

“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” (Jeremiah 29:11)

Our congregation is in a time of transition. As United Methodists, we realize pastors are appointed on an annual basis by the resident Bishop; however, that long-held tradition does not make a pastoral change easy. Clergy care for their congregations, and church members care about their pastors. I want you to know I feel as many pastors do—that moving is a bittersweet experience. We have shared many experiences together—a pandemic, even!, and I will always remember you in my heart. While leaving is emotionally challenging, moving forward brings positive opportunities for all involved. One strength of the United Methodist Church’s unique system is that we are granted the opportunity to meet and serve lots of new friends in Christ. I commend Rev. Rusty Glasgow and his mother to your care. If you’d like to read more information about United Methodist policies, transitions, and our mission, please visit our Website: umc.org.

I am including this announcement that was made in both worship services on April 3...
“First UMC of Gatlinburg is one of 850 churches in Holston Conference. We are in the midst of what the United Methodist Church calls ‘Appointment-making Season.’ On behalf of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee of our church, I’d like to make the announcement that Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett is projecting a change of appointment for our congregation. Pastor Barbara is projected to move to a new appointment at the end of June, and The Rev. Rusty Glasgow is projected to be appointed as our new pastor on July 1. Barbara will continue to serve as our pastor through June 30, and June 12 will be her final Sunday to preside over our services. Guest preachers will fill the pulpit for the following two Sundays, and Rev. Glasgow will preach on July 3. Rev. Glasgow is a member of the North Alabama Conference, where he currently serves as senior pastor of Cahaba Heights UMC, in Vestavia Hills, Alabama. All pastoral appointments are projected until made official during Annual Conference in June. We look forward to welcoming Rev. Glasgow to Gatlinburg this summer, and we wish Pastor Barbara well in her new appointment. Feel free to speak to Barbara or to any member of the SPRC with any questions. Please join me in praying for a smooth transition for these two pastors and for all ministers, so that our church can remain a strong witness for Jesus Christ.”

~ B.Z. Lane, Church Council Chair – for the Staff-Parish Relations Committee

The Lord is our strength and our guide every step of the way forward.

Blessings,

Pastor Barbara

Welcome, New Members! Our congregation is delighted to welcome Jenessa and Payton Abernathy and daughters Charlotte and Tessa Kemp to our congregation! Jenessa, Payton, and Charlotte joined by transfer of membership from other congregations in Oak Ridge and Knoxville, and Tessa will be included on our preparatory roll. They are new to our area, and we wish them many blessings in making Gatlinburg and First UMC their home.

May is Missions Month! We are so blessed to have the opportunity to support several mission projects during this month. Special offerings will be collected on these dates: Native Ministries/May 1, South Sudan/Uganda children's home/May 15, Holston U.M. Home for Children/May 29. Evelyn Reagan is our Holston Home Ambassador. Our congregation also participates in the Annual Conference's "Change for Children" offering (an effort to provide grant money to worthy projects). The "Hands-on Mission Project" for Annual Conference (June 5-8) is, again, the collection of food to ship to our children's home in Old Mutare, Zimbabwe. Learn more at this source: www.holston.org.

Annual Conference Mission Project - The Smoky Mountain District has been asked to fill 400 food buckets for the 2022 Holston Annual Conference Hands-On Mission Project. First UMC and Huskey Grove UMC plan to fill 20 buckets together. Our gifts will provide food for the children in our UMC mission in Old Mutare, Zimbabwe. Please follow this list precisely:

1 Bag Corn Meal (4-5 lb.); 1 bag dried beans (2 lb.); 1 box quick/instant oats (18 oz. or fewer); 1 box Splenda/sucralose (50 ct. or fewer); 1 bag grits, butter flavored; 1 bag rice (2 lb.); 1 box powdered milk (10 oz. or fewer); 1 bottle cooking oil (48 oz.). We appreciate our United Methodist Men's group for covering the expense of the buckets. Thank you for helping "the least of these." The due date is June 1.

Prayer Concerns: Doris Clayton, Opal Gott, Don Muskett, Herb Reagan, Jerri Ewell, J.R. Phildius, Dot Colvard, Jane Eisaman, Judy Sakalosky, Ann Bush, Brad Spradlen, Mary Alice Cox, Alexis Kellogg, Joyce King, David Cottengim, Judith Lawhead, Prissy & David Eaton, Margery Helms, Anne Ogle, Sherri Valentine, Joe Bates, Liam Wallace; 8 silent requests; all affected by COVID-19; for an end to racism; for an end to gun violence; for our homeless community; persons in prison; for all suffering from the opioid epidemic; for UMC missionaries in Alaska & Zimbabwe & South Sudan/Uganda; for an end to suffering and famine in Yemen & Myanmar & Ethiopia; for our Outreach ministry to the Boys & Girls Club; all pastors and congregations in transition; 8 silent requests.

We appreciate your contributions towards our ministries! You may mail checks to our locked mailbox at the church: 742 Parkway; Gatlinburg, TN; 37738. The free online giving portal is available only through May 15: www.holston.org/ChurchOffering. "The Lord loves a cheerful giver"(II Cor. 9:7b).

We are grateful to have received a gift in memory of Newman Smith, given by Connie and Brad Johnson. The memorial service for Newman Smith is being planned for Friday, June 3, in our sanctuary.

Scripture Selections for the Sundays in May: May 1 – John 21:1-14; May 8 – John 10:22-30; May 15 – Revelation 21:1-6; May 22 – Luke 24:44-53 (Ascension Sunday); May 29 – John 17:20-26 (Rev. Bill Black, guest preacher).

Food Collection for May for our Bread of Life Ministry is Power Ade (12-ounce size). Clothes Closet Collection for May is toiletry items (travel-sized). Thank you! ☺