



JULY 2021 | VOL. 58 | NO. 7

THE FLAME

The First United Methodist Church of LaGrange

Church celebrates Methodist Ministries Center renovation

Rededication service marks beginning of an exciting future at First Methodist

Though the long months of the COVID-19 pandemic will be remembered as an uncertain time in LaGrange First Methodist's history, 2020-21 also will be etched in our minds as a period when our church adapted and grew to accommodate our congregation and larger community with a \$450,000 renovation of our Methodist Ministries Center.

On Sunday, June 13, about 200 gathered after the worship service for a picnic lunch in the newly painted Wesley Hall to celebrate the completed project. In front of a massive LED screen supported by other new technology, Dr. John Beyers and Rev. Ben Wills led our congregation in prayer and a brief rededication of the spaces that house the very heart of our church's mission and ministries.

After the rededication, those present viewed the building's transformation, subtle in some areas and dramatic in others. The biggest "oohs" and "aahs" came as they approached the church's former library/resource center, which is now a new modern Welcome Center with a coffee bar and drink station. A new crosswalk now connects the church's Vernon Street parking lot to the double-door entrance leading right into the Welcome Center. Accessing your morning wake-up drink of choice on the way to Sunday School has never been so easy!

The library has moved up the hall to the former Pathfinders/Mary Will Thompson class. Its books are catalogued in what is our church's new Oxford Conference Room, so named for the place where the Methodist Revival Movement began as a student movement at Christ Church College, Oxford University, in 1729 under the leadership of John and Charles Wesley. The back wall features a print imported from London. It is a copy of the 19th century painting, "John Wesley and His Friends at Oxford" by Marshall Claxton (1813-1881). Our conference room table and leather chairs are reminiscent of furnishings at Oxford in the 18th century, similar to those in the painting.

Renovated spaces also include St. Andrew's Chapel (and its Narthex), which received a beautiful facelift with newly upholstered and refinished pews, new flooring and paint, and an aesthetic more similar to our main Sanctuary. Other perked-up places are the Epworth Dining Room, a beverage station outside the kitchen, the second-floor Youth Center, and a second-floor conference room.

We're so very grateful to our congregation for your generosity, which has brought renewed life into a building that houses the hands and hearts of First Methodist. You have pledged more than \$371,000 above and beyond our operating budget to fund its renovation! A little more than \$78,000 is needed to fund the project in full, and we hope you will consider helping us reach this amount. And, if you haven't yet seen the renovations, please stop by so we can give you a tour!



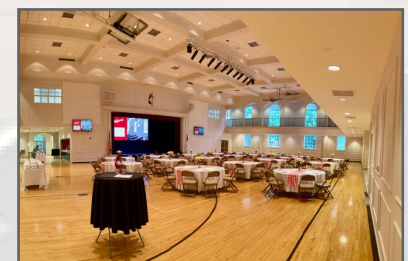
Dr. John Beyers and Rev. Ben Wills lead the rededication service to celebrate the Methodist Ministries Center's renovation.



The new Welcome Center



St. Andrew's Chapel



Wesley Hall



Oxford Conference Room

YOUTH MINISTRY

Will Locke, Youth Minister | will@lagrangefumc.org

Summer is in full swing! Student Ministries continues to have engaging, and fun ways to connect with students in July.

Before diving into July's opportunities for our students, I want to take a quick recap of June. On Sunday, June 13, I had the privilege of preaching at Church on the Hooch. I reflected on Matthew 9:9-13 and called those present to "Build a Bigger Table" by extending the radical hospitality and acceptance of Jesus to people in our community who don't know Him. What would it look like for you to show the love of Jesus in your workplace, school, country club, gym, etc.? I challenge you this month to extend Jesus' radical hospitality and acceptance towards one person who doesn't know Him.

Coffee & Conversations

Student Ministries launched Coffee & Conversations, our rebranded Sunday School hour offering on June 20. We will continue to meet in the four-square room on the Youth Center from 10:00 to 10:45 a.m. every Sunday to build relationships with each other and talk about how God is at work in our lives. I would love for your student to join us for coffee, donuts, and vulnerable conversations.

Local Missions Week

See the box below for details of our Local Missions Week on July 12-15! Student Ministries will partner with service organizations across southwest Georgia to share Christ's love through day-long service. RSVP by Tuesday, July 6, so we can give each organization a solid number of people coming to serve. To register, visit bit.ly/fumc_studentmissions

Six Flags

Student Ministries' annual trip to Six Flags is Sunday, August 1. We will meet at the church at 12:30 pm and return between 7:15-7:30 pm. Sign-up for Six Flags opens Monday, July 19; the first 10 students to sign up can go for FREE! Otherwise, the cost is \$18. Students won't want to miss this fun trip that unofficially kicks off the school year! This is also a great opportunity for students to bring their friends to connect them with Student Ministries. More details will follow before sign-up begins. To join the Student Ministries' email list, send a message to fumcyouthlagrange@gmail.com.

May the peace and joy of Christ dwell in you richly!

Will Locke, Youth Minister

Elissa Lamoree to serve as new Assistant Family Minister

Elissa Lamoree, Assistant Children's Minister, is taking on an expanded role as our new Assistant Family Minister effective July 12. In addition to her role in Children's Ministry, she also will work with Student Ministries to ensure excellence in programming across Family Ministries.



Elissa will develop and ensure opportunities for spiritual growth and discipleship for fourth- through eighth-graders. She will serve a crucial role to help ensure a smooth transition from Children's Ministry to Student Ministries, shepherding our tweens and middle-schoolers while also bridging the transition from Children's Ministry to Student Ministries. High-school students will get to know Elissa as well during Wednesday nights, Spiritual Life Retreats, and other annual trips and events.

Elissa graduated in 2020 from LaGrange College, where she majored in Religion & Philosophy with a concentration in Church Leadership and minors in both Psychology and Servant Leadership. Her husband, Collin, also is a LaGrange College graduate and is pursuing a master's degree at his alma mater in Clinical Mental Health Counseling to become a Licensed Professional Counselor.

LOCAL MISSIONS WEEK

JULY 12-15, 2021

bit.ly/fumc_studentmissions

LAGRANGE FIRST METHODIST STUDENT MINISTRIES

MONDAY

12:30 - 5:15 pm
Serving meals at Valley Rescue Mission in Columbus

TUESDAY

8:00 am - 6:15 pm
Assisting RiverLife in Newnan with tornado relief

WEDNESDAY

9:00 am - 4:30 pm
Helping Pioneer Georgia in Hogansville with day camp

THURSDAY

We'll have a fun trip to **URBAN AIR** in Newnan. The cost is \$20, but if you attend at least one of the service days, we'll pay for your ticket! We'll meet at the church at 3:15 pm and return around 6:45 pm.

Please let Will Locke know (will@lagrangefumc.org) what days you'll be participating by Tuesday, July 6.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

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

Super Summer Sundays!

Kids, join us from 10:00 to 10:45 am for Sunday School in June and July as we celebrate some fun National Days of summer! On June 20 we celebrated National Vanilla Milkshake Day by serving milkshakes to our kids who came to Sunday School. On National Sunglasses Day on June 27, we wore sunglasses to Sunday School and to worship! Gather with us for fellowship, games, crafts, a Bible story, and featured events, including Blueberry Muffin Day (July 11), Ice Cream Day (July 18) and Day of the Cowboy (July 25).

Kids' Church

During Sunday worship services (except for the first Sunday of the month when we have Holy Communion), children in grades Pre-K4-fifth grade are invited to attend worship kids' style. Children will dismiss from the main Sanctuary for Kids' Church, where they can wiggle and move, apply to their lives a lesson taught on their level, participate in age-appropriate worship, and build lasting relationships. In August, we will have news about how our fourth- and fifth- grade students are stepping up as leaders.

Summer Day Camp

First Methodist is rocking and rolling during the summer! Drop by to hear the sound of laughter, children playing, singing, praying, bouncing balls, screaming in delight, and occasionally being quiet (not often, though!). We're learning together about the God who created us as our campers enjoy music, art, games, field trips, science, nature, and fellowship with each other.

Fourth- and Fifth-Grade Events

Our June event took us to Urban Air in Newnan where we bounced, flew, balanced, got bopped, and had a great time! After exhausting ourselves on the trampolines, we enjoyed spending time together

and eating delicious pizza at Johnny's Pizza. Our next event is scheduled for Wednesday, July 21, and it's going to be a WET one! Look for more details on Facebook and in your inbox.

Looking Ahead ... to Camp Glisson!

Mark your calendars for Friday-Sunday, **September 17-19**, for all third-, fourth-, and fifth-graders. We're headed to Camp Glisson for a weekend retreat with other North Georgia Conference churches! Look for registration information soon.

MISSION OF THE MONTH:

MEALS ON WHEELS

Meals on Wheels at First Methodist has delivered over **40,000 meals** in LaGrange since 2014! Each Monday morning, devoted volunteers prepare and deliver meals to community members who cannot cook for themselves. Drivers develop relationships with meal recipients and provide not only a warm meal but also spiritual nourishment and friendly service.

In partnership with the Senior Center and other churches in LaGrange, this ministry fills a vital role within our community. If you're interested in serving with this missional ministry through food preparation or driving and delivering meals, please contact **Dorothy Cammon** at bcammon@charter.net, or fill out our Online Volunteer Opportunities Form by clicking the "Make an Impact" box at lagrangefumc.org.

All donations given toward "missions" in the month of July will go directly to support the ongoing ministry of Meals on Wheels.

Note on our June Mission of the Month: We are so grateful to our congregation for helping us meet our goal of \$3,000 for food distribution and ongoing construction efforts at the Ahuachupan Methodist School in El Salvador. Thank you!

OUR SUMMER CAMP SUPERHEROES!

They may not wear capes, but they're superheroes to us! Jeanne Jones, our Children's Minister and Summer Day Camp Director, has been seeking out church members with special hobbies, talents, and time to share their creative sides with our summer campers. We're so thankful to those who have stepped up so far to enrich the experience we're able to offer our campers!

So far, the children have enjoyed **Mary Ann Keck**, retired librarian at Rosemont Elementary, who read them a dashing pirate story (and had them convinced her brother is a real-life pirate). In addition, **Steve Cole** introduced to them the art of growing and cultivating a garden, including tips on soil, fertilizer, water and sunlight. And artist **Jennifer Emery** braved potential paint splatters with love and patience as she taught the kids a painting technique known as pointillism, which is the practice of applying small strokes or dots of color to a surface so that from a distance they visually blend together.



Clockwise from above:
Mary Ann Keck, Steve Cole, and Jennifer Emery

If you're willing to share a skill or hobby, please contact Jeanne at jeanne@lagrangefumc.org or 706.884.4635. She'd love to hear from you!

CHURCH ON THE HOOCH



Church On The Hooch continues to be a popular gathering on West Point Lake each Sunday! Eighty-seven guests attending on June 27, when **Rev. David Adamson**, lead pastor at Trinity On The Hill United Methodist Church, shared the message, "Where Are We Fishing?" based on John 21:1-14.

Services continue each Sunday at 10 a.m. from **now until August 8**. We welcome everyone to this casual worship experience, whether you come by land (with your lawn chair) or on your boat.

Church On The Hooch is located on the banks of the Chattahoochee River 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.

Volunteers are always welcome to help with the setup, breakdown, and transportation of materials to Camp Lumpkin each Sunday. 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.



CHURCH ON THE HOOCH SPEAKERS



Dr. Colin Dacus
JULY 4



Carol Cain
JULY 11



Rev. Yolanda Jones-Colton
JULY 18



Rev. Carl Von Epps
JULY 25



Jeanne Jones
AUGUST 1



Dr. John Beyers
AUGUST 8

Laegan Smith
WORSHIP
MUSIC LEADER



Beacon of Hope to resume in August

We're excited by our community's response to BEACON OF HOPE, our new ministry held the third Thursday of the month from February to June at Beacon Brewing Co.! About 25 to 35 people—primarily 20- to 30-somethings—gathered monthly for meaningful fellowship, authentic discussions of faith, and monthly hands-on service opportunities. After taking



a July break, Beacon of Hope will continue to meet from 6:00-7:30 pm every third Thursday in August to November.



We are grateful to you all—and specifically the Evangelism Committee—for allowing us to engage in this ministry, which meets people right where they are with the love of Christ! You each have a role as permission-givers and supporters of innovative community partnerships, and for that, we are incredibly thankful!

Shining our light ...



- Packaged 80 care kits for the LaGrange-Troup County Homeless Coalition Warming Center
- Wrote over 100 thank-you cards for frontline staff at Wellstar West Georgia Medical Center
- Collected material goods for Harmony House in recognition of Sexual Assault Awareness Month
- Learned about generational poverty and its effects from Sherri Brown, executive director of Circles of Troup County
- Served a poppyseed chicken dinner for 50 Circles participants at their June 17 meeting
- Wrote thank-you cards and bought cookies to say thank-you to the team at Beacon Brewing Co. for being our hosts for the last five months



SOUL CONNECTIONS on the Water

DIVE DEEPER IN YOUR FAITH THIS SUMMER!

SOUL CONNECTIONS ON THE WATER

has been created especially for those who love to spend time on the lake, want to dive deeper in their faith, and may not have found a traditional church to call home. The casual group is meant to build meaningful community and grow in love for God and others. Discussions will relate to scripture from the Church On The Hooch message from that week!

The Hooch Hideaway Restaurant at Highland Marina

**5:00-6:30 pm
Sundays
July 11 - August 8**

LaGrange First Methodist pays for the appetizers; guests pick up their own dinner tab!

Hosted by **Tina and Glenn Quiggle**

A COMMUNITY GROUP FOR CHURCH on the HOOCH

LAGRANGE FIRST METHODIST'S CASUAL WORSHIP SERVICE ON WEST POINT LAKE

Young Adult Gatherings

GAME NIGHT

July 13 | 7:30 pm
125 Jasmine Lane

Hosted by Jennifer and Jared Thornton

SMALL GROUP NIGHT

July 27 | 7:30 pm
151 Alton Drive

Hosted by Sammi and Ben Wills



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 hand from time to time, and it's completely confidential. Just call Tina at 334.377.0552.

We're Better Together!

THE FLAME

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| | | |
|----------------------|----------|---------------------------------------|
| 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 |
| Mrs. Jeanne Jones | ext. 209 | Children's Minister |
| Mr. Darian Krimm | ext. 202 | Minister of Music |
| Mrs. Elissa Lamoree | | Assistant Family Minister |
| Mr. Will Locke | ext. 215 | Youth Minister |
| Ms. Maxine Ogletree | | Nursery Worker |
| Mr. Don Papenbrock | | Organist |
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| Mrs. Natalie Shelton | ext. 203 | Director of Communications |
| The Rev. Ben Wills | ext. 206 | Senior Associate Minister |

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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.

Memorial Gifts

CHARLES HAYS
(brother of David Hays)
Sue Larkin

FRANK McCOOK
Mary Ann & H.R. Shepherd

LONNIE RITCHIE
Tina & Dennis Sudduth
Lauren & Cory Sudduth
Adley & Landry Sudduth
Kala & Kyle Sudduth
Keithen, Winston,
& Wallace Sudduth

JOE COLLEY
Carlene & Dusty Mills
Carolyn Alise
Mary Ann & H.R. Shepherd

JANET WYCHE
Betty & Bob Ward
Freddie & Gene Hayes
Carolyn Alise
Jane Willey
Catherine Carmical
Shirra & Hoyt Rogers
Carlene & Dusty Mills
Alan & Sharon Jones

United Methodist Women
Elizabeth Circle of UMW
Nita & Jerry Overall
Anne Allen
Carole & Kelly Linch
Jane Stephens
Mary Ann & H.R. Shepherd
Sammie Bureson
Virginia Robertson

Stephen Ministry

Our Stephen Ministry equips and empowers lay caregivers ("Stephen Ministers") to provide high-quality, confidential, Christ-centered care to people who are hurting. Those receiving care may be struggling with grief, a divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, or some other crisis. A Stephen Minister usually provides care to one person at a time, meeting with that person once a week for about an hour. All inquiries and discussions are strictly confidential.

Our church's next training session to become a Stephen Minister will be held on Wednesdays and Saturdays from August 14 to November 10. Wednesday evening sessions are 1.5 hours, and Saturday sessions are 4 hours (with breaks). Contact **Hank Dobbins** at hankdobbins@gmail.com or 706.518.8773 to sign up.



IN MEMORIAM

**Lonnie
Ritchie**

May 3, 2021



IN MEMORIAM

**Janet
Wyche**

June 11, 2021



IN MEMORIAM

**Joe
Colley**

June 12, 2021