

The COMMUNICATOR

First United Methodist Church

Making lifetime followers of Jesus Christ

February 2, 2018

BREAKING DOWN WALLS

“Now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us.” ~Ephesians 2:13-14

Did you catch that? Look, again, at how Paul describes the mission and purpose of Jesus Christ: Christ came to tear down the dividing wall. Christ came to say “no more” to the walls we erect. Christ came to say “no more” to all the ways we try to divide the children of God. Christ came to say “no more” to the hostility between us.

Last Sunday, Robin preached from Acts 6 and we heard how the early church made the poor a priority by appointing seven people to distribute food to widows and care for the foreigners in their midst. This Sunday, we will zero in on the life of one of those seven, Philip, who made it his mission to break down some walls in Jesus’ name. In Acts 8, Philip converts an entire town of Samaritans – outsiders that the other disciples weren’t even sure they wanted to invite to church! After this, an angel of the Lord sends Philip down a wilderness road where he encounters an Ethiopian eunuch, sitting in a chariot, in the middle of the desert, reading aloud from the prophet Isaiah.

In *Outlive Your Life*, Max Lucado has this to say about the encounter: “Walls separated Philip from the eunuch. The Ethiopian was dark skinned; Philip was light. The official hailed from distant Africa; Philip grew up nearby. The traveler was rich enough to travel. Philip was a simple refugee from Jerusalem. And don’t overlook the delicate matter of differing testosterone levels.”

These two people could not be any more different. But in our story, the black, influential, eunuch from Africa turns to the light-skinned, simple Christian from Jerusalem and asks, “What is to prevent me from being baptized?” The next thing you know, the eunuch is stepping out of the baptismal waters as the first non-Jewish convert of the early church. It’s an incredible story that is packed with 21st century implications.

Max Lucado concludes this chapter in his book by offering this prayer:

“Lord, in how many ways does my foolish heart make false distinctions among your people? Reveal them to me. How often do I judge someone as unworthy of you by the way I treat him or her? Rebuke me in your love. Where can I blast a wall or remove a barrier that keeps your children apart from one another? Give me some dynamite and the skill and courage to use it for your glory. What can I do in my sphere of influence to bring the love of Christ to someone who may feel ostracized or estranged from you? Lend me divine insight and bless me with the resolve to be your hands and feet. May I be a bridge and not a wall. In Jesus’ name I pray, amen.”

May we be found faithful as we bear witness, together, to the extravagant love and expansive kingdom of God.



Patrick Hitchman-Craig
patrickcraig@fumcopelika.org

The Life of the Church

LAITY MINISTRY THIS WEEK

Greeters
8:30 a.m.: Jim & Phyllis Mayfield;
Skip & Sandra Gregg

11:00 a.m.: Al & Dudley Cook;
Charles & Enid Weissinger

Gathering Music
Shannon Cason

Acolytes
8:30 a.m.: Barrett Galimore
& Bryce Speakman

11:00 a.m.: Sam Kemp
& Nolen Wilson

Cross Bearer (11:00 am)
Rebecca Wilson

Sound & Video
8:30 a.m.: Caroline Bush
11:00 a.m.: Nathan Goff

Ushers
8:30 am: John Parker (Captain),
Blake Epperson (Co-Captain),
Michael Bass, Allen Bush,
Richard Pelham,
John Reichmann

11:00 am: Kenneth Boggs
(Captain), Clay Harper (Co-Captain),
Ramsey Anabtawi, Jim Beach, Josh
Brown, Bill Levins

Communion Set-up
Beverly McKeever
& Sherri Meadows

Welcome Notes
Peggy Dyar

Nurturing Notes
Phoebe Branch

Monday Flowers
Vikki Hendricks, Colleen
Alsobrook & Jean Heath

Tuesday Office Volunteer
Earle Wilkes

Prison Ministry
Ron & Sharon Rooks, Donna
Hamilton, Margaret
Rogers, Danielle Fornea

ATTENDANCE & GIVING

Attendance
Sunday School: 197
Worship: 408

Giving
Weekly Offering: \$61,684

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sunday, February 4

7:30 a.m. - Men's Breakfast
8:30 a.m. - Worship
9:45 a.m. - Sunday School
11:00 a.m. - Worship
4:00 p.m. - One Accord
5:00 p.m. - Sunday Night Youth
6:00 p.m. - Wesley Ringers

Monday, February 5

8:45 a.m. - Sonshine Preschool

Tuesday, February 6

8:45 a.m. - Sonshine Preschool
1:00 p.m. - Prison Ministry
6:00 p.m. - eTeen
7:00 p.m. - UMW Evening Group (Library)

Wednesday, February 7

7:00 a.m. - Men's Devo
5:00 p.m. - Wednesday Night Supper
5:00 p.m. - M.A.T.T. (Meals And Teen Tires)
5:15 p.m. - Children's Choir
6:00 p.m. - Wednesday Connection Programs
7:15 p.m. - Chancel Choir

Thursday, February 8

8:45 a.m. - Sonshine Preschool
5:15 p.m. - LAFF

Wednesday Connection Dinner (served from 5- 6 p.m.)

Menu: Jambalaya, Marinated Veggie Salad, French Bread & Dessert

Kid's Menu: Chicken Fingers & Baked Macaroni

Reservations for dinner can be made by:

1. Placing the Dinner Reservation card found in the pew rack in the offering plate.
2. Calling the Church Office at 745-7604
3. emailing Laura Boggs at: lauraboggs@fumcopelika.org
4. Register using the "Ministries", then "Discipleship" tabs on the church website.

Ladies Night Banquet

The annual Methodist Men's Ladies Night Banquet will be held on February 13th at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Tickets (\$15) may be purchased from any Methodist Men's Club member and are also available in the Church Office.

Poe-Cumbie Sunday School Class (3rd Floor—Room 310)

If you would like to live happier come join us for Sunday School.
Singles—Couples—45 years old & up
We would love to have you. Belva Guy, Class President

Prison Ministry - January 30, 2018

Volunteers: Sara Nan Levins, Edna Caldwell, Rebecca Sanderson, Margaret Rogers

Inmates ministered to: 34 women, 13 men **Bibles given:** 4

Message: "Are You Ready?" - Danielle Fornea

There are some things that, even though we know they're coming—an exam, tax day, a birth, death—we find ourselves unprepared for.

Scripture reference: Luke 12:16 - 21

Have you received the HOLY GHOST since you believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any HOLY GHOST !Acts 19:2

The GOOD NEWS is that the Holy Spirit has not yet been removed from this earth! We HAVE heard....AND witnessed HIS Presence throughout our lifetimes! Recently GOD has laid it on Libby's and my heart to "gather the Saints", once again, to corporately seek His Faceto learn what He has to say....to receive what He has to give.....that we may be empowered to do His Will in our daily lives. We believe God wants not only to refresh us and fill us full of enthusiasm again, but to *empower* us to overcome the world, the flesh and the devil! "Come let us learn, Come let us drink, Come let us LIVE!"

**THE HOLY SPIRIT (8 week study...every Monday at 10:00 A.M Feb. 5 — Mar. 26
Cynn timer James House 5665 Lee Road 146 Opelika**

Youth News

Sunday Morning Youth

Every Sunday morning on the 4th floor in the Cross Cafe from 9:30 - 10:30. Milk and cereal and God's Word!

Sunday Night Youth on February 4th

Jr Hi "One Accord" Choir from 4 - 5pm

Sr Hi "One Accord" Choir from 4:30 - 5:30pm

Super Bowl Party from 5pm until game is over! Bring your friends! Supper is \$5.00.

Wednesday Night Youth on February 7th & 14th

M.A.T.T. from 5 - 6pm

J Groups from 6 - 7pm

Sunday Night Youth on February 11th

Jr Hi "One Accord" Choir from 4 - 5pm

Jr Hi Youth from 5 - 6:30pm

Sr Hi "One Accord" Choir from 4:30 - 5:30pm

Sr Hi Youth from 5:30 - 7:30pm

Prayer Concerns

EAMC:

Ann Canon
David Dorsey, Sr.

Emory:

Lea Botsford Perez
(daughter of Betty Botsford &
sister of Leslie Anabtawi)

Vanderbilt:

Jackie Spann (Terri Knight's
sister)

Home:

Peggy Aiken (Ann Canon's niece)
David Alexander (Marcia
Alexander's husband)

Barbara Allen

John Askew

Sharolin Bravo

Mable Collins (Arbor Springs)

Bette Corley (Nann Ogletree's
mother)

Betty & Hal Cummings
Trinchua Dukes

Anne Grady

Kathy Groves

Barbara Hartley (Marrell
Hartley's mother)

Cordelia Klinner

Jean Meadows (Azalea Place)

Maggie Joy Mclain
(Pam Alsobrook)

Dot Mitchell

Genna Mitchell

Dot Norrell

Cora Reames (Rhonda Boothe's
mother)

Bill Samford

Fran Smith

Kathy Smith

Sandra Smith (Ric Smith's
mother)

Theron Sorrell (Jake Thompson's
grandfather)

Emilie Tucker

Jill Turner (Tori Beth Thompson's
mother)

Starnes Windsor
(brother of Pam Alsobrook)

Out of Town:

Annie Louise Antley (Priscilla
Blythe's grandmother)

Evan Ashby (Macy Finck's
cousin)

Bob Bowen (Julia Moreman's
brother-in-law)

Shirley Brown (Ginger Perkins'
sister-in-law)

Sally Buck (Billy Ogletree's
mother)

Cody Burns & family (Lynn
Harrington's nephew)

Gail Colvin (cousin of Bobbie
Hamilton, Becky
Saggus, Fran Smith)

Bill Cook (Al Cook's brother)

Shannon Cook (friend of Earle &
Kenny Wilkes)

Scott & Christy Ellis (friends of
Rick Lane)

Bill & Anita Finck;

Romilda Westenhofer (Macy
Finck's grandparents)

Traci Hart (Pam Hope's
sister-in-law)

Sam Hayes, Jr. (Sharon & Ron
Rooks' grandson)

Lanier Johnson (Becky Brown's
father)

Allen Liu (Wei Beach's nephew)

Michael Marcades

Lexi Melton (great niece of
Stanley Melton, III)

Bob Miller (Sam Bailey's
brother-in-law)

Kelly Oliver (Lynn Harrington's
niece)

Sherry Parrish (Meg Branch's
step-mother)

Lauren Ragsdale (Michael Bass's
sister)

Marian Rogers (Emily Finck's
grandmother)

Carolyn Sell (Jo Vaughan's
daughter)

Rick Vetra (Karen Bush's cousin)

Bobby Woodruff (Caroline Bush's
uncle)

Military:

Beau Carroll (friend of the
Perkins)

Tyler Carter (son of Tommy &
Lynn Carter)

Michael Fischer, T J Fischer, &
Frank Rielly (friends of Phyllis
& Jim Mayfield)

Robert Groszmann (Bob
Ingram's nephew)

Garrett Guess (Becky Bailey's
nephew)

Dalton Lucas (son of Todd &
Stacey Lucas)

Chandler Norris (cousin of Mary
Virginia Norris & Louisa
Wood)

Alex Pendergraph (Janet
Taylor's grandson)

Jacob Ramus (Phyllis & Jim
Mayfield's son-in-law)

Kennard R. Smith (friend of Anne
& Sheldon Whittelsey)

Ronnie Snyder (grandson of
Arden Snyder)

Bubba Sumrall (son of Leslie
Sumrall)

Drew Tatum (son of Crawford &
Lynn Tatum)

Missionary

Orphanage Emmanuel:

Rachel Canada (daughter of
Ellen & Eric Canada)