

# The COMMUNICATOR

## First United Methodist Church

---

*Making lifetime followers of Jesus Christ*

March 9, 2018

---

Our Lenten journey began with Jesus in the wilderness, where he was surrounded by wild beasts and tempted by Satan. This Sunday – the Fourth Sunday in Lent – we will join the Israelites on their own wilderness journey where they are surrounded not by wild beasts but by poisonous snakes. This story from Numbers 21 is puzzling, for sure. Actually, it's just plain weird. It has perplexed Jewish and Christian interpreters for centuries, and no single, definitive interpretation has won the day.

In this passage of scripture, God does not act according to our expectations or the expectations of the ancient Israelites. The God in Numbers 21 is not a safe and comfortable companion for our Lenten journey through the wilderness. It may take us out of our comfort zones to imagine God as a dangerous, unpredictable presence in our lives. Yet, if we claim to have God all figured out...well...we're wrong. A domesticated unmoving God does not pull a people out of slavery in Egypt, through the wilderness, and into the Promised Land; no, we need a God who is on the loose! God is not always predictable but God is always faithful and always good, even when we are unable to recognize that goodness.

As strange as it is, I am grateful for this weird story from Numbers 21. It has led me to a very different reflection than I thought it might. Obscure passages are sometimes like that – all the more reason to read the whole Bible, even the odd bits! I hope you will join us on Sunday and I pray that God will meet you in the wilderness and speak to you in ways you were not completely ready for.



Rev. Patrick Hitchman-Craig  
[patrickcraig@fumcopelika.org](mailto:patrickcraig@fumcopelika.org)

## LAITY MINISTRY THIS WEEK

### Greeters

8:30 a.m.: Joe & Sara Wilson;  
Buddy & Becky Young

11:00 a.m.: Tom, Julene, Martha  
& Shirley Pugh;  
Bill & Nell Samford

### Gathering Music

Jim Warman

### Acolytes

8:30 a.m.: Myles Tatum, Jr.  
& Nolen Wilson

11:00 a.m.:  
Caroline & Susannah Couey

**Cross Bearer** 11:00 am  
Baker Rowton

### Sound & Video

8:30 a.m.: Nathan Goff  
11:00 a.m.: Will Levins &  
Peter Elliott

### Ushers

8:30 am:  
Aaron Waller (Captain),  
Blake Epperson (Co-Captain),  
Ben Bugg,  
Michael Vance

11:00 am:  
George Walker (Captain),  
Mike McKee (Co-Captain),  
Michael Guy,  
Bill Levins,  
Jeff Suhling

### Welcome Notes

Margaret Walker

### Nurturing Notes

Barbara Kriel

### Monday Flowers

Vikki Hendricks, Phoebe Branch  
& Lorene Paschal

### Tuesday Office Volunteer

Barbara Sims

### Prison Ministry

Jean Heath, Colleen Alsobrook,  
Ron Rooks, Margaret Rogers,  
Danielle Fornea

---

## ATTENDANCE & GIVING

### Attendance

Sunday School: 273  
Worship: Sunday Morning: 390

### Giving

Weekly Offering: \$ 26,051

---

## THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

### Sunday, March 11

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

### Tuesday, March 13

1:00 p.m. - Prison Ministry  
6:00 p.m. - eTeen  
7:00 p.m. - Methodist Women

### Wednesday, March 14

7:00 a.m. - Men's Devo  
4:00 p.m. - Grocery Delivery  
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. - Wed Night Studies  
7:15 p.m. - Chancel Choir

### Thursday, March 15

11:00 a.m. - JOY Fellowship  
5:15 p.m. - LAFF

---

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

**Menu:** Roasted Pork Loin, Garlic Butter New Potatoes, Cabbage Au Gratin, Marinated Veggie Salad, Sister Schubert Rolls, & Saint Patrick's Day Cupcakes

**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](mailto:lauraboggs@fumcopelika.org)

## MEMORIALS

**H S Bence:** Susan & Peter Elliott; Rabon & Ruth Harrison  
**Era Claire Collins:** Mr. & Mrs. John Blanton;  
Ms. Jane B. Gavin

**Betty Lawrence:** Susan & Peter Elliott  
**Huey Mann:** Wallace & Lorene Paschal;  
Barbara Sims

---

## IT'S A BOY

Congratulations to Mike & Tina Roberts upon the birth of their grandson, Thomas Bruce Bedsole, IV. Thomas was born March 7, 2018 weighing 6 lbs., 14 oz. He is the son of Trae & Becky Bedsole and his big sister is Sarah Michael. The Bedsoles reside in Birmingham, AL.

---

### Prison Ministry - March 6, 2018

**Volunteers:** Laura Fuller, Charlotte Ward, Edna Caldwell, Margaret Rogers

**Inmates ministered to:** 31 women

**Message:** *Memories* - Danielle Fornea

Memory can make a thing seem to have been much more than it was.

**Scripture reference:** Hebrews 8:12

---

## MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

### Orphanage Emmanuel Mission Trip - July 12 to July 19, 2018

Join us for a life changing trip to Orphanage Emmanuel, Honduras where you will be the hands and feet of Jesus. For more information, please contact Sara Jane Tatum [sjtatum@att.net](mailto:sjtatum@att.net)

### Grocery Delivery

We will be delivering grocery bags for spring break on Wednesday March 14<sup>th</sup>. Meet at Condon Hall at 4pm. We should be done by 5:30. All are welcome! Please let me know if you can help.

---

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

### Parent's of 6th grade & younger children!!!

We will not have regular children's programs on Wednesday, March 21<sup>st</sup> due to Opelika's Spring Break. We will have child care on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor for any parents that need child care in order to attend a class.

### "VBS" (Vacation Bible School): June 18 - 21 (Babylon - Daniel's Courage in Captivity)

Experience the thrill of traveling back to ancient *Babylon* with Daniel and his friends.

We need volunteers!!! Please contact Priscilla Blythe or Drew Speakman if you can help!

---

## YOUTH NEWS

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

### Sunday Night Youth on March 11<sup>th</sup>

Jr Hi "One Accord" Choir from 4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Jr Hi Youth from 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Sr Hi "One Accord" Choir from 4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Sr Hi Youth from 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Second Sunday Worship

Sr Hi Grocery Pack

### Wednesday Night Youth on March 14<sup>th</sup> & March 21<sup>st</sup>

M.A.T.T. from 5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

J Groups from 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

O Town Ice Cream on March 14<sup>th</sup> from 6-7pm!

**Sunday Night Youth on March 18<sup>th</sup>:** Movie Night and Steak 'n Shake!

# Prayer Concerns

---

## **EAMC:**

Crawford Melton  
Jim Royal (*Kevin Royal's father*)  
Leah Huskey Sherriff

## **Emory:**

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

## **MD Anderson:**

Trinchua Dukes

## **Arbor Springs (Rehab):**

Dot Norrell

## **Home:**

David Alexander  
(*Marcia Alexander's husband*)  
Barbara Allen  
Dean Bledsoe  
Sharolin Bravo  
Mable Collins (*Arbor Springs*)  
Bette Corley  
(*Nann Ogletree's mother*)  
Betty & Hal Cummings  
David Dorsey, Sr.  
Ellen Flenniken (*daughter of Shellie & Ren Flenniken*)  
Kay Gifford (*friend of Stevie & Charlie Couey*)  
Anne Grady  
Kathy Groves  
Lou Harrelson  
Barbara Hartley  
(*Marrell Hartley's mother*)  
Corinne Hurst  
Dot Mitchell  
Genna Mitchell  
Donna Moreman  
Nann Ogletree  
Oscar Penn  
Pooker Robertson  
Fran Smith  
Sandra Smith  
(*Ric Smith's mother*)  
Theron Sorrell  
(*Jake Thompson's grandfather*)  
Emilie Tucker  
Jill Turner  
(*Tori Beth Thompson's mother*)

Jody Wilkerson  
(*Deborah Mitchell's brother*)  
Starnes Windsor  
(*brother of Pam Alsobrook*)

## **Out of Town:**

Peggy Akin (*Ann Canon's niece*)  
Annie Louise Antley  
(*Priscilla Blythe's grandmother*)  
Evan Ashby (*Macy Finck's cousin*)  
Scott Boggs (*brother of Kenneth Boggs*)  
Bob Bowen  
(*Julia Moreman's brother-in-law*)  
Shirley Brown  
(*Ginger Perkins' sister-in-law*)  
Sally Buck (*Billy Ogletree's mother*)  
Gail Colvin  
(*cousin of Bobbie Hamilton, Becky Saggus, Fran Smith*)  
Shannon Cook  
(*friend of Earle & Kenny Wilkes*)  
Bill & Anita Finck;  
Romilda Westenhofer  
(*Macy Finck's grandparents*)  
Traci Hart (*Pam Hope's sister-in-law*)  
Sam Hayes, Jr.  
(*Sharon & Ron Rooks' grandson*)  
Carolyn Hicks (*Lisa Abercrombie's mother*)  
Graham Lane (*friend of Sherry & Richard Freeman*)  
Allen Liu (*Wei Beach's nephew*)  
Maggie Joy McLain (*Pam Alsobrook*)  
Lexi Melton  
(*great niece of Stanley Melton, III*)  
Bob Miller  
(*Sam Bailey's brother-in-law*)  
Paxton Jane Norman  
(*infant great-granddaughter of Ann & David Canon*)  
Sherry Parrish  
(*Meg Branch's step-mother*)  
June Pyle (*Ken Woolley's sister*)  
Marian Rogers  
(*Emily Finck's grandmother*)  
Carolyn Sell  
(*Jo Vaughan's daughter*)  
Jackie Spann  
(*Terri Knight's sister*)

Hilt Tatum, III (*Corinne Hurst's brother*)  
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*)

## **Christian Sympathy. . .**

. . .is extended to Al & Dudley Cook upon the death of Al's brother, Bill Cook, of Wetumpka, AL.