

The *South Georgia* Conference  
Northwest District

Northwest District Office  
The United Methodist Church  
1022 B - Second Avenue  
Columbus, Georgia 31901  
Phone 706-561-4541  
Edwin M.(Buddy) Cooper, Jr.  
District Superintendent  
R. Lawson Bryan, Bishop

"We mourn the tragedy in Las Vegas. . . " Bishop Lawson Bryan, *See Page 4.*

## 2017 Northwest District Conference Schedule

<u>Cluster</u>	<u>Conference Location</u>	<u>Conference Date</u>	<u>Conference Time</u>
1	St. Peter	October 8	4:00 p.m.
2	Marshallville	October 15	4:00 p.m.
3	Buena Vista	October 22	4:00 p.m.
5	Dawson	December 3	4:00 p.m.
6	Cuthbert	November 19	4:00 p.m.
7	Wynnton	November 12	4:00 p.m.
8	South Columbus	November 5	4:00 p.m.

**Cluster 1:** Hamilton, Cataula, Bigham's Chapel, Ellerslie, Waverly Hall, Epworth, Pierce Chapel, St. Mark, St. Peter, St. Paul, Striplin Terrace, The Ridge

**Cluster 2:** Wesley Chapel, Powersville, Ideal, Oglethorpe, Pine Level, Montezuma, Bethel, Walker's Chapel, Byron, Roberta, Dixon, Fort Valley, Marshallville

**Cluster 3:** Bethel, Brantley, Tazewell, Union, Buena Vista, Butler, Charing, Howard, Mauk, Wesley, Union, Reynolds, Crowell

**Cluster 5:** Americus 1st, Andersonville, Bronwood, Smithville, Concord, Dawson, Graves, Lee Street, Morningside, Plains, Preston, Salem, Sasser

**Devoted Dozen:** Mt. Olive/Parrott, Cuthbert, Georgetown, Sharon, Union, Lumpkin, Sardis, Wesley Chapel, Richland, Shellman, Stephen's Chapel, Trinity

**Fall Line:** Upatoi, Box Springs, Talbotton, Collinsworth, Corinth, Olive Branch, Evan's Chapel, Matthew's Chapel, Midland, Wynnton

**Cluster 8:** Cusseta, Marvin, Asbury, Living Grace, M.L.Harris, Midway, South Columbus, St. Luke, St. Mary's Road, East Highland

**The Charge Conference Forms** can be found at <http://www.sgaumc.org/onlineforms>. In addition, the Extension Ministry dashboard is updated and ready as well - <http://www.sgaumc.org/emdashboard>.

Three updates to note:

1 - All forms that we get from the GCFA website (Minutes, Trustees, Finance, Pastor Report) have been updated to the new 2017-2020 forms.

2 - The Extension Minister narrative form now combines two different forms that we have been using (the one included with the charge conference forms and the one included on the dashboard) into one single form. The form can still be accessed in both places. However, there is a note on the Extension Ministry dashboard that indicates if a person has already completed it for charge conference there is no need to fill it out again.

3 - The Cabinet approved Wesley Glen adding an Advocate form to Section 5. See addition at the bottom of the section (#6).

For clergy serving a local church the Compensation Form is accessed through the Church dashboard. For clergy serving in an extension ministry position the Compensation Form is accessed through the Extension Ministry dashboard. As a reminder, Sections 8 and 9 on the Compensation Form will not be able to be completed until after open enrollment ends on Nov. 15. The fields are there and visible to the user, but may not yet be completed. If you or a pastor/church have any questions specifically about the comp form, please contact Eleanor. This was the same process we used last year.

Also, if a church or an Extension Minister has lost their dashboard password they can reset it using the link on the dashboard page {if they have an email entered}. If they can't use the "Need Help Logging In" link then the password can be manually reset for them in the console.

30th Annual Eagles Fall Retreat  
October 23-215, 2017  
Jones Auditorium and Lovely Lane Chapel  
Epworth By The Sea



### 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.

**Download Android App on Google Play**

**Download Apple App for iPhone**

## Open Door Community House

### Can you help?

Open Door is gratefully accepting canned goods/nonperishable items and especially needs: tuna, canned meats, peanut butter, spaghetti/spaghetti sauce, juice, soups, green beans, corn, peas, 1 lb. bags of rice.

Homeless Ministries are in need of: Q-tips, spray deodorant, socks, underwear (briefs), white t-shirts, disposal razors, foot powder, and insect repellent.

## 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.



## 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](http://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.



*The Northwest District Ministers' and Spouses' Christmas Luncheon*  
*December 2, 2017, 12:00 noon*  
*Upatoi United Methodist Church, 13730 Macon Road, Upatoi, GA*



## THE MITE MIGHT OF THE POOR

Deaconess Sandi Hortman  
The Fellowship at Rose Hill

Hurricane Harvey came ashore in Texas in August, 2017, turning roads into rivers and houses into hovels. Parts of Houston received over 50 inches of rain and the storm continued to consume lives and livelihoods as it spread to Louisiana. Not content with the lives taken in the Caribbean, the monster storm took scores of life in the Gulf Coast region.

After the devastation wreaked by Harvey, the South Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church suggested an offering be collected on Sunday, September 7, to assist the victims of the horrendous winds and flooding. So United Methodists around the Conference continued to be “alive in Jesus” as they gave generously to those who were suffering.

In a very poor neighborhood in Columbus, Georgia, the appeal was given at the Fellowship at Rose Hill (FRH) Sunday church service. This Fellowship was envisioned and supported by the NW District Superintendent Dr. Buddy Cooper and the St. Peter UMC Senior Pastor Rev. Larry Rollins. The congregation is small and mostly poverty-stricken. Many are homeless, without access to the constant weather reports on the Internet and television. As details of the destruction were given, the worship leader could see sadness and compassion change the faces of these gentle sisters and brothers in Christ. The offering baskets were passed and placed on the altar. Having no pianist that day, the congregation sang “Rock of Ages” a capella with several coming forward to help “lead” the singing. It was a God moment.

After the service, the worship leader took the offering to her office to count the dollars, quarters, dimes, nickels, and pennies. She witnessed the acts of generosity and was moved to tears. The small congregation had reached into their tattered pockets and had given \$90.49 to the “least of these.”

Two Scripture verses came to mind. First, “It is more blessed to give than to receive..” (Acts 20:35) and “she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had.” (Luke 21:4)

In that office, the Lord assured this writer that this “widow's mite” offering, perhaps not much compared to others, would do MIGHTY things for another group of the “least of these.” After all, Jesus fed many hungry folks from two fish and some loaves, didn't he?

Thanks to God from Whom all blessings flow . . .





## We pray for victims of the Las Vegas shooting

10/2/2017

Our hearts go out to the victims of last night's shooting at an outdoor concert in Las Vegas. Early reports indicate that at least 50 people have died and hundreds more are injured. The police are at work to learn all they can about the shooter and his background. Right now there is so much we want to know, yet we want real information and not misinformation. What we do know for certain is that we must pray:

for the hundreds of wounded victims, that their injuries would heal and that they will be surrounded with support and love;

for the medical workers who have been at it all night caring for the victims of this tragedy;

for the law enforcement officers who are working tirelessly to collect evidence, conduct interviews, and develop an accurate picture;

and for the families who are grieving the death or injury of their loved ones.

And we know one thing more: that there are United Methodist Churches in Las Vegas who, along with all the other churches in that community, will be present in the hospitals and in the community so that the victims know they are not alone. Some of us know firsthand how important the presence of another human being can be at a time when we are overwhelmed by tragedy. It's not what you say; it's being there - the ministry of presence. We have United Methodist churches all over Las Vegas, and they will mean so much to that community in such a time as this.

We mourn the tragedy in Las Vegas. As United Methodists, our commitment to the sanctity of life leads us to stand up and speak out against such violence. In the days ahead, as we learn more specifics, let us continue our commitment to work with lawmakers and our fellow citizens to find ways to protect our communities from violence such as this.

Alive Together,

Lawson Bryan

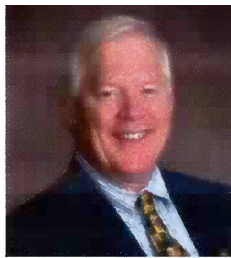


## Building Community; UMW to Meet October 21

The conference Annual Meeting being held at Statesboro First UMC October 21 will highlight this theme and will accent the job our Bishop gave us at Annual Conference, "Being alive in Christ."

The day will begin with registration at 9 a.m., which will allow time for browsing the book room and visiting with old friends and acquaintances. Worship will begin at 10 a.m. in the sanctuary with the procession of presidents, followed by the program, business session, and communion. Lunch will be served in Statesboro First UMC's beautiful dining room.





From the Desk of  
Dr. Derek McAleer

## ARE YOUR CHURCH LEADERS GETTING THE INFORMATION THEY NEED?

- Did your Treasurer ask about whether the July benefits bill was delayed?
- Did the Finance Chair want to know when the preliminary apportionments would be available?
- Did the SPRC/PPRC chair want to know what the cost of insurance would be in 2018? Or wonder if there is a new minimum salary scale?
- Has anyone in your church asked how the church can "fix" the membership roll, since the number on the roll "is too high; we don't have that many members"?

My office has sent out information on all of the above. We don't print and mail because of the high cost. We e-mail.

Who gets the emails? Those leaders whose e-mail addresses are entered to the local church dashboard. Every year the pastor, church secretary, or someone enters the leaders into the church dashboard (usually around Charge Conference time, but they can do it anytime during the year). If they enter a current e-mail address, then when we send useful information out, that leader receives it. If

the church secretary/pastor/whomever doesn't put in the e-mail addresses, their leadership will not get some of the basic information they need to help lead the church effectively. It's just that simple.

We don't send all our e-mails to everyone. I am careful to e-mail particular information to particular persons -- some only goes to the Treasurer or Finance chair, while other info may go to the Staff-Parish chair, or the Trustee chair. I try not to inundate with stuff for others.

We don't share emails so they can be spammed. We use a high-quality e-mail system which keeps others from capturing your e-mail address.

## YOU CAN HELP

Please take a look at your church dashboard, and click on the "my church's contacts" button. There you will be able to see what leaders we have for your church, and what (if any) e-mail address we have. You'll find it easy to update.

If you click on the "my church's leaders" button, you'll see who we have as your church leadership. You can put an "end date" for anyone who has rolled off, and easily add anyone who needs to be listed.

We have 215 persons named as church secretary, but only 116 e-mail addresses. We have 527 named as financial secretary/treasurer, but only 219 e-mail addresses. ***With your help, we can connect with more of our key local church leaders.*** Please look at the leadership dashboard for your church, and update it to include e-mails.

If I or my office can assist you, please do not hesitate to call.

## 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>

## Upcoming events

Early Response Team and Chainsaw Training, Moultrie - Oct. 7  
 Vashti Day - Oct. 15  
 Fresh Expressions Vision Day - Oct. 19  
 UMW Annual Meeting - Oct. 21  
 Eagles' Fall Retreat - Oct. 23-25  
 Early Response Team and Chainsaw Training, Columbus - Oct. 28  
 Early Response Team Training, Savannah - Nov. 4  
 Wesleyan College Sunday - Nov. 12  
 Wesley Glen Ministries' Golf Tournament - Nov. 13  
 Encounter Youth Retreat - Nov. 17-19

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## ***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!



# Epworth BY THE SEA

## The Evelyn Laycock Bible Study Series

### **"Creating a Symphony"**

*"God revealed his hidden design to us, which is according to his goodwill and the plan that he intended to accomplish through his Son. This is what God planned for the climax of all times: to bring all things together in Christ, the things in heaven along with the things on earth." Ephesians 1:9-10 CEB*

Epworth By The Sea  
St. Simons Island, GA  
October 9-12, 2017

**Preaching: Bishop James E. Swanson, Sr.**

**Bible Study Leader: Bishop Richard C. Looney**

**Dr. Evelyn Laycock** - She has the God given gift of teaching. After teaching and preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ for a life-time, she has established the Evelyn Laycock Bible Study Series at Epworth By The Sea. By establishing an endowment fund, the series will bring leading Bible scholars and preachers to Epworth. In retirement, her legacy of love and devotion to God's Holy Word will continue to Make Disciples for Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World. Evelyn plans to attend each series and enjoy this new chapter on her spiritual journey along with her many friends.

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### **Encounter Youth Retreat - "One"**

**November 17-19, 2017**

**6th - 12th grade students**

**Register online [sgaumc.org/events](http://sgaumc.org/events)**

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### **Winter Conference**

**January 28-31, 2018**

**Our theme will be "Alive Together in Worship" as we seek to discover new ways to create vibrant and intimate worship experiences.**

**Bishop James Swanson and our own South Georgia Bishop, Lawson Bryan, will participate in leading the conference. Dr. Ben Witherington, III, Professor of New Testament at Asbury Theological Seminary, will be the Bible teacher. Housing Register online [sgaumc.org/events](http://sgaumc.org/events)**

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### **Saint Simons Island Storytelling Festival**

**February 17-19, 2018**

**Storytellers: Donald Davis, Kevin Kling, Kim Weitkamp and Andy Offutt Irwion**  
**For more information and to register: [sgaumc.org/events](http://sgaumc.org/events)**













