



THE FLAME

First United Methodist Church, LaGrange, GA

Christians . . . SERVING, CARING, & SHARING

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER IS HERE!

"...And the gospel must first be published to all nations..." (Mark 13:10, KJV)

For over 2000 years, Christians have sought to find effective ways to communicate the "good news" of the gospel with those around them. In the earliest days this took the form of in-person, word of mouth communication to and with individuals and groups. But even in these early days, there was always a need to communicate to those who were not directly present. That's why early evangelists like Paul and Peter wrote letters to express their thoughts and feelings to Christians in churches and places far away -- the "Epistles" of our New Testament (books like Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, 1 and 2 Peter) are all examples of this kind of communication.

Much later, Christians in the Middle Ages used stained glass windows in cathedrals to communicate Bible and church stories, ideas, and theology to multitudes who were illiterate. With the Renaissance, however, came a resurgence of literacy, along with the invention of the printing press, allowing for the mass publication of papers, books, and tracts to share news of the gospel. Along with the printing of scripture, churches soon also started printing news of what God was doing in their midst -- printed congregational announcements, if you will. By the 20th-century, these "announcement bulletins" morphed into what we today call church "newsletters" to let folks know what was going on in the life of a congregation. And now, nearly twenty years into the 21st-century, many are experiencing the next stage in this story of gospel and church communication: **electronic communication, including online and emailed e-newsletters.**

Most of you probably already know that starting with this issue, our church's *Flame* newsletter will only be printed and mailed once per month, and that during the interim of each month, we will increasingly do more communication electronically.

We're not doing this to leave anyone out -- we know that there is a significant number of members who either are not online at all, or who still prefer to receive printed content from the church via snail mail, so we'll still have print copies available and mailed out. However, we also recognize that the majority of people today have the capability of receiving information online and/or via email. We will be adding email addresses to our current e-distribution list, as well as encouraging you to sign up to receive the *Flame* electronically. To do this, visit our church's website [<http://www.lagrangefumc.org>] and click on the red "Sign Up for Email Updates" box at the bottom right of the homepage.

This change not only reflects how most of our culture now processes information, but it allows us as a church to be better stewards of our resources: be more efficient from a resources standpoint. More importantly, it will help us "get the word out" more quickly, and allow us to provide more information than before. For example, in addition to the current content, we'll have new monthly church calendars, regular column articles from ministry areas that we've not had regular columns from before, and other new items.

While we won't be adding weekly e-updates at this time (we don't want to junk up your email box!), be on the lookout for occasional emails during the month when there is important information we want to communicate with you about church activities and/or opportunities.

We pray that this new monthly format with occasional emailed updates will help you stay better connected with the work of Christ here at LaGrange First UMC as we go about fulfilling our mission of being "*Christians... SERVING in love, CARING with compassion, and SHARING with boldness.*"

For questions, comments, or suggestions about this transition, contact our Administrative Assistant, Dodie Patterson at churchoffice@lagrangefumc.org or call her at the church office. In the meantime, we pray that you will enjoy this new way to keep in touch with the work of God through our church!

And remember, God loves you and I do too!

Pastor Brian



God Gave YOU Spiritual Gifts

Uncover your Spiritual Gifts in this 4-week Lenten Study
February 25th and March 4th, 11th, and 18th
2:15 PM to 4:30 PM
Cost is \$18 per person
Led by Pat Gilbert and Pastor Brian

Explore these questions and more
Why Am I Unique?
What Spiritual Gifts Did God Give Me?
What Am I To Do With My Gifts?

To register return this completed form to the Church Office or
email churchoffice@lagrangefumc.org by February 5, 2018.

I am interested in participating in this spiritual adventure.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____



Children's Ministry

Jeanne Jones, Director, jeanne@lagrangefumc.

The children at FUMC need YOU! Can you give one hour just a few times a year? We are looking for people to join our team of children's Sunday School teachers. We have been using a rotation model so that no one person feels overwhelmed. Please prayerfully consider this opportunity and send Jeanne an email.

Let's have lunch! In January I'd like to start having lunch with your child at school. Jesus spent a lot of time teaching and building relationships over a meal. I'd like to bring a "special" lunch to your child at school. In the next several months I will be calling or emailing you to see if we can schedule a time.

Children's Events for January

January 10 - Wednesday Night Program Resumes

January 21 - Family Worship Sunday

January 28 - 3-5 p.m. Sunday school Teacher Training

Worship Committee 2017 Review

The FUMC Worship Committee had a productive year, meeting eight times in 2017, approving several expenditures including: sermon developing software, a large screen TV and cart for occasional use in the sanctuary, Easter and Advent activity material, and providing guest speakers. The Lenten Devotional book was another activity.

The Committee also reactivated the Morning Glory Task Force to review the format and make recommendations to revitalize that worship service. The Task Force met every other week for 3 months, reviewing the latest literature on contemporary services, discussing our own membership and community needs, and preparing recommendations for change to present to the congregation. The Bridge was born from much thought, prayer, and support of many church members; and the Morning Glory service was gracefully retired. The Bridge service meets at 10:55 Sunday mornings in the fellowship hall with music played by a band, prayer, and welcome; all lead by members of the congregation. Pastors Brian and Blake deliver sermons on a monthly rotation.

The purpose of the Worship Committee is to coordinate and support ministries for worship planned by others. Input about our Worship services is always welcome at worship@lagrangefumc.org. We will look for you in worship.

Bonnie Norrick, Chairperson

Thursday Lunch Club, February 1st 12 Noon, Fellowship Hall

featuring



The Valdez Brothers

For reservations for the meal & program, call or email the church at 706-884-4635 or churchoffice@lagrangefumc.org. Cost is \$6 per person. All are welcome!



Soup for Sale

Sunday, February 5th, \$6 per Quart

9:45am till sold out (No pre-orders)

****Pick up in the Small Dining Room****

Soup Choices Available

Potato Vegetable Beef White Chicken Chili
Mexican Chicken Corn Chowder
Creamy Chicken and Rice

The Altar Guild —Dedicated to Glorifying God in our Worship Areas

It has been a busy year for the Altar Guild! Participating in our mission gives fuller meaning to our personal worship. Our hope is to translate this personal engagement to every visitor and member of the church through both the visible and behind-the-scenes services we provide.

- The Altar Guild provides wedding and funeral coordination and planning by helping the families involved and upholding the sacred character of these special events.
- They maintain the worship areas, pew rack supplies, and candle oil, and decorations for important holidays.
- They train and schedule our acolytes and visit the home-bound with gifts of flower arrangements from our altar.
- They coordinate and plan special events like Nativity & prepare and help serve the communion elements.

Our members stay busy because the worship services at First United Methodist Church are active and full of meaning. We feel this in our hearts and want to impart our respect and love for Christian worship experiences to everyone through what we do.

Do you remember pinning a palm cross on your lapel during Holy Week? An Altar Guild member wove it for you. Did you place a floral stem on the Living Cross at Easter? An Altar Guild member set up the structure and provided extra flowers for you. Do you enjoy analyzing the different Chrismon symbols on the tree each year? An Altar Guild member crafted each ornament. Did a tear come to your eye as you lifted a lit candle, singing Silent Night on Christmas Eve? An Altar Guild member prepared hundreds of candles for that night for you. Do you feel the warmth and spirit enter the church as the candles are lit at the beginning of each service? An Altar Guild member scheduled and coached the acolyte. Do you write notes on the scribble pads in the pew rack? An Altar Guild member made sure the pencils were sharpened and the notepad had plenty of sheets. The list of what our members do each week is extensive.

Our next meeting is January 22nd, at 10:00 am in the Chapel with an encore meeting the following Wednesday at 5:30pm for anyone who can't attend the morning meeting. You are invited to be a part of our ministry. Come meet with us or call the Church Office at 706-884-4635 for more information. Maybe this new year is the right time for you to join us!

Davie Biagi

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOEBOX DESTINATION



Did you pack a shoebox for needy children through our church's Operation Christmas Child missions event this past November? Did you request that it be tracked to its final destination?

If so, you can discover the destination of your shoebox gift through the "Follow Your Box Look-up Tool". Using it, you'll learn where your shoebox will be used to share God's love with a child in need. You can also discover heartwarming stories and special prayer requests for that location.

You'll need either the email address OR bar code number that you shared with your box. Click the following link to find out where your box went:

<https://www.samaritanaspurse.org/operation-christmas-child/follow-your-box-lookup/>

JANUARY 14-FEBRUARY 11 SERMON SERIES

Join pastors Brian and Blake for two unique, 5-week sermon series.



9am & 11am "Traditional" — WHERE FAITH & SCIENCE MEET

Are faith and science mutually exclusive ideas? Or do they complement one another? Do the latest scientific discoveries about our universe, life and medicine threaten religious faith? Or confirm it? Has science moved humanity beyond its need for religious faith (as some have proposed)? Or is faith more important now than ever? Join Pastor Brian January 14-February 11 at our 9am Chapel and 11am Sanctuary worship services as we explore the relationship between science and Christian faith.



10:55am "THE BRIDGE" — Known and Called

After we celebrate the birth of Christ, we move into a season of hearing the stories of people discovering and understanding Jesus' identity. In the time from Epiphany to the beginning of Lent, we too will discover the depth of who Jesus is, and, likewise, who we are called to be as His followers. What identifies us in such a way that others see the unmistakable likeness of Christ in us? We hope that you will join Pastor Blake this New Year at THE BRIDGE service as we together look at how we are Known and Called to be disciples of Jesus.

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USPS (079-260) IS PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Postmaster: Send Address Change to

The Flame, 401 Broad Street

LaGrange, Georgia 30240

Mr. Rick Free (ext 210).....Director of Food Services
 Dr. Brian Germano (ext 205).....Senior Pastor
 Mr. Eddie Giddens.....Custodian
 Ms. Lisa Highland (ext 207).....Business Manager
 Mrs. Jeanne Jones (ext 209).....Director of Children's Ministry
 Mr. Darian Krimm (ext 202).....Minister of Music & Worship
 Mr. C.J. Lord (ext 215).....Director of Mid & Sr High Youth
 Mr. Greg Nichols.....The Bridge Worship Leader
 Ms. Dodie Patterson (ext 204).....Executive Secretary
 Mr. Andy Rainey (ext 201).....Church Administrator
 Rev. Blake Trent (ext 206).....Associate Pastor

To reach all other employees and/or volunteers,
 please call the church office.

We always look forward to hearing from you.

*Christians . . .
 SERVING,
 CARING,
 & SHARING*

Non Profit Periodical
 U.S. Postage
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Need to Talk? Refer yourself or a friend in need to one of our church's confidential Stephen Ministers who can help walk one-to-one with you or them through crisis. For more information or for a referral, speak to one of our Pastors or email stephenministry@lagrangefumc.org.

OFFICES CLOSED

The church offices will be closed Monday, January 1st, New Year's Day; and on Monday, January 15th, for the Martin Luther King Jr., holiday.

If you have a pastoral emergency, please call 888-456-1203.

Supporting Our Ministries

In addition to traditional giving methods (cash & check), you can also donate to First United Methodist Church via Text-to-Give (Text LGFUMC to 73256) or online at lagrangefumc.org/online-giving.

Thank You!

Thank you for the cards, flowers, and wonderful treats that came into the church office. Your staff enjoyed it all, but we are most grateful for the prayers and good wishes that came with each one.

Thank You to Lamar & Dorothy McKeen, December Place Farm, for donating the beautiful trees in our Sanctuary, Chapel, and Fellowship Hall this past Christmas.

Thank You to Wanda-Ann Kinnaman, the Nativity Committee, Sunday School Classes, and others for coordinating the 2017 Nativity Festival.

Thank You to Davie Biagi, the Altar Guild, and the many helpers for decorating our church (inside and out) for Advent.

A special Thank you to all Meals on Wheels volunteers: kitchen prep crew, drivers & substitutes. 2017 was another wonderful year of helping those in our community with a weekly meal. This is truly a team effort, and you all make it all so easy. A special shout out to Rick Free for all his hard work; this would never work if it were not for him.

Dorothy Cammon, MOW Coordinator

Congratulations!

Margo Sutherland Johnson was born **December 13, 2017**, the granddaughter of Deborah & Clark Johnson.

United Methodist Men's January Breakfast

Please join us for the Men's Breakfast on Saturday, January 13th at 9:00am in the small dining room. The program will be presented by **Shane Frailey**, Troup County Tax Commissioner. All men in the church are invited. We look forward to seeing you on January 13th.

save the date...

**Backstage
 Pass**

Music Ministry fundraiser

4pm, February 11, 2018



January 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 10:30am Combined Worship Service in the Fellowship Hall	1 Offices Closed for New Year's Day	2 12:30p Red Cross Blood Drive	3 5:00p U.M.W. Board Meeting	4 6:00p "Backstage Pass" Meeting	5	6
7 5:00p Disciple II Bible Study	8 Circles Meet	9 3:00p Mary UMW Circle	10 Wednesday Evening Weekly Meal & Activities Resume	11 5:30p Long Range Planning Committee	12	13 9:00a Men's Breakfast
14 5:00p Disciple II Bible Study	1 Offices Closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday	16 5:30p Worship Committee	17	18	19	20
21 4:00p Cub Scout "God & Me" Class	22 10:00a Altar Guild 11:30a Memorial Foundation	23	24	25 5:30p Board of Trustees	26	27
28 3:00p LaGrange District UMC Training	29	30 5:00p Disciple II Bible Study	31	1	2	3

Weekly

SUNDAY

9:00a Chapel Worship
10:00a Sunday School
10:55a The Bridge
11:00a Traditional Worship
Service

MONDAY

10:30a Meals on Wheels
11:30a Soup Kitchen
1:30p Staff Meeting
6:30p Cub Scouts

TUESDAY

9:00a Community Care
11:00a Dulcimers
6:30p Cub Scouts
7:30p Boy Scouts
7:00p The Bridge Band Rehearsal

WEDNESDAY

9:30a Explorers Bible Study
11:30a Soup Kitchen Sack Lunch
5:00p Wednesday Evening Meal
5:30p Handbell Rehearsal
5:45p Children's Program
6:00p Mid & Sr. High Youth
6:30p Chancel Choir Rehearsal

THURSDAY

9:00a Community Care
9:45a Prayer Ministry
10:00a Dulcimers

FRIDAY

7:00a Men's Coffee & Prayer

From December 2017

Remembrances Received *In Memory of*

Grace Allardice—The Lower School Faculty of Brookstone School

Sarah & John Soltis—Paul and Karen (Soltis) Tobben

Preston Dubyak—Elynor Varner

Frances Scarborough—U.M.W.

A Special Gift

A special gift was given to the Church in memory of
Hugh Camp by Margaret Camp and Family.

January's Worship Team Volunteers

Ushers: Hoyt Rogers, Robby Burch, Jerry Clement, Ken Young, Bill Davidson, Sam Graham, Blair Harlin, Ray Holmes, Mike Peterson, Lewis Powell, Ric Selbie, H.R. Shepherd, Perry Wilder

Altar Guild: Laura Harlin, Page Estes, Freddie Hayes, Davie Biagi, Bobbie Ritchie, Shirra Rogers

The Bridge: Angela Ochsenknecht, Jennifer Emery, Steve Cole, Lauren Spaggiari, Glenn & Tina Quiggle, Debra Jackson, Kay & Ron cole

Greeter Team: Jane Willey, Bill & Joyce Young, Steve & Caryn Cole, Wayne & Beth Godwin, Jean Edwards, Pat & Fred Bodine, Sharon Jones, Carolyn Day, James & Jennifer Emery, Laura Harlin, Dean & Nancy Larson, Mike & Denise Wilson, Terri Cook, Bill & Susan Black, Richard & Donna Ennis, Laura Jennings, Jared & Loren Lovin, John & Cindy Jackson

January 2018 Wednesday Evening Weekly Meal Menus

January 3 NO WEW

WEW Meal on January 10

Menu: Beef Chili or White Chicken Chili, Baked Potatoes, Salad Bar, Dessert.
Children: Grilled Cheese & PB & J sandwiches

WEW Meal on January 17

Menu: Roast Beef, Oven Roasted Potatoes, Veggie, Salad Bar, Dessert.
Children: Mini Burgers & PB & J sandwiches

WEW Meal on January 24

Menu: Company Chicken, Rice, Veggie, Salad Bar, Dessert.
Children: Pizza & PB & J sandwiches

WEW Meal on January 31

Menu: Pizza Casserole, Salad Bar, Dessert.
Children: Same & PB & J sandwiches

ATTENDANCE, Sunday, December 17

Sunday School.....166

Worship Service.....280

Carols by Candlelight.....360

ATTENDANCE, Sunday, December 24

10:30am Combined Morning Worship Service.....226

5:00pm Christmas Eve Family Service.....314

11:00pm Christmas Eve Communion Service.....169