



MARCH 2021 | VOL. 58 | NO. 3

THE FLAME

The First United Methodist Church of LaGrange

A message from your minister ...

THE HOPE OF HOLY WEEK AND EASTER!

Growing up, I was more of a Batman fan than a Spiderman fan. I am still not very interested in this web-spinning, skyscraper-climbing, crime-fighting guy in the spider suit. However, I did see the 2002 Spiderman movie and still remember one powerful moment.

Peter Parker, the bookish teenager who is bitten by a radioactive spider, begins to discover that he has suddenly developed some amazing "spiderish" abilities. It dawns on him that he cannot use these abilities for himself; he has to use them to make a difference for the sake of others.

Here is what he says. I really like this: "For me, living an ordinary life is not an option anymore." Peter is an ordinary guy who suddenly realizes that he has been given extra-ordinary powers for a purpose. He decides that he cannot settle for the ordinary anymore.

What a great picture of any man or woman in whom the Crucified and Risen Lord, Jesus Christ, lives! The day you give yourself to Him, He moves into your life to stay with all His resurrection power and claims your "ordinary" for His "extra-ordinary" purposes!

St. Paul wrote, "Christ's love compels us (a strong, steady, prevailing influence), because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and was raised again" (2 Corinthians 5:14-15).

So what is supposed to be the practical result of Good Friday and Easter? That you stop living only for yourself, stop settling for the small and ordinary, and start living a life worthy of Jesus' Good Friday sacrificial love and Easter Sunday resurrection power!

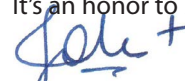
I wonder: How can anyone in whom this death-conquering Christ lives ever settle for ordinary again? Paul expressed his lifelong passion this way, "I want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection" (Philippians 3:10a). That is, exploring, unleashing, and experiencing the awesome power of the Jesus who lived in him!

Maybe you are like so many believers I have met across the years. You have an unexplainable restlessness inside. Perhaps you say to yourself, "There's got to be something more than this. I want to make a greater difference with the rest of my life than I've made until now." It is God Himself who makes you restless. He wants you to realize the power you received when you received Jesus as Savior and Lord. He wants to enable you to give yourself to a mission far greater than your kingdom, your comfort zone.

Jesus has resurrection power to set you free from the ordinary! If you will commit yourself to resurrection living, you can confront those memories from your past that have haunted you and defined you for far too long. You can face your fears, move beyond your bitterness, and throw yourself into doing something that will last forever!

In this Lenten season, tell the Lord Jesus that you are tired of business as usual! Confess that you have been settling for a life that is too small. Commit to His plan and claim His power this Easter. Stand with Jesus at the empty tomb and say, "For me, living an ordinary life is just not an option anymore!"

Remember how much I love you!
It's an honor to be your Senior Minister


Dr. John Beyers

Holy Week Services

Palm Sunday, March 28
11:00 a.m.

Maundy Thursday, April 1
6:30 p.m.

Good Friday, April 2
6:30 p.m.

Easter Sunday, April 4
8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

Please pre-register for each service at lagrangefumc.org or call the Church Office. Each service will be livestreamed on our website, LaGrangeFUMC.org, or on our Facebook page at [LaGrange First UMC](https://www.facebook.com/LaGrangeFirstUMC).

STUDENT MINISTRY

by Will Locke, Youth Minister | will@lagrangefumc.org

Happy Lent, everyone! As our church community takes time to reflect intentionally upon God's work in our lives, we are thankful for the ways this church supports students in their growing faith journeys.

DRIVE-THRU PRAYER BREAKFAST

We enjoyed seeing so many students' faces at our Ash Wednesday Drive-Thru to begin our Lenten journey together. Drive-Thru Prayer Breakfast is back on Tuesday this month, so don't forget to swing by the Wesley Hall parking lot from 7:30-8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, March 16. As always, there will be a devotional written by Anabeth Ivey or one of our student leaders, a chicken biscuit, and a warm smile awaiting you. We hope to see you for Prayer Breakfast this month!

WEDNESDAY NIGHT YOUTH

After concluding our study of the first half of Acts in February, we held Small Group Night the first Wednesday of March. Here's our schedule for the remainder of the month:

March 10 - No Wednesday gathering (because of SLR)

March 17 - St. Patrick's Day-themed gathering with Rev. Adam Roberts

March 24 - Reflection on Holy Week's significance and how it impacts our lives

March 31 - No Wednesday gathering (due to Spring Break and Holy Week observances)

SPIRITUAL LIFE RETREAT

Please be in prayer for the 12 students and four adults who will attend the Spiritual Life Retreat at Camp Glisson March 12-14. Pray for safety and good health amongst those going; for God to prepare

their hearts for what He wants to do during SLR, and for everyone to be open to whatever God lays on their hearts during the retreat.

MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

We have two mission opportunities coming up this month: helping Sleep in Heavenly Peace with bed deliveries to recipients on Tuesday, March 9, and helping with Children's Ministries' Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, March 20. They need eight students to come help hide eggs the morning of the Easter Egg Hunt at 9 a.m. in the field behind St. Mark's Episcopal. If you or your student would like to help, please contact **Will** at will@lagrangefumc.org.

MISSION TRIP

Registration for our mission trip to Pensacola, Florida, has opened. All you need to do to register is turn in your deposit (\$100) and have a current Medical and Media Release Form on file by Sunday, March 28. (Please note the dates of the trip have changed from July 11-16 to June 27-July 2.)

RICHARD LINCH MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Applications for the Richard Linch Memorial Scholarship open on Monday, March 15, and are due by Wednesday, April 28. Seniors and their families will get more information about the application process closer to March 15.

During this season of Lent, may you take time to reflect and pray as we await the restoration of all things in Christ Jesus.

Anabeth Ivey and Will Locke
Your Student Ministries Team

'Pay it forward'

During the Christmas holidays, I heard a story about a fast-food drive-through customer who said to the employee at the window, "I want to pay for the order for the car behind me." Each car after that paid for the car behind them. This went on for about 20 cars. They were each "paying it forward."

It made me think about Dr. William Murphey, who in the 1890s left \$2,500 to our church. Today that gift is valued at \$760,000 and provides almost \$30,000 per year to the church. Dr. Murphey was "paying it forward," just like Lillian Cobb, Estelle Bennett, Emory and Louise Park, and most recently, Charles Stevens.

In 2020, we had 11 church members decide to "pay it forward." They have agreed to make provisions in their estate plan to leave a bequest to The First United Methodist Church of LaGrange

Memorial Foundation. They all understand that, together, we are more than any one person could be. I can only imagine the impact these 11 members' gifts will have on our church and its programs for decades to come.

Dr. John reminds us that we are "Better Together." Through the foundation, we can be "Better Together Forever."

In 2021, I hope you will prayerfully consider making a provision in your estate plans, a bequest to our foundation. Let us all join together and "Pay It Forward."

Bobby Carmichael
Chairman, Gifts and Bequest Committee
The First United Methodist Church of LaGrange
Memorial Foundation

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

by JEANNE JONES, CHILDREN'S MINISTER | jeanne@lagrangefumc.org

February was a a short month but it was jam-packed: Valentine's party, drive-thru Imposition of Ashes, cards and goody bags to Vernon Woods residents (see pictures on the right), and so much more!

If you haven't picked up a copy of our Lent Adventures 2021, a journey to Easter, it's not too late. Copies are available each Sunday in the Narthex and from Jeanne Jones.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT KIDS

Our Wednesday Night Kids are studying the book of Acts, and I just want to brag on the amazing kids at First Methodist. After talking about how the early church worked together, everyone giving all they had, we did a fun simulations of how that might look now. FUMC kids are rockstars! Not only did they completely understand how to give generously, but they also wanted to give everything for the sake of Jesus and His church.

Wednesday Night Kids has a new time! In response to your needs, we now meet from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m., a half hour later with a light dinner for children in attendance. We are continuing our study of the book of Acts throughout the month. We will have an Easter celebration on March 24, and we will not meet during Spring Break (March 31).

CHILDREN'S CHURCH AND WEDNESDAY MORNING WAKE-UP

Catch up on the latest editions of these digital resources. Children's Church is designed for you to watch with your child as you lead them into a deeper relationship with Jesus. You can complete the entire lesson together in one sitting or choose to do individual segments. Wednesday Morning Wake-Up is a short five-minute "hello," celebration of birthdays, and devotion.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON VISITS

Ms. Elissa and Ms. Jeanne will come to you again on Tuesday afternoons. Be sure to go to our Linktree at the top of our Facebook to sign up for a day and time.

EASTER EGG HUNT AND STATIONS OF THE CROSS

This annual community event will be held on Saturday, March 20, at 10:00 a.m. on the field behind St. Mark's. We need your help in several ways: 1. Volunteer to serve that day greeting guests, hiding eggs, working one of the stations of the cross, or preparing the field. 2. Invite your friends and neighbors. 3. Donate bags of wrapped candy. 4. Pick up a bag of empty Easter eggs at the church and fill them with wrapped candy. Contact Jeanne Jones with any questions or to volunteer. This is a fun day and a great way for you to show the love of Christ to the children and families of LaGrange. Thank you for loving LaGrange so faithfully.

SUMMER CAMP

After doing an extensive amount of research and talking to other schools and childcare centers, we are excited to announce Summer Camp will be back this year. We feel confident we can offer a program that is not only safe but also offers campers a chance to build relationships, learn, laugh, be physically active, explore their creativity, feel the love of Christ daily, understand more about the God who made them, and have a great summer!

If you know of any college students who love kids, are reliable, and love Jesus, we want them to be part of our Summer Camp staff. Counselors will work 25 hours a week. Students who have just graduated high school can also apply.

Registration forms for summer camp will be available during the month of March. First Methodist members can register their children the week of March 7. Registration will be open to the general public starting March 15. We are looking forward to another great year of summer camp!

HOW TO ACCESS US:

YouTube: LaGrange Children (You can access our Wednesday Morning Wake-Up and other videos on this channel.)

Facebook: FUMC Children

Instagram: @lagrangefumckids

Email: jeanne@lagrangefumc.org



Easter Lilies

To place an Easter Lily in honor or memory of someone on **Easter Sunday, April 4**, please complete this form and return it to the Church Office along with your check for \$12 made payable to the church (marked "Easter Lily") by **Monday, March 22**. You also can give online at bit.ly/fumc_giving and specify "Easter Lilies." Lilies will be delivered to our homebound members unless you indicate otherwise below. If you are purchasing more than one, simply include all pertinent information below on a separate sheet of paper and include with this form. Questions? Contact Dodie Patterson at dodie@lagrangefumc.org or 706.884.4635.

CHECK ONE: ☐ In Honor ☐ In Memory

OF: _____

BY: _____

CHECK ONE: ☐ Pick up after Easter Service ☐ Deliver to a homebound member

Memorial Gifts

**Martha Tanner Peacock
& Paige Peacock Schine**
Murray Schine

Cliff Cammon
Dorothy & Bob Cammon

Bobbie Jolly
Clairnelle & Andy Wilkerson

Quillian Baldwin
Clairnelle & Andy Wilkerson

Wayne Bartley
Clairnelle & Andy Wilkerson

William B. Fackler
Clairnelle & Andy Wilkerson

Luke Hill
Clairnelle & Andy Wilkerson

Irene & Kerry King
Catherine Carmical
Patti & Larry Lybrand

**Charles Hays
(brother of David Hays)**
Virginia Robertson
Patti & Larry Lybrand

Frank McCook
Peggy Lukken
Patti & Larry Lybrand

Tom Mahaffey
Jane Willey
Dorothy & Bob Cammon
Virginia Robertson
Dawn Ware
Carolyn Alise
Carole & Kelly Linch
Susan & Tommy Whitworth
Betty & Bob Ward
Stephen F. Hutchinson
Anne Allen
Carolyn Alise
Sue & Allen Daniel
Marilyn M. Jenkins
Nita & Jerry Overall
Carlene & Dusty Mills
Stephanie & John Hodgkin
Lois Marie (Mahaffey)
and Michael Dawson
Jane Foster & Bill Martin
Frances Muse
Judy Jackson Glass
Sally Jackson Scarborough
Esther & Andy Rainey
Susan & Jimmie Church
Cheryl Weldon
Pat & Jim Nappier
Pat Gilbert
Joe E. Daniel, Jr.
Ann & Ted Beason
Nancy Peterson
Patricia A. Smith
Betty & Joey Mines
Marie & Joseph Ayoob
Marilyn & Allen Smith
Freddie & Gene Hayes
Lauranne Buchanan



WELCOME, (SORTA) NEW MEMBERS!

We're so glad that Jack and Short Brown have decided to call LaGrange First Methodist home again! Jack and Short first joined our church in 1975 and then moved away about five years ago. The couple moved back to our area recently, and we're thrilled they have once again joined our church family as members. Whether we welcome new friends or familiar ones, one thing's for sure: We Are Better Together!

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.

LaGrange First Methodist partners with Warren Temple UMC to distribute food to those in need

Warren Temple UMC and LaGrange First Methodist teamed together in February to distribute 1,200 pounds of food to those in need in our community. Warren Temple UMC previously had regular food distribution days for six or seven years until the pandemic hit; this most recent event was the first one since February 2020.

"We're at a point where we feel we can resurrect our food ministry and do it safely by wearing gloves and masks and also social distancing as much as possible," said Rev. Carl Von Epps, Warren Temple's pastor. "We know a lot of people in our community are in need and want to be able to provide this for them again."

Volunteers from both churches spent a day unpacking food from Feeding the Valley Food Bank and then redistributing it into boxes for individuals and families. The next day, they loaded fresh fruits and vegetables, meat, cereal, and canned goods into cars as well as into the arms of those who came on foot.

Rev. Ben Wills said he was excited to work within the connection of the United Methodist Church to help fulfill a community need alongside a sister church.

"What more can the church do in today's world than to nourish the community, whether that be through food boxes or spiritually?" he said.

Note: Other volunteers not pictured are Joe Ragland, Sylvia Davis, Maria Willey, Molly Carmichael, Bobby Carmichael, and Kelly Linch.



Top photo: John Tures from First Methodist loads a box of food into a recipient's car at a recent food distribution at Warren Temple UMC. In the bottom left photo are food distribution volunteers Pat Gilbert, Rev. Carl Von Epps, Linda Frano, Rev. Ben Wills, and Jerry Heard. Rev. Carl Von Epps and George Henry are in the bottom right photo.

'Beacon of Hope' brings 25 together for first gathering

Within the Fresh Expression movement, there are three primary roles: pioneers, supporters, and permission-givers. Pioneers are entrepreneurial leaders who start a new form of church. Supporters come alongside the formation of the new community and help out. And lastly, all fresh expressions need permission-givers. That's you! Permission-givers release people and resources, connect gifts with mission, and allow the church to more effectively reach out into the community. Without your permission and support, Beacon of Hope couldn't happen, and for that, I give thanks! Thank you for your support of innovative ministry efforts that help connect the love of Christ with our community. On Thursday, February 18, over 25 individuals from different walks of life gathered at Beacon Brewing Co. for our inaugural Beacon of Hope meeting. This new group came together building relationships and packaging over 80 Care Kits to be handed out at the LaGrange-Troup County Homeless Coalition's

Warming Center to those experiencing homelessness. Thank you for being permission-givers, providing the funds for these care kits, and helping Beacon of Hope to be a light in the community! With your support, our hope is stronger and our lights shine brighter!



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The First United Methodist Church of LaGrange

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Dr. John Beyers	ext. 205	Senior Minister
Mrs. Cindy Brown		Pianist
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

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.

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WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Community Easter Egg Hunt and Stations of the Cross

HELP FILL 3,000 PLASTIC EGGS

Pick up a bag (or four!) of 100 empty plastic Easter eggs in the Narthex or just inside the Trinity Street office door. Fill the eggs with prizes or wrapped candy, and then return the filled eggs to us by Sunday, March 14.

**You also can donate
bags of wrapped candy.**

HELP ON THE BIG DAY ...

- hiding eggs
- preparing the field
- greeting guests
- manning Stations of the Cross

**HUNT IS ON
SATURDAY
MARCH 20
10 AM**

**THE
THREAD
FIELD
(Behind
St. Mark's)**

**To volunteer,
please contact
Jeanne Jones at
jeanne@lagrangefumc.org**



IN MEMORIAM

Luke Hill

February 8, 2021



IN MEMORIAM

Tom Mahaffey

February 12, 2021

SOUL CONNECTIONS

We're better together!

We are so excited about our church family's welcoming response to Soul Connections, our weekly small groups designed to nourish your soul while drawing you closer to God and our church family.

60 participants

5 Soul Connection groups