One year has passed and Charge Conference has been completed. Annual Conference is finished and the Bishop has seen fit to allow me to remain as pastor at Eastlawn UMC for another year. A whole year---three hundred and sixty five more days. That's AWESOME!

Let's review:
The membership was officially audited. This means that we went name by name through the membership book and made the necessary edits in order to ensure accuracy, to pray over all our members past and present and to begin to learn who everyone is at Eastlawn. That was a very cool experience. Twelve or so of us met every couple of weeks and had a very good time recalling the past. We concerned ourselves with the present and future of our church. It was a pace setter for the year. The Holy Spirit showed up and showed out. Plans began to form and bonds were made--good bonds.

In June 2016, Bishop James Swanson challenged his clergy to be intentional about making disciples of all nations. To that end, I felt led to begin a few new projects. These included teaching Sunday evening bible study for adults, leading Wednesday evening bible study, and teaching the class "When Helping Hurts". All three of these initiatives had a common purpose which was to help us all grow closer to the Lord in our study. It has worked. All of these seemed to be well received and certainly helped us as a congregation to begin moving towards the nearness of Christ that the Bishop intended. Throughout the past year, we have additionally added 14 new members to our congregation through the blessing of God.

Furthermore, we aided our connectional friends from St. Stephens and St. Mark UMC with their annual fundraiser by allowing them to utilize our ministry center. We successfully trained and got certified as an Emergency Response Team, and our youth were able to attend the special retreat at Palmer Creek where they were able to learn more about Christ and one another.

Perhaps the most celebrated occurrence in the past year from my perspective is the addition of weekly communion services. These two services have been well attended while not interfering with the traditional eleven o'clock service. They have been attended by friends who do not attend other services. The Sunday evening service is the only worship encounter for many of our youth, and they love it because they own it. Their praise band is one of the most diverse I have ever witnessed, and they are very good. Young people are volunteering to take on leadership roles during communion who would not otherwise participate in church activities; they feel welcomed; they feel included.

Weekly communion was a mainstay in the Means of Grace taught to us by the founder John Wesley. Specifically, he said that communion was a means by which the spirit of God is imparted upon believers. We need to have the spirit upon us. It is our POWER to add a supporting statement from Bishop Swanson himself. Communion is our link to one another as Christians; it is our common bond. Without that power, we can do nothing. Once a week is helpful. If we ate regular food the way we eat this spiritual meal, we would all starve to death. Once a month communion is a glorious thing and is far more often than many, but weekly is better. I am proud to share with others that I have been allowed this grace by the church. Thank you all.

Confirmation received plenty of press in the past two Eastlawn Journeys. But that too is a great success we can
measure as we peer back through time. As my first class to teach or participate in, it was the best ever. The young people excelled and have already begun to show signs of the impact of the confirmation of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Third parties are weekly reporting to me their great works of faith and grace.

All of these successes are fueled through a team of incredible individuals. The leadership committees at Eastlawn UMC are the best I have ever been allowed to serve with. Everyone takes their roles with dedication and care. Our church is lived out openly by these leaders and it shows at every meeting. Great care is taken to insure opinions are heard and considered; nothing is done without consensus and agreement. Few churches can claim this great achievement. So many fight over the smallest things and those fights always end ugly. Eastlawn seems to have risen above this more common form of church leadership into a way of cooperation. Any leader would be proud to be allowed to speak about this of their own teams. I am super proud to be the leader of the best church ever.

So thank you all for allowing me the great privilege to name myself as your pastor. Thank you all for the way in which you so warmly receive my family and our visitors. Thank you all for your generosity and care for the people both in and outside the church. Thank you all for your individual desire to seek first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness. These are the hallmarks of Eastlawn UMC; these are the hallmarks of a body of believers committed to the cause of Christ. These are your hallmarks. You are the reason we are so blessed. Keep up the great work, and next July I will report even greater things.

Allow me to sum this up with words from our savior, John 14:12: "Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these".

God, continue to bless us as a body of believers and carry us through grace to even greater things than we have done already.

God bless each of you. And remember I love you all.
Brother Andy
The Eastlawn Journey

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July 2  9:45a Sunday School
       11:00a Morning Worship
       6:00p Worship Service in Upper Room
July 3  Church Office Closed
July 4  Independence Day –Church Office Closed
       No church activities today
July 9  8:30a Early Worship Service
       9:45a Sunday School
       11:00a Morning Worship
       6:00p Youth Activities
July 10 6:00p NOW Committee Meeting
       7:00p Administrative Council Mtg.
July 11 7:30a Men’s Bible Study at Sara Sue’s
       9:00a Hilltoppers Coffee/Fellowship
July 16 9:45a Sunday School
       11:00a Morning Worship
       6:00p Worship Service in Upper Room
July 18 7:30a Men’s Bible Study at Sara Sue’s
       9:00a Hilltoppers Coffee/Fellowship
July 23 9:45a Sunday School
       11:00a Morning Worship
       6:00p Youth Activities
July 25 7:30a Men’s Bible Study at Sara Sue’s
       9:00a Hilltoppers Coffee/Fellowship
July 30 9:45a Sunday School
       11:00a Morning Worship
       6:00p Worship Service in Upper Room

July 1 .......... Homer Wales
July 9 .......... Kay Carlow
July 11 .......... Kaitlyn Hardy
July 12 .......... Payton Green
               Catherine McIlwain
July 13 .......... Heather Wiggins
July 14 .......... Sean Jones
July 17 .......... Opal Currie
July 19 .......... Gayla Daniels
               Brittney Ellis
July 22 .......... Cathy Epps
               Carol Woodson
July 24 .......... Jason Rushing
               Marie Singleton
July 27 .......... Bernard Fulkerson
July 29 .......... Martha Strum

July 6       Tony & Carol Mello
July 9       Robert & Carolyn Weathersby
July 10      Wesley & Glynda Smith
July 12      James & Cynthia Lovom
July 18      Charles & Jackie Morie
July 24      Billy & Kelli Green
               Joseph & Darlyne Scarborough
July 30      Ronnie & Kim Crocker
COME JOIN US!

We hope that if you’re in an approximate age range in the 30’s to somewhere in the 50’s, you will feel welcome to join the Sunday School Class formerly known as “The Young Adult Class.” Our new name is the G.I.F.T.E.D. (or “Growing In Faith Together Every Day”) Class! At the present we are doing an Adam Hamilton study called “Creed.” We meet from 9:45 till about 10:35 each Sunday morning. So, please, feel welcome to come join us. Robin and Carl Weihing

FRIENDSHIP SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS
The Friendship Sunday School Class is currently using The Story for their lessons through the Bible. Each week the class is discussing the next story following the Bible timeline. New members, old members and visitors are welcomed each Sunday. Please join us in the conference room by 9:45 a.m.

JOYCE HAMILTON SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS
The Joyce Hamilton Class meets at 9:45 a.m. We are currently studying Sandra Richter’s “The Epic of Eden”. Visitors are encouraged to attend. Please join us in Room 201.

SUNDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY
5-6 P.M. IN CONFERENCE ROOM
“Genesis to Revelations – The Book of John”
This thirteen week study is led by Brother Andy. Everyone is welcomed to be part of this study.

MEN’S BIBLE STUDY
Tuesday Mornings 7:30 - 8:30 am at Sara Sue's 3019 Magnolia Street

ADULT BIBLE STUDY:
WEDNESDAY NIGHTS
JULY 2017

ANIMATE PRACTICES:
 Begins July 12

Experience core practices of the Christian faith with Animate Practices. In each Animate Practices session, the group will watch a video featuring a leading voice from the Christian faith, spend time on personal reflection and journaling, and share ideas with the group. :

1. Prayer | Oriented toward God | Brian McLaren/ Brian’s take on prayer is less about what prayer does or why we pray. Instead, he focuses on giving us permission to pray in ways that are meaningful, helpful, and life giving.

2. Food | Eating, with Jesus | Sara Miles/ Sara believes that French fries can be as holy as organic kale when they are offered and shared in acts of love and fellowship. This point can get lost in our conversations about the “right” kind of food.

3. Worship | Seeking God’s Presence | Mike Slaughter For many Christians, worship is synonymous with going to church. Mike challenges us to think about worship as a much richer practice, one we can follow on our own and in community.

4. Sacraments | A Tapestry of Traditions | Phyllis Tickle For many of us, the sacraments have become just another part of our church routine, like hymns and prayer. But Phyllis asks us to revisit the ancient meaning of these experiences and consider what we are really up to as we take part in these practices.

5. Money | The Joy of Sharing | Shane Claiborne/ Shane’s message can easily be construed as political, but he asks us to look beyond -isms and -ologies to see financial generosity as a kingdom call, rather than a social position.

6. Service | The Needs Right in Front of You | Enuma Okoro/ Enuma is a seasoned traveler, having lived and worked in countries on four continents. But she encourages us to see the needs around us. This local context can give us a new understanding of what service really looks like.
7. Community|An Unexpected Family|Doug Pagitt/Doug pushes us to think of community as more than just a nice idea. He invites us to remake our communities by bringing our gifts, our talents, and our ideas with us wherever we go.

Thursday Morning Bible Study

**We have stopped for the summer.** We will start back August 31 studying Sandra L. Richter's *The Epic of Eden*. For more info: Contact Opal Currie.

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**GRASS CUTTERS**

I have a request for more volunteers to be on a grass cutter team for cutting and trimming the lawn at Eastlawn. I have three, 3-man teams, but we really need a fourth team. If you can be a grass cutter, please let me know. Contact Carl at 228-623-1377.

- July 3—Team 3
- July 10—Team 1
- July 17—Team 2
- July 24—Team 3
- July 31—Team 1
- Aug 7—Team 2

Team 1-Doug Ros, Jerry Clement, Bootsie Larsen
Team 2-Harvey Felts, Greg Hust, Forrest Hardy
Team 3-Ike Burks, Carl Weihing, Doug Merrill

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**USHERS**

**The Ushers for July** are: The Ladies
If you are not listed and are willing to be an Usher, please let me know.
(Carl Weihing)

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**Counters for July**

Opal Currie
Judy Ros

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There are still dates available in July to sign up for altar flowers. If you want to put flowers around the altar in honor or memory of someone, you can either sign up in the hallway of the Worship Center at church or contact Martha Strum this month at 228-217-3934.

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**NO WEDNESDAY NIGHT MEALS**
**WE WILL RETURN AFTER SUMMER BREAK!**
**STAY TUNED!!**

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**MAMIE KIMBROUGH CIRCLE**

The Mamie Kimbrough Circle will honor the Pascagoula Police Department with a come-and-go luncheon on Thursday, July 20, from 11:00—1:15. The members wish to show their appreciation to the policemen and policewomen and to thank them for their service to our community. Please give a personal invitation to your friend or neighbor who works in this department. Also, if you would like to volunteer to help with this event, please contact Linda Tillman.

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**SILVER SNEAKERS**

*Silver Sneakers* fitness program has been unable to be organized at this time so for now it is cancelled. We will notify everyone if there is some organization in the future.
Dear Church Family,

Thank you for the meals, cards, phone calls, prayers and so much love and concern for me during my recent surgery and return to the hospital. It's times like these that let me know just how blessed I am to be a part of this Very Special Church!!

With Love,
Judy Ros

WEDNESDAY NIGHT CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

The Wednesday Night activities for the children will take a break for the summer. We will start back in August when school begins. Watch for further details on dates and activities.

If you are interested in helping with the children in any activity (Sunday School, Children’s Church, Wednesday Nights) please contact Susie at 228-623-3026 or susieriley1225@hotmail.com

FINANCIALLY FAITHFUL

| BUDGET FOR 2017 | $351,582 |
| TITHES FOR 2017 (YTD) | $178,987 |
| BENEVOLENCE FUND | $3,048 |

Interested in having your Tithes or Building Fund Commitment automatically withdrawn from your checking account? Forms are available in the church foyer. If you need help filling out the form, please call the church office or Beth Chapuis (424-4333).

As a part of our overall church security during worship please note that the ministry center and the education buildings will be locked during Sunday worship times. In order to access these locations during worship, please see the ushers in the narthex. Thank you.
The Eastlawn Journey

YOUTH AT LAKE JUNALUSKA

WE ARE BACK! and what a wonderful four days! After six Spirit-filled worship services, four small group spiritual-growth sessions, a mini-concert by our youth at a Waynesville nursing home, and packaging 5000 meals to “stop hunger now”, the youth have returned and are thankful for this opportunity provided by our church.

For Alannah, Katie, Kerstin, Mallory, Kaylynn, Mimi, Gracie, Tori, Maya, Gaeleen, and Michael, this week at Lake J was a special time of reflection and growth as they explored David's Psalm 139 and how God knows and loves each one of them.

In addition to worship, study, and service, the youth kayaked, paddle boarded, played tennis, and played in the volleyball tourney. Our youth also made new friends from among the 350 youth attending from 10 states across the southeast. As we return, our youth are excited about continuing our spiritual growth and ministry at our Eastlawn UMC home! Again, a great big thank you to our church family.
The Storms of Life
By Lesa Larsen

With the coming and going of Tropical Storm or Cyclone (as they call them now), Cindy, I had some anxious moments. It is my first time in Mississippi since moving here from the Texas coast 4 years ago that we have had even a hint of a storm coming this way. Now I know I cannot even begin to understand how most of you felt after the horror of Katrina, but since I lived right on the bay on the Texas coast for close to 25 years, we had quite a few scares. Bootsie can tell you how anxious I always got during hurricane season. After watching the aftermath of Katrina, visiting family in Pascagoula and seeing the re-build and struggles, I have a great respect for the strength of people. And it is not just people in general, but the people of Mississippi on the coast. Your stories have touched me in so many ways. Your great faith and caring for each other are stories that many have never heard as they weren’t the ones that made the news. Most of the stories that were mentioned were catastrophes about New Orleans. The strength and faith of Mississippians was rarely told, and most folks like me in other parts of the world never got to learn of the Faith and love that was going on over here in cities like Pascagoula; I wouldn’t have known had we not had family here and now been living here and heard it first-hand. People in this area know better than anyone how to pull themselves up and just get going again, and they do it with much grace and humor, and prayer. This all comes with great faith in the Lord. Eastlawn rose again from the love of its church family and is stronger than ever because of it.

We have heard that God won’t give us more than we can handle. As it states in 1st Corinthians 10:13, “God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it”.

It makes Bootsie and I happy to be a part of a church that has that kind of faith. And, as a proud Texan who was concerned about leaving her home, I can tell you I was relieved to move to a city and a state whose people had such great strength of faith and character. It was an added bonus to find a community and church home with such a strong love of God.

I don’t always understand the trials and tests that I must endure, but I do understand the love of my Savior for me and why He suffered for me. With that knowledge secure in my heart, I can only hope when I am faced with any big storms or trials of any fashion in the future, that I, too, will be able to be as good of an example through faith as the people of Eastlawn Methodist and the great state of Mississippi. You truly are a “beacon to all”!