

Happy April everyone!

I hope your Easter was wonderful and spring is off to a good start. It certainly is bringing lots of changes to College Park First UMC! There are several updates I'd like to bring to your attention:

Reverend Vicki announced her retirement several weeks ago. This means that our church will be assigned a new pastor named in May and the respective moves will occur in June. For those of you not familiar with the United Methodist tradition, please don't be alarmed. Explained below is the UMC pastor-appointment system and procedure.

- The [Encyclopedia of World Methodism](#) explains. "One of the distinguishing characteristics of the United Methodist Church is the itinerant system in which pastors move from appointment to appointment, or church to church, so that at all times every preacher has a church and every church has a preacher...". This system dates back to the days of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism.
- In the UMC, clergy appointments are made annually by the bishop, who has the responsibility for setting all the pastoral appointments in the conference. In our circumstance the Staff Parish Relations Committee led by Kathleen Gulley has been working with our District Superintendent to outline what we'd like to see in a new pastor. The District Superintendent will then work with the Bishop during March and April to make the appropriate selections and assignments.

Reverend Vicki has been a great asset to our congregation; keeping us glued together as we worked through significant staff turnover as well as the departure of The Main Street Academy. She has a great command of the Church Discipline and as a result our committees and processes are running more appropriately and smoothly than in the past. More to come on our celebration of Reverend Vicki's role in our church and plans for welcoming a new pastor.

At the last Church Council Meeting, we agreed to focus our attention on a couple of things.

- We will be posting our Church Directory online so that members have electronic access. The church office will control the data base and any changes pertaining to needed updates. Stay tuned for the rollout of this new feature.  
Speaking of the directory, please make certain you have updated your information including an **up-to-date picture**. The directory can be invaluable to our new Pastor as he begins to put names with faces. Page 7 in this newsletter is a form to complete and return via mail or email ([info@cpfirstumc.org](mailto:info@cpfirstumc.org)) to the office.
- In support of our Church Covenant, we are expanding our connectedness with visitors and new members within the church and community. To that end, we will be working on getting more information to new members along with helping them to feel more welcomed, creating several work groups for things like church beautification and community projects and instituting several small groups – if you have an interest in becoming involved, please let me know!

The Learning Academy of College Park is excited about the potential for growth and upcoming move into the Educational Building, which the Church Council approved last month. The goal for TLACP is to have fifty-five students by the fall. The Board of Directors made a request to the Finance Committee for funds to repair and update the Educational Building, to update the old parsonage (to be used as a rental) and to pave the parking lot. Due to Stuart Gulley's hard work, five families have graciously committed to underwrite the requested \$65,000. Thanks go to Dr. Gulley and each of the generous families!!!

We have lots of exciting things happening here at College Park First UMC. Thanks for being a part of it.

Meredith Hodges and Julie  
Co-Chairs Church Council

Askew

