



Alabama-West Florida Conference

Wesley Heirs

Fall 2021 Newsletter

Marking Time

Greetings Fellow Retired Status Ministers!

While I was still in high school, I became a blood donor. I continued to donate through the years until I started taking a blood thinner and they wouldn't accept my blood. They tell me a unit (pint) of blood can save up to 3 lives and there are 8 pints in a gallon. Records show I have given approximately 10 gallons or 80 units. Have I saved 240 lives? Who knows, but it made me feel good to be able to share my God-given gift, even if my blood didn't save a life. I am disappointed that I had to stop donating blood, but now I have found another opportunity to share and maybe save another life or prevent an illness. Last January I received my first Covid-19 vaccine and the 2nd one in February. Now I have been vaccinated, but I'm wearing a mask when I am out because I found out I can be a carrier, causing someone else to catch the Covid-19. I hope I am treating others as I hope they are treating me. May I never cause my sister or brother to stumble in any way, including health.

Allow me to share a devotional written by my good friend, George Sedberry, retired United Methodist preacher, that I read in a post by Prof. Ed Williams.

Are we looking in the wrong direction?

Mark Twain once described the day he rushed to the top of Pike's Peak to see the sunrise. He said, "I got there on time, but I missed it because I was looking in the wrong direction!" Looking in the wrong direction can have eternal significance too. This is precisely what the story in Exodus 14 shares with the reader. It is about how people see things differently, even when they are confronted with the same situation. It reminds me very much of how our society is today! The people of Israel have made camp near the Red Sea. They are filled with joy. This is a historic moment for them. This is their exodus, their deliverance, their salvation. After being in bondage slavery for those many years, now they are free. But suddenly their beautiful dream becomes a ghastly nightmare. They run and look around and they see at a distance the dust being caused by Pharaoh's mighty army. The people of Israel see doom. They see themselves trapped, pinned in, caught. They see their situation as hopeless because they are looking in the wrong direction. On the other hand, Moses sees it quite differently. He turns his face toward God and sees an exciting, amazing, and incredible new possibility. NOTICE: Moses does not look to the past; he looks to the future! He does not look backward; he looks forward. He does not look at the strength of Pharaoh; He looks at the power of God. Because of what he sees, Moses was able to say to the people with confidence, "Do not be afraid, stand firm, and see the deliverance the Lord will accomplish for you today." (Exodus 14:13-14). But the story in Exodus 14 also raises a crucial question for you and me. It is, ARE WE LOOKING IN THE WRONG DIRECTION? Are we facing the wrong direction? Are we looking at our situations through the lens of fear or with the eyes of faith?

I never dreamed that the pandemic would last so long and cause so many problems of every kind! Wesley Heirs canceled our 2020 Fall and 2021 Spring gatherings at Blue Lake out of an abundance of caution. The Fall 2021 gathering was being planned to be held at Westminster Village in Spanish Fort, Alabama where some 20-30 retirees and spouses gather monthly for lunch. This is a larger group than has made it to Blue Lake the last couple of times we have met there. But alas, a new variant has reared its ugly head, and a bigger surge is under way. The Executive Committee has postponed our gathering until Spring 2022. I am concerned about the large number of memorials we will be observing. To all those who have retired at the last 2 or 3 annual conferences, please come join the Wesley Heirs for retired clergy and spouses who served and/or live within the bounds of the AWFUMC Annual Conference. I have found during the last 11 years that Wesley Heirs is truly one of the many of God's blessings that He has bestowed upon me. I feel I would be amiss if I didn't invite and urge you to avail yourself of this blessing.

Put March 15-16, 2022 on your calendar now in the hopes we will be able to gather again! Until then, please join me in staying safe and treating everyone as a much-loved sister and brother!

Mark Stewart, President

Quick links

[Executive Board \(2020\).pdf](#)
[Wesley Heirs Facebook Page](#)

Thoughts on Wesley Heirs

Rev. Bill Hust made one more trip to MORGANS CHAPEL, located in Bon Secour, in south Baldwin County. This was his request as told by his wife, Judy. The speakers at his service expressed kind words of service by Bill, helping any one in need that he knew about, and always willing to help you as long as he was physically able. The community will miss Bill; his kind of Christian service doesn't grow on trees. Wesley Heirs will also miss his presence. He always attended with Judy, who accompanied us on the piano until she had to stop to care for Bill.

Like many who have gone before us, our founders (Rev. Ray Whatley, Rev. Arthur and Mable Carlton), and others (Rev. Charles Walker, Rev. Doug and Nelda Williams, and the list goes on) have made contributions to the Wesley Heirs with their ministry. We have a great heritage to continue in the AWFUMC. Not only do we meet for fellowship, but also to share memories and have fun. Nelda Williams and Ann Calhoun were always ready to teach you a board game. We have always appreciated updates in our conference, and pertinent information about our health and our finances. Our pastors have preached the Gospel as well as lived a life of service. Wesley Heirs has been able to make generous offerings in the past to Dumas Wesley Center who sponsors Blue Lake Summer Camp for children in the inner city of Mobile and Sunshine Camp for adults with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities. Each of us are preaching a sermon with our daily lives. Some of us publish books, like Rev. Karl Stegall and others. Some of us have become artists, like Rev. Marcus Smith. God has blessed each of us with spiritual gifts and talents. May we continue to use them for HIS Glory and depend on His Power and daily strength to live in this world. We can claim Jesus, when He says, NO FEAR; depend on ME. He is always Faithful. AMEN.

A Note From The Editor

The AWFUMC Wesley Heirs has had a bi-annual newsletter for many years, always preceding the bi-annual retreat. The last newsletter was Spring 2020, a year and a half ago. Much has changed in the past year and a half. The Wesley Heirs have had to postpone the Fall 2020, Spring 2021, and Fall 2021 retreats. We are planning to meet March 15-16, 2022 for our Spring 2022 retreat. In this newsletter you will see a tribute and a memorial to those that have gone on before us this past year and a half. The list is extensive, and the lives lost will be memorialized at our Spring 2022 retreat. There are also articles from the new Executive Director at Blue Lake Methodist Camp, Patric Newton and one from Tony Soper about the lunch group that meets at Westminster Village in Spanish Fort, Alabama. I look forward to our next meeting March 15-16, 2022!

Julia Fitzpatrick, Wesley Heirs Newsletter Editor

Lunch at Westminster Village

We were living in Fairhope, AL about 7 years ago when we were invited to join a retired Methodist minister's lunch group called "The Birthday Bash". At that time, Rev. Bill Calhoun organized the group that met at a restaurant selected by those celebrating an anniversary or birthday. We felt so fortunate to be part of a group who loved each other and who loved serving the Lord.

About 5 years ago a member of our group, Rev. Langdon and Billy Garrison, moved to Westminster Village. When it was their turn to choose where we would eat, Langdon made arrangements with Westminster Village for our group to come here totally complementary. The next year Rev. Carl and Ruth Herndon moved here. The following year Marguerite and I moved here. The Fall of 2020 Monette Walker moved in. Our group enjoyed Westminster so much that it is now our permanent meeting place. We are now looking forward to hosting our Wesley Heirs Retreat on March 15-16, 2022. Many members in the group are from our conference. There are several members, including myself, who served in other conferences, but who now live in the area. A couple of local ministers and District Superintendents visit with us from time to time. If you no longer drive or do not travel solo, your friend/driver is welcome to enjoy lunch with us. Our list of invitees needs to be expanded as there are many new retirees throughout our conference that might enjoy attending. Please e-mail me at revtony2@gmail.com, if you would like to get a reminder or if you simply want to confirm your attendance. Our dining room staff need to know approximately how many will be attending.

We meet on the third Tuesday of every month at 11:30 at Westminster Village, 500 Spanish Fort Blvd., Spanish Fort, AL. The meal will be delicious. You only need to bring your appetite and your COVID vaccination card. There will be a blessing and fellowship. There will be no promotions by Westminster. The microphone will be made available to those who would like to share prayer requests or praise reports. Our goal is that you receive a blessing by being a part of our group. We encourage you to either attend our group or begin a group of your own.

Grace and peace, Rev. Tony Soper

Wesley Heirs Executive Board

President: Mark Stewart
(615) 319-4962; austew@aol.com
Co-President: Monette Walker
(850) 865-8101; monette_charles@yahoo.com
Secretary: Bonnie Chandler
(251) 564-7244; mbchandler@frontiernet.net
Treasurers: Seth W. & Sally Granberry, Jr.
(334) 559-5290; swgranberry@hotmail.com
Registrars: Curtis & Dianne Smith
(251) 675-7835; curtisanddianne@gmail.com
Sunshine Camp: Betty Blackwell
(334) 410-0619; Blackwell0619@gmail.com
Communications Director: Julia Fitzpatrick
(281) 635-6548; WesleyHeirs@gmail.com
Music Director: Julia Fitzpatrick
(281) 635-6548; jazzyj.fitz@gmail.com
Accompanist: Glenda Bryan
(334) 702-4275; (334) 701-7265 (cell)
Harpist: Janean McCawley
(251) 454-3203; janean.mccawley@gmail.com
Past Presidents: Jim & Bobbie Dannelly
(334) 584-7514; jpdcd@yahoo.com

Treasurer's Report

Bank Balance at ending of Spring 2020 meeting	\$1,439.26
Deposits from Registration & Offering	1,888.00
TOTAL	\$3,327.26
Disbursements:	
Blue Lake assembly for fall registration	\$250.00
"Church Ladies" Honorarium (program)	150.00
Harland Clarke Check/Acc (new checks)	36.91
Blue Lake United Methodist Assembly	1,386.50
TOTAL	\$1,503.85

SAVE THESE DATES

Annual Conference
Wesley Heirs Luncheon
– Rev. Jim Dannelly

SPRING 2022 RETREAT
MARCH 15-16

A Note From Blue Lake

Greetings! My name is Patric, and I am the new Executive Director at Blue Lake. I was on staff here from 2008-2012 as Program Director so you may remember me from back then. I am originally from Indiana, where my father is a United Methodist pastor and where I first experienced camp at the age of 4. That first summer began a part of my story in which camp changed everything for me in a variety of ways. Eventually, I would hear my call to ministry at camp and answer that call by dedicating my life to serve in Camp and Retreat Ministries. It is a blessing to be back home at Blue Lake with my family. I met my wife, Brianne, at Blue Lake and we have been married for 11 years. We have a four-year-old daughter named Beatrice, our next little one due late October. I can't think of a better place to raise a family. My first couple of months at Blue Lake have been full of listening, learning, and reconnecting to this special place. As you are aware, this has been a challenging time in the life of Blue Lake, yet there are so many things to celebrate. I want to share with you just some of the exciting things that I have learned and that we are celebrating here at camp.

2020 Financial Support

Incredible support enabled Blue Lake to keep its doors open and endure a moment in time that was devastating for so many. In 2020, generous donations of over \$200,000 supported essential operations and kept our doors open.

Strategic Assessment and Planning

During the past year our Board, Staff, and Conference Leadership began work on developing strategic plans for the future of Blue Lake. An initial evaluation and assessment have been completed and teams are working to implement the key pieces of this strategic plan.

Storm Damage Support

This Spring we had significant storm damage across the site. We faced an insurance deductible of \$70,000 which in a normal year is a substantial unexpected expense. On the heels of the pandemic year, it felt insurmountable. Word of our need went out and once again the generosity of our community enabled us to fully cover our storm damage expenses.

The pandemic is not over, and we are still navigating cancellations, less groups, and less guests. The support of the Blue Lake community continues to allow us to keep our head afloat in the challenging waters we find ourselves in. The blessings we continue to receive fill us with gratitude as we consider the present and look to the future with hope. God is not done with Blue Lake. Lives are still being changed, disciples are still being made, and the world is being transformed through God's ministry here. Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to the day that Wesley Heirs can return to Blue Lake in person!

Blessings,

Patric Newton, Executive Director
director@bluelakecamp.com

Lord, They Went Home

In memoriam to Clergy and Spouses 2020-2021, AWFUMC

Many of us remember Rev. Bill Hinson, who was a faithful pastor in our United Methodist Church. Upon his death, requested the phrase, “*Lord, He went*” be put on his tombstone. Having known a good number of both clergy and their spouses, I want to borrow that phrase and entitle this message, “*Lord, they went home*”.

Will you join me in thinking first about the spouses of our friends. Like clergy, it takes a special calling to be a minister’s spouse because of the demands often made upon them. Demands like living in a church-owned parsonage with both unspoken and spoken expectations; participation in every church event; raising children with no rough edges and, of course, always being happy about the next move, even if a child is a sixth grader or senior in high school! Surely, they are to help in the nursery, sing in the choir, volunteer for VBS, and host the visiting evangelist. Vacations are cut short because of some need (“crises”) back at the church, and the 1,000 other ways they support their spouses’ ministry.

Both a song and a scripture come to mind as I ponder the lives of these wonderful partners in ministry. The song by Bette Midler, “*The Wind Beneath My Wings*” has these words: “I want you to know the truth. Of course, I know it, I would be nothing without you! Did you ever know that you’re my hero, and ev’rything I would like to be? I can fly higher than an eagle, ‘cause you are the wind beneath my wings”. The scripture is from Jesus: “And everyone that hath forsaken houses or brethren or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or land, for My name’s sake, shall receive a hundredfold and shall inherit everlasting life.” (Matthew 19:29) So, Lord Jesus, thank you because they went!

Now, to those clergy friends who have gone on to the Father’s house. With the call of Jesus upon their lives, they sought to faithfully proclaim the Good News wherever they were sent, small county seat towns or First churches. Their desire was to help people on their journey of faith. Yes, to care for those whom God gives often demands more than they were able to provide; that’ when they knew the Holy Spirit was truly the Helper. They were truly shepherds under the guidance of the Great Shepherd. Did things always turn out for the best? No, but that’s when God’s grace is sufficient to meet all those situations, and so, as our friends pressed on! Like the Apostle Paul, they didn’t claim perfection, but pressed on toward that high calling in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:12). Yes, in reminiscing, they would often say, “I would do things differently this time” but they also knew that the Omniscient God would redeem even those shortcomings of the past! Their goal, it seemed to me, was always in taking those eternal truths of scripture and helping people apply them to their daily lives.

The peace, joy and forgiveness Jesus brought as a result of that faithful preaching of the Word is written in Heaven. Only our Heavenly Father knows how many lives were impacted for the Gospel, both now living and those who have gone before us. Their goal of ministry was the mission of the church – to make disciples of Jesus Christ and to that high calling, they lived out their lives.

To God be the glory for these that answered the call to “follow Christ”. Yes, they went home!
Rev. Jim Fillingim, Pastor Emeritus, Daphne United Methodist Church

What religion do I preach? The religion of love; the law of kindness brought to light by the gospel. What is this good for? To make all who receive it enjoy God and themselves: To make them like God; lovers of all; contented in their lives; and crying out at their death, in calm assurance, ‘O grave, where is thy victory! Thanks be unto God, who giveth me the victory, through my Lord Jesus Christ.’

– John Wesley

We Remember

Betty K. Hendricks (Ralph)	August 27, 2021	Betty H. Hall (Billy)	October 22, 2020
Rev. Gary R. Perry, RE	August 19, 2021	June M. Enfinger (Floyd)	October 11, 2020
Rev. William "Bill" N. Hust, RA	August 11, 2021	Rev. Albert Roy Hunt, Jr., RE	September 28, 2020
Mr. Senta "Dee" Stevenson (Cheryl)	August 1, 2021	Rev. Rual W. Morris, RE	September 28, 2020
Brenda C. King (John)	July 25, 2021	Nancy W. Wingard (Bob)	September 8, 2020
Rev. Johnny W. Johnson, Jr.	July 3, 2021	Margaret L. McDonald (Hugh)	September 2, 2020
Alvalene J. "Ivey" Reynolds (Jack)	June 13, 2021	Rev. G. Ronald Williams, SY	August 29, 2020
Jean S. Sublette (Roy)	June 12, 2021	Rev. Charles G. Sanders, PL	August 27, 2020
Betty Jean Grice (Bobby)	May 31, 2021	Rev. Dr. Ervin Dailey, RE	August 16, 2020
Margaret R. Greenhill (Ernest)	May 30, 2021	Rev. Kenneth L. Jacobs, RA	August 15, 2020
Rev. George W. Gilbert, RE	May 20, 2021	Elizabeth "Becky" Bell, (Jim)	August 4, 2020
Mr. Jimmy Smith (Remonia)	May 19, 2021	James E. Howard, RL	August 4, 2020
Rev. Robert W. "Bob" Brown, RL	May 15, 2021	Jane W. Patterson (Rick)	July 30, 2020
Sandy L. Calvert (Bob)	May 14, 2021	Virginia O. Satterwhite (Charles)	July 18, 2020
Mary Ann M. Pickard (William)	April 20, 2021	Charles W. Avery, RE	July 6, 2020
Rev. Ronald T. Lee	April 11, 2021	Joilyn "Joy" Tanton (Jerry)	July 5, 2020
Vann S. Smith (Marcus)	February 19, 2021	Betsy R. Newton (Lawrence)	June 26, 2020
Rev. Dr. Thomas L. Butts, RE	February 15, 2021	Robert A. Calvert, Jr. RP	June 25, 2020
James E. Barefoot (Rita)	February 14, 2021	John F. Sawyer, RL	June 18, 2020
Rev. Roy T. Sublette, RE	January 31, 2021	R. Daniel Nixon, RE	May 28, 2020
Annella Trobaugh Smith (Johnny)	January 22, 2021	Marilyn Jordan (Coyt)	May 16, 2020
Rev. James W. "Jim" Bell, HR	January 20, 2021	Ann D. Gamblin (Roy)	May 5, 2020
Rev. Dr. Jerry M. Dooling, RE	January 1, 2021	J. Clark Wilburn (Anita)	May 2, 2020
Rev. Freddie L. McCain, RL	December 19, 2020	Rebecca Harper, PL	April 23, 2020
Louise Eudene "Dean" Albritton (Walter)	December 16, 2020	Rev. James L. Farrow, Jr., RE	March 28, 2020
Rev. J. Walter Ellisor, RE	December 6, 2020	Rev. Linwood A. Lewis, RE	March 1, 2020
Rev. Ray E. Whatley, RE	December 3, 2020	Rev. George W. McClure, RE	February 29, 2020
Rev. Ben R. McKee, RL	November 4, 2020	Betty T. Gaddis (Coy)	February 14, 2020
Jennifer B. Brown (Robert)	November 5, 2020	Rev. Dr. J. Douglas Williams, RE	February 5, 2020