNOW THAT HE WAS "THE ONE"?

Sara: Chase was everything I prayed for. He was kind and cared about me just the way I am!

HOW DO YOU BALANCE CAREERS & MARRIAGE?

Chase: Sara and I both work for the same company, and fortunately there is an emphasis on work and home life balance. With us working not only in the same industry but for the same company, we understand and can relate to each other's day. We try not to spend too much time talking about work and instead focus on the things we enjoy doing collectively.

HOW HAS MARRIAGE CHANGED YOUR RELATIONSHIP?

Sara: I feel marriage has brought us closer together. I always feel I couldn't love him more, but I do with each passing day.

The Parmers and Beacon of Hope are celebrating their 1st Anniversaries!

"I always feel I couldn't love him more, but I do with each passing day."

- Sara Parmer

SARA, YOU GREW UP IN A BAPTIST CHURCH. WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO JOIN LAGRANGE FIRST METHODIST?

Sara: I visited First Methodist with Chase when we were dating and immediately felt home. It was an easy decision to join First Methodist and I'm so thankful for my church family!

WHAT SCRIPTURE MOST PERSONIFIES HOW YOU HAVE APPROACHED YOUR RELATIONSHIP AND MARRIAGE?

Chase: Proverbs 16:9, "In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps." This piece of scripture was used in our ceremony and is important to the two of us.

HOW DO YOU DECIDE WHICH SERVICE TO ATTEND OR VIEW?

Sara: We really enjoy the 9:00 am Modern Worship service. We enjoy the worship style, as well as the casual atmosphere. We do love the traditional Easter and Christmas services as well!

YOU HAVE TAKEN A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN THE BEACON OF HOPE PROGRAM FOR YOUNG ADULTS SEEKING A CONNECTION WITH OTHER CHRISTIANS. WHY ARE YOU INVOLVED?

Chase: Beacon of Hope was a vision created by Pastor Ben that provides individuals an opportunity to gather outside of our campus to "fuel your faith." Beacon of Hope is something both Sara and I enjoy being involved in, and look forward to supporting each month's mission to benefit an organization within our community.

BEACON OF HOPE

"Grab a drink. Fuel your faith. Be a light."

That's the premise behind Beacon of Hope, our young adult faith community group that meets in a seemingly unlikely place: Beacon Brewery! If you like craft beer, good food, and authentic conversation (or even just one out of three), join us the third Thursday evening of each month. Through Beacon of Hope, we believe lasting change can happen in individuals and in our community when we gather around the table, share a drink together, fuel our faith through meaningful conversation, and shine our lights by serving those in need. Come join us! Our light will be brighter —and our hope will be stronger —if you're a part.



Celebrate our 1st Birthday!
Thursday, March 17, 6:30 pm, at Beacon Brew Co.
Featured Guest: Holly Winner, American Red Cross

YOUTH

Sunday School continues to meet weekly on the Youth Hall from 10:00-10:45 a.m. Join us as we discuss further our main Scripture passages from Youth the previous Wednesday! All students in grades 6-12 are welcome to join us. We will not meet on March 27 due to Spring Break.

During Wednesday Night Youth on March 16 and 23, we will examine two passages from the gospels to discover what Jesus has to say about Himself. On both Wednesdays, we will have our regular schedule of Homework & Hangout at 4 p.m., dinner in Wesley Hall at 5 p.m. and worship in the Youth Worship Room at 6 p.m. We will not meet on March 30 because of Spring Break.

Lastly, we are thrilled to announce a new opportunity for the 2022-2023 School Year. Drum roll please...We are launching a **Student Leadership Team!** This team will be made up of seven students, one from each grade (6-12). This team is going to help lead Student Ministry's events and programming, assist in planning big events as well as engage in leadership development. To apply for the Student Leadership Team, students must complete an application form and do an interview. **Applications will be accepted March 16 - April 6.** Interviews will take place over the weeks of April 11 - April 15 and April 19 - April 22.

May this season of Lent draw you closer to Jesus as you take time to reflect on how He is calling you deeper into a relationship with Him.

Your Student Ministry Team,
Elissa Lamoree & Will Locke

EASTER EGG HUNT

WE NEED YOUR HELP!
Community Easter Egg Hunt and Activity Stations
HELP FILL 5,000 PLASTIC EGGS
 Pick up a bag (or more!) of 100 empty plastic Easter eggs in the Narthex of the Sanctuary or in the Welcome Center of Wesley Hall on March 13 or March 20. Fill the eggs with prizes or wrapped candy. Return the filled eggs by Sunday, April 3.
You also may donate bags of wrapped candy.

HELP ON THE BIG DAY ... lot of volunteers needed!

- set-up & tear down at the venue
- hide 5000 eggs
- greet guests and participants
- staff the prize table and assist in distributing prizes
- staff activity stations

HUNT IS ON SATURDAY APRIL 9 10 AM
New Location! SOUTHBEND PARK
To volunteer, please contact Jeanne Jones at jeanne@lgrangefumc.org

SENSATIONAL SUMMER CAMP

Summer camp is back and better than ever! **First Methodist Summer Day Camp** offers traditional summer fun along with an array of professionally taught classes. Activities will include art, music, karate, basketball, softball, yoga, cooking drama, gardening and so much more. There will be daily activities and outdoor games that will delight any child. Each week of summer programming has an exciting theme plus live entertainment and off-campus excursions.

Camp begins May 31 and ends on July 29.

Registration is open! Contact Jeanne Jones (jeanne@lgrangefumc.org) for more information. Registration forms are available via lgrangefumc.org.

Camp counselors are needed! Do you know a college student that will be in LaGrange this summer? This is the perfect summer job for college students. We pay competitive wages with no evening or weekend hours. Those interested should should request an employment application by emailing jeanne@lgrangefumc.org.



Our Youth Ministry recently attended a Columbus Riverdragons hockey game.

MEMORIAL GIFTS

BETH GODWIN

Robyne & Jim Hunnicutt
Short & Jack Brown

FAY RIDDLE

Short & Jack Brown

BETTY EDMONDS

Molly Gamblin
Stacey & Jason Weldon
Mary Anne & H.R. Shepherd
Short & Jack Brown
Laura & Blair Harlin

ALLEN DANIEL

Short & Jack Brown

JACK ENRIGHT

(father of Sharon Jones)
Dorothy & Bobby Cammon
Jean Edwards
Hidden Harbor Prop. Owners
Laura & Blair Harlin
Virginia Robertson

ELYNOR VARNER

Steven D. Jabaley

BEVERLY KAAP

Judy Baldwin
Mary Ann Hudson Williams

QUILLIAN BALDWIN

Robyne & Jim Hunnicutt

ELIZABETH SIMS

Susanna Circle of UMW

HILDRED CAMMON

Gordon M. Smith, Sr.
Judy Baldwin
Robyne & Jim Hunnicutt
Patty & Jim Bonner
Mary Ann Hudson Williams
Sandra & Eddie Knowlton
Debbie & Sandy Simmons
Short & Jack Brown
Lynn & Ricky Wolfe
Laura & Blair Harlin

TEE BORDERS

Lauranne Buchanan
Sylvia Hunter
Meg Borders
Margaret Camp
Maranatha Sunday School Class
Lynda & Rob Petry
Kay & Ron Cole
Judy Baldwin

TEE BORDERS

Lea & J. M. Rawlinson
Donna & Richard Ennis
Mary Anne & H.R. Shepherd
Trish Smith
Cheryl Weldon
Mack Clements
Lyn Clements
Betty & Bob Ward
Nita & Jerry Overall
Martha & Horace Thom
Freddie & Gene Hayes
Pattie & Homer Borders
Nancy Cammon
Sarah Funderburk
Jane Stephens
Virginia Robertson
Mary Ann Hudson Williams
Short & Jack Brown
Laura & Blair Harlin

SYBIL RAYBURN

Berta Alexander & Family
L. J. Rayburn
Cecilia & Mike Stevenson
James Gregory Rayburn
Beta Sigma Phi Preceptor Chi
Jim Rayburn
Doris B. Gill
Michael Dowdle
Buckhead Lions Club
JoAnn Walker
Sheryl & Brent Smith

BETTY KNIGHT

Shirra & Hoyt Rogers
Ann & John Stewart
Anne Allen
Kathleen & Stuart Gulley
Carlene & Dusty Mills
Barbara Parker
Page Estes
Freddie & Gene Hayes
Jane Stephens
United Methodist Women
Cecilia & Mike Stevenson
Catherine Carmical & Family

BILL YOUNG

Libba & Bill Bowling
Carolyn Alise
Kelly & Carole Linch
Laura Shedd
Gordon M. Smith, Sr.
Lauranne Buchanan
Carol Freeman
Spinks, Brown & Durand
Judy & Ellis Solomon
Linda McClelland

BILL YOUNG

Jane Willey
Ann & John Stewart
Cheryl Weldon
Miriam Pearson
Lee Banks
Sherrie Latham
Page Estes
Marilyn & Allen Smith
Callaway Foundation
Gail Lee Gordon
Phyllis & Greg McEachern
Nancy Cammon
Lenore Wilson
Catherine & John Holmes
Shirley K. Harrington
Hoyt & Shirra Rogers
Susan & Bill Black
Lea & J. M. Rawlinson
Donna & Richard Ennis
Kathy Christian
Markee & Mike Jones
Beverly Bartley
Mary Anne & H.R. Shepherd
Dr. & Mrs. Steven Garner
Dublin Board of Realtors
Jen Esham
Trish Smith
Peggy Lukken
Lori M. Thomas
Heather & Sam Graham
Betty & Bob Ward
Debbie & Bill Terrell
Lamar Jones
United Methodist Women

BILL YOUNG

Jane Stephens
Ann & Perry Wilder
Sherel & Robert Perry
Jennie & James Sasser
Pamela L. Ramsay
Nancy Stevens
Robyne & Jim Hunnicutt
Angeline Walker-Green
Larry & Lora Morgan
Jennifer Hoysa
Sylvia Hunter
Freddie & Gene Hayes
Ann & Dee Woodward
Cindi & Tony Kosior
Lorie & Charles Anderson
Cecilia & Mike Stevenson
Laura & Blair Harlin
Janet & Dwayne Greer
Nita & Jerry Overall
Ruth Moncrief
Louise & Ben Parham
Dr. & Mrs. W. H. Smith
Mary Ann & Greg Keck
Dr. Susan Braik Taunton
Dorothy & Bobby Cammon
Stuart & Kathleen Gulley
Molly & Bobby Carmichael
Clairnelle & Andy Wilkerson
Cliff Rainey
Carlene & Dusty Mills
Pat Gilbert
Mary Lou Dabbs
Michael Cobb



THE FLAME

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The First United Methodist Church of LaGrange

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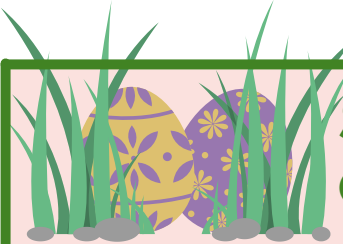
The Flame
401 Broad Street
LaGrange, Georgia 30240

Staff Servants

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| The Rev. Dr. John Beyers | Senior Minister |
| James Camp | Pianist |
| Jeradean Collins | Nursery Worker |
| Page Estes | Director of Development & Stewardship |
| Rick Free | Director of Food Services & Hospitality |
| Mary Elizabeth Gerick | Minister of Modern Worship |
| Eddie Giddens | Custodian |
| Scott Hill | Facilities Maintenance Coordinator |
| Jeanne Jones | Children's Minister |
| Elissa Lamoree | Assistant Family Minister |
| Will Locke | Youth Minister |
| Maxine Ogletree | Nursery Worker |
| Don Papenbrock | Organist |
| Dr. Richard Prior | Minister of Traditional Worship |
| Andy Rainey | Executive Minister |
| Sara Grace Todd | Director of Member Engagement |
| The Rev. Ben Wills | Senior Associate Minister |

Our Church Office is open from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday. After hours, you may drop off correspondence in the secure mail slot to the right of the Trinity Street door or the locked mailbox under the portico outside the Vernon Street entrance to the Children's Building.

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Save the Date: April 9, 10:00 am Community Easter Egg Hunt at Southbend Park

Easter Lilies

If you would like to purchase* a lily in honor or memory of someone, please submit this form and return it to the church with \$12 by March 30. You may also purchase online by selecting "Easter Lilies" as the gift fund from the church online giving page. Lilies will be delivered to homebound members unless otherwise noted.

In Honor In Memory

Of: _____

By: _____

Payment Options

- Check/Cash Enclosed
- Credit Card

Credit Card Number: _____

Expiration: _____ CVV: _____ Billing Zip Code: _____

*Easter Lily purchase is not considered tax deductible gift.