



800 GREENSBORO AVE  
TUSCALOOSA, AL 35401  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Tuscaloosa, AL  
Permit No. 135

#### SOCIAL MEDIA



WWW.FUMCT.ORG



Scan the code with  
your mobile device  
to visit our website.

#### CONNECTING POINT INFORMATION

The Connecting Point is published monthly by FUMCT, 800 Greensboro Avenue, Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35401 | 205.345.7261 | [www.fumct.org](http://www.fumct.org)

Editors: Savannah Smith & Hannah Crisp

Submissions can be emailed to [cp@fumct.org](mailto:cp@fumct.org) or may be submitted to Savannah Smith in the church office. To unsubscribe to this publication, send an email to [contact@fumct.org](mailto:contact@fumct.org) or call 205.345.7261.



Rev. Jesse Tosten  
PASTOR OF CONTEMPORARY  
WORSHIP

**“Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God...to God’s holy people...” –Ephesians 1:1**

No part of the New Testament has a more contemporary relevance than the letter to the Ephesians. Its importance as God’s message to the modern church cannot be overstated.

Ephesians clearly lays out the Gospel, both its cosmic and individual significance. It reminds us that God’s in control of our lives and God has claimed us as his children. Yet, Ephesians also acknowledges the reality of evil in the world which presses against our lives. The letter gives us insights and guidance on how to live out our faith in the midst of the world in which we live.

Calling us to holiness and obedience, Ephesians helps us become who we are in Christ.

Join us starting January 6th in the Bridge for this new sermon series, Becoming Who You Are, as we dive into the book of Ephesians and uncover its relevance for us today.

**“Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love.” –Ephesians 6:24**

## BECOMING WHO YOU ARE

EPHESIANS

BEGINNING JANUARY 6

#### SERMON ROUNDTABLE

**For those not in a Sunday school or who desire to learn more about Ephesians....**

In addition to our Sunday morning sermons on Ephesians, join Jesse for a Sermon Roundtable during the 10:00 a.m. Sunday school hour in room 308. During this time, we will dive deeper into the Scripture preached that morning and focus on your questions about the text. We’ll explore Ephesians using some creative study methods as well as consider its meaning for us today. Whether you worship at 9:00 a.m. and want to dialogue further or prime the pump for 11:00 a.m. worship, Sermon Roundtable is for you! Traditions and Bridge worshipers welcome! Jesse would love to fill the room – maybe you’ll make his 11:00 a.m. sermon better with your insights!



FUMCT

WINTER 2019 CONNECTING POINT JANUARY-FEBRUARY



## 2019: A New Year

Dr. Ken Dunivant, SENIOR PASTOR

#### THERE ARE THREE BIG EVENTS ON THE CALENDAR FOR THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF 2019:

**1.) The General Conference of the United Methodist Church will meet in St. Louis to chart the church’s future in regard to how inclusive we will be to our LGBTQ brothers and sisters. 2.) A new senior pastor will be assigned to us. 3.) On a personal note, I will retire in June.**

#### FIRST ABOUT GENERAL CONFERENCE (GC):

Fifty years ago the GC was debating a resolution on human sexuality. From the floor of the conference an amendment was added that said the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with the Christian teaching. Since then, every four years, the GC debates the topic of homosexuality and how inclusive/exclusive we will be. In 2016, we were at an impasse. The GC postponed until 2019 any decision and created the Commission on the Way Forward to give us leadership. So complex are the issues and so entrenched are the sides, that the commission brought not one recommendation but three. On page 11, I have described each plan as presented. The GC will meet February 23-26, 2019. Serious prayers for God’s guidance are being offered daily. I invite you to join the Methodists throughout the world in these prayers.

#### THE APPOINTMENT OF A NEW SENIOR PASTOR:

In June of 2019 a new senior pastor will be appointed to FUMCT. Our Bishop will make the appointment in consultation with our Staff Parish Relations Committee. The SPRC has developed a profile for the senior pastor and shared this profile with our district superintendent and bishop. The SPRC has met with the bishop twice and with the district superintendent three times. This is an important appointment for the conference and for the church. There are many talented pastors in our conference. The bishop and district superintendent as well as the SPRC are all praying for the right match of skills for our needs in the church. Join us in this prayer. In January, Mike Case takes the leadership of the SPRC from the able hands of Madelene Hollingsworth who has chaired the committee for the past two years.

#### RETIREMENT:

In February 1973, I took my first job in the church as a youth minister in Cullman. In June of 1976 I was ordained and appointed and thus began my professional career. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve God and serve my church. On June 2, I will be voted into retirement and on June 9th I will preach my last Sunday as a pastor of FUMCT. Barbara and I look forward to this new season of life. I will cherish every minute of my time as your pastor and look forward to passing the baton to the new person who will follow me. I am excited about the preaching/teaching plans for the next six months. I plan to preach from some of my favorite passages:

January-February:	“Life in the Spirit”	Roman 8
February-April:	“On the Road with Jesus”	Gospel Travel Narratives
April-May:	“God’s Requirement”	Micah 6:9
May-June:	“Virtues that Last”	1 Corinthians 13:13

On Wednesday nights, the Pastor’s Bible Study will be divided into two parts. The first half will be “Reconsidering the Parables”. The second half will be “Reconsidering the Psalms”. Plan to join me on Wednesday evenings, starting January 9th.

Wow, we have an important six months ahead of us.

With gratitude,

*Ken*



**1 SINGLES TOGETHER**

LED BY **Dennis Harkey** (Parker Fireside Room)  
**Starting January 9th** (all weeks)

Singles Together is an ongoing group of like-minded singles that are looking for community, learning and socialization in a clean and healthy environment. Whether you were never married, divorced or widowed, Singles Together is for you. Break the routine of "work, tv, sleep and repeat." Join us and network with a great group of singles.

**2 FUMCT MEN**

LED BY **Mike Greene** (Room 204)  
**Starting January 9th** (all weeks)

Are you looking for a way to connect with other men at First Church? Are you looking for a place to immerse yourself in the Bible and discuss scripture with other men? Are you wanting to strengthen your relationship with Christ and further your spiritual journey? Please plan on joining us on the ground floor of this exciting new ministry geared directly to the men of FUMCT.

**3 PASTORS BIBLE STUDY: PARABLES AND PSALMS**

LED BY **Dr. Ken Dunivant** (Lee Class room)  
**Starting January 9th** (all weeks)

Join Dr. Dunivant for the Pastors Bible Study as he explores the parables of the Bible found in the New Testament during the first half of WNA. During the second half of WNA he will explore the Old Testament Psalms. Each week he will help you learn ways to interpret Scripture and apply the truths to your life.

**4 DISCIPLE FAST TRACK: NEW TESTAMENT**

LED BY **Sandy Felkins** (Stabler Conference Room)  
**Starting January 9th** (all weeks)

Disciple Fast Track gives an overview of the entire New Testament. This course is great for those interested in learning overall themes and the importance of the New Testament in their lives.

**5 RECLAIMING A FORGOTTEN (AND ESSENTIAL) SMALL GROUP EXPERIENCE**

LED BY **Jesse Tosten** (Room 221)  
**Starting March 20th** (4 weeks)

Dr. Kevin Watson has written a fresh new guide to the theory and practice of the Wesley class meeting, an essential element of true Wesleyan spirituality. This book is for clergy and congregations who are looking for ways to develop deeper discipleship. The class meeting is made workable without losing its essential dynamic as a gospel-based accountable community. Watson has resurrected the class meeting and given it new meaning, showing its relevance for the church today and how it may be a perfect means for church renewal.

**DEATHS:**

- In thanksgiving for her life, Virginia Marie Buck Mills of Tuscaloosa, Alabama who died on November 16, 2018.
- Sympathy to Tim (Susan) Brister on the death of his father, John C. Brister, Jr. of Demopolis, Alabama on November 13, 2018. Sympathy also to Jessica Brister and Jason Brister on the death of their grandfather.
- Sympathy to Grant (Terry) Huddleston on the death of his mother, Sherry Huddleston of Brigham City, Utah on November 13, 2018.
- Sympathy to Justin (Stefanie) Thompson on the death of his grandfather, Charles Abston of Aliceville, Alabama on November 15, 2018. Sympathy also to Laurie, Leah and Lily Thompson on the death of their great grandfather.
- Sympathy to Tracie Monfore Turner on the death of her father Rev. Robert "Bob" Monfore of Tuscaloosa, Alabama on November 23, 2018. Sympathy also to Lindsay and Lauren Turner on the death of their grandfather.
- Sympathy to William "Chip" (Marcia) Burke on the death of his mother, Lola E. Burke of Tuscaloosa, Alabama on November 29, 2018. Sympathy to Doug Hollyhand on the death of his mother-in-law. Sympathy to grandchildren, Hillary Burke Cameron, Riley (Crystal) Hollyhand and Amanda (Wesley) Livingston. Sympathy also to great grandchildren, Avery Burke Cameron, Anna Riley Hollyhand, Ava Kate Hollyhand, Lola Jane Hollyhand, James Duncan Livingston and William Barrett Livingston.
- Sympathy to Mike (Jackie) Greene on the death of his aunt, Sandy Vallely of Auburn, Alabama on December 1, 2018.
- Sympathy to Ethelyn Stuhr on the death of her brother, Donald Gene Kyzer of Tuscaloosa, Alabama on November 30, 2018.
- Sympathy to Tinia (Joel) McLaughlin on the death of her mother, Opal Stone, of Fosters, Alabama on December 17, 2018. Sympathy also to granddaughters, Mary Catherine (Jeremy) Houston, Caitlin Tubbs and grandson, Cole McLaughlin. Sympathy to great granddaughter, Bayleigh Catherine.
- Sympathy to Anne Brandon on the death of her mother-in-law, Marion Brandon of Chattanooga, Tennessee on December 13, 2018. Sympathy also to grandchildren, Natileigh McNutt, Brooke, Walker and Hannah Brandon.
- Sympathy to Lacy (Daniel) Lavender on the death of her grandmother, Catherine Williams of Fairhope, Alabama on December 14, 2018. Sympathy to great grandsons, Lawrence and Camper Lavender.

**BAPTISMS:**

• George Campbell  
 Cornelius son of Meghan and Kirk Cornelius



• Rhodes Oliver Chambers son of Ashley and Rhett Chambers



• Scot Rayford Benton  
 Winston son of Zoe and William Winston



• Kate and Gray Garrett with children Jane, Rainer, Broox and Virginia

**ATTENDANCE****NOVEMBER 2018**

NOVEMBER WORSHIP: 3,078  
 NOVEMBER SUNDAY SCHOOL: 1,169

**DECEMBER 2, 9, & 16, 2018**

DECEMBER WORSHIP: 1,882  
 DECEMBER SUNDAY SCHOOL: 628

THIS IS A PUBLICATION OF FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH TUSCALOOSA.  
 Broadcast & Contact Information  
 The Sunday 11:00 AM Traditions Worship Service is broadcast on WACT 1420 AM, 96.9 FM and online.  
 Listen to and watch sermons on our website at [fumct.org/welcome/listen-to-a-sermon](http://fumct.org/welcome/listen-to-a-sermon).



## Volunteer in the New Year!

Attention congregation! Would you like to volunteer? We would love your support as we approach the new year for FUMCT. Service Coordinators are looking for hosts, communion servers and greeters for 2019. For Traditions, please contact [nicole@fumct.org](mailto:nicole@fumct.org). For the Bridge, contact [jackie@fumct.org](mailto:jackie@fumct.org).

## CHURCH CLOSINGS

The Church Office and Fitness Center will be open on **Monday, December 31st** until 4:30 p.m. We will be closed on Tuesday, January 1, 2019. The Office and Fitness Center will be closed on **Monday, January, 21st** for MLK Day.

## UMW Meetings January-February

**Charlotte Shamblin Bible Study Circle** | Monday, January 14th at 10:00 a.m. in the Lee Classroom

**Faith & Friendship Circle** | Monday, January 14th at 10:30 a.m. in the Parker Fireside Room

**Wesleyan Circle** | Monday, January 21st at 2:00 p.m. at Capstone Village

**Faith & Friendship Circle** | Monday, February 11th at 10:30 a.m. in the Parker Fireside Room

**Charlotte Shamblin Bible Study Circle** | Monday, February 18th at 10:00 a.m. in the Lee Class

**Wesleyan Circle** | Monday, February 18th at 2:00 p.m. in the Parker Fireside Room

## GET MOVING FOR A HEALTHY BRAIN

New studies support facts that exercise is the best thing you can do for your brain. It is never too late to start exercising for brain and whole body health. The absolute truth is that exercise matters and this is something neuroscientists, psychologists and physicians all agree on.

The recommendation of a minimum of about 2 ½ hours of exercise, such as walking at a brisk pace, spread over a week is very doable. Consider coming to a free FUMCT exercise class (monthly schedule at [fumct.org/ministries/fitness-recreation](http://fumct.org/ministries/fitness-recreation)), walking the indoor track in the CAC, or if at least 19 yrs. (must show picture ID) working out in the Body & Soul Fitness Center. Please check with your doctor before starting a new exercise routine. Our Pilates and Yoga classes focus on strengthening your core, stretching your muscles, and improving your balance. Best wishes for a happy and healthy 2019!

If you have questions contact Linda Dunn, Fitness & Wellness Director FUMCT at [ldunn@fumct.org](mailto:ldunn@fumct.org) or (205) 345-7261 Ext. 120.

## 8 THE PATH TO THE CROSS

LED BY **Pat Johnson** (Room 220/Artos)

**Starting January 9th** (8 weeks)

This small group Bible study is by noted teacher and historian, Ray Vander Laan. In this study, God's story continues with the intense devotion of his people. Discover how their passionate faith prepares the way for Jesus and his ultimate act of obedience and sacrifice at the cross. Then, be challenged in your life to live as they did – by every word that comes from the mouth of God. This is a unique video series that brings God's Word to life with astounding relevance. By weaving together the Bible's fascinating historical, cultural, religious and geographical contexts, teacher and historian Ray Vander Laan reveals unique insights into the Scriptures' significance for modern believers.

## 9 PRAYER

LED BY **Randy Allen** (Sanctuary)

(all weeks)  
Our lives are hectic. We seek a time to slow down and commune with God. We know that prayer helps us grow in Christ and shrinks the barriers separating us from the Holy and Divine. Each week we will briefly discuss Biblical principles of prayer and then we will enter into sacred conversation with God, together.

## 10 WOMEN'S MINISTRY CULTIVATE SMALL GROUPS

- WOMEN'S PRAYER JOURNALING
- THE ROAD BACK TO YOU: AN ENNEAGRAM JOURNEY TO SELF-DISCOVERY
- ANXIOUS FOR NOTHING: FINDING CALM IN A CHAOTIC WORLD

Cultivate will be offering three courses during WNA. See pages 4 and 5 for details.

## 6 THE 7 RINGS OF MARRIAGE: PRACTICAL BIBLICAL WISDOM FOR EVERY SEASON OF YOUR MARRIAGE

BY JACKIE BLEDSOE

LED BY **Danielle and Shane Turrisi** (Room 213)

**Starting January 9th** (8 weeks)

Studies show that roughly half of all marriages end in divorce. One reason for this is couples today are not prepared for the good - and the bad - that may happen in marriage. The adrenaline rush of new love eventually fades. Unexpected challenges arise and unmet expectations come. Couples can feel lost, hopeless and alone. Dreams of holy matrimony and happily ever after can turn into their worst nightmares. This bible study not only outlines The 7 Rings of Marriage but provides practical biblical insight and activities to equip couples in all stages of marriage. Discover the pathway to a fulfilling and lasting marriage. Revisit the covenant you made and live out your calling as a couple, believing that God's best for your marriage is yet to come.

## 7 GRIEF SHARE

LED BY **Jackie Greene** (Room 219)

**Starting January 9th** (all weeks)

GriefShare is a support group for people grieving the death of a family member, loved one or friend. Your bereavement experience may be recent or not so recent. You will find encouragement, comfort and help in the grieving process. No matter what the cause of your loved one's death, this is an opportunity to be around people who understand what you are feeling. You will learn valuable information about facing your new normal in life and renewing your hope for the future. GriefShare meets weekly and contains three parts: video seminar; support group and workbook activities. Please contact Jackie Greene at [jackie@fumct.org](mailto:jackie@fumct.org) or 205-345-7261, ext.104 if you have additional questions.



# Cultivate

## Women's MINISTRY

**The purpose of Cultivate is to create a sense of belonging for the women of our church and community where we grow in our faith, prayer life, and friendships through studying God's word, serving his people, and shepherding one another along life's journey.**

### SPRING SEMESTER CULTIVATE SMALL GROUPS

During the fall 2018 semester, 74 women participated in Cultivate small groups which included completing Bible studies, Christian book studies and a prayer journaling group. The women in these groups develop friendships while growing in their faith and studying God's word. Please consider joining one of these groups beginning in January. If you would like to join one of the groups, please email the small group leader listed below.

### FAITHFUL, ABUNDANT, TRUE: THREE LIVES GOING DEEPER STILL by Beth Moore, Kay Arthur and Priscilla Shirer

Join Beth Moore, Kay Arthur and Priscilla Shirer in a women's Bible study. Kay challenges us to faithfulness in difficult days. Priscilla points to the essential of trust in God's ability, and Beth teaches on how to discern truth from error in difficult days. Faithfulness, abundance and truth are the focus points of this study. Led by Beverly May on Mondays at FUMCT in room 212 from 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Contact Beverly at [bevbmay@icloud.com](mailto:bevbmay@icloud.com) to register.

### DARE TO LEAD by Brené Brown

Brené Brown has taught us what it means to dare greatly, rise strong, and brave the wilderness. Now she's showing us how to put those ideas into practice so we can step up and lead. A leader is anyone who takes responsibility for recognizing the potential in people and ideas, and has the courage to develop that potential. This study is for anyone who wants to step up into brave leadership. Led by Virginia Jones on Monday evenings from 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. - # 5 Rollingwood, Tuscaloosa, 35406. Contact Virginia at [vajones@comcast.net](mailto:vajones@comcast.net) to register.

### IT'S NOT SUPPOSED TO BE THIS WAY: FINDING UNEXPECTED STRENGTH WHEN DISAPPOINTMENTS LEAVE YOU SHATTERED by Lysa Terkeurst

Life often looks so very far from the reality for which we long. Lysa TerKeurst deeply understands. But she's also discovered that whether we're dealing with daily disappointments or life-altering loss, we can find unexpected strength as we wrestle between our faith and feelings. Led by Susan Kizziah on Tuesday evenings from 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. at 1873 Gaineswood Drive, Tuscaloosa, 35406. Contact Susan at [susankizziah@gmail.com](mailto:susankizziah@gmail.com) to register.

### ANXIOUS FOR NOTHING: FINDING CALM IN A CHAOTIC WORLD by Max Lucado

Americans especially know about living in perpetual anxiety. According to one research program, anxiety-related issues are the number one mental health problem among women. Lucado invites readers into a study of Philippians 4:6-7, teaching that, with God's help, you can learn to face the calamities of life. Anxiety comes with life. But it doesn't have to dominate your life. Led by Susan Page and Danielle Spree during WNA at FUMCT in room 212 from 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Contact [spage@ua.edu](mailto:spage@ua.edu) or [dac724@yahoo.com](mailto:dac724@yahoo.com) to register.



The Bridge Band and Worship Team packed Chitwood Hall on **Sunday, December 16th** for an amazing program of Christmas music.




The Chancel Choir, soloists and instrumentalists transported us to the magical land of Narnia for a beautiful Christmas music program on **Sunday, December 9th**.



The final celebration of our 200th year was a huge success! People of every age and stage gathered in Chitwood Hall on **December 16th** for an Ole Fashioned Christmas Party.







## A FRIEND LOVES AT ALL TIMES, AND A BROTHER IS BORN FOR ADVERSITY.

**-PROVERBS 17:17**

**Welcome to FUMCT MEN!** Are you looking for a way to connect with other men at First Church? Are you looking for a place to immerse yourself in the Bible and discuss scripture with other men? Are you wanting to strengthen your relationship with Christ and further your spiritual journey? Please plan on joining us on the ground floor of this exciting new ministry geared directly to the men of FUMCT.

FUMCT MEN will incorporate Bible studies, discussion, and service to strengthen our relationship with Christ and help build relationships with other men of the church. FUMCT MEN meets weekly, every Wednesday night, as part of Wednesday Night Alive programming. We are planning to participate in mission projects for the Tuscaloosa community, along with hosting social events throughout the year. If you are looking for a place of community and service, please plan on checking us out. Men of all ages are welcome, from the young professional to the senior citizen. If you have any questions regarding the ministry, please contact Mike Greene at [mjwgreene@icloud.com](mailto:mjwgreene@icloud.com). We hope to see you soon!



**NEW GRIEF SHARE GROUP FORMING**

GriefShare will begin a new 13 week cycle **January 9th-April 10th, 2019 from 6:00 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. in room 219.** Please contact Jackie Greene at [jackie@fumct.org](mailto:jackie@fumct.org) or call 205-345-7261, ext. 104.

### WOMEN'S PRAYER JOURNALING

Keeping a prayer journal helps us connect with God in a consistent, authentic, creative and tangible way. We will practice talking and listening to God through many journaling formats and methods. Led by Janice Stewart during WNA at FUMCT in room 214 from 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Contact [jcs-alabama@att.net](mailto:jcs-alabama@att.net) to register.

### THE ROAD BACK TO YOU: AN ENNEAGRAM JOURNEY TO SELF-DISCOVERY

Ali Lindsey will lead this group on Wednesday nights at 6:00-7:00 p.m. as part of the WNA group of classes. What you don't know about yourself can hurt you and your relationships—and maybe even how you make your way in the world. It can also keep you in the shallows with God. Do you want help figuring out who you are and why you're stuck in the same ruts?

The Enneagram is an ancient personality type system with an uncanny accuracy in describing how human beings are wired, both positively and negatively. In this study, Ian Morgan Cron and Suzanne Stabile forge a unique approach—a practical, comprehensive way of accessing Enneagram wisdom and exploring its connections with Christian spirituality for a deeper knowledge of God and of ourselves.

### CULTIVATE SERVE TEAM

**January 26th from 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at the church.**

Please join Cultivate's small group/serve team on Saturday, January 26th from 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. as we help our church and Love Inc. serve the homeless residents of our community. Homeless Connect works to connect individuals who lack a fixed, regular or adequate nighttime residence with area agencies, organizations and businesses to provide services free of charge. Homeless guests can receive free legal, medical and dental assistance as well as resources for housing, education, employment and more. Please contact Erin Tucker at 331-8232 or [ehtucker2003@yahoo.com](mailto:ehtucker2003@yahoo.com) if you can volunteer or would like more information.

### COMMUNITY OUTREACH BY ONE OF OUR CULTIVATE LEADERS



God has called one of the Cultivate leaders to serve as a leader of Bible studies at a University of Alabama sorority house. For several years, Melanie Edwards spent lots of time volunteering at the Alpha Chi

Omega sorority house. About two years ago, as she walked into the dining room of the sorority house during lunch, her heart was overwhelmed with love for the 200 or more girls seated there! She felt the Lord say, "This is where you need to serve! Can't you see it?" Melanie began a small Bible study group; starting with 10 girls the first semester increasing to over 20 young women the next semester. Last Spring, over 30 girls participated in the small group Bible study!

They are currently studying *Mere Christianity* by C.S. Lewis at the request of the group members. God is blessing this group, and Melanie is so thankful for the opportunity to mentor these young women. Several girls have now started their own small groups! That's what it's all about - discipleship! It is amazing to see what God has done and is continuing to do in this ministry. Cultivate desires to create mentoring relationships between older women and younger women. Thanks to Melanie for reaching out to young women in our community!





# Little Lambs

## CONSIGNMENT SALE

FEBRUARY 21-23, 2019

Offering Infant & Children's Clothing,  
Nursery Items & Toys

CALLING ALL  
CONSIGNORS  
AND VOLUNTEERS!

The semi-annual Little Lambs Consignment Sale will be held **February 21-23, 2019** in the church activity center (CAC), with a portion of the proceeds benefitting the church and its missions.

The doors will open to the public on **Thursday, February 21 at 6:00 p.m.** for a preview sale, which offers shoppers a first chance at gently used children's clothes, shoes, toys and baby items before the general public. There is a \$5 admission for the preview sale and no strollers are allowed that night.

**On Friday, February 22 from 9:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. the sale will be open to the public with free admission. On Saturday, February 23 from 9:00 a.m. to noon the sale will include most items at half price.**

Consignor signup will occur online on January 17 at 9:00 p.m. To find out more information about Little Lambs, about consigning or to inquire about helping with the sale, visit to [fumct.org/ministries/little-lambs](http://fumct.org/ministries/little-lambs) or email [littlelambstuscaloosa@gmail.com](mailto:littlelambstuscaloosa@gmail.com).

If you sign up to volunteer for the set up and the sale, you get special privileges to shop earlier on Preview Night. We welcome new volunteers and new consignors to the sale. It is a wonderful volunteer work environment where women come together to help the community.



### More on General Conference (from page 1)

The Special Session of the General Conference will meet February 23-26th in St. Louis. The special meeting of The United Methodist Church's top lawmaking assembly will be limited to acting on a report by Council of Bishops, based on the proposals from the Commission on the Way Forward. The 32-member commission, appointed by the bishops, has the charge of finding ways for the denomination to stay together despite deep differences around homosexuality.

### THE PROPOSALS ARE BRIEFLY DESCRIBED BELOW:

#### THE TRADITIONALIST PLAN

**This plan keeps the current status restricting LGBTQ rights and adds defined penalties for anyone who violates the Book of Discipline.**

#### THE ONE-CHURCH PLAN

**This plan recognizes that we have a variety of views, gives room for each expression of faith but does not define a specific view of LGBTQ. This plan gives conferences, local churches and pastors the freedom to decide what the beliefs and practices of each will be. The conference determines the standards for ministries. The local churches will decide if they will be open or closed to gay/lesbian weddings and each pastor will decide if he or she will perform same sex weddings.**

#### CONNECTIONAL CONFERENCES MODEL

**This model keeps the core theology of our church and some of the structure. It would create three conferences in North America: one traditional conference, one progressive conference, and one centrist or "uniting" conference. Each annual conference would choose to be a member of one of the three connectional conferences based on their affinity to the conference's theological stance on homosexuality. Any local church that disagrees with the annual conference decision could vote to join a different branch conference.**

The 57 page report with its 36 pages of appendices is available in English at [www.fumct.org/contact](http://www.fumct.org/contact). It is expected to be amended and revised during the sessions.

There is an initiative called Pray Our Way Forward that encourages all United Methodists to pray daily for God's leadership. Go to [UMCPrays.org](http://UMCPrays.org) to register and watch our bishop on video explaining the initiative. A scripture and a suggested prayer topic are given each week and will be emailed to you if you register.

The special session begins in less than two months. Please pray for our church and the eight North Alabama Conference delegates to General Conference.





## HOMELESS CONNECT 2019

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 26TH**

**8:00 A.M.-1:00 P.M.**

AT FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH TUSCALOOSA | LUNCH PROVIDED

### ♥ WHAT IS HOMELESS CONNECT?

Homeless Connect is an event that focuses on serving those who are homeless in Tuscaloosa. Love In the Name of Christ, along with area churches, agencies, businesses, and volunteers come together to remove the barriers of homelessness.

On Saturday, January 26th, our homeless guests can receive any and all services provided, free of charge. The services range from legal, medical and dental assistance, vaccinations, prescriptions, eye exams and eye glasses, to resources for housing, education, employment and much more.

### ♥ SERVICES OFFERED

- Legal advice
- Housing information
- Court--for minor offenses
- Eye exams and glasses
- Medical exams
- Dental exams and services
- Veterans' Affairs
- Prescriptions (non-narcotic)
- Clothing and other supplies
- Identification
- Employment opportunities
- Flu Vaccinations
- Hair cuts
- Hygiene items
- Prayer
- Addiction counseling
- STD and HIV testing

### ♥ WHO IS A GUEST?

- An individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.
- An individual who resides in a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, camping ground, shelter. Or one who resides in a hotel, motel, or transitional housing that is designated to provide temporary living arrangements.
- An individual or family living temporarily in a multi-family residence.



**American  
Red Cross**

**MARK YOUR  
CALENDAR NOW  
FOR**

**American Red  
Cross  
Blood Drive**

TUESDAY,  
FEBRUARY 26, 2019  
from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Visit  
[www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org)  
to sign-up!



### 300 VOLUNTEERS GOAL

Help us reach our goal of getting 300 volunteers signed up!  
Please register at [fumct.org/serve](http://fumct.org/serve) to volunteer.

## GETTING TO KNOW YOUR CHURCH FAMILY



### NICE TO MEET YOU, SAVANNAH STOUT SMITH!

*Director of Communications & Media*  
[savannah@fumct.org](mailto:savannah@fumct.org)

You have to be optimist to plan a wedding in an open meadow in late November! Meet Savannah Stout Smith, our *Director of Communications and Media*. She is the energetic and talented redhead you see around the church—or maybe you don't see her. Her job is behind the scenes, recording the services, making videos to bring to life the work of our mission teams and putting together newsletters.

Savannah married Kaleb Smith on November 24th at Sweet Meadow Farm in Buchanan, GA. Most of you were glued to your TVs watching the Iron Bowl, but this Tennessee fan was walking down the aisle with her favorite puppy, Peyton (named for Heisman Trophy/Super Bowl winner Peyton Manning) to become Mrs. Smith.

Savannah grew up in Peachtree City, GA and attended Georgia College and State University to major in Mass Communications. She was a member of Kappa Delta and played intramural sports. She joined the Wesley Foundation on campus and served as their communications specialist.

She worked two summers at Centrikid Camps. It was at a travel camp that she met Kaleb Smith. Their team was responsible for setting up camps for children on college campuses in Tennessee, Texas, Louisiana and Alabama. Kaleb stayed on with the organization to become a camp director but Savannah spent her next summer in Costa Rica with Mission to the World. It was an organization that planted churches and she led short term mission teams in this work.

Later she worked with Freedom Challenge, a group that specializes in bringing awareness to and advocating for the victims of sex trafficking. "It was an all-women's group. We rallied women to be the voice for the voiceless victims of exploitation." Human trafficking happens all over the world but is the fastest growing illegal activity in the U. S.

Savannah started work at FUMCT a year ago. Kaleb is the Childrens' Minister at Northport Baptist Church. She, Kaleb and Peyton live in Northport. One of the most touching moments of the wedding was when the minister read from Savannah's grandfather's Bible. "Pappaw was the lead pastor at a church in Bristol, TN for over 40 years. We lost him to cancer in 2015. Having his Bible as part of the service, made it seem like he was there with us," she said.

When you see Savannah you might hum a little "Rocky Top" but be sure you thank her for the good work she does to keep us informed of everything going on in this busy church.





## KIDDIE KOLLEGE REGISTRATION FOR 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR

**January 7-11:** Registration for current Kiddie Kollege students and siblings

**January 14-18:** Registration for FUMCT church members

**January 29:** Registration is open to the public.

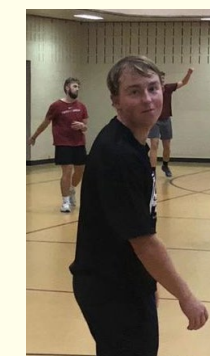
If you know someone that may be interested in a half day preschool program and would like more information, please contact Crystal Hollyhand at [kiddiekollege@fumct.org](mailto:kiddiekollege@fumct.org) or call us at 205-345-7074.



## SAVE THE DATE - VBS 2019 - June 24-27, 2019

This epic African adventure engages the whole herd. At Roar, kids explore God's goodness and celebrate a ferocious faith that powers them through this wild life. Put VBS on your calendar now!

Online registration opens May 1st for children who turn 3 years old by September 1st through students who have completed 5th grade.



## FOOMACK STUDENT MINISTRY

As 2018 has come to a close I want to say a special thank you to the church family for making this year a great year. There were many exciting events, ministries, and activities that took place in our student ministries. From the Foomack basketball league, Big Stuf, Discovery, Identity, Hospice Christmas tree decorating, College ministries, etc.; None of this would have been possible without the support of our church family. Thank you from Foomack.

As 2019 begins I'd like to encourage everyone to come out on Sunday afternoons and see one our church league basketball games. It is guaranteed entertainment--air balls, bad officiating, bad coaching, etc. But what one will also see is outreach happening within the walls of our church as we are given the opportunity to pray for students and encourage them in a daily walk with Christ.

Foomack Wednesdays will begin January 9th. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. and pick up is at 7:30. Don't miss out on the service as we continue our focus of what it means to live for an "Audience of One."

Stephen Stroud, *Director of Youth Ministry*