“Sailing Against the Wind”

There are times in the life of the church when the most important thing we can do is remember, reclaim, and live into our foundational principles. Times of rapid cultural change swirl around the church and like a ship at sea tossed by the waves of a tempest the church is in jeopardy of sinking or being torn asunder.

Latching onto the latest church fad that mimics popular culture is like a ship that abandons its course when the winds are against it and goes in any direction the wind blows it. This tactic erases any trace of distinctiveness the church has from the surrounding culture and it becomes lost at sea.

But seasoned sailors know how to sail against the wind. A sailor intent upon traveling toward a point exactly in line with the direction of the wind will zig zag back and forth to reach the target. Using this “tacking” technique and traveling at an angle as close to the wind’s direction as possible, sailors can reach a point in any direction, regardless of the direction of wind. Remembering, reclaiming, and living into the foundational principles of church is sailing against the wind in the direction of God’s call and purpose for the church.

What are the foundational principles of the church that set us on course no matter what culture throws at us? Certainly, the entire Bible contains these principles. Our familiarity with the Bible should grow over time. However, knowing the Ten Commandments, Psalm 23, The Lord’s Prayer, the Apostles’ Creed, and other Biblical and historical texts gives Christians essential tools for stabilizing our ship and setting our sails to combat any storm. These texts are at the very heart of the identity of the church. The church must be able to adapt to relate to radically different and ever-changing cultures without losing our identity.

As the early church spread from Jerusalem, it adapted to relate to cultures of the people who received and believed the Gospel. The Apostle Paul said, “I have become all things to all people that I might by all means save some” (1 Corinthians 9:22). He did not adopt their sin or idol worship but discovered experiences that were common to the people and related the Gospel message to them. Although the same Gospel was preached in Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople (Istanbul) and Rome, worship styles differed in all those places. The early church councils, beginning with the Jerusalem Council of Acts 15, imposed no greater limitations on the churches in those various cultures than necessary. Yet, an essential identity had to be named and maintained.

The Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D. affirmed belief in God as Trinity and the humanity and divinity of Christ and named the Marks of the Church. They are recorded in the Nicene Creed. No matter what culture the Gospel relates to, no matter what worship style it has, the Church is One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. Regardless of our age, gender, race, social class, nationality, political party, or football team, we are members of the One Church which belongs to Christ; we are to keep the church Holy as Christ is Holy; Catholic (i.e., universal) so all from every culture are welcome here; and Apostolic, true to the teachings of the Apostles as found in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. These are the foundational principles of the church passed down through the generations. When storms come, we sail against the wind by claiming and living into these principles.

Yours in Christ, 

Hughey

“Season Four at the Urban Acre Community Garden”

Work will begin soon at The Urban Acre Community Garden, a garden begun and maintained by Decatur First United Methodist Church. When the ground dries adequately we will break the soil, hopefully by the first of April. This year we plan to cover the entire garden area with landscape fabric and lay soaker hoses on every row. This will cut the landscape fabric just enough to plant our seeds and set our plants. Thanks to the generous donations of plants we receive from Bonnie Plants and seed from Cawaco Resource, Conservation & Development Council, we will have plenty of cool season plants to get into the ground in early April and warm season plants and seeds to set out and plant in late April.

The 2019 garden season is going to be the best yet for The Urban Acre, as long as we have a sufficient number of volunteers to help. Weeding will be minimal this year because the landscape fabric will inhibit the growth of unwanted plants. Here are the gardening opportunities you have:

- We need gardeners in the next two weeks to help prepare the garden by rolling out and securing the landscape fabric and laying the soaker hoses on top of it. No expertise needed, just willing hands and a good sense of humor.
- We need gardeners to help plant the seeds and set out plants. Again, no expertise needed, just an ability to bend or kneel, a knife or box blade, and at least one clean joke to tell to entertain other gardeners.
- We need the largest group of gardeners yet to plant summer crops on Good Friday, weather permitting. No expertise needed, just bring a knife or box blade, gloves, sunscreen, and a brimmed hat to protect your ears, and water.
- We need gardeners who will turn the water system on and off one day a week each - if we ever do have another week without abundant rain.
- We need gardeners who will sign up to harvest one day and deliver vegetables and fruit to a community agency one day a week beginning in mid-June.

All of this work will make for a wonderful garden with the Lord’s Blessing. We will pray that this garden glorifies God as we partner with God to grow food to feed our neighbors in need this year.
Church Prayer List March 20

Please fill out a prayer card found in the pew pockets or email your prayer requests to aquinn@decaturfumc.org for publication in the next newsletter.

The Vickery/Pylant Family on the death of Mary Love Eyster
Death of Adria Singletary, Alexia Claborn’s aunt
Matthew Moon, 3 years old, brain surgery
Charlie Gross, neck & spine surgery recovery
Christchurch mosque shootings
George McCrary
Laverne Armstrong Sharron Cook
Death of Yvonne Michaels
Van Windsor Jane Blake
Susan Baughn Ed Taylor
Ruth Beasley Carolyn Taylor
Gary White Nita Lawrence
Libby Sims Patrick, daughter of Bill and Betty Sims
Lisa Sims Wallace, daughter of Bill and Betty Sims
Billie McLeod Marilyn Todd, brain tumor
Jeff Crosswhite Bill & Bettye Dennis
Kerry Hawkins, cancer Martha & Robert Long
Bob & Mary Alice Johnson (friends & neighbors of Mary Jane Sasser. Bob has Lymphoma.)
Brantley Motes Deborah Stewart
Eston Lovingood Emmy Whatley
Joanne Wheat Alice Ackley
Maryanne Robbin, cancer Judy Coon
LaVerne Dollahite Dot and Burl Oliver
Ronald Matthews Marian Sittason

Greeter/ Guest Services Training
If you have signed up to be part of the new greeter team, there will be training held on the following dates in the Courtyard Conference Room.
Email Patrick at pfinley@decaturfumc.org to sign up for one of the dates.

Sunday, March 24th at 11:15 AM
Wednesday, March 27th at 5:30 PM

Additionally, if you have not signed up but are interested in serving, please email Patrick.

Fifth Sunday Fellowship Meal March 31
- March 31 at 11:15 a.m.
- Fellowship Hall

The Hospitality and Kitchen Teams at DFUMC are organizing a Fifth Sunday Covered Dish Fellowship meal to follow the 10:00 worship service on March 31. Mark your calendars and take this opportunity to enjoy good food and conversation in a relaxed atmosphere with folks you only know from worship and those you have not previously met. Please bring a covered dish with you (that is large enough to feed 8-10 people) to the Church Kitchen by 10:00 a.m. on the morning of the 31st. The church will provide the meat, drinks, dessert, and rolls.

We had hoped to have the Grace United band lead worship in the fellowship hall prior to the meal that day. Since we have only a small remnant of the original band available, we will hold the traditional service in the sanctuary at 10:00 a.m. before the meal.

Trip for Hilltoppers
Tuesday, March 26 / American Village at Montevallo, AL
We will leave church at 8:30 a.m. and travel to the American Village for a guided tour. You will need money for lunch, $5.00 for tour and $4.00 for fuel. Sign-up sheets will be available soon!
Web site: www.americanvillage.org

Children’s Ministry Director Position
As you are aware, Alexia Claborn is transitioning out of the role of part-time Children’s Director to work full-time in the private sector. The SPRC is accepting applications for a part-time Director of Children’s Ministry. We are seeking an enthusiastic Christian who is thorough and versatile. We want to hire a self starter who is able to develop and carryout creative children’s ministries. If you know of someone who may be interested, a complete job description is available in the church office.
Sunday Morning Volunteers

Volunteers for Sunday, March 24
Sunday School 9:00am
Preschool Room #215– Calley Ondocsin
K-5th Room #209– Dell Ward & Barbara Ashwander

Children’s Church
10:00 Service Teachers– Calley Ondocsin & Vickie Earwood

Volunteers for Sunday, March 31
Sunday School 9:00am
Preschool Room #215– Leigh Ann Blankenship
K-5th Room #209– Katie Caldwell & Claudia Blake

Children’s Church
10:00 Service Teachers– Alexia Claborn & Molly Ferrell

FUMC Easter Egg Hunt
Please join us on Sunday,
April 14th
3:00 - 4:30 p.m.
at
The Buckner Farm
4411 Day Rd SW, Decatur, AL

We will have light refreshments and treats. We would for you to bring family and friends.
If we have rain we will have it at the church. We will announce rain change in church that morning and by social media: www.facebook.com/DecaturFirstUMC
Please bring 12 filled Easter Eggs per child that will be hunting eggs. Place them in the green tub outside of the Fellowship Hall by April 10th.

Wanted: volunteers who like to have a roaring good time! Our VBS dates for 2019 will be June 10-13, with registration opening in March. It takes a LOT of work to pull off VBS each year, so a lot of volunteers are needed! If you’re interested in roaring with us, contact Bailey Copeland (baileygcopeland@gmail.com) or Carrie Hart (carrglenn@aol.com).

Acolyte Schedule
March 24 Nelson Earley & Mary Emma Harper
March 17 Hunter & John Benton Claborn

First Fellowship Kids
We are learning about Super Heroes of the New and Old Testament! Please join us on Wednesday nights as we travel through the Bible to meet Super Heroes that get their super powers from God!
Children’s Choir 6:00- 6:25
Super Hero Lesson 6:25- 7:00

Volunteers
We are looking for Sunday School Teachers / Assistants, Children’s Church Teachers / Assistants and First Fellowship Volunteers. Please contact Alexia if you are able to volunteer in any of these areas. The best way to contact me is by email, text or call at the following. aclaborn@decaturfumc.org and cell 256-606-8646.
**Youth Ministry News**

**Confirmation**

It’s Confirmation time! Confirmation classes this year will start with a retreat on March 29-30 here at the church. Confirmation Sunday will be May 12th, on Mother’s Day! Contact Jonathan at 662-736-0930 with any questions.

**Summer Plans**

We have changed our summer plans. Instead of the beach, we will be going to a Mission Camp from July 8-12, 2019 based at Birmingham-Southern College!

This Summer, Ignite Students are headed to the mission field! This incredible week will include mission projects, amazing worship, a greater connection with Christ, and of course, lots of fun! This camp is open for all students going into 6th grade and graduating 12th grade. A deposit of $180 will be due by March 24th and can be paid in installments.

Camp Pastor: Hunter Gregg  
Worship Leader: Chuck Hooten  
Camp Pastor: Adam Robinson

**Flower Dedications**

We have several dates available for Sunday Flower Dedications. Please contact the church office or send an email to aquinn@decaturfumc.org for more information.

**Minister of Youth**

Jonathan Creekmore  
(662)736-0930  
youth@decaturfumc.org

**Find Us On Social Media**

“Like” us on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/DecaturFUMCYouth

**Summer Plans**

We have changed our summer plans. Instead of the beach, we will be going to a Mission Camp from July 8-12, 2019 based at Birmingham-Southern College!
Wednesday Night First Fellowship

Our meal starts at 5:00 p.m. On Wed., March 27, we will enjoy Meatloaf, Mashed Potatoes with Gravy, Vegetable TBA, Rolls, Salad Bar, Dessert TBA.

No reservations required! Meal Price: $7.00 for ages 11 and up, $2.00 for ages 3-10, Kids 2 & under eat free, $18.00 Family max, $6.00 salad bar, $7.00 takeout

Money Desk for March 27 is Jim King and Bert Pippen and Cleanup will be Diane & Billy Hudson and Vicki & Ronnie Dukes

"The Holy Land" Led by Mark Heard (Room 351) Jan. 9th - April 10th The relationship of the two great commandments with the who, what, when and where of the Holy Land including the practical applications of the sites of Jesus' teachings

Two Steps Forward led by Lisa Earley (Room 354) will start on Feb. 6th - April 10th. How does your own spiritual journey in the midst of struggles? This book study will look at the lives of four women and how their spiritual journey unfolded and hope developed. Everyone is welcome. The book can be found on Amazon for $13.00.

Women's Study: It's Not Supposed to Be This Way Led by Weety Vickery (Room 352) January 9 - April 10th Find unexpected strength when disappointments leave you shattered. This book is written by Lisa Terkeurst. All ages are welcome and the book can be found on Amazon for $13.00.

Lenten Study: Led by Rev. Hughey Reynolds (Minister's Conference Room) March 13th - April 10th Six-week Lenten Study of the book "Forgiveness" by Marjorie J. Thompson

Children’s Choir will be at 6:00 for all ages. From 6:25 - 7:00, preschool will have class in Room 215 and elementary age will have class in Room 306. Youth will start at 6:00 p.m. and Adult Choir Practice will be at 6:30.

Mark Your Calendars - Holy Week Services

Lenten Lunches 12:00 noon On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of Holy Week we will again have noon worship experiences. Following the service, at 12:30, our United Methodist Women will have lunch available in the Fellowship Hall. No reservations are necessary for the lunch, but a donation of $5.00 a person is requested.

Monday, April 15 - Our preacher on Monday of Holy Week will be the Rev. Keith Beatty, Wesley Memorial UMC

Tuesday, April 16 - Our preacher on Tuesday of Holy Week will be the Rev. Fred Webster, Central UMC.

Wed., April 17 - Our preacher on Wednesday of Holy Week will be the Rev. Amy Howard, The Church at Stone River

Maundy Thursday Holy Communion, April 18 - 6:30 p.m. Childcare will be available.

Good Friday, April 19 – Tenebrae - 6:30 p.m. Childcare will be available.

Easter Sunday, April 21 - 8:00 and 10:00 a.m. (Two Services)
Upcoming Events

Sunday, March 24, 5:30 p.m.
Ignite Youth Go to Movies

Tuesday, March 26, leave church at 8:30 a.m.
American Village at Montevallo, AL

Wednesday, March 27, 5:00 p.m.
First Fellowship Meal and Classes

Wednesday, March 27, 6:30 p.m.
Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, March 28, 6:30 a.m.
UMM Bible Study - Courtyard Conf. Room

Thursday, March 28, 8:00 a.m.
UMM Breakfast at City Cafe

Thursday, March 28, 1:00 p.m.
First Friends, Room 250

March 29-30
Confirmation Retreat here at church

Upcoming Sunday Worship Services

PURPOSE STATEMENT:
“Discipling our church to cultivate a legacy of Gospel-inspired servant leadership”

MISSION STATEMENT:
“Making Disciples of Jesus Christ who become servant leaders for the transformation of our church, our homes, our city, state, nation, and world.”

Sunday, March 24
Rev. Hughey Reynolds preaching
10:00 a.m. - Traditional Service, Sanctuary
“Both Tree and Gardener Are Known by Their Fruit”

Sunday, March 31
Rev. Hughey Reynolds preaching
10:00 a.m. - Traditional Service, Sanctuary
“Return to Sender”
Luke 15: 1-32

Scheduled To Serve March 24
Acolytes:
10:00 - Nelson Earley & Mary Emma Harper

Ushers:
10:00 a.m. - Bert Pippen, Kin Copeland, Sage Copeland, Jimmy Sykes, Stephen Brown

Wednesday Night
First Fellowship

Our meal starts at 5:00 p.m. On Wed., March 27, we will enjoy Meatloaf, Mashed Potatoes with Gravy, Vegetable TBA, Rolls, Salad Bar, Dessert TBA.

No reservations required! Meal Price: $7.00 for ages 11 and up, $2.00 for ages 3-10, Kids 2 & under eat free, $18.00 Family max, $6.00 salad bar, $7.00 takeout

Money Desk for March 27 is Jim King and Bert Pippen and Cleanup will be Diane & Billy Hudson and Vicki & Ronnie Dukes