

Gulf Breezes

Monthly Newsletter of Gulf Cove United Methodist Church

From the Pastor

Dear Family,

Easter is almost here, and I can already hear the sound of joyful “Alleluias” on the horizon! After walking through the sacred season of Lent, we are about to step into the most powerful celebration of our faith—the Resurrection of Jesus Christ!

Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 15:55-57:

“Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting? ... But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

We are an Easter people, a resurrection people, and we have a full week ahead to journey together toward that empty tomb!

Holy Week Services & Events

- Maundy Thursday –April 17 @ 5pm

A service of Holy Communion, remembering the Last Supper of Christ. The table is set, and there is a place for you. Bring a dish to share.

- Good Friday –April 18 @ 6 pm

A powerful service of reflection, as we remember the depth of Christ’s sacrifice on the cross. It’s a hard day, but we know that Sunday is coming!

- Easter Egg Hunt – Saturday, April 19 @ 11 am

Let’s be honest—this is one of the most anticipated events of the year (by the kids and the grown-ups who get to watch the chaos unfold). Bring your baskets and your best “I’m-totally-not-racing-the-kids” attitude.

Easter Sunday – He is Risen!

We will have four opportunities to celebrate the resurrection together!

☉ 6:45 AM Sunrise Service – For the early risers and those who want to experience the first light of Easter morning, just as Mary did when she found the empty tomb. (Bring coffee. Jesus is risen, but we still need caffeine.)

⛪ 8:00 AM, 9:30 AM, & 11:00 AM Worship Services – Whether you’re an early bird, a mid-morning worshipper, or you need that extra cup of coffee before church, there’s a place for you! Come ready to sing, celebrate, and be reminded that hope is alive!

Easter Is More Than a Sunday

Easter isn’t just a one-day event—it’s a life-changing reality. Jesus didn’t rise so we could just have one great church service; He rose so we could live as resurrection people every single day.

So, let’s gather, worship, and rejoice together. Let’s welcome friends and neighbors. Let’s be a

church that lives out the power of the resurrection in the way we love and serve.

I can't wait to celebrate with you all! Until then, know that I'm praying for you and hoping you don't eat too much Easter candy before Sunday (no judgment if you do).

With love and Joy,

Mike

SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

- 8am** **Traditional Worship Service**
- 9:30am** **Contemporary Worship Service**
AND Kids Church (PK-5) #109
- 9:30am** **Adult Sunday School #D**
- 11am** **Traditional Worship Service**
- 4-6pm** **Youth Group (gr 6-12) #D**

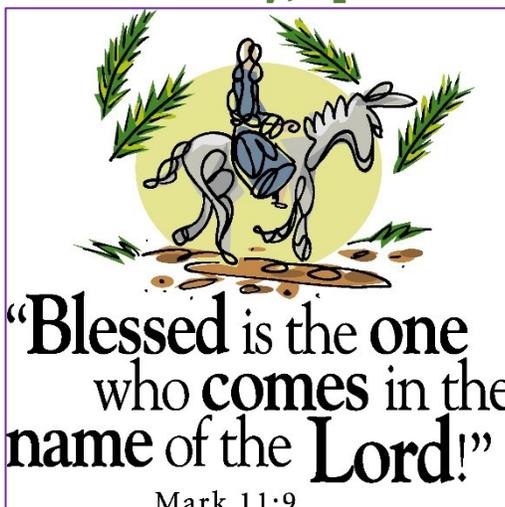
WEDNESDAYS AT GULF COVE

- Midweek Boost** ~ meets with Pastor Mike at 12pm.
- Pastor's Bible Study** ~ meets at 4:30pm.
- Jesus Rocks** ~ Grades K-5 meet from 6-7:30pm.
- Youth** ~ Grades 6-12 meet from 6-7:30pm.

Notes: Midweek Boost and Pastor's Bible Study are open to all adults. Discussions might be about the scripture for the upcoming Sunday, or a short video or book study. There are no requirements, no prep work – all are welcome. Bring a Bible and join us. Both classes are the same content, just different times. Jesus Rocks and Youth start out together with a light meal before splitting into their groups. All kids/youth are welcome!



Palm Sunday, April 13



Maundy Thursday Shared Meal ~ April 17, 5pm





**EMMAUS WALK ~
Suncoast Emmaus
Women's Spring Walk 98,
May 1-4**, at Dayspring
Episcopal Camp in Parrish,
FL (2.2 miles off I-75 from
Exit 224/US 301); \$250 per
person (nonrefundable \$100

deposit due w/registration; balance of \$150 due by
registration deadline on 4/21). If any woman would
like to experience a deepening of her spiritual life and
in her relationship with God, please contact the office.



**Being the church together means all of us need
to pitch in.**

We have volunteers who are part of our email
prayer chain. This job is something almost
everyone can do.

Volunteers open the church and get our Sunday
morning coffee going.

Volunteers greet everyone at the door and hand
out bulletins and act as ushers who pass out
attendance pads and collect offerings.

Volunteers count the offerings and make sure
they get to the bank.

Volunteers make sure our communion elements
are ready.

Singers in the choir and members of the praise
band are volunteering their time to practice,

then sing and play so we can have a spiritual and
meaningful worship time.

Volunteers come out and take care of the church
grounds.

Volunteers help with Sunday School, Youth
Group and Jesus Rocks.

Volunteers facilitate Bible studies and small
groups.

All of these people and more do this because
they are a part of our church family, and
together we make the church what it is. Sunday
mornings are a time to gather together and
worship God and get filled spiritually, so that we
can share the love of God with our community.

Volunteers can then go out and help with
community outreach programs, events and
activities like Englewood Helping Hand, Closet of
Hope, Trunk R Treat, Easter Festival, MRES
Events, VBS, Thanksgiving Dinner and more. We
cannot be the church without all of you.

Thank you to all of our volunteers.

WE ARE THE CHURCH – ALL OF US!

What CAN you do?



Englewood Helping Hand
needs the following: bar
soap, toilet paper, shelf
stable or powdered milk,
condiments, instant
mashed potatoes, ramen

noodles, rice, tuna, canned chicken, canned
beans (kidney, black, refried, baked), canned
pasta, canned chili, soups, peanut butter, cereal,
or any shelf stable foods. Donations can be
placed in the EHH bin in the Narthex entry.
Please be sure items have not expired.



CURRENT OPPORTUNITIES TO BE THE HANDS AND FEET OF JESUS IN OUR CHURCH AND OUR COMMUNITY

Sponsoring Combined Services: We are looking for church groups to take the reins for one of the combined services (held on 5th Sundays) and be responsible for both setting up and cleaning up. Since we use paper plates & disposable cups, and people take their covered dishes home, it should not be too much work for a group.

Leadership Board took care of March 30. The next combined service will be on June 29, and Jackie suggested that the VBS group take care of that one, since June 29 will also be VBS Sunday.

The other two combined services this year will be on August 31 and November 30. It would be nice if two other groups would volunteer for those two days. Hint, hint...

Englewood Helping Hand: We still need a Co-Captain for Englewood Helping Hand to work with Jean Howard. Work with her to make sure food is collected and brought to EHH and signup volunteers when it is our church's turn to volunteer at the pantry.

Vacation Bible School: The VBS planning meeting on March 9 went very well. We will be using the Group program "True North," and VBS

will be held Monday to Friday, June 23-27, from 5:30 to 8:30pm. We still need an adult to handle the Imagination Station science projects (2 youth have agreed to help), an adult to handle the Sticky Scripture Bible sessions (2 more youth have agreed to help), and a couple adults to help in the kitchen. Thank you to the 36 people who have already volunteered to help with VBS!!!!

Usher/Greeter Coordinators: No one has stepped forward yet to act as coordinator for either the 8:00 or 9:30 services. This position can be shared if you are not a full time resident. The job consists of encouraging and training people to be greeters and ushers, and making sure someone is signup up to do the job each month. Contact the office if you can help. 941.697.1747.

Church News

YOUTH GROUP NEWS

Youth Report: Jackie reported on several youth and children's activities:

- Vacation Bible School is scheduled for June 23-27.
- Child Protection Class is scheduled for May 18, and will include additional information on dealing with disruptive children. This second part is not mandatory, but recommended.
- VBS Decoration Workdays will be held on the Saturdays leading up to VBS.
- The Youth will be attending Warren Willis Camp from July 7-12. They alternate "camp" years with mission trip years to allow time to raise funds to cover the mission trips.
- A Bingo Night will be held on Friday, April 11.
- A Trivia Night will be held on Sunday, May 18.

During the entire month of May, they will collect orders for baked goods, with a Baking Day on Saturday, May 31 – brownies, cookies, and muffins.

Church news continued on next page.

(church News continued)

REPORT ON WOMEN'S WORKSHOP

The Women's Workshop facilitated by Lu and Susan Roy in March was well attended by 27 women. All of the feedback was positive.

Interested in facilitating a Bible Study, Video Series, Men's Study or ???? Please contact the office to submit your plans. We love new ideas and new groups.

TEAM CUBA

John McGuire advised that our semi-annual support for the Cuba churches (\$5,800 to cover pastor's salaries, missionary salaries, and each church's missions) was delivered to Dan Christopherson two weeks ago. Dan will take the funds to Cuba at the end of March. After this support payment, the balance in our Cuba account is \$6,517.



Review of Current Finances:

John Furtado reminded us that church operating expenses do not decrease

because attendance and giving is down. The easiest way to remedy the situation is to have automatic payments pulled from a checking account on a weekly or monthly basis. Practically all banks offer this service which makes giving so much easier – the onus is on your bank, not you, to get that check in the mail. You select the date and amount one time, and the bank does the rest.

	FEBRUARY	YTD
Total Spendable Income Received	37,901	79,231
Operating Expenses	44,278	81,994
Surplus/Deficit	(6,377)	(2,763)
Reserve Money Used	0	0
Designated Funds Received	16,008	32437

COMMUNION OFFERING ENVELOPES

Each month a different fund is chosen by our church leadership to receive these extra funds. If you wish to give above and beyond your usual tithe for April, the Communion Offering will be designated for our Conference Special.

SECOND SUNDAY ~ SECOND MILE GIVING is

another opportunity to go above and beyond your normal giving to support the church. This collection always goes to our reserve fund, so that we may pay our bills when gifts and tithes will not cover our regular monthly expenses.

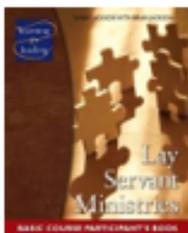
DONATIONS MADE EASY ~ GCUMC accepts donations by several methods. You indicate these donations to be either a one-time payment or recurring payments:

- *GivePlus+*: This special program has 3 online giving methods: (1) the GCUMC website "donate" button; (2) the smartphone app, uses your credit/debit card, checking account, or savings account; (3) text the amount to donate by dialing 941-236-5788
- *ACH Payments*: Electronic payments made by your bank to GCUMC from your account.
- *Bill Pay*: Paper checks issued by your bank to GCUMC from your account.
- *Check or Cash*: Write a check or making sure you have enough cash.

Worship Through Giving
2 Corinthians 9:6-8
 6 But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.
 7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.
 8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all-sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.



Florida UMC Conference Lay Servant Ministries Southwest District ZOOM Classes OPEN for registration NOW



BASIC, Introduction to LSM and Methodism and Christianity history

5 classes, consecutive Saturday mornings April 5 – May 3, 2025

Instructor: Ken DeWalt

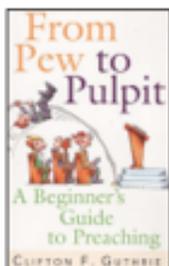
Registration: \$5: Check made out to Ken DeWalt mailed to 7 Jute St, Alva, FL, 33920 or PayPal to kendewalt1@gmail.com

Book: *Basic Introduction to Lay Servant Ministries, Sandy and Brian Jackson*. Purchase a good used copy anywhere you buy books online, or new from the www.UpperRoom.com

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84743711430?pwd=KMn4BjXclNhVITpOc6JVN0Ou3DXvto.1>

Meeting ID: 847 4371 1430 Passcode: 932099



From Pew to Pulpit: A Beginner's Guide to Preaching

5 classes, consecutive Saturday mornings May 10– June 7, 2025

Instructor: Ken DeWalt

Registration: \$5: Check made out to Ken DeWalt mailed to 7 Jute St, Alva, FL, 33920 or PayPal to kendewalt1@gmail.com

Book: *From Pew to Pulpit: A Beginner's Guide to Preaching, Clifton F. Guthrie*. Purchase a good used copy anywhere you buy books online, or new from the www.UpperRoom.com

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83147819744?pwd=SFEha6rt03yrkCTBzaBi6F3rWApY7b.1>

Meeting ID: 831 4781 9744 Passcode: 932099



This is one of our community outreach projects. Many hands are needed. Please contact Holly Tozer if you can help. Oh, and bring the kids and grandkids! 517.260.6167.



WOMENS BIBLE STUDY IN MAY

Patty Frick is planning to facilitate another Women's Bible Study on Tuesdays in May. It will be open to women and their friends and will be titled *More Women of the Bible*. You need not have attended the last study to be a part of this one. Look for more information in the upcoming weeks.



VBS will be held Monday to Friday, June 23-27, from 5:30 to 8:30pm. Many volunteers are still needed. Please contact Holly Tozer if you can help.



Child Protection Training: This training is mandated by Conference for ANYONE who works with our children or youth on a regular OR occasional basis (such as through VBS). This training is to occur annually. Background checks are also required every 3 years, and many checks were performed before VBS last year. This year's training is scheduled for Sunday, May 18, from 12-2pm. Lunch will be provided. Anyone who should receive this training but cannot attend that day needs to contact Holly Tozer to make alternative arrangements. As mentioned above, we will also include additional information on dealing with disruptive children on May 18; this second part is not mandatory, but is recommended.



Phyllis Roushar	4/2
Pat Meyer	4/2
David Plummer	4/3
Ken Priest	4/3
Richard Jacoby	4/4
Theresa Peterson	4/4
Julie Whitford	4/4
Patty Twardzik	4/7
Brenda Carter	4/12
Tim Matthews	4/13
Alison Grove	4/13
Ralph Saczawa	4/14
DeAnna Crandall	4/14
John Zink	4/14
Quinn Gray	4/18
Julie Anne Kern	4/20
Penny Wolfe	4/20
Donna Palmer	4/22
Lynne Gill	4/24
John Kaiser	4/24
Roran Egan	4/26
Dawn Eckbreth	4/26
Barbara Indermaur	4/27



Dick & Theresa Peterson	4/4
Samuel & Jackie Carter	4/24
Seth & Dawna Stewart	4/27



APRIL SERMON SERIES

- April 6 Philippians 3:1-11
When We Don't Know God

- April 13 PALM SUNDAY
Luke 19:28-44
When We Feel Unwanted

- April 20 EASTER SUNDAY
John 20:10-18
Surprise in a Graveyard

- April 27 John 20:19-23
Panic Room



- 6:45am Easter Sunrise Service
- 8:00am Easter Traditional Service
- 9:30am Easter Family Contemporary Service
- 11:00am Easter Traditional Service

Gulf Cove United Methodist Church
 1100 S. McCall Road, Port Charlotte, FL 33981
 941.697.1747 www.gulfcovechurch.com email: gulfcoveumc@gmail.com
 Rev. Mike Weaver II, Pastor