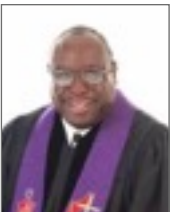




Winter Conference January 28-31, 2018 Epworth By The Sea

Bishop Lawson Bryan invites you to Winter Conference 2018!

I am looking forward to Winter Conference, January 28-31, at Epworth By The Sea. Last year, when I attended Winter Conference for the first time, I was inspired by the hundreds of laity and clergy who were Alive Together in Christ. This year I am more enthusiastic than ever because of the tremendous resource people who will be with us. Our theme, Alive Together in Worship, will be expressed in worship, Bible study, workshops, and wonderful fellowship. The music of Jarvis Wilson and Robert McMichael will lift us to the presence of God. The Biblical teaching of New Testament scholar, Dre. Ben Witherington, and the preaching of Bishop James Swanson will be stimulating to our minds and our souls. I am also glad that Claire Bowen will lead a workshop on “Managing Conflict”; and Jody Ray will lead a workshop on “Pastor as Change Agent”; We also have Anne Bosarge from The Chapel leading a workshop on “Change Management”. It would be difficult to get a more dynamic experience than this join just a few days. For me Winter Conference is also a chance to connect personally with the laity and clergy of our conference. Please accept my invitation to join me at Winter Conference. May the Spirit of the loving God fall afresh on us as we discover the true meaning of being Alive Together in Worship.



Preaching: Bishop James Swanson and Bishop Lawson Bryan will be leading the conference.



Bible Study Teacher: Dr. Ben Witherington, III, Professor of New Testament at Asbury Theological Seminary



Worship Leader: Robert Henry McMichael, III



Workshop Leaders: Ms. Claire Olliff Bowen,
 Ms. Anne Bosarge and Dr. Jody Ray

2018 Appointment Making Schedule, Pages 6-8



**The Northwest District Office will close for Christmas and New Years
Thursday December 14, 2017, 2:00 p.m.
and will reopen Tuesday, January 2, 2018, 9:00 a.m.**



From the Desk of
Derek McAleer

The South Georgia Conference Administrative Services

Do You Have Questions About Your Church's Apportionments?

If so, you are not alone.

As I am in churches across the Annual Conference, I hear these basic questions again and again. "What are all these items in our apportionments?" "Who decides what we fund?" "How did you decide how much to apportion my church?" In the past few weeks it has been my privilege to travel to two of our churches to speak with the congregations about these matters. People are quite willing to be generous, but they want to know more about what they are supporting.

A really basic question is, "Where do the apportionments come from?" The quick and easy answer is, the apportionments are just the Annual Conference budget apportioned to the churches. Your pastor and your lay delegate to Annual Conference vote on the conference budget every year. Once the budget is set, we use the formula referenced below to determine what your church's portion is.

You can find much information about the apportionments on this webpage. I have included our "Budget At A Glance" for 2018, which has details about each line item of your apportionments. I have posted the popular "How Your Church Dollar Was Spent" charts, which help you get a good overview of what happens to a dollar placed in your church offering plate. The page has other useful information and links also (want to look at data for your church over the past 10 years? It's there.)

If you have questions about how we calculate the precise amount of your church's apportionments, you can find that information here. I not only cover the formula (including the rationale behind our formula), but also tell you which lines on the annual Statistical Report matter. Fundamentally, we calculate your church's strength relative to that of every other church in the Conference, and apportion you the share relative to your church strength. Big churches pay more than little churches. Churches with more money pay more than churches with less money.

Which leads to the comment I hear most often: "We're just a small church ..." Many people do not have a good idea of how large most of our churches are. So I share this bit of data to help you get a good overview. In 2016, 64% of the churches in the South Georgia Annual Conference had 50 people or less in average worship attendance. 40 our churches had 25 people or less. We are an Annual Conference full of small churches. If your church is small, you have plenty of company! Small churches form the majority of our Annual Conference.

If you still have questions once you have looked over this information, do not hesitate to contact me. If you would like me to come to your church to discuss the askings, it would be my pleasure. Let me know how I can be of service.

Derek

Early Response Team and Chainsaw Training

Saturday, December 9, 2017

Roberta UMC

116 W Agency St, Roberta, GA 31078

Early Response Team Trainings help equip individuals and teams to respond in the immediate aftermath of a disaster. The cost for the training is \$25 per participant. At the training, participants will receive an ERT Training Manual and upon completing the course will receive an UMCOR ID Badge and a T-shirt. Background checks are required before receiving badges. Please provide proof of background check. Safe Sanctuaries background checks are applicable. Lunch is also included in the cost.

*Chainsaw training requirements: complete and pass ERT training offered in the morning or hold current ERT badge. Cost for chainsaw training only is \$12. If taken following the ERT class in the morning \$6. Cost includes textbook and badge. Chainsaw training will be demonstration and lecture style. There must be 6 participants for a chainsaw course to make.

ERT training time: 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Chainsaw training time: 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Register: <https://sgaumc-reg.brtaapp.com/ERTTrainingRoberta>

To schedule an ERT training/chainsaw training, please contact Luis Morales at morhill@gmail.com.



Annual Conference

At a recent meeting, the Annual Conference Program Committee decided to shorten the length of the 2018 Annual Conference session by one day. It is now set for June 3-5, 2018, at the Jekyll Island Convention Center on Jekyll Island. "After last year, some delegates expressed concern over the cost of hotel rooms and meals on the island," said Dr. Jay Harris, Conference secretary. "We listened and have therefore modified our schedule so that delegates may choose to head home on Tuesday if they if they want."

The 2018 Annual Conference session will begin at 6:30 p.m. Sunday evening, June 3, and conclude at 4 p.m. Tuesday afternoon, June 5. Since the conference was shortened by one day, if delegates choose to leave after the session ends Tuesday they will only have to pay for two nights in a hotel instead of the typical three or four nights.

"We are excited to be returning to Jekyll and the wonderful surroundings and facilities this location offers us," Dr. Harris said. "Bishop Bryan and the Conference Program Committee have already begun to plan a conference that will engage us in God's mission. The Local Arrangements Coordinator, Mr. Bill Allen, and the marvelous army of volunteers that Bill led in 2017 are gearing up again to host us."

Hotel room blocks are now open. Special South Georgia Conference rates have been negotiated at hotels on Jekyll Island and at Epworth By The Sea on St. Simons Island.

Additional information and changes related to the annual conference session can be found on the conference website, www.sgaumc.org/annualconference.

2017 Conference Journal

Journal includes conference business, directories, reports, appointments, and statistical tables The 2017 Journal of the South Georgia Annual Conference is now available for purchase. As has been our process in recent years, those wishing to purchase a Conference Journal will order their copy(ies) online directly from the printer. The cost of the Journal is \$20 each plus tax and shipping.

Conference Updates Mobile App, published 8/21/2017

The South Georgia UMC mobile app has gotten a facelift. The convenient app – available free of charge for iPhone and Android phones/tablets – recently underwent a redesign and was launched last week. Those who have already downloaded the app need only update it to get the latest version. "We are continuously looking for ways to enhance how we share news with the clergy and laity of our Annual Conference," said Kelly Roberson, Director of Communications. In addition to the calendar and news, features include connections to both the church and clergy locators, and district and conference office information. Users can easily view and interact with conference social media: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and Vimeo. Users can also receive up-to-the-minute alerts and message notifications sent out by the South Georgia Conference communications office. To access the South Georgia Conference's app, search "South Georgia UMC" in the Google Play or Apple stores.

2017-2018 Sexual Ethics Workshops

In the South Georgia Conference, any person serving under appointment by the bishop is required to attend a Sexual Ethics workshop every three years. For more information or to register, visit www.sgaumc.org/sexualethicsworkshops

- Thursday, **September 21, 2017**-Tifton UMC 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- Saturday, **January 20, 2018**, Camilla First UMC 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- Thursday, **February 15, 2018**, Epworth By The Sea, Nalls Building 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, **April 10 2018**, Vineville UMC, Macon 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Northwest District Ministers due for Sexual Ethics Workshop before Annual Conference 2018 are:

Jeremy Alexander, Gayle Alston, Earnestine Campbell, David Carter, Paul Coats, Buddy Cooper, Jr., Tony Crosby, Cindy Garrard, Shane Green, John Homer, Lance Kindred, Dennis Lanning, Jimmy McIlrath, Gary Page, J. Brooks Partain, Noel Perez, Emery Ramsey, Mark Sasser, Scott Tucker, John Allen Walker, David Warlick, Michael Webb, Roy White, and Reginald Williams.

HURRICANE RELIEF

United Methodists wishing to help can make donations directly through UMCOR's Domestic Disaster Response Advance #901670.

Churches and individuals also can assemble cleaning buckets. Here is how -- <http://www.umcor.org>

Teams needed from Texas to Florida

Teams needed from Texas to Florida

The South Georgia Conference has received requests for ERTs (Early Response Teams) and mission teams from Annual Conferences affected by recent storms. Coastal communities here at home and in Texas and Florida can use our help, as can communities affected by Hurricane Matthew last year. Remember that when you are looking for an opportunity to volunteer as a mission team, each requesting Annual Conference controls the process and coordinates the United Methodist response.

Want to Serve in South Georgia?

Here at home, Hurricane/Tropical Storm Irma left its worst impact in Coastal Georgia. Badged, current ERT and trained chainsaw teams are needed in Chatham and other coastal counties. Lodging can be arranged in local churches; however, teams may need to cook their own meals or use local restaurants.

Interested ERTs can contact Luis O. Morales, South Georgia Conference Disaster Response Coordinator, at morhill@gmail.com.

Want to Serve in Florida?

We have received confirmation that Florida is ready for volunteers to respond to Hurricane Irma. Trained ERTs will be placed in Irma relief and those who are not trained will be serving with recovery for Hermine and Matthew.

For more information regarding needs in Florida, visit their Disaster Response information page at <http://www.flumc.org/disasterrecoveryministry>. Want to serve in Florida? <https://florida-reg.brtapp.com/hurricaneirmaregistration>

Want to Serve in Texas?

Two Annual Conferences in Texas are calling for ERTs or mission teams. The Texas Annual Conference is ready to receive volunteer teams to assist with Hurricane Harvey relief. The work consists mainly of cleaning out flooded homes and requires extensive physical labor. At least one member of a team must be ERT trained. Teams should bring their own protective gear and tools. All members need proof of Safe Sanctuary training and clear background check from your local United Methodist Church. Housing is available at a host church in the conference. Team leaders can register their team here. The Rio Texas Conference is asking for currently certified ERT members for help with debris removal of down trees and roof tarping. Many homes have water damage from damaged windows and roofs. Teams will be based out of Corpus Christi and should register at <https://riotexas.org/ert-volunteer-team-registration>. ERT trained individuals/small groups not part of a team should register at <https://riotexas.org/ert-individual-and-small-group-signup>.

Want to Serve in Louisiana?

Teams are currently working two different disasters in Louisiana. The state is in the early response phase (i.e. mucking out) in response to Hurricane Harvey in the southwest part of the state and in the recovery phase (i.e. rebuilding) in response to the 2016 floods in the Baton Rouge, Denham Springs, Gonzales and Hammond areas. Register your team at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/UMCVolunteerRegistration>

Want to Serve in North Carolina?

We encourage anyone interested in volunteering to join the work in Lumberton, NC, or any of the Hurricane Matthew devastated areas as the need is great and our best energy can be put to work right now!

Want to Serve in Puerto Rico?

There is not yet a call for ERTs or other mission teams in Puerto Rico. Our Annual Conference is in communication with the Bishop of Puerto Rico and has offered our prayers right now and our teams when they are ready for that phase of the response. Even though the situation is significantly worse, the same process will be involved once Puerto Rico is ready to receive teams.

Luis Morales, Disaster Coordinator for the South Georgia Conference, traveled to Puerto Rico Friday, Oct. 13, as a consultant for the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR). He is representing UMCOR and meeting with Bishop Hector Ortiz, bishop of the Methodist Church of Puerto Rico, to assess how The United Methodist Church and UMCOR can best support and help Puerto Ricans in the wake of Hurricane Maria.

Feeling Called to Serve as an ERT?

The South Georgia Conference has several ERT training events scheduled in November, and December. Visit www.sgaumc.org/erttrainings for more information and to register.



Open Door Community House

Open Door Classic will be on March 3, 2018

Save the Date! The 31st annual Open Door Classic will take place March 3, 2018 again in Woodruff Park in Uptown Columbus along the Riverwalk. This year close to \$100,000 was raised to empower the impoverished and focus on long-term solutions to poverty through the program ministries. Would your company like to participate as a sponsor? Please call Susan Sealy for more information at 706-323-5528.

It is about people lives being changed!

We have a goal to increase our average weekly worship by 10%
by January 2018.

That is what we call a WIG (Wildly Important Goal)!

It means we would go from 49,424 people in January 2016
to 54,366 people in worship in January 2018.

Here is how that breaks down by Districts:

Coastal District average worship attendance goes up by **1,167 people.**

North Central District grows by **1,094 people.**

Northeast District grows by **639 people.**

Northwest District grows by **733 people.**

South Central District grows by **655 people.**

Southwest District grows by **655 people.**

That is 4,943 people whose lives will be changed!

My hope is that this goal will inspire us and not discourage us. That it will motivate us to try new things and discover new ways to share the Good News with people that really need some good news.

Let's continue to find ways to keep this goal before us and constantly look for practical action steps that we can take toward making it a reality. This is a game changer!

In the days ahead we will be rolling out more tangible opportunities offered by Congregational Development. Please keep us in mind as you discover opportunities in your district. WE WANT TO HELP!

Important Information for Clergy

Below is important information regarding forms, meeting dates and timelines related to the appointment making process. Also included are announcements about our 2018 Annual Conference Session, apportionments and statistical tables.

Appointment Making Process Related Information

Each year the Cabinet utilizes a tool called the “Master Move Book” in order to help facilitate the appointment making process. This year they are also utilizing an online appointment making tool. The forms below are used to populate these tools and ensure accurate information is used as the Cabinet discusses clergy appointments. Your help in completing these forms in a timely manner is appreciated.

Compensation Form

Deadline to complete: December 6, 2017

Clergy Serving a Local Church: www.sgaumc.org/dashboard

Clergy Serving in an Extension Ministry Position: www.sgaumc.org/emdashboard

Clergy serving a local church will utilize the Church Dashboard to complete their compensation form (link above). This form is filled out as part of the Charge Conference packet.

Extension Ministers will utilize the Extension Ministry Dashboard to complete their compensation form (link above). The narrative form is also available through the dashboard if it has not previously been completed.

The last day to make updates or complete the compensation form is December 6. Any changes made after this date must be made through the District Office.

Appointment Preference: Report to the Bishop and Cabinet

Form sent by: January 2, 2018 -Deadline to return: February 2, 2018

No later than January 2, the District Office will mail to each clergyperson a form entitled “Report to the Bishop and Cabinet” where information relative to the appointment process for 2018-2019 will be recorded. The District Office will also mail a similar report to each SPRC chairperson that solicits similar information. Each party is to sign the other’s form after it is completed prior to returning to the District Office. Please remember, the deadline to return forms to the District Office is Friday, February 2.

Appointment Information Review

Review form made available: January 17, 2018 | Deadline to complete review: January 22, 2018

Clergy Serving a Local Church: www.sgaumc.org/dashboard

Clergy Serving in an Extension Ministry Position: www.sgaumc.org/emdashboard

In order to provide one last snapshot for clergy to review their information prior to the printing of the “Master Move Book,” clergy will be asked to login to their dashboard (links above) between January 17 and January 22. There is nothing to complete; it is simply a one-page sheet to review. If there are any changes that need to be made clergy will need to contact their District Office. There are 5 sections to review:

- Charge Membership Information for 2017 (pulled from the December Discipleship Report)
- Charge Apportionment Information for 2017 (pulled from the Administrative Services Office)
- Appointment Information as of 7/1/2017 (pulled from the Conference Database)
- Compensation Information for 2018 (pulled from the Clergy Compensation Form)
- Sexual Ethics Workshop Last Attended (pulled from the Conference Pastoral Counselor Office)

Again, if there are any changes that need to be made please contact your District Office. Please note that the Charge Membership Information will be blank for Extension Ministers. The deadline to review this form, and to request changes to be made, is January 22.

Cabinet Appointment Making Sessions

The Appointive Cabinet will meet on the following dates. Consultation is a year-round process, and District Superintendents will continue consultations with Pastors and SPRC as needed throughout the appointment making process.

- Appointment Making Session #1 - February 19-21
- Appointment Making Session #2 - February 26-28
- Appointment Making Session #3 - March 19-21
- Appointment Making Session #4 - April 2-4
- Appointment Making Session #5 - April 9-11
- Appointment Making Session #6 - April 16 - 18
- Appointment Making Session #7 - April 23 - 25
- Anticipated release of appointments - April 29

Orientation for Moving Pastors

Bishop Bryan and the Appointive Cabinet will host an orientations session in May for full-time moving clergy. Superintendents will release the date, location, and time for this event in the Spring. Please remember that this is a mandatory meeting for all moving pastors.

Preaching Schedule & Moving Day

In an effort to encourage clergy to take a Sabbath break, the Bishop and Appointive Cabinet invite all clergy, especially those who are projected to move to a new appointment, to observe the following:

Preach in Local Churches as Scheduled – June 3, 2018

For Clergy moving to a new appointment, this is your final preaching Sunday in your current appointment.

Pulpit Supply Sunday – June 10, 2018

Clergy are encouraged to coordinate with their SPRC to have retired clergy or lay supply fill the pulpit to preach this Sunday. All clergy are invited to participate in this Sabbath break but clergy on the projected move list are strongly encouraged to do so.

Moving Day – June 13, 2018

Annual Conference Session Information

Annual Conference Meeting Dates

The 2018 session of the South Georgia Annual Conference will meet June 3-5 at the Jekyll Island Convention Center, during which Bishop Bryan will fix these appointments for 2018-2019. Please note that this is a one-day reduction from last year's conference session. The 2018 Annual Conference will begin with the Opening Worship Service at 6:30 pm on Sunday evening, June 3, and go through Tuesday afternoon, June 5, at 4:00 pm.

Annual Conference Materials

All Annual Conference materials for the 2018 session will be placed on the conference and district websites to download and print or save to an electronic device prior to Annual Conference. The Book of Recommendations will also be available to order at a minimal cost through lulu.com. All clergy for whom we have an email address will receive a notification when Annual Conference materials are available. If an email address was entered during Charge Conference season for the lay member to Annual Conference from your church that person will receive an email as well. However, clergy are requested to check with the church's lay member to Annual Conference to make sure they receive all of the Annual Conference materials. Information will also be included in the district newsletter and conference communications. Please make note of these procedures for Annual Conference materials. The process remains the same as last year. If printing out the materials, downloading them to an electronic device or ordering from lulu.com presents a hardship please let your District Office know by April 3.

Apportionments

Thank you for your continued faithfulness in giving to the mission and ministry of The South Georgia Conference and The United Methodist Church. The final day to make payments on your local church's 2017 apportionments is January 12. Payments must be turned into the Administrative Services Office by this date. As a reminder, there are electronic means available in which to pay apportionments. Also, the 2018 "Budget At a Glance," which explains the various apportionments, is available at www.sgaumc.org/conferencebudget.

Statistical Tables Information

The Statistical Tables will launch on January 23 and must be completed by March 2. Statistical tables will be filled out through the Ezra website (ezra.gcf.org/login.aspx). Login information will be emailed to the pastor and treasurer/financial secretary in early January.

South Georgia's week of prayer January 14-21, 2018

The denomination-wide "Praying Our Way Forward" initiative launched New Year's Day 2017 with 75 weeks of focused prayer for The United Methodist Church. Each annual conference will take one week to pray for the mission of The United Methodist Church to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world and for the work of the Commission on a Way Forward. The Commission was proposed by the Council of Bishops and approved by the 2016 General Conference to do a complete examination and possible revision of every paragraph of The Book of Discipline concerning human sexuality and explore options that help to maintain and strengthen the unity of the church.

During this week of prayer, South Georgia United Methodists are being asked to commit to worshipping and praying daily using a guide written by the Conference's deacons. A prayer is provided to help guide each day's worship.

The "South Georgia Prays" daily prayer guide may be found online here. Prayers will also be sent daily via email and posted on the Conference's Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram pages. To subscribe: <http://sgaumc-email.brtapp.com/subscribe>

Bishop Bryan has also asked each congregation to take time during its January 21 worship service to pray for the Commission on a Way Forward. He gave pastors and church leaders several ways to engage in corporate prayer for the work of the commission and the future of The United Methodist Church: through a prayer from the umcprays.org website, with an original prayer, or by hosting a special prayer vigil.

"We are called to a posture of prayer, praying for God's leadership to guide us effectively in fulfilling the mission of the church," he said. "All persons – clergy and laity, conferences and congregations – across the denomination are invited to pray for God's guidance."

During phase 1 of the "Praying Our Way Forward" initiative, 84 bishops of the church spent 15 minutes each day for four months in prayer for the selection and initial work of the Commission on A Way Forward.

Churches and individuals are invited to join the initiative beyond their annual conference's week of prayer by praying daily and fasting weekly for the Church, its mission, and future. The Upper Room has developed umcprays.org, a website where prayers, information, and resources can be shared.

16th Annual South Georgia Conference Confirmation Retreat

Join the Journey Confirmation Retreat

March 2-4, 2018

Epworth By The Sea

Retreat registration now open

For more information: contact Event Coordinator Suzanne Akins at suzanne@sgaumc.com or 912-638-8626

Register Early

<http://epworthbythesea.org/>

St. Simons Island Storytelling Festival

Epworth By The Sea

February 17-29, 2018

Storytellers: Kevin Kling, Donald Davis, Kim Weitkamp, and Andy Offutt Irwin

