

# The Messenger



**FIRST METHODIST CHURCH**  
**— OF ZEPHYRHILLS —**  
a Global Methodist Family

## *Branching Out* *March 2025*

*In this issue:*  
*Annual Walk to Emmaus for Men and Women ~ See page 06*

38635 5th Avenue, Zephyrhills, FL 33542  
Church Office: (813) 782-5645  
[www.fmcz.org](http://www.fmcz.org) / [info@fmcz.org](mailto:info@fmcz.org)

## Join us for Live, In-Person Sunday Worship

Contemporary Service 9:30am

Traditional Service 11:00 am

**Children's Church** dismissal at both services

**Adult Sunday School:** 9:30-10:30am Crusaders room;

11:00am-12:00pm Truthseekers room

### New to FMCZ? Welcome!

#### First-Time Guests

Welcome! We hope you'll have a wonderful, Spirit-filled experience worshipping God with us. We have a gift for you. Just ask one of the ushers for a first time guest gift bag after the worship service.

#### Children's Nursery

We offer a Nursery for children aged 8 weeks through 5 years. It opens at 9:15am each Sunday morning and is open for the full hour of each worship service. It is a safe and nurturing place with screened and trained leaders located in the Education Building through the door to Cooper Hall.

#### Children's Church

Kindergarten through fifth graders are invited to Children's Church! They are dismissed halfway through each worship service. One of our screened and trained team members will lead them to the Children's Church room in the **Education Building** for a fun, Christ-centered learning experience. All parents/guardians please pick up your children immediately following the service.

#### Sanctuary Mothers' Room

Read about our accommodations just for new mothers. Page 4 of this publication.

#### Restrooms

Restrooms are located in the sanctuary lobby, in Cooper Hall by the kitchen, and at the end of the hallway in the Education Building. Changing tables are available in most restrooms.

#### Sunday Café

Drop in for light refreshments in Cooper Hall before or between worship services 9:00-11:00am. Grab a cup of coffee and a treat on your way to worship or Sunday School class, and meet some of the other friendly people in our church family!

### Campus Map



- |                       |               |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| A. Truthseeker's Room | E. Kitchen    |
| B. Crusader's Room    | F. Rest Rooms |
| C. Nursery            | G. Choir Room |
| D. Children's Church  |               |



## March 2025 Worship Services

**Worship Series:** You Won't Believe What Jesus Said! (Based on The Sermon on the Mount)

Contrary to popular beliefs, in fulfilling the Law, Jesus RAISED the bar on expected attitudes and behaviors of God's people! If people actually read what Jesus said and taught, many would honestly be shocked. This series explores what Jesus REALLY said on various topics in his world-changing sermon.

**Sunday, March 02: Communion Sunday**

Jesus Said What? "About Who Is Blessed" Matthew 5:1-12

*"The rule of God is truly available even in 'hopeless' circumstances."*

*Note: Ash Wednesday is this week, March 05. No Refuel Classes. Special Service at 6:30pm.*

**Sunday, March 09: Mission Celebration [1st Sunday of Lent]**

Jesus Said What? "About God's Laws" Matthew 5:17-20

*"What we do defines who we are."*

*Note: Daylight Savings Time Begins: set clocks forward one hour at bedtime Saturday night.*

**Sunday, March 16: Cuba Mission Presentation**

Jesus Said What? "About Anger" Matthew 5:21-37

*"Outward behavior always begins with inner transformation."*

*Note: Pasco Schools Spring Break - Monday, March 17 ~ 21, 2025*

**Sunday, March 23:**

Jesus Said What? "About Your Enemies" Matthew 5:38 - 6:4

*"Living in God's Kingdom means loving others above and beyond the norm."*

**Sunday, March 30:**

Jesus Said What? "About Worry" Matthew 6:19-34

*"What we take into our hands, we take into our hearts. We can't serve two gods."*

## WORSHIP: Witnessing Boldly

**Music Ministry** Our Music Ministry groups are always open to welcoming new members! If you are interested in serving through music, talk to a group member!

**Salvation's Rock [Contemporary Service 9:30am]**

**Music Worship Leader:** Eric Gale

**Practice Schedule: Thursdays - 7:30—9:30pm, Sundays - 8:00am**

**Chancel Choir [Traditional Service 11:00am]**

**Music Worship Leader:** Miriam Ezra

**Hand Bell Choir [Periodically at Traditional Service 11:00am]**

**Practice Schedule: Mondays - Bells 6:00—7:00pm; Choir 7:00—8:00pm**

**Men Of God [Periodically at Traditional Service and other functions]**

**Practice Schedule: Varies**



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## Sunday Study and Discussion Groups

If you are looking to explore the benefits of regular discussion and studies on faith, spirit, and discernment found in the Wednesday Refuel groups, our regular weekly study groups offer adult Bible study each Sunday morning between services. Choose from the Crusaders group from 9:30 - 10:30am and the Truthseekers group from 11:00am - 12:00pm. Each group has its own unique curriculum and make up, with study focus and themes changing regularly.

**Crusaders Class for March** will begin a study of the **Beatitudes from the Book of Matthew**. Each week a gospel story will be included, offering an illustration of how the beatitude functions. All are welcome to join in questions, discussions, and study. We just finished a study of Galatians for February. Check it out!

**Truthseekers Class** will start a new study on March 2<sup>nd</sup> titled **EASTER** by JD Greear on RightNow Media. It is a 5-part study with discussion and devotional guides. Right Now Media's description of the study says, "The resurrection is the most important moment in history, but it is more than an event we just remember on Easter Sunday. Join J.D. Greear as he takes a deeper look at Jesus' life, death, and final resurrection in the Gospel of Matthew, revealing the way we should see ourselves in Jesus' story. "

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## Sanctuary Mothers' Room

Mothers of very young children, please check out our refurbished Sanctuary Mothers' Room, especially furnished to provide a comfortable and practical environment for private on-the-spot childcare needs through all Sanctuary services and events. Stay connected to the service and the day's message even if you need to be away from the main sanctuary. Live streaming provided in the room.

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## Sanctuary Support [Team Leader ~ Karen Harwell]

With friendly faces, welcoming voices, and engaging personalities, our Sunday greeters rank high in visitor surveys returned to us. This positive first impression is how we help make more Disciples of Christ and welcome potential new members!

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## Technical Support Services [Team Leader ~ Todd Kramer]

Activities include live audio and projection control, streaming video control, and audio/video preparations. The quality of our live services and online streams impacts how much and how well we engage those who may be looking for a church home, especially in this day and age of electronic media. **This team is actively looking for several new volunteer members to help run the audio board and slide presentations. No experience needed! Training can be provided. Contact our Technical Director at [tkramer@fmcz.org](mailto:tkramer@fmcz.org)**

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## Sunday Café ~ Cooper Hall [Team Leader ~ Michelle Hill]

The Sunday Morning Café is located in Cooper Hall east from 9:00 am until 11:00 am every Sunday. Enter through the side door facing the sanctuary which also leads to the Education Building. Join us as we greet the day with coffee and fellowship! It's a great time to meet or make friends, share viewpoints, or prepare to join in a Sunday Bible Study class.

While our days may be busy and full of activities, this is a wonderful opportunity to sit, relax, and just see who walks in and walks up to make your day complete!

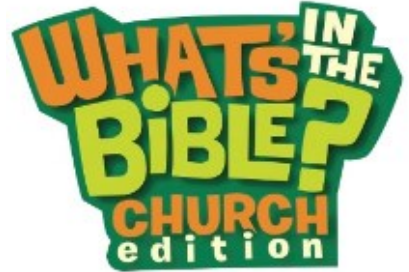


## MINISTRIES: Making Disciples for Christ

### Children's Ministry [Team Leaders ~ Carol Runyon and Polly Adwell]

**Children's Church** (grades K - 5) continues through March with themes from Genesis using the curriculum entitled, "What's in the Bible With Buck Denver" that was developed by Veggie Tales creator, Phil Vischer.

**03/02 and 03/09 activities** will include making cards to mail to our seniors who are homebound or in assisted living facilities. Message theme: "We are LUCKY to have you in our congregation." Sunday School theme for **03/16** will be "We are LUCKY to have Jesus."



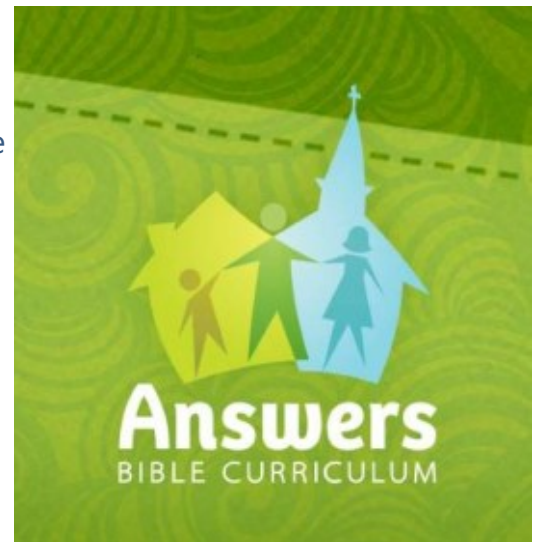
Bring your children and youth to Sunday Service from where they will be dismissed to the Cooper Hall Education Building for their own prayerful fun and Bible-based activities led by Carol and Karen. Children meet in the Children's Ministry Room and Youth meet in the Chapel Classroom.

### Youth and Family Ministries [Team Leader ~ Karen Ezra]

**Youth Sunday School** curriculum continues to explore themes from Genesis with tie-ins to other key passages in both the Old and New Testaments, using material from "Answers in Genesis". This summer will see a new and exciting VBS experience, from the team that developed The Great Jungle Journey, with brand new Bible-based adventures, activities, and learning.

#### March Youth Lesson Plan ~ Unit 3

- 03/02: Topic - Worldwide Flood
- 03/09: Topic - Noah's Ark
- 03/16: Topic - The Ice Age
- 03/23: Topic - Confusion - Dispersion at Babel



It's official! The information page for this year's Vacation Bible School is up to steam and ready to welcome all who would like to sign up as volunteers, register their children, or just explore the themes and content of the latest VBS Adventure. When you check out our web site page at <https://fmcz.org/children/vbs-summer-2025/> you will find additional links for registration and volunteering. This summer will be a grand western-style adventure with crafts, fellowship, fun, food, discovery, and learning more about God's hand in our world.

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## Praise and Prayer Group [Team Leader ~ Connie Norton]

Every Tuesday Morning 9:00am  
Truthseekers Classroom, Education Building



Prayer requests can be sent to [cnorton40@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:cnorton40@tampabay.rr.com) and must confirm the approval of the person or persons being prayed for. The team also asks that requestors provide complete contact information in order for the team to follow up with phone calls or cards.

Along with the weekly prayer list, the Prayer Team has begun to keep a **Long Term Prayer List** of folks who need special extended spiritual assistance over time. This list will be published once every three months beginning this month. Please see Page 9.

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## FMCZ Outreach Devotional Services

### *Assisted Living Outreach Ministry*

Several members of our church family will be providing on-going devotional services at American House Assisted Living Community on the **3rd Sunday of each month at 2:30pm**. Each service includes praise and prayers, hymns, scripture readings, and a spiritual message. This month's service will be held on **March 16th**. Contact Roz Hill for more information, 443-834-8621.



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## Walk to Emmaus [Team Leaders ~ Dave and Roz Hill]

The **Walk to Emmaus** is a spiritual retreat designed to deepen participants' relationship with Christ and strengthen their commitment to their faith. It's inspired by the biblical story of Jesus appearing to two disciples on the road to Emmaus, as described in Luke 24:13-351.

Here's a brief overview of what the Walk to Emmaus entails:

1. **Three-Day Experience:** The retreat typically lasts for 72 hours, starting on Thursday evening and ending on Sunday evening.
2. **Structured Program:** Participants engage in a series of talks, worship, small group discussions, and fellowship activities.
3. **Focus on Grace:** The talks and activities center around the theme of God's grace and how it can be lived out in daily life.
4. **Holy Communion:** Participants have the opportunity to celebrate Holy Communion and experience the presence of Christ in the community.



**Personal and Community Growth:** The retreat aims to inspire, challenge, and equip participants to live out their faith in their homes, churches, and communities.

The Walk to Emmaus is open to all Christians who are seeking to deepen their spiritual journey and become more active in their faith. It's a transformative experience that many find profoundly impactful.

Would you like to know more about how to participate or the history of the Walk to Emmaus?

Contact Roz Hill at 443-834-8621 for more information.

*Next Walks: Men's ~ March 20 - 23, 2025 Women's ~ March 27 - 30, 2025*



# Adult Studies and Classes [Wednesday Night Refuel]



“The Chosen” watch group will complete **Season 2** and continue to the finale of **Season 3** using the updated schedule on the right. Note that the last three episodes of the series will be shown after **Refuel** has finished in April.

**Refuel Family Meal Entrees for March:** (No Refuel March 05 ~ Ash Wednesday) 03/12 ~ Taco Salad; 03/19 ~ American Chop Suey; 03/26 ~ Tortilla Chicken Soup. All entrees are served with a side, bread, drinks, and dessert. Dinners served 5:45 to 6:30pm in Cooper Hall. \$5 per person and \$10 per family.

Season 2	Episode 6	Wednesday	2/19	
	Episode 7	Wednesday	2/26	
	No Refuel Classes - Ash Wednesday		3/05	
	Episode 8	Thursday	3/06	*Without Refuel
Season 3	Episode 1	Wednesday	3/12	
	Episode 2	Wednesday	3/19	
	Episode 3	Wednesday	3/26	
	Episode 4	Wednesday	4/02	
	Episode 5	Wednesday	4/09	Last Refuel Night
	Episode 6	Wednesday	4/16	6:00 p.m.
	Episode 7	Wednesday	4/23	6:00 p.m.
	Episode 8	Wednesday	4/30	6:00 p.m.

## United Women in Faith [Team Leader ~ Phyllis Blanchard]

Report from February Meeting:

Today's United Women in Faith Unit meeting was busy!

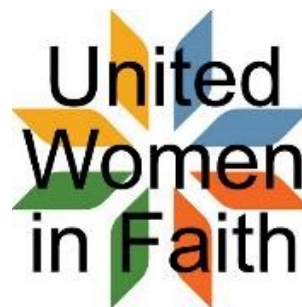
We listened to Kathy Mackenzie who spoke about the ABC Program at Stuart Middle school and promised to collect items for the special school cupboard. The ABC Program is a Pasco School District program, supported directly by our community, that helps provide basic essential items for students in need. ABC stands for ASSIST ~ BELIEVE ~ CARE. The program was featured in the October 2024 Messenger. Our UWF chapter will donate hygiene and toiletry items when they're collected.

Our first Radio Play practice was Sunday, February 23rd, about 1pm. Our actors will perform behind the curtain, so it'll be fun! Want to help? Call Phyllis at 712-830-5196 to sign up.

**Tickets are only \$10** and we'll practice Sundays until the big event.

OLD TIME RADIO SHOW Presenting “The Prodigal”  
March 22, 2025 4-6pm  
Cooper Fellowship Hall Dining Room

**Next UWF meeting ~ Thursday, March 13th, 12:00pm—2:00pm  
in the Truthseekers Room**



## Project Others [Team Leader ~ Deann Harrington]

This unique ministry in conjunction with Project Others focuses on hand-crafting beautiful shawls while in contemplative prayer, having them specially blessed, and then gifting them to individuals who are facing illness, sorrow, or grief; or who are observing a special joy such as a wedding, an anniversary, a baby's birth, or a milestone birthday. If you know someone who can benefit from prayer's warm embrace, call the church office and leave your contact information. The project coordinator, Barbara Sheldon, will respond to each request received. Please see our Spotlight, page 10 on the beautiful work produced prayerfully by all the members of Project Others.

### Prayer Shawl Project

## MISSIONS: Community Outreach

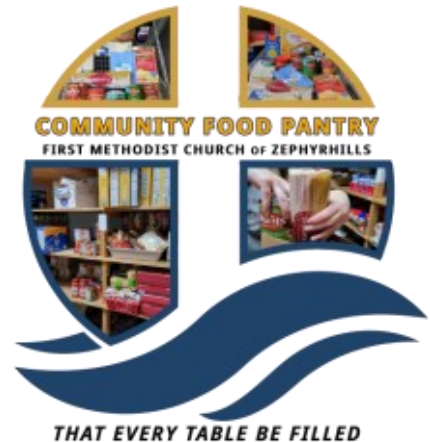
### Food Pantry [Team Leader ~ Tana Day]

Food Pantry continues to support our community with monthly bags of food as we see a steady increase of our neighbors in need of basic food stuffs. In addition to more folks showing up during regular distribution days, we see an increase in individuals coming to the office outside of regular pantry times. No one is turned away empty-handed. In response to the needs of larger families the pantry is starting to provide double food set-ups where those needs are so much greater. To assist beyond food needs, we continue to partner with the Thrift Store to provide \$10 coupons for household goods and clothing items.

Our focus needs for March include cereal, dry milk, saltine crackers, and mashed potato packets.

As always, thanks for all you do. Without your donations, our food pantry would not be able to serve the many food vulnerable individuals and families in our community.

"Never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."  
Margaret Mead



**Food Pantry Distribution Days are March 10, 11, and 12.**  
**THIS MONTH'S DONATION COLLECTION SUNDAY IS March 16th.**

### Thrift Shops [Team Leaders ~ Lyn Sears, Main Shop; Terry Dutkiewicz, Annex]



#### Featured In the Annex

Furniture and a wide variety of larger home goods

#### Featured In the Main Shop

Clothing, books, and smaller home goods and decor

All at super low prices!!  
Ask a floor volunteer about any special sales of the day

Remember that the proceeds from all sales go directly into the ministry work of our church.

**MONDAYS 8am–12pm**  
**Donations only**

**Wednesday & Saturday 8am–12pm**  
**Both Sales & Donations**





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## Miriam Circle

The Miriam Circle, a ministry group within United Women in Faith, will no longer meet as a circle group at FMCZ. According to Phyllis Blanchard, UWF Unit President, *"Miriam Circle's footprint is old and deep. My records go back to 1991 when our church supported 17 United Methodist Women Circles who in turn supported an onsite daycare, youth missions, trips to Cuba and South America, humanitarian issue fundraisers like ABC, Sunrise of Pasco, Pregnancy Care Centers, and Meals on Wheels to name a few. A note from Bishop Earl Hunt, Jr in 1981 at our church's 75th anniversary ended: May you move from a noble history into the most exciting chapter of your life as a congregation, and may you soon be engaging in important new conquests for the Kingdom of Jesus Christ."*

*"We're sorry to see Miriam, Aldersgate, Charity, Dorcas, Elizabeth, Faith, Harmony, Helen, Hope, Joy, Lydia, Mary, Priscilla, Queen Esther, Rebecca, Susanna, and Together Circles close but will hold close and share the lessons they taught and friendships they helped form. "*

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## Long Term Prayer List [For March, April, and May 2025]

Along with the weekly list of those connected to our congregation in need of prayer support, our team of prayer warriors now has added a special focus on those who are in need over a long period of time; prolonged illness, lengthy recoveries, uncertain circumstances, or protracted personal challenges. This list will be published once every quarter year beginning this month. The Praise and Prayer team asks all church family members to keep these individuals in your own prayers as well throughout the early spring. As Jesus reminded us, "Ask, using my name, and you will receive. . ."

Richard Bice, Michele Devine, Jim Elliot, Randy Hall, Barbara Kehr, Olga Kolonova, Gary McLean, Steven Noh, Trisha Stevens, Jim Wyman, Roxanne Young

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## Commission on Missions Committee [Team Leader ~ Kay Milligan]

The Commission regularly collects donations in direct support of our **Sister Church located in Amancio, Cuba**, covering some of the great needs experienced by the congregation. Funds collected help to supplement Pastor Osmar's salary, and funds a special congregational Christmas dinner. An ongoing fund is held aside for emergency use through the year to pay for vehicle repairs, special building work, and the ministries in which the church engages. **Remember Amancio this month!**

### **Cuba Sister Church 2025 Mission Trip - Presentation ~ March 16th at 12:00pm**

We celebrate the successful trip and safe return of our Mission Team; Pastor Steve, Karen Laukat, Rex Milligan, Debbie Nonnemaker, and Daniel Ezra. Traveling in and around Amancio, Cuba during the first week of February proved to be a uniquely impactful time for our team members, both culturally and spiritually. The team plans to present trip images and impressions to the congregation on **Sunday, March 16th at 12:00pm in Cooper Hall**. All are invited to join the team in learning more about what it was like to visit this area and experience first-hand how blessed we are in our church in our own country.

Pastor Steve writes, "There are multiple blessings for me in being part of a team that visits a mission partner to strengthen relationships, particularly in another country such as Cuba. Seeing God at work in powerful ways in a different culture deepens my own faith and trust in God. When I see persons come to saving faith in Jesus Christ amid deprivation and much hardship . . . when I see God miraculously heal persons and answer prayers with His supernatural power . . . when I see persons who completely and absolutely trust in God to provide for their daily needs . . . my faith is revived and strengthened.

Look in upcoming eBlasts for impressions from other members of the Mission trip to Cuba, and join us **SUNDAY, MARCH 16 AT 12:00PM** in Cooper Hall for a full trip presentation.

## Spotlight < Project Others

Project Others works its unique ministry every Friday morning in Cooper Hall from 8:00 until 11:00am, crafting an array of beautiful and practical items within an environment of prayer and contemplation, hearts focused while the hands craft. Items such as quilts, lap throws, arm covers for wheel chairs, prayer shawls, afghans, walker bags, and bed covers are made throughout each year and given out as needed, or carefully stored for their special Christmas season distribution.

There is no requirement for any level of knitting or quilt-making skill, just a desire to help those in need feel loving warmth and healing, and to know that they are remembered in both work and prayer. Join us Friday mornings because many fingers make light work!



FIRST METHODIST CHURCH  
— OF ZEPHYRHILLS —

Prayer Shawl Ministry

"This shawl was crafted with  
prayers for your healing -  
Mind, Body, and Spirit.  
As you wear this shawl,  
may you feel the warm embrace  
of our Heavenly Father."



Hand Made by Members of the Prayer Shawl Ministry  
and Blessed by the Senior Pastor



## Stephen Ministry [Team Leader ~ Dave Hill]

Stephen Ministers are laypeople, Christian men and women, trained to provide one-to-one care to people experiencing a difficult time in life, such as divorce, grief, job loss, terminal or chronic illness, relocation, or separation due to military deployment. If you find yourself in a difficult time of life, please know we have trained Stephen Ministers who are here to walk with you through any place or time of need.

Please call Dave Hill at 410-409-9132 for more information.



## Ministry Fair [02-16-2025 - photos submitted by Janet Toth and Teresia Gale]

Our Ministry Fair was a great success. Not only was a good time had by all, but many people signed up to volunteer at the various ministries. Thank you to all who attended the Fair.

A huge, heartfelt **"Thank you!"** to the Ministry Fair team of Karen Harwell, Karen Laukat, Suzanne Morgan and Johanna Theel. Your creativity, hard work and willingness to serve made this a very special event.

A big thanks to the following people for their behind-the-scenes contributions: Karen Emery, Roz Hill, Rex and Kay Milligan, Bobby and Conway Theel, Pat Bailey, Tom and Teresia Gale, Lyn Sears, Rich Vogel, Diane Belles, James and Dee Treanor, Barbara Salmond, Sandy Coon, Tamela Davis, Deann Harrington, Debbie Nonnemaker, Eric and Sarah Gale. If I missed anyone, my humblest apologies.

Thank you to the Ministry leaders and volunteers for your passionate embrace of the Ministry Fair. Your tables were creative and beautiful.

*Submitted by Janet Toth; Ministry Fair Team Leader*





Parish Nurses [Team Leader ~ Druann Briggs, RN 813-420-7919]

Next Blood Pressure Checks ~ March 23rd ~ 10:30 - 11:00am in Cooper Hall

Next One Blood Blood Drive ~ March 30th in front of Sanctuary



PLEASE CHECK THE BULLETIN BOARD IN COOPER HALL FOR OTHER UPDATES

## MARCH IS THYROID AWARENESS MONTH

Think of your thyroid as a car engine that sets the pace at which your body operates. An engine produces the required amount of energy for a car to move at a certain speed. In the same way, your thyroid gland manufactures enough thyroid hormone to prompt your cells to perform a function at a certain rate.

- As many as **30 million Americans** may be affected by [thyroid disorders](#), although more than half remain undiagnosed.
- Thyroid disorders are more common amongst women.
- Thyroid disorders tend to run in families.
- Fatigue is a common complaint for under and [overactive thyroid conditions](#).
- TSH testing is the most useful test for thyroid screening.
- Regular check-ups are the key to successfully managing a malfunctioning thyroid gland.
- Changing formulations and dosage that affect thyroid hormone levels should be followed by re-testing.
- Do not change your dose of thyroid medication without guidance from your physician.
- Thyroid conditions in [pregnancy](#) warrant close attention.
- [Thyroid cancer](#) is one of the fastest growing cancers in America and one of the most curable.

## HOW TO TAKE THE THYROID NECK CHECK

ALL YOU NEED IS A GLASS OF WATER AND A HAND-HELD MIRROR

1. Hold the mirror in your hand, focusing on the lower front area of your neck, above the collarbones, and below the voice box (larynx). Your [thyroid gland](#) is located in this area of your neck.
2. While focusing on this area in the mirror, tip your head back.
3. Take a drink of water and swallow.
4. As you swallow, look at your neck. Check for any bulges or protrusions in this area when you swallow. Reminder: Don't confuse the Adam's apple with the [thyroid gland](#). The thyroid gland is located further down on your neck, closer to the collarbone. You may want to repeat this process several times.
5. If you do see any bulges or protrusions in this area, see your physician. You may have an enlarged thyroid gland or a [thyroid nodule](#) and should be checked to determine whether [cancer](#) is present or if [treatment](#) for thyroid disease is needed.

Every time you look in the mirror, a key to your well-being is staring back at your thyroid gland. The thyroid gland is a small, butterfly-shaped gland located in the lower front of the neck, above the collarbones, and below the voice box (larynx). Your thyroid gland makes hormones that help control the function of many of your body's organs, including your heart, brain, liver, kidneys, and skin. Making sure that your thyroid gland is healthy is important to your body's overall well-being.

For more info go to: <http://www.thyroidawareness.com/> and take the QUIZ!

## Support Groups On Our Campus

### Adult Children of Alcoholics and Family Dysfunction

**Wednesdays from 12:00 - 1:00pm in the Chapel Parlor.**

From 10th Street, enter through the white gate into the courtyard, and go to the double doors.

ACA is a 12-step international fellowship of healing from past traumas as a child and growing through the pain to become a happy and content adult! The program focuses on emotional sobriety for those affected by dysfunctional families, whether alcohol is involved or not.



**Wednesdays, 4:00 - 5:30pm  
Spring 2025 13-week session**

Truthseekers Classroom - Education Building in  
Cooper Hall

This 13-week session will feature a video seminar, group discussion, and personal workbook designed to create a safe and comforting place where anyone recovering from significant loss can find support, direction, and guidance on how to make it through the challenges inherent in the grieving process. For information, contact Gaynell Jeffries at: [eldis.jeffries@gmail.com](mailto:eldis.jeffries@gmail.com) or pick up a flyer in the sanctuary lobby. You can register directly at <https://www.griefshare.org/findagroup>



**Al-Anon meets regularly here on the FMCZ campus.**

**Fridays, 6:30 - 8:00pm, in the Truthseekers Room.**

*Please enter through the back door of Cooper Hall, on 6th Avenue between 10th and 11th Streets (a sign will be there).*

*For more information contact the Church Office, 813-782-5645.*

Al-Anon is a mutual support program for people whose lives have been affected by someone else's drinking. By sharing common experiences and applying the Al-Anon principles, families and friends of alcoholics can bring positive changes to their individual situations.

### Overeaters Anonymous meets weekly on our campus

**1:30 - 2:30pm every Wednesday**

**in the Chapel Classroom, Education Building of Cooper Hall**

*For more information contact the Church Office, 813-782-5645.*

Overeaters Anonymous (OA) is a community of people who support each other in order to recover from compulsive eating and food behaviors.



### Alcoholics Anonymous

**AA Meets on Fridays at 4:00 p.m. in the Truthseekers Room.**

*Please enter through the back door of Cooper Hall, on 6th Avenue between 10th and 11th Streets (a sign will be there).*

*For more information contact the Church Office, 813-782-5645.*

Alcoholics Anonymous is fellowship of people who utilize the 12-step program to achieve sobriety and support others who share that path.

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## TOPS Meetings

Every Thursday morning 10:00am - 12:00pm

Truthseekers Classroom, Education Building of Cooper Hall

For more information contact the Church Office, 813-782-5645.

*Founded in 1948, TOPS is the first of its kind noncommercial weight-loss support group, with ties to the medical community and thousands of chapters in the U.S. and Canada.*



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## Campus News [FMCZ Trustees] Faith Responders Hosting

This month we are in the initial stages of a six month partnership with Faith Responders. We will be hosting volunteer recovery teams in some of our long-unused second floor education rooms, which, after much renovation will serve as short-term meeting and planning rooms, team living quarters, and support spaces. The work is now proceeding prior to Faith Responders' active use of the spaces. Already the west end of the second floor is showing so much improvement, as these photos testify.



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## So Many Ways to Serve [Volunteers come in all shapes, sizes, and talents]

Regardless of your skill set, talents, or interests, there is always a way for you (and perhaps a friend or family member) to become involved directly supporting the many ministries of the church in helping to make disciples for Christ. Whether it's swinging a hammer, painting a wall, patching a hole, giving another church member your undivided attention, or lending a supportive arm, your actions help to move forward the very human business of our church.



The February 16th Ministry Fair, coordinated by the team led by Janet Toth, proved a great success in generating new awareness of and interest in the many ministry groups currently active in our church family. If you didn't get a chance to sign up that day, please stop by the church office to leave your name and contact information.



## SPECIAL EVENTS: Information, Fellowship, Music

### Young At Heart Presentations [Team Leader ~ Harry Kehr]



Planned Speaker:  
Lucy Gidaro  
Humana Insurance Agent

#### **YOUNG AT HEART SENIOR LUNCHEON**

**Thursday, March 20th**  
**11:30am—1:00pm**  
**Cooper Hall**

**Presenter:**  
Lucy Gidaro  
Medicare 101

Presentation includes a  
question and answer segment.



**ADMISSION: BRING  
ONE COVERED DISH  
OF YOUR CHOICE TO  
SHARE.**

### 5th Sunday Specials [Team Leader ~ Family Ministries]

We are beginning a new FMCZ tradition on **Sunday, March 30th**. Along with our long standing 5th Sunday practice of collecting donations for the Florida Children's Home, we are setting aside those same dates for unique special events as our way of saying "Thank you" for being a part of such an active and lively church family. The events may change (perhaps a meal, a movie, an outing, or something completely different!) but they will always focus on fun, family, and fellowship.

For our first Fifth Sunday Special, we are planning a special dinner on **March 30th** so we as a church can all come together both first and second service attendees. Mrs. Judy and her team are making a wonderful dinner for us. We will eat at **12:30pm in Cooper Hall**. Because this will be a fancy dinner with much fuss, we need to know who is coming. We will provide **RSVP cards starting Sunday, March 9th**; put your name and the names of those coming with you on the card and drop it in the offering plate or one of the baskets asap so we can count you. We haven't had this much fun since last year when we had an all-church banquet in January! Please come and join us.

### Visiting Choir Performance [Team Leader ~ Miriam Ezra]

**Sunday, March 9th ~ 11:00am and 12:15pm**

The **Franklin and Marshall College Chamber Singers** from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, under the direction of Dr. William Wright, will join the **FMCZ Chancel Choir** on Sunday, March 9th during the 11:00am Traditional Worship Service in a very special vocal ensemble. This stop is part of their 16th Annual **Spring Good Will Tour** that includes both church and civic venues around Central Florida. After the Worship service, the chamber group will continue with a special **mini-concert in the sanctuary at 12:15pm**.



## Worship Space Partnership



2/16/2025

Dear Pastor Ezra, Teresia and members of First Methodist Church of Zephyrhills,

Iglesia Cristina Ciudad de Refugio along with our Pastors Jose and Glenda Santiago want to express our most sincere appreciation for the use of your Chapel.

Our first service was a blessing, and we hope that we have made a positive impact to those that were in attendance and in our community for months to come.

Please thank your congregation for allowing us to share the Gospel together and be a blessing to many.

In His Service,  
Pastor's Jose and Glenda Santiago

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## Did You Know? [Helpful Hints for Staying Connected]

- Past issues of the Messenger newsletter are always available on-line on our special Messenger collection page. You can find the page here: <https://fmcz.org/messenger/> and download many of our recently past newsletters to read electronically or print out.
- Our website [fmcz.org] offers many sub-pages that highlight the diverse groups and ministries active here on our campus. Go to our home page and look to the upper right-hand corner where you will see what's humorously known as the "hamburger" menu. Put your cursor on that and click, and a drop down menu will appear with a map showing all the pages you can travel to with just a click. Try it! We are adding to our site regularly!
- Want to know how to contact your church staff members? Go to the staff contact page here: <https://fmcz.org/staff/> and click on the envelope under the staff member you would like to contact. You will also regularly find the staff contact list on the back of the prayer list in the Sunday morning bulletin and in the Messenger on page 19.

## MEMBER HAPPENINGS: Monthly News

Budurka, Michael, Drill SGT, US Army, Ft. Moore, GA, grandson of Bob & Barb Stankiewicz  
 Clark, Matthew, 1ST LT., US Army, Ft. Drum, NY, grandson of Jack & Louise Smith  
 Cotton, Collin J., YN SSA, US Navy, son of Richard & Julie Cotton  
 Daniels, Clay, Major, US Army, Ft. Bragg, NC, grandson of Ed Fisher  
 Hill, Nathaniel, Colorado National Guard, son of David Hill  
 Hunter, Hollaway, Army National Guard, great nephew of Lori Hollaway  
 Hurley, Luka, MSGT., grandson of Gordon & Norma Hurley (Omaha, NE)  
 Kramer, Hunter, LT., US Army MP, Ft. Lewis-McChord, WA  
 Lenz, Alexander, MM3, US Navy, Norfolk, VA., grandson of Richard & Linda Bice  
 Monteiro, Jared, U.S. Coast Guard, grandson of Debbie Huffert  
 Mueller, Hannah, US Army, Fort Sill, OK, daughter of Lorraine & Tom Mueller  
 Noel, Tim, MSSGT., Air National Guard, Japan, son-in-Law of Ann Crawford  
 Parks, Andrew, Staff SGT, US Air Force, Shaw AFB, SC, grandson of Bob & Barb Stankiewicz  
 Shoup, Justin, Deployed  
 Tindall, Tyler, US Army Specialist, TX, grandson of Ed Fisher  
 White, Darrel, 1<sup>ST</sup> SGT., US Army, TX, nephew of Gerald & Virginia Swank  
 Williams, Andrew, LT. COL., US Air Force, grandson of Bob & Barbara Williams

**REMEMBER THEM ALWAYS IN YOUR DAILY PRAYERS**

### MARCH BIRTHDAYS

03/2	Jim Martin	03/18	Melanie McDowell
03/4	Thelma Diekfuss	03/19	Minyon Freiermuth
03/4	Bonnie Hazelett	03/19	David Friedman
03/5	Nancy LeBel	03/19	Alene Mattison
03/6	Lorne Becker	03/19	Richard Vogel
03/6	Ronald Wisor, Sr.	03/20	Lois Hemphill
03/7	Vicki Gower	03/21	Shirley Force
03/8	Franklin Rakocy	03/23	Sarah Gale
03/9	Ken Emery	03/23	Bernie Schmitt
03/9	Virginia Gray	03/25	Joan Atwood
03/9	Terri Palmer	03/25	Doyle Springfield
03/9	Beulah Zeller	03/27	Reva Cooper
03/11	Joshua Ouellette	03/27	Patricia Sheets
03/12	Linda Ashline	03/28	Harry Kehr
03/12	Glenn Harmon	03/29	Kevin Keating
03/13	Jennifer Smith	03/30	Terry Dutkiewicz
03/13	Geri Teeple	03/30	Daniel Ezra
03/15	Deanna Hasenauer	03/31	Tina Graves
	Pafundi	03/31	Robert J. Sheldon
03/15	Nancy Hitte		
03/16	Gregory Belles		
03/18	Joy Beaulieu		

### MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

03/04	Kevin and Sarah Smith
03/04	Scott and Teresa Stewart
03/13	Elisabeth and Stephen Jenkins
03/21	Sandra and Kevin Morris
03/22	Johanna and Bobby Theel
03/23	Donald and Janice Parsley



*"We reflect on the past and look forward to the future  
 but the best life is always lived in today."*

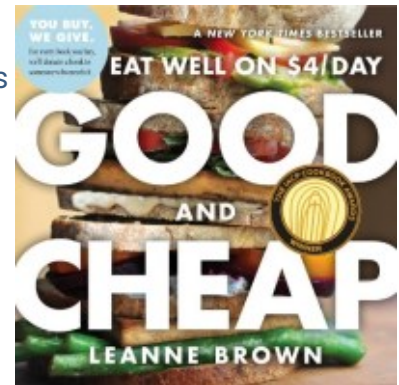


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## Cookbook and Recipe Ministry

From Goodreads: “While studying food policy as a master’s candidate in Food Studies at NYU, Leanne Brown asked a simple yet critical question: How well can a person eat on the \$4 (now \$6.25) a day given by SNAP, the U.S. government’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program informally known as food stamps? The answer is. . . surprisingly well: Broiled Tilapia with Lime, Spicy Pulled Pork, Green Chile and Cheddar Quesadillas, Vegetable Jambalaya, Beet and Chickpea Salad—even sweet desserts like Coconut Chocolate Cookies and Peach Coffee Cake. In addition to creating nutritious recipes that maximize every ingredient and use economical cooking methods, Ms. Brown gives tips on food shopping; creating pantry basics; mastering certain staples like pizza dough, flour tortillas—essentially how to make better, and fundamentally smart, healthful food choices.”

With our Community Food Pantry giving out food bags in record numbers, FMCZ has partnered with the book’s author to make free PDF copies available for download from our website. We hope to expand this offer by developing a resource page on tips and recipes for stretching every food dollar in the healthiest way possible. Click the QR code to download a copy and watch our website for more resources to come.



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## Nursing Homes and Assisted Living

For all our friends, family, and church members who are in long-term care facilities we keep them in our prayers and our hearts that they always remain a vital part of who we are as a church family and are never far away from our thoughts.

**AMERICAN HOUSE ~ 38130 Pretty Pond Rd., Zephyrhills 318-400-2291**

Lyden and Sue Green Apt. 333  
Neal Slingerland Apt. 207

**EDWINOLA ~ 14235 Edwinola Way, Dade City 352-567-6500**

Peggy Fetch Room 703  
Beulah Zeller

**ZEPHYR HAVEN MEMORY UNIT ~ 38250 A Ave., Zephyrhills, FL**

Shirley Griffin

**COMPASS ROSE OF ZEPHYRHILLS ~ 37411 Eiland Blvd., Zephyrhills 813-783-8100**

Roberta Hubbart

**SOLARIS NORTH ~ 7350 Dairy Rd., Zephyrhills 813-788-4300**

Shirley Force Washington Unit

**SOLARIS SOUTH ~ Zephyr Park, 38250 A Ave., Zephyrhills 813-782-5508**

**HILLSIDE REHAB CENTER ~ 38220 Henry Dr., Zephyrhills 813-715-1749**

**AT HOME ~ 37326 Rutledge St., Zephyrhills 813-783-6608**

Joan Donaldson  
Luci Knepper  
Terri Stanley – with Comfort Keepers of Pasco in-home services

## Staff and Organizational Contacts

### **Church Web Address**

[www.fmcz.org](http://www.fmcz.org)

### **Staff Team Email Addresses**

*(for staff with church emails)*

Church Office

[info@fmcz.org](mailto:info@fmcz.org)

Karen Ezra, Director of Family Ministries

[kezra@fmcz.org](mailto:kezra@fmcz.org)

Carol Runyon, Assistant Director of Family Ministries

[crunyon@fmcz.org](mailto:crunyon@fmcz.org)

Polly Adwell, Nursery Coordinator

[padwell@fmcz.org](mailto:padwell@fmcz.org)

Miriam Ezra, Choir Director

[mezra@fmcz.org](mailto:mezra@fmcz.org)

Steve Ezra, Senior Pastor

[sezra@fmcz.org](mailto:sezra@fmcz.org)

Carol Freiermuth, Financial Secretary

[cfreiermuth@fmcz.org](mailto:cfreiermuth@fmcz.org)

Eric Gale, Contemporary Worship Leader

[egale@fmcz.org](mailto:egale@fmcz.org)

Teresia Gale, Office Manager

[tgale@fmcz.org](mailto:tgale@fmcz.org)

Tom Gale, Communications Director

[tigale@fmcz.org](mailto:tigale@fmcz.org)

Peter Jordan, Treasurer

[pjordan@fmcz.org](mailto:pjordan@fmcz.org)

Todd Kramer, Technical Director

[tkramer@fmcz.org](mailto:tkramer@fmcz.org)

## Giving Back [supporting and expanding the ministries of our church family]

At First Methodist Church of Zephyrhills we appreciate the sacrifices and commitment that you and your family make to your church home. It is our goal to provide our members with several convenient options for their regular giving.

### Automatic Bank Transaction

Most banks have the ability to do automatic bill pay. It is simple and easy to set up and once established continues without interruption. Access your bank's bill pay features and choose a new pay to account. You can choose the amount, frequency, and duration of your payments. Please make sure your contribution is sent to:

First Methodist Church of Zephyrhills  
38635 5th Ave, Zephyrhills, FL 33542

### Automatic Bank Draft

The church has the ability to set up a batch file through our bank that will draft from your checking account 2x each month. This is similar to the Vanco giving as you will need to provide your account number plus the routing number for a one time setup. Usually there are two separate batches each month so you can choose to give, for example, on the 5th or 20th of the month. There is no fee charged to the church for this service. Contact our Church Treasurer in the church office to sign up.

### Secure Online Transaction

First Methodist Church of Zephyrhills has partnered with Vanco to provide safe and secure processing of church contributions using credit cards, debit cards, and bank accounts. Vanco provides these services to many churches across America and is a partner with the Global Methodist Church. With this option you can choose the frequency and the amount of your contribution. The preferred method and most economical for FMCZ is to utilize bank draft.

To sign up or learn more you can visit [www.fmcz.org](http://www.fmcz.org), click on GIVE on our home page and click the GIVE ONLINE button there.

### Offering Envelopes

You can order a book of offering envelopes that are dated for each Sunday to use in placing your tithes and offerings in the offering plate each week. These offering envelopes are ordered annually and can be picked up in the narthex or church office in December. This is a great benefit because the envelopes are already preprinted with your family name and number, and the weekly envelopes are a good reminder. If you would like to receive envelopes or cancel your envelopes, contact our Church Treasurer in the church office.

### Plate Offering

Simply place your offering in the plate each Sunday as it passes you.

To ensure that your contribution is credited to your account for tax purposes, please clearly mark your envelope with your family name.

### Donating Appreciated Stock

The IRS allows for donation of appreciated stock to a qualified 503c organization. This method requires some setup with the church. If you are interested in this, please contact our Church Treasurer in the church office.

**Thank you for your support!**



**FIRST METHODIST CHURCH  
— OF ZEPHYRHILLS —**  
a Global Methodist Family

**Active giving is not an afterthought but a central tenet of our faith.**

**We are a global church that recognizes and deploys the gifts and contributions of each part of the church, working as partners in the gospel with equal voice and leadership, and striving always to serve others as ambassadors of Christ!**