

FEBRUARY 2015



open hearts  
open minds  
open doors

**Vision:**

*Transforming our world one soul at a time by sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with all people. We will be Spirit-led, focused on our children and youth, as we build disciples and leaders for the future.*

**Merrell On The Move**



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+ Merrell United Methodist Church +

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**The Reverend Bancroft L. Williams, Senior Pastor**

Spirit-led • Equipped • Empowered • Disciples

*Mission: To create **S**pirit-led, **E**quipped and **E**mpowered **D**isciples for the world.*

# FROM THE PASTOR

## COMMITTED TO CHRIST



Dear brothers and sisters, grace and peace to you through our Lord Jesus Christ.

**This month we continue in the “season of Decision and Commitment toward the goal of becoming fully devoted disciples of Jesus Christ.” I pray that you will participate fully** in this time of prayer, bible reflections and submitting yourself to the obedience of what the Lord commands. Let us take at least one step in the three remaining steps to a generous life. We will be focused today on witnessing and sharing our faith in Christ. The other two weeks will focus on growing in your giving and growing in you hands-on service to the Lord. So far some persons have been impacted

by the call to commitment. Please take the time to prayerfully prepare before worship services as you make a further step.

While we deepen our steps of faith with the faithful God, we also will be commemorating Black history as the story of trial and near triumph. In that light let us remember those who served in the past especially our spiritual leaders and mentors who were faithful in the struggle for freedom and self-**advancement**. **Perhaps it is occasion to explore how a “commitment to Christ”** released the energies of people in the power of the Holy Spirit. Are our energies challenging injustice, untruth and generally evil that enslaves and inhibits love, hope and peace in our communities and nation?

Hopefully, when Ash Wednesday appears on February 18, our collective concerns and aspirations for the wellbeing of all persons may move us from repentance to a place of redemption or freedom in hearts and minds. At this point of wanting change we should be able to get up and do something about our convictions beyond, just celebration occasions by ritual, recalling history, ceremonial fanfare and banqueting. We should in our Christian commitment be ready to engage in meaningful action in keeping with the strength of our conviction of faith. I am excited about what God has in store for us this month. Be blessed saints.

From Christ’s servant in ministry with the saints,

*Pastor Bancroft Williams*

# MISSION MINISTRY CORNER

*“Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.”*

*Matthew 28:19*



## What is Mission?

The Florida Conference and the General Board of Global Ministries describes Mission in four (4) parts:

### **Purpose, Vision, and Goals of Mission:**

The General Board of Global Ministries is the global mission agency of The United Methodist Church, its annual conferences, missionary conferences, and local congregations.

**Purpose:** connecting the Church in Mission.

**Vision:** The General Board of Global Ministries equips and transforms people and places for God's mission around the world.

**Four Mission Goals:** Make disciples for Jesus Christ. Strengthen, develop, and renew Christian congregations and communities. Alleviate human suffering. Seek justice, freedom, and peace.

Mission is presence, relationship, witness and sharing. Mission is refusing to turn away when the tears of God are being shed over the violence and injustice and suffering of God's wayward creation.

Stay tune for what we are doing in the South East District and how we can help.

Later we will talk about our upcoming plans for our Mission Ministry.

*Sister Violet Jordan*



## UMM “Singspiration” Participation

Our United Methodist Men traveled to Christway Baptist Church in Miramar on January 25 to participate in their Men's Fellowship Annual “Singspiration.” Men from several churches around South Florida got together to raise their voices in harmony and praise, bringing a spectacular evening of music and message. Our men, in their signature burgundy jackets, got much support from many members of our congregation who traveled with them.



# Announcements and Upcoming Events

## Sunday Worship Times

Contemporary Worship	8:00AM	Sanctuary
Adult Bible Study	9:00AM	East Lounge
New Members Class	9:10AM	Room 17
Youth Bible Study	9:30AM	Ragsdale Hall
Traditional Worship	10:00AM	Sanctuary
Every Fourth Sunday	6:00PM	Sanctuary

## WEEKLY EVENTS

Bible Study	Monday	7:00PM	Ragsdale Hall
Bible Study	Tuesday	12 Noon	Chapel
Prayer Meeting	Tuesday	6:30PM	Sanctuary
<b>Men's Choir</b>	Wednesday	7:00PM	Music Room
Dance Rehearsal	Wednesday	7:00PM	Ragsdale Hall
Dunamis Youth	Friday	7:00PM	Ragsdale Hall
Choir Rehearsal	Saturday	5:00PM	Music Room



### Bread Cart Ministry Tomorrow

**FEBRUARY 2-** 2:00 PM—3:00 PM  
RAGSDALE HALL

Please Note: You will be required to sign in with your telephone #, and show your ID.



### FEEDING WITH COMPASSION

**SATURDAY  
FEBRUARY 21  
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM**

**SPPRC COMMITTEE MEETING**  
TUESDAY , FEBRUARY 3 - 7:00pM room 17

**EVANGELISM COMMITTEE MEETING**  
SATURDAY FEBRUARY 21 - 10:30AM -  
ROOM 17

**finance COMMITTEE MEETING**  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10 - 7:00PM - ROOM 17

**WORSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING**  
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28 - 2:00PM -  
ROOM 17



**LYDIA CIRCLE**  
Thursday, FEBRUARY 12  
7:00pM east Lounge

**VISION COMMITTEE MEETING**  
Saturday, FEBRUARY 28 - 3:00PM -  
ROOM 17



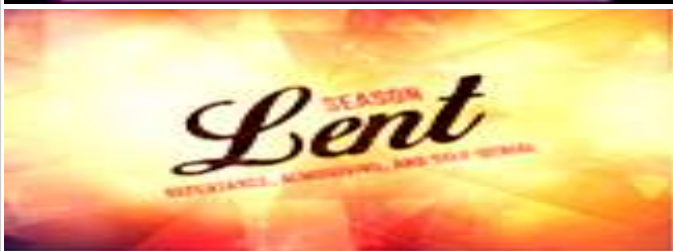
**RUTH CIRCLE Luncheon**  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17 - 10:00 AM  
RAGSDALE HALL

**CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING**  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24 - 7:00PM  
RAGSDALE HALL

**TRUSTEES COMMITTEE MEETING**  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17 - 7:30PM  
ROOM 17

**Merrell Preschool Advisory  
meeting**  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25 - 7:00PM  
ROOM 17

# The month of February



## 2015 National Black History Theme:

### A Century of Black Life, History and Culture

Over the past century, African American life, history, and culture have become major forces in the United States and the world. In 1915, few could have imagined that African Americans in music, art, and literature would become appreciated by the global community. Fewer still could have predicted the prominence achieved by African Americans, as well as other people of African descent, in shaping world politics, war, and diplomacy. Indeed, it was nearly universally believed that Africans and people of African descent had played no role in the unfolding of history and were a threat to American civilization itself. A century later, few can deny the centrality of African Americans in the making of American history. Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH)

### Hearts Fixed on the Lord

On Valentine's Day, we pray that we will always have our hearts fixed on the Lord. On Valentine's Day, we pray that the love our Lord showed for us will transfer from Him to us, manifested in our desire to serve those who need us. On Valentine's Day, we pray to remember the origin of all love, from the beginning, and the source of all love we know now is our Lord, Jesus Christ. In Jesus' name we pray; amen. By Joanna Fuchs

### Transfiguration Sunday

We celebrate the revelation of Christ's glory "before the passion" so that we may "be strengthened to bear our cross and be changed into his likeness." The focus of the Lenten season is renewed discipline in walking in the way of the cross and rediscovery of the baptismal renunciation of evil and sin and our daily adherence to Christ. At Easter, which reveals the fullness of **Christ's glory (foreshadowed in the Transfiguration)**, Christians give themselves anew to the gospel at the Easter Vigil where they share the dying and rising of Christ.

### Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent. Lent is a time when many Christians prepare for Easter by observing a period of fasting, repentance, moderation and spiritual discipline.

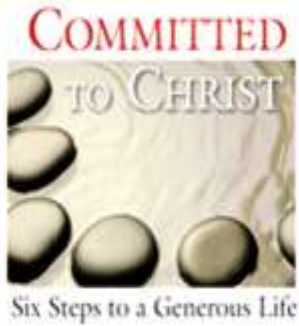
Ash Wednesday emphasizes two themes: our sinfulness before God and our human mortality. The service focuses on both themes, helping us to realize that both have been triumphed through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

During some Ash Wednesday services, the minister will lightly rub the sign of the cross with ashes onto the foreheads of worshipers. The use of ashes as a sign of mortality and repentance has a long history in Jewish and Christian worship. Historically, ashes signified purification and sorrow for sins.

### Season of Lent

Lent is a season of the Christian year when people are invited to simplify their lives to focus on their relationship with God in Christ.

Lent is a time when many Christians prepare for Easter by observing a period of fasting, repentance, moderation and spiritual discipline. The purpose is to set aside time for reflection on Jesus Christ - his



A seven week series beginning  
Sunday, January 4 through  
Sunday, February 15th  
*Living Your Commitment to Christ*  
**How committed are you?**

Have you been following along on the series *“Six Steps To A Generous Life” Living Your Commitment to Christ?* This has been a great start for our church’s journey this year by getting back to the basics of true discipleship.

It draws our attention to **Prayer, Bible Reading, Church Attendance, Witness, Financial Giving and Service.** These are true marks of a disciple. If you haven’t been following

along, it’s not too late to join in. We encourage you to start reading the booklet provided and participate by making a commitment each week by completing the commitment cards. But don’t just stop there, James 2:22-24 (CEV) says it all too clearly: *Obey God’s message! Don’t fool yourselves by just listening to it. <sup>23</sup> If you hear the message and don’t obey it, you are like people who stare at themselves in a mirror <sup>24</sup> and forget what they look like as soon as they leave.*

At the end of this exciting series, let us declare we are **“Spirit-led, focused on our children and youth, as we build disciples and leaders for the world.”**

Spirit-led•Equipped•Empowered•Disciples

## Confirmation Classes

Merrell confirmation classes currently have 10 enrolled candidates in the adult group and seven in the youth group. This is a sign that Merrell is growing. Our vision is to transform our world one soul at a time by sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with all people. The challenge for Merrell in 2015 is how many souls will you share the gospel with this year in transforming our world?

To that end, let us become more spiritually-led; let us increase our attendance to prayer meeting, and bible studies, Sunday School classes, home devotion, participation in ministries, and let us invite someone to church. We are Spirit-led, Equipped, Empowered Disciples at Merrell United Methodist Church!



## Prayer and Worship – a Study

Adult Sunday School extends a very special invitation to all saints, especially the men, to join us every Sunday at 9 a.m. in the East Lounge as we focus on how to pray and worship God.

God comes to us right where we are. He seeks us and finds us and points our lives in the best direction for us. When we begin to catch a glimpse of the total reality of God, the natural reaction is to worship Him.

Let us devote our time and spirit to the study of His word.

--Di Dann

## NEW SUPERINTENDENT FOR SOUTH EAST DISTRICT



LAKELAND – Bishop Ken Carter has announced that the Rev. Dr. Cynthia Weems will become our new South East District superintendent as of July 1.

She will replace the Rev. Dr. Craig Nelson, who has been our superintendent since 2009.

Rev. Dr. Weems, currently pastor of First UMC, Miami, has been serving churches in Florida since 2007.

Fluent in Portuguese and Spanish, she received her Doctor of Ministry degree from Saint Paul School of Theology, a United Methodist seminary with campuses in Kansas City and Oklahoma City. Her undergraduate work was at Millsaps College in Jackson, Miss., followed by a Master of Divinity degree from Yale Divinity School.

She spent two years as a volunteer missionary in Cochabamba, Bolivia, before accepting clergy appointments in congregations in Connecticut and Kansas. In the Florida Conference, Weems has served on the Board of Ordained Ministry since 2010 and has been theology chairperson since 2012. She is the chairperson of the Committee on Resolutions for the conference and has served as the South East District Residents in Ministry leader for six year.

“I am honored and excited to serve in this new capacity,” Weems said by email of her new appointment. “I love the South East District and its amazing opportunities for ministry.”



# The Merrell United Methodist **Men's Fellowship**

*Cordially Invite You To Attend Their Annual*

## *The Pre-Valentines Banquet*

*Friday, February 6, 2015 7:00 PM—1:00 AM*

*Fabulous Inverrary Vacation Resort*

*3501 Inverrary Blvd., Lauderhill, FL*

*Donation: \$60.00 Dress: Formal*

*Music by: JANICE "THE EMPRESS"*

*Tickets are still available!!!!*



## **“Sweet Treats” for your Sweet Tooth**

**Support our Youth!!!!**

Don't forget to stop by Ragsdale Hall on **February 8** to pick up a pastry and other confections as the Youth Ministry puts its cooking skills on display for its annual Bake Sale fundraiser. Expect to see your favorite goodies on sale – coconut drops, ginger beer and cake. Stop by and support Merrell's Youth Ministry.



## **A Cultural Affair**

Cultural Sunday will be on **February 22**. Please join the congregation after the 10 a.m. worship service in Ragsdale Hall for food, fellowship and fun. This is an opportunity to bring your delicious cultural cuisine to share and to wear your best African finery commemorating your culture for Black History Month.

## **Lay Servant Ministries News**

A basic and advanced course in Lay Servant Ministries will be given in February and March for those in the South East District. The first, a basic course, will be at Fort Lauderdale United Methodist Church, 101 SE Third Ave., Fort Lauderdale. The course will be given in two sessions – Saturday, **February 7** and Saturday **February 14** from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. A breakfast snack and lunch will be provided. The cost is \$25.00 Scholarships are available. For more information, please call Pastor Pam Maden at 508.423.1454. The second, an advanced course will be at Plantation United Methodist Church, 1001 NW 70<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Plantation, on **March 20-21**. This course also will be done in two phases, from 5-9 p.m. on Friday, March 20, and from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, March 21. The fee is \$45.00. Light snack included on Friday and breakfast and lunch are included on Saturday. For more information, please call Jacki Haack, Lay Servant Ministry Director at 954.559.4465.



Rev, Hope McNeil-Williams 02/01  
Valrie Henry 02/03  
Tiana McDonald 02/03  
Everton Kelly 02/04  
Thelma McGeachy 02/04  
Edith York 02/05  
Dudley Mills 02/05  
Xavier Robinson 02/06  
Manu Barnes 02/06  
Janet Davis 02/07  
Helen Searing 02/07  
Dizzierene Cox 02/08

Annette Smith 02/08  
Carmeta McKail 02/09  
Horby Turner 02/09  
Shawn Robinson 02/10  
Joyce Boothe-Holman 02/11  
Joan Chambers 02/11  
Hyacinth Henry 02/11  
Randall Kelly 02/11  
Mavis Pusey 02/11  
Sydney Wood 02/11  
Claudette Cox-Brown 02/12  
Dorlen Earl 02/14  
Jermeko Harris 02/14

Andrew Holder 02/15  
Gloria Hudson 02/15  
Sakeena Gohagen 02/17  
Javaunie Harrigan 02/18  
George Riviears 02/21  
Kenneth Farquharson 02/23  
Trisha Williams 02/23  
Fitzroy Lawrence 02/24  
Zharayah Warner DeSuza 02/24  
Stanley Martin 02/24  
Errol Cameron 02/26  
Monica Powell 02/27  
Ralph Williams 2/28

### **+ The Staff +**

#### **The Rev. Bancroft Leighton Williams, Pastor**

Email: [pastorbancroft@merrellumc.org](mailto:pastorbancroft@merrellumc.org)

Claudette Meatley, Assistant to the Pastor

Email: [claudette@merrellumc.org](mailto:claudette@merrellumc.org)

Mr. Louis Trotman, Director of Music

Ms. Shirley Smith, Director Preschool

Email: [Preschool@merrellumc.org](mailto:Preschool@merrellumc.org)

Mr. Leroy Satchell, Custodian

#### **MEMBERSHIP AND DISCIPLESHIP**

Merrell welcomes interested persons to become members.

We invite you to contact the Pastor by calling the Church Office.

#### **BAPTISMS**

Performed at the Sunday Service, contact the Church Office.

#### **MARRIAGES**

Performed after consultation with the Pastor.

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In time of **illness or sorrow**, please call the Pastor  
or the Church Office promptly.

*Bulletin Announcement Forms are available in the church office area on the office door. Please return form(s) via email: [office@merrellumc.org](mailto:office@merrellumc.org) or place it in the box on the office door. Deadline for announcements: **WEDNESDAY at NOON.***