



MAY 2021 | VOL. 58 | NO. 5

THE FLAME

The First United Methodist Church of LaGrange

A message from your Senior Minister

“Love You Forever”

We Americans pause to give thanks to the Lord for our mothers and all the wonderful women who have mothered us across our lives the second Sunday in May. The first Mother’s Day was celebrated seven years earlier when Anna Jarvis held a memorial for her mother at Andrew Methodist Church in Grafton, West Virginia, and was made a national holiday in 1914.

I cannot read the heart-warming little book, “Love You Forever” by Robert Munsch without feeling a lump in the throat and a tear in my eye. Why? I am blessed by an extraordinary Mom!

As you think about the moms in your life, I commend this wonderful “circle of life” story to you.

A mother held her new baby and very slowly rocked him back and forth, back and forth, back and forth. And while she held him, she sang: *I’ll love you forever, I’ll like you for always, As long as I’m living my baby you’ll be.*

The baby grew. He grew and he grew and he grew. He grew until he was two years old, and he ran all around the house. He pulled all the books off the shelves. He pulled all the food out of the refrigerator and he took his mother’s watch and flushed it down the toilet. Sometimes his mother would say, “this kid is driving me CRAZY!”

But at night time, when that two-year-old was quiet, she opened the door to his room, crawled across the floor, looked up over the side of his bed; and if he was really asleep she picked him up and rocked him back and forth, back and forth, back and forth. While she rocked him she sang: *I’ll love you forever, I’ll like you for always, As long as I’m living my baby you’ll be.*

The story continues tracing the growth of the boy through the years, then concludes,

Well, that mother, she got older. She got older and older and older. One day she called up her son and said, “You’d better come see me because I’m very old and sick.” So her son came to see her. When he came in the door she tried to sing the song. She sang: *I’ll love you forever, I’ll like you for always...*

But she couldn’t finish because she was too old and sick. The son went to his mother. He picked her up and rocked her back and forth, back and forth, back and forth. And he sang this song: *I’ll love you forever, I’ll like you for always, As long as I’m living my Mommy you’ll be.*

When the son came home that night, he stood for a long time at the top of the stairs. Then he went into the room where his very new baby daughter was sleeping. He picked her up in his arms and very slowly rocked her back and forth, back and forth, back and forth. And while he rocked her he sang: *I’ll love you forever, I’ll like you for always, As long as I’m living my baby you’ll be.*

Happy Mother’s Day!

John +
Dr. John Beyers

PLEASE JOIN US!

RETIREMENT RECEPTION

Our church family is cordially invited to a Retirement Reception to honor **Dodie Patterson** and **Cindy Brown** on **Sunday, May 30**, in Wesley Hall immediately following the morning worship service.

Dodie, our Membership Engagement Coordinator, has been the friendly face and voice who has greeted our members and guests for 21 years.

Dodie is retiring, effective May 31. She has gracefully served with four senior ministers and seven associate ministers. Dodie is a lifetime member of our church and the person who holds more institutional knowledge than anyone else. We are thankful that she will also continue to share life’s adventure with Jesus Christ with all of us.



Cindy has made beautiful music as our Pianist/Organist since 2006. Both she and her husband, Boley, have faced difficult health challenges in recent years, and she

has decided that their overall well-being needs to be her priority. Cindy has resigned, effective April 30, and we are so glad that she and Boley will remain a part of our church family.



YOUTH MINISTRY

Will Locke, Youth Minister | will@lagrangefumc.org

Tuesday Prayer Breakfast

Tuesday Prayer Breakfast is happening two more times this semester: May 4 and May 18. Please swing by the Wesley Hall parking lot with your students between 7:30-8:00 a.m. so they can get a chicken biscuit and a short devotion on their way to school.

Wednesday Night Youth



Our Wednesday Night Youth will be winding down in May as we finish our semester-long discussion of Acts on Wednesday, May 5, and celebrate our year together on Wednesday, May 12. You and your student don't want to miss our last Wednesday Night Youth of the school year when we'll celebrate our seniors, **Anabeth Ivey**, and our Small Group Leaders. (Anabeth, our Assistant Youth Minister, has resigned effective May 31 to attend graduate school while she continues her job at New Ventures, Inc.) We will also share some dates for fun events we'll have during the summer. Be on the lookout for more details about our May 12 celebration on our Instagram page and in our Weekly Rundown emails.

Graduate Sunday

Graduate Sunday is Sunday, May 23. We will recognize our outstanding seniors as they make the transition from high school into young adulthood. This is an important time in the lives of our seniors and First Methodist as we commission them to step into this new season of life. As the church family that has nurtured these seniors' faith journeys, it is important to send them forth with words of encouragement and by praying God's continued blessing over them. Whether you have a child in Student Ministries or your child has long since left the nest, I hope you'll be a part of worship on Sunday, May 23, as we recognize and pray over our seniors.

May the peace of Christ dwell in you richly,
Anabeth Ivey and Will Locke, Your Student Ministries Team

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Jeanne Jones, Children's Minister | jeanne@lagrangefumc.org

Family Olympics - May 12

Wednesday Night Kids is celebrating the end of the school year with a family event. On Wednesday, May 12, from 5:30 -7:00 p.m., all of our Wednesday Night Kids and their families are invited to join us for a picnic dinner and fun family Olympic games. This is going to be an event you don't want to miss!

Sunday School and Children's Church

We'll be back on June 20. Look for more information in the "Re-Opening Plans" insert included in this issue of The Flame.

Wednesday Night Kids

We are finishing the year off strong with a crowd of amazing kids attending on Wednesday Nights. We'll be finishing off our study on the book of Acts with a lesson on how important it is to know scripture and that God's word helps us every day. Our final Wednesday Night Kids until August is on May 12 with our Family Olympics Celebration.

Connect with us ...

Wednesday Morning Wake-Up on

Instagram and Facebook: [@lagrangefumckids](#)

Online Children's Worship on Facebook: [@lagrangefumckids](#)

YouTube: **LaGrange Children**

Water Wars for Rising Sixth- and Seventh-Graders!



On Wednesday, May 19, we will have a Water Balloon War for our rising sixth- and seventh-graders to help our current fifth-graders "get their feet wet" as they transition from the Children's Ministry to the Youth Ministry.

It will be from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. at the field behind St. Mark's, with a light dinner to be provided. This will be a great time for them to fellowship with each other and get to know **Will Locke**, our Youth Minister. Wear clothes and shoes that can get wet, and come out ready to have a blast! Be sure to let Jeanne Jones or Will Locke know you'll be there.

If you are not getting Student Ministries' regular communication (weekly emails and Remind101 messages), please email fumcyouthlagrange@gmail.com, and we will make sure you receive future communications from us. You can also keep up with the fun things happening in Student Ministries by following our Instagram page: [@lfumcstudentministry](#).

Our Nursery is open!

Nursery is open on Sunday mornings and we couldn't be happier! Check out the pictures of some of the amazing miracles we have been entrusted with at First Methodist!



Re-Opening Plan

Phase 7, effective May 24, 2021, unless otherwise noted.

Considerations

- Troup County is currently in **YELLOW** (1-15 cases/100,000) which is labeled **COMMUNITY SPREAD**.
- 3.4 Average 7-day positive cases in Troup County; 17% residents with at least one vaccine; 14% fully vaccinated.
- 65% FUMC Respondents have attended in-person worship in past four weeks; 70% likely to attend in next 4 weeks; 14% somewhat likely to attend in-person; 13% waiting until vaccine more widely distributed.
- As of 4/8/21, Governor Brian Kemp has lifted most large gathering restrictions.
- Staff required to be vaccinated by May 31, unless contrary to religious beliefs or medical orders.
- On-going construction impedes some activities through June 10, especially in Methodist Ministries Center.

Masks

Masks **required** for all persons age 3+ at all indoor gatherings with more than 25 in attendance where social distancing is not possible, except where noted.

Staff & Offices

Regular work schedules and office hours. Masks no longer required while in office/work area with 25 or fewer persons in area.

Personal Health

If member/guest/staff has any signs or symptoms of COVID-19, he/she should remain off campus. Handwashing and use of hand sanitizer is strongly encouraged.

Campus

Signage noting risk of COVID remains in place. Regular cleaning schedule resumes on May 24. Use of spray disinfectant (fogging) no longer in use. Restroom restrictions lifted. Temperature checks required until June 19; day camp excluded.

Worship

- Live Stream & In-Person Worship Services offered at 11 am weekly. Radio broadcast offered weekly.
- Reservations for in-person worship no longer required, beginning with May 30 service.
- Temperatures taken prior to entry.
- Self-monitoring of seating. Participants are encouraged to social distance at least three feet between family units.
- Masks required for all congregants, age 3+. Masks remain in place for entire service.
- Worship leaders and choir no longer required to wear masks, beginning with the May 30 service.
- Communion elements modified.
- Hymnals/Bibles/Guests Pads returned to pews, beginning with the May 30 service.
- Offering plate passed, beginning with the June 13 service.

Weddings & Funerals

- Follow worship protocols for service.
- Outside group protocols apply for receptions and other related gatherings.
- Bride/Groom and Funeral Home required to sign agreement acknowledging current protocols established by church and a waiver, releasing the church of any responsibility of their participants/attendees contracting COVID-19 while on campus.

Sunday School, Small Groups & Committees

- Sunday School classes return to campus and regular schedule, beginning June 20.
- Small groups (less than 25 attendees) return to campus May 10, pending space availability.
- Groups and Sunday School classes must follow mask requirement.

Re-Opening Plan

Phase 7, effective May 24, 2021, unless otherwise noted.

Children & Youth

- Nursery open for worship service, without required reservation, beginning with May 30 service. Toys and equipment disinfected weekly (after use).
- Sunday School classes and Kid's Church resume regular schedule and in regular spaces, beginning June 20. Social distancing of 3 feet strongly encouraged.
- All participants must follow mask requirement.

Day Camp

- Masks required for all participants and staff, regardless of number of participants in each group.
- All campers and staff will be screened prior to entry daily.
- Each camper will have his/her own supply kit.
- All meals (whether provided by family or church) will be boxed.
- Limited interaction between camp classes.
- All seasonal staff required to be vaccinated prior to opening of camp unless violating religious beliefs or medical orders.

Large Groups & Gatherings (25+ attendees)

- Outside groups, including Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts, may return to campus beginning May 10. Group leaders must discuss space availability with Executive Minister, due to on-going construction projects and space utilization assessment.
- All groups must sign agreement acknowledging current protocols established by church and a waiver, releasing the church of any responsibility of their participants/attendees contracting COVID-19 while on campus.
- Masks and social distancing will be encouraged; however, groups assume full responsibility for implementation and monitoring.

Food Services

- Soup Kitchen returns to regular operations (non-boxed meals) on June 21.
- TLC & WEW resume in August.
- Coffee stations open June 13.
- Masks required to be worn by all those preparing and/or serving meals.

CHURCH ON THE HOOCH

We're so excited to announce the 2021 season of LaGrange First Methodist's Church On The Hooch! Services will be held at 10 a.m. each Sunday from **June 6 to August 8**.

Because of state regulations due to the COVID-19 pandemic, last year we had to limit guests to boaters only. So ... drum roll, please ... we're thrilled to announce that this year marks the return of land-lovers along with boaters! Stay tuned as we roll out more details.

Church On The Hooch is located on the banks of the Chattahoochee across from Highland Marina at the Boy Scouts' Camp Lumpkin (2818 Antioch Road), between West Point Lake buoys 50 and 51. Close GPS coordinates are 33.0600 and -85.1427.

As the season approaches, we are looking for more volunteers to help with the setup, breakdown, and transportation of materials to Camp Lumpkin each Sunday this summer. If you are interested in helping out, please contact **Mike Wilson** at mwilson@newventures.org or sign up online by clicking "Make an Impact" on the homepage of lagrangefumc.org.

2021 SEASON

JUNE 6
Rev. Ben Wills

JUNE 13
Will Locke

JUNE 20
Jim Thornton

JUNE 27
David Adamson

JULY 4
Dr. Colin Dacus

JULY 11
Carol Cain

JULY 18
Yolanda Jones-Cotton

JULY 25
Rev. Carl Von Epps

AUGUST 1
Jeanne Jones

AUGUST 8
Dr. John Beyers

**WORSHIP LEADER
LAEGAN SMITH**

Please spread the word ...

We're so thankful to **Kevin Jolly** for the donation of hundreds of thousands of disposable pans that will be used by our Meals on Wheels mission and other local non-profits and churches for months and possibly years to come. Thanks to his donation, our church and other community organizations can save money on material goods and utilize more funds to make a bigger difference! These pans, stored at New Ventures, are available to those seeking to help others in the community. If you know of a group or organization that could use them, please reach out to **Rick Free**, our Director of Food Services, at rick@lagrangefumc.org.



Hands In Service

A MISSION OF SERVICE TO THOSE IN NEED

When you have a small task or job that requires attention and you're unable to do it yourself, we're here to help! Don't hesitate to ask. We all need a helping hands from time to time, and it's completely confidential. Just call Tina at 706.406.4331.

Helping hands when you need them.

Check out the new design of our website at LaGrangeFUMC.org

We are excited to announce the release of our newly designed church website! Its address remains LaGrangeFUMC.org. Visitors and church members alike will be able to watch our livestreamed and archived services, learn more about our ministries, and stay up to date with current church events. As you explore the new site, please notice the bottom of the home page, where we have included a section that serves as a "cheat sheet" of sorts to help you find what you need.

This new site is also an important step in growing our church's online presence through our livestreamed traditional worship services and our anticipated modern worship services. More and more people in our community are online, and we want to move forward in making connections with those around us so that we might reach them with the gospel.

We are incredibly grateful to The First United Methodist Church of LaGrange Memorial Foundation for its financial



support of the new website. In addition, we greatly appreciate the Kelsey Advertising & Design team for its development of the new site, Page Estes for coordinating and leading the redesign process, Natalie Shelton for her photography and design coordination, and Ashley Blencoe for her professional photographs.

THE FLAME

USPS (079-260) IS PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY

The First United Methodist Church of LaGrange

401 Broad Street | LaGrange, Georgia 30240

706.884.4635 | churchoffice@lagrangefumc.org | LaGrangeFUMC.org

Postmaster: Send Address Change to
The Flame, 401 Broad Street
LaGrange, Georgia 30240

Dr. John Beyers	ext. 205	Senior Minister
Ms. Jeradean Collins		Nursery Worker
Mr. Rick Free	ext. 210	Director of Food Services/Hospitality
Mr. Eddie Giddens		Custodian
Mr. Scott Hill	ext. 213	Facilities Maintenance Coordinator
Miss Anabeth Ivey		Assistant Youth Minister
Mrs. Jeanne Jones	ext. 209	Children's Minister
Mr. Darian Krimm	ext. 202	Minister of Music
Mrs. Elissa Lamoree		Assistant Children's Minister
Mr. Will Locke	ext. 215	Youth Minister
Ms. Maxine Ogletree		Nursery Worker
Mr. Don Papenbrock		Organist
Ms. Dodie Patterson	ext. 204	Member Engagement Coordinator
Mr. Andy Rainey	ext. 201	Executive Minister
Mrs. Natalie Shelton	ext. 203	Director of Communications
The Rev. Ben Wills	ext. 206	Senior Associate Minister

Non-Profit Periodical
U.S. Postage
PAID
PERMIT NO. 079260
LaGrange, GA 30240

Our Church Office is open 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday to Friday.

We have a secure mail slot to the right of the Trinity Street office-door entrance. In addition, you also may drop off correspondence in our locked black mailbox under the portico on Vernon Street outside the Children's Building.

Summer Camp Needs You!

Our church's Summer Day Camp begins Tuesday, June 1, and we'd like you to join us. If you have had your COVID-19 vaccine and have a special talent you would like to share with our campers, we need you! We are looking for guest speakers with life skills such as woodworking, gardening, cooking, personal finance, table-setting, flower arranging, sewing, or map-reading. We also are looking for readers as well as people with drama or musical talent! Contact **Jeanne Jones** at jeanne@lagrangefumc.org to share your talent with our campers. You'll be amazed at what these kids can do with your help!

Memorial Gifts

FRED JONES

Pat Gilbert
Sue Duttera
Michael Ehloe
Charles Nored
Cathy & Bernie Berntson

TOM MAHAFFEY

Lurae Ahrendt
Tee Borders
Toody & Jim Sullivan

Attention, long-time lovebirds!



Our church will honor our member couples who have been married 50 years or more with a Golden Anniversary Lunch on Sunday, June 6.

We normally have a sit-down luncheon, but due to the pandemic, couples have the opportunity either to pick up boxed lunches (and special desserts!) at Wesley Hall at 12:00 p.m., or to have their lunches delivered to their home.

If you're a Golden Anniversary couple, please email Natalie Shelton at natalie@lagrangefumc.org by Monday, May 31, to let us know if you would prefer to pick up your lunch or have it delivered.