

Messenger

A PUBLICATION OF FIRST METHODIST CHURCH

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Mississippi-West Tennessee Annual Conference

This past weekend was incredible! On January 25-27, we held our Convening Annual Conference for the Mississippi-West Tennessee Conference of the Global Methodist Church.

Over 300 delegates from all over Mississippi and West Tennessee came together at Christ Methodist Church in Memphis, Tennessee with at least 200 other visitors to officially launch our Conference and to celebrate this new beginning in the Global Methodist Church.

Most of the Conference business was completed in less than an hour. We elected officers for all our Conference boards and committees, approved a conference budget for 2024 (\$639,021), and established a mission partnership with the Global Methodist Church in Angola, Africa.

The **mission partnership with Angola** is an exciting opportunity to invest in the kingdom. God is doing powerful things in the churches there, but they are really struggling with finances. Mississippi-West Tennessee has already sent them \$15,000 to help them get started as a conference, and we budgeted \$60,000 more for 2024.

But, we'd like to invite individual churches to contribute to support local pastors. For just \$100 per month we can support a pastor in Angola. That's just \$1,200 per year!

And their leader, B.D. Sapalo, assures us it will make a real difference in helping pastors have food and shelter as they pastor their churches and reach new people for Jesus. What an incredible opportunity to invest in the kingdom!

Most of the rest of the Conference was spent learning more about our mission statement: *To make disciples of Jesus Christ who worship passionately, love extravagantly, and witness boldly.*

Rev. Dr. Leah Hidde-Gregory, the President Pro Tem of Mid Texas, preached for us throughout the weekend. Bishop Scott Jones presided over our business sessions and led the ordination service on Friday night.

That night we **ordained 55 new pastors** in the Mississippi-West Tennessee Conference (9 Deacons & 46 Elders). Many of these ordinands had been local pastors with all the educational requirements already met to be ordained in the GMC.

So, for instance, many of you may know Glenn Hoskins, the pastor at Ellison Methodist Church in Vaughan. Glenn has been a local pastor for near 20 years. Friday night he was ordained as an Elder in the GMC. It was so exciting! And there are so many others like him.

Our lay delegate for this Annual Conference is **Rich Knox**. Rich was one of the founding members of the Conference. He served on the transition team (TCAT) that helped organize a Global Methodist Church here in Mississippi. And this past weekend, he was elected as Chair of the Conference Committee on Finance, Administration, and Benefits. We are so grateful for his leadership in our Conference and here in our local church.

As your pastor, I was elected to continue serving as Chair of the Board of Ministry for the Conference as well as Presiding Elder for the Delta District. Our districts are currently growing and will soon be restructured to better accommodate that growth.

Currently, we have **180 churches** in the Mississippi-West Tennessee Conference. And I already know of three new churches that have recently voted to join us just this past week. It is an exciting time to be a part of the Global Methodist Church!

Brother Lauren



FEBRUARY

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4

- 9:00 a.m. Contemporary Service
- 9:50 a.m. Sunday School
- 11:00 a.m. Traditional Worship Service
- 11:00 a.m. Live Stream Worship
- 6:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study
- 6:15 p.m. Solid Ground Youth

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5

- 5:00 p.m. Bible Study Millie's home
- 6:00 p.m. Trustees meeting

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7

- 4:30 p.m. Ladies Handbell Choir
- 5:30 p.m. W.O.W. Children's Ministry
- 6:00 p.m. Chancel Choir
- 6:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study
- 6:15 p.m. Snack Supper
- 6:30 p.m. Youth

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10

- 9-12 noon Methodist Market



Birthdays &
Anniversaries
This Month!

4. Shirley Simmons

8. Jim Roberts

4. Mr. & Mrs. Gray Goodman

9. Mr. & Mrs. Harry Simmons

With Sympathy

Sympathy and love is extended to Neetsie and Butch Gary and family in the death of her sister, Kathy Erickson Coker, who died January 20, 2024.



Kathy Coker

M/M Camp King

Clayton Nagle

Jim Pierce Family
H. Brister DeCell, Jr.

Frances Pierce

Lea & Lesca Black

Mary Stigler Thompson

Jim & Chris Lauderdale

Josie Tullos

Carolyn Anderson

Bill & Kathy Allen

Karen Appleby

Cecille Werkheiser

Phil Williams

M/M John Phillips

M/M Mike Phillips

Campbell Delong, LLP

Jim Pierce & Mark Jordan family

Judy & Stephen Robbins

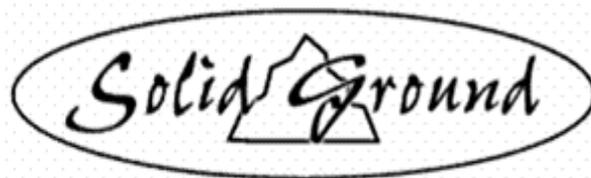
Judy & Douglas Varney



For the month of February, our series is called *Power to Serve*. In our first lesson, "Real Power," we learn about the power of Jesus through Paul. Paul was in Ephesus teaching people about Jesus when he encountered seven brothers. We will learn about more about this story on Sunday.

W.O.W. Wednesday

Wednesday night Bible Study for Grades K-6th resumed in January and begins at 5:30 p.m. The Bible Study will continue to be Bible-in-Crafts. The children have enjoyed learning about so many of God's faithful followers in the Book of Genesis while creating crafts and activities.



Sunday and Wednesday Night Youth Group will begin a new study. We will be talking about entertainment, music, and social media. We will be discussing the progression of the types of entertainment throughout the past decades and how we have been manipulated to accept, become numb to, or just ignore the fact that wrong is being presented as right. We will connect scripture to these facts and talk about how/what we, too, can avoid being pulled in.

M28 CAMP

Sign up for M28 Camp at Lake Junaluska has begun. The youth are asked to sign up ASAP due to limited availability. Sign-up includes a \$50 deposit to secure their spot. Camp dates are Friday, July 5- Tuesday, July 9. The total cost is \$350.

Sunday, February 4, 2024

Greeters

Bettina & Steve Newman

Brenda and Jim Oakes

Scripture

Luke 8:26-39

Sermon

“Deliver Us From Evil”

Flowers

Angie & Archie Edgar

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

JANUARY

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| 4. 5th Sunday after the Epiphany | Luke 4:21-30 |
| 5. Resting in the LORD | Psalm 138 |
| 6. Choose this day | Joshua 24:15-22 |
| 7. Turn away from evil | 1 Peter 3:8-12 |
| 8. Choosing whom to trust | Jeremiah 17:5-10 |
| 9. Two ways | Psalm 1 |
| 10. Either “yes” or “no” | 2 Corinthians 1:12-20 |