

# The Messenger



**FIRST METHODIST CHURCH  
— OF ZEPHYRHILLS —**

a Global Methodist Family

## *Whispers of Spring*



**February 2026**

*In this issue: Wednesday Refuel Dinner Menus. See page 9*

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

**Three Adult Sunday School Classes:** 9:30-10:30am Crusaders

9:30 -10:30am Spirit and Truth and 11:00am-12:00pm Truthseekers

## New to FMCZ? Welcome!

### First-Time Guests

Welcome! We hope you'll have a wonderful, Spirit-filled experience worshiping 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

Mothers' Room offers live streaming of each service and a quiet place for mothers to attend to the needs of their small children. Located through the door to the right of the altar platform.

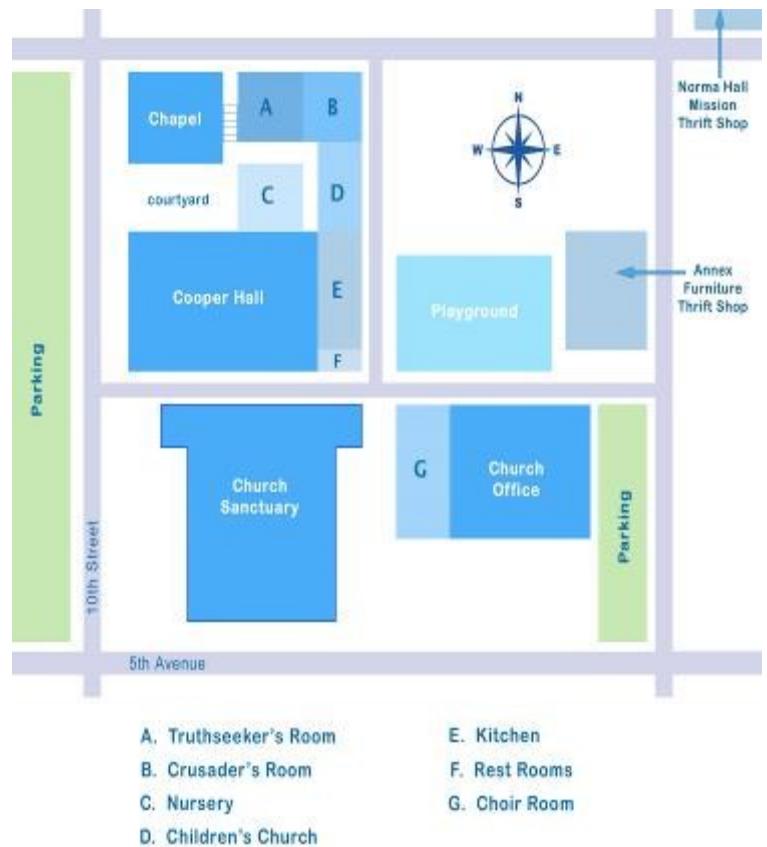
### Restrooms

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



# February 2026 Worship Services

## Worship Themes

February begins with the end of one series and ends with the beginning of a new one, a Lenten worship series on the work of the Holy Spirit, leading up to and including Easter. The Holy Spirit is the least known or understood person of the Trinity. Historic mainline Christians tend to emphasize God the Father, evangelical and independent Christians, emphasize God the Son, and Pentecostal and charismatic Christians tend to emphasize God the Spirit. Yet the God we know and serve has revealed Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is fully God, equal to the Father and Son, yet distinct from them in role. This seven-week worship series will help us understand the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives to give us a more holistic understanding of the God who created us and loves us.

In between these two series will be two stand-alone sermons looking at general questions about our faith and denomination often asked of Pastor Steve by both visitors and congregational members.

### **Sunday, February 01: Communion Sunday**

No Regrets ~ "Living in the Moment", John 4:1-26 (NIV)

"Regret: "I focused too much on the future and lost touch with the present."

### **Sunday, February 08: Missions Celebration**

Questions ~ "Why Do We Baptize the Way We Do?", Matthew 28:16-20

*These two interim sermons are based on answers to common questions asked of Pastor Steve by members of the congregation.*

### **Sunday, February 15: Receiving New Members**

Questions ~ "Why Should I Become a Church Member?", Ephesians 2:17-22

*This week's Scripture is taken from the CEB (Common English Bible translation)*

### **Sunday, February 22: First Sunday of Lent**

The Holy Spirit ~ "Sparks Confidence", Romans 8:15-16 (NIV)

*"The Holy Spirit gives us confidence that we are part of God's family."*

## 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 for both choirs:** 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

## Sunday Study and Discussion Groups

Weekly study groups offer adult Bible study each Sunday morning in the Education Building Classrooms through Cooper Hall East.

**Crusaders from 9:30 - 10:30am**

**Spirit and Truth from 9:30 - 10:30am**

**Truthseekers from 11:00am - 12:00pm.**

**Crusaders Class:** Facilitated by Jeanne Narum. The Crusaders class continues their study of the book of Thessalonians where we will consider who we are as First Methodist Church and how we ought to be living our lives in community.

**Spirit and Truth Class:** Facilitated by Greg Peavey. The Spirit and Truth Sunday class will be looking at Jesus' early ministry in Galilee including the Beatitudes. What was the purpose of Jesus' teaching and preaching and healing? Let's learn together, Sunday mornings at 9:30 in Truthseekers' classroom.

**Truthseekers Class:** Truthseekers class continues to explore the Book of Acts, guided by the insightful study materials of Max Lucado. All are welcome to join us in discovery and discussion.

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

To meet modern needs, our A/V support services are constantly expanding. Activities include live audio and video projection control, streaming video control, and audio/video preparations. The quality of 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 during Sunday services. No experience is needed!** Training can be provided on the production software used in our balcony systems. Contact our Technical Director at [tkramer@fmcz.org](mailto:tkramer@fmcz.org)



## 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 feedback is no accident. Please be sure to thank our Sanctuary Support team, when you see them in the lobby, for often being the very first impressions visitors have of our church family. Regular volunteer activities include Sunday ushers and greeters, sanctuary preparation, communion stewards, and visitor assistance. Making everyone welcome helps make more Disciples for Christ and makes each Sunday service a meaningful, joyful experience. Fill out a Ministry Interest Form on our website if you are interested in joining this important team.

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

The Sunday Morning Café is located in Cooper Hall east from 9:00 am until 11:00 am every Sunday, before and between services. 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 our viewpoints, or prepare to join in a Sunday Bible Study class.



## MINISTRIES: Making Disciples of Christ

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

#### Children's Church (grades K - 5)

##### February Class Activities

Children's Church continues with the Buck Denver video series through February. Along with these engaging Bible lessons come fun, themed crafts and games. February's lesson topics include the following:

- Feb. 01 ~ Words to Make Us Wise: Ecclesiastes
- Feb. 08 ~ Words to Make Us Wise: Song of Solomon
- Feb. 15 ~ God Speaks: Prophets
- Feb. 22 ~ God Speaks: Messages From God



Questions? Contact Carol Runyon at: [crunyon@fmcz.org](mailto:crunyon@fmcz.org)



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 with Next Waves Kids and Youth Ministries. Children meet in the Children's Ministry Room which is down the 1st floor hallway of the Education wing 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".

#### February Youth Lesson Plan

##### Unit 5 continues

- Feb. 01 ~ Lesson 76: Topic - God Chooses David
- Feb. 08 ~ Lesson 77: Topic - David Defeats Goliath
- Feb. 15 ~ Lesson 78: Topic - Jonathan Warns David
- Feb. 22 ~ Lesson 79: Topic - Saul Hunts David

Youth Sunday School is held in the Chapel Classroom and conducted by Karen Ezra and other members of the Ministry Team. Connect with Karen at [kezra@fmcz.org](mailto:kezra@fmcz.org) for more information.



### OTHER YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S NEWS FOR FEBRUARY

**Youth Sunday Confirmation Classes:** February 8, 15, and 22. Meeting in 2nd Floor Youth Room Education Building, 11:00am - 1:00pm. Along with the Adult New Members class, these classes are for our youth, ages 10 and up who are ready to learn about church membership. We will be getting to know each other better, learning more about what it is to become a member of God's church and specifically our First Methodist (Global Methodist congregation) of Zephyrhills. All students who wish to, at the end of the class, can become members of the church with special presentations at both worship services on March 8th. For information connect with Karen Ezra at [kezra@fmcz.org](mailto:kezra@fmcz.org)

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

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

Thank you notes to the Prayer and Praise team are NOT mandatory, but they are a source of joy and inspiration to all of our team members! Thank you notes that we receive are reminders that we have brought joy to someone in times of adversity or special need; times when so many feel alone and disconnected.

This mail is truly prized over the numerous pieces of JUNK mail received! Psalm 100 tells us that God made us and watches over us much as a shepherd watches over sheep. God has given us SO MUCH to be thankful for!!!

**TODAY: Thank God for HIS many blessings!**



submitted by Connie Norton

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

The Walk to Emmaus has a unique role in the Church's task of nurturing strong, committed disciples who compassionately serve Christ in the World. The unique role of the Walk to Emmaus is spiritual renewal.

During the Walk to Emmaus weekend, a short course in Christianity is presented within as part of the retreat. The course is divided into several talks given by laity and clergy. These talks are a mixture of information and personal experience. The speakers tell how they have absorbed the message of Christ, had their lives formed by it, and lived it in their journeys of faith.

The Walk to Emmaus is a life-changing experience designed to empower and strengthen local church members in their Christian journey. Through a combination of spiritual teachings, small group discussions, and meaningful connections, participants are equipped to live out their faith in their daily lives in homes, churches, communities, and workplaces.



Are you ready to take the Walk to Emmaus? Are you ready to become an Emmaus Pilgrim and consider a deeper commitment to Christianity? Are you ready for a spiritual renewal? If so, then you're ready to take the Walk to Emmaus.

**Next Men's Walk - September 10-13, 2026 ~ Next Women's Walk - September 17-20, 2026**  
Masterpiece Gardens, 3900 Great Masterpiece Rd., Lake Wales, FL.

Please join us! Call Roz or Dave Hill at 443-834-8621 to be referred to a sponsor for details.

## New Members [Pastor Steve Ezra]

According to the History of FMCZ on the church website, "Zephyrhills, Florida, is home to a large and active Methodist community that dates back more than a century. In 1912, with the blessing of the district of the Florida Conference, Reverend N. J. Hawley began holding meetings and ministering to a small group of individuals. It was this dedicated group that eventually organized our present church."

Within that span of time, our church family has been home to a wide variety of guests and stakeholders alike including Visitors (who worship with us temporarily or are looking for a church home); Contributors (who support our efforts but may not regularly attend); Affiliates (whose home church is another Global Methodist church); Associates (who belong to another denomination); and Full Members. Twice a year, everyone is invited to examine their connections to this church family and to become full stakeholders by attending a New Members Class. Our next class will be held on Sunday, February 8th. See the feature on page 16 for full details on how you can take your next steps!



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

Ladies and Gents!

Our Unit of United Women in Faith has "hit the ground running" in 2026.

We'll start the year hosting the Gulf Central District Officer Training on February 7th. Business begins with coffee and coffee cake at 9am in Cooper Hall and we'll use the classrooms starting about 9:30 for President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Committee Chair instructions. There's no cost, so if you'd like to add to your leadership skills set, this is a perfect opportunity to learn. If you're not an officer here in Zephyrhills, but would like to attend, let Phyllis or Lyn Sears know.



Is there one issue you'd like to see addressed in our unit? Membership? An activity you enjoyed in the past? Bible passages to highlight? Does anyone know where the jewel box with Bible Verses went when Miriam Circle disbanded? It'd be wonderful to answer Roll Call with a favorite bible verse...what do you think?

Please know my sisters and I appreciate all of your thoughts, prayers, wishes, cards, and hugs at my mom, Shirley DeBoe's, passing. We ALL miss her, but we know she's happy where she is. Thank you.

"Until we meet again, may the Lord bless and keep you by the right hand of his power."

Phyllis Blanchard, President, Zephyrhills United Women In Faith, 712-830-5196 lpb5152@yahoo.com

## Project Others [Team Leader ~ Deann Harrington]

The beautiful quilt work shown below is just a small sample of the colorful and practical hand-crafting produced by the members of this ministry. Much of our dedication to care missions is exhibited in our sewing program, which allows us to lend a hand to communities in need all over the world. The items created by Project Others add a personal touch to our outreach efforts, creating a sense of community and Christian caring with practical, hand-crafted items. Our team works closely together to take donated fabric and other materials and turn them into one-of-a-kind items that provide comfort and support for those who receive them. Thank you for all your ongoing material and supply donations throughout the year. Your generous gifts keep our hands crafting, quilting, sewing, and above all, serving!



THE PROJECT OTHERS TEAM

Meeting faithfully for hand crafts, fellowship, and prayer every Friday morning, 8:00 - 11:00am in Cooper Hall West



Happy birthday to our Project Others team members, Michelle Hill and Robyn Nelson. We are blessed to have you as part of our hands-on ministry work!

## MISSIONS: Community Outreach

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

#### REGARDING OUR RECENT REQUEST FOR EGG CARTONS

Recently the Food Pantry put out a special request for boxes of cereal and empty egg cartons. First, thank you so much for your response to our plea. You responded with the generosity and promptness that is so characteristic of our church family. But there were questions, too. Cereal is a common pantry staple and we always need cereal, but egg cartons? Normally the Pantry only requests donations of non-perishable canned and dry goods because we do not have the facilities to keep perishable foods like meats, dairy, and produce fresh and safe to eat between distribution days. However, a friend of the food pantry regularly donates eggs from their own home-grown stock; not enough to need storage between months, but enough to add one more important meal ingredient to as many distributed bags as possible each month. As the eggs are home-grown, they come to us in temporary containers, so we need egg cartons to put them in. This past month we had far more eggs than available cartons so we sent out the plea. What a blessing to have an over-abundance of good nutrition to offer to our Pantry families. Again, thank you very much for your response; we are well-stocked on cartons now for the next several months.

This month's special request is for **saltine crackers**. There are a number of our Pantry patrons who do not have cooking facilities where they stay, so the Pantry makes up special bags with items that do not need any further preparation. Crackers are a stable and versatile element of these AND our regular meal bags. Thank you for your donations!

**January Distribution Days are February 09, 10, and 11**

**DONATION COLLECTION SUNDAY IS February 15**

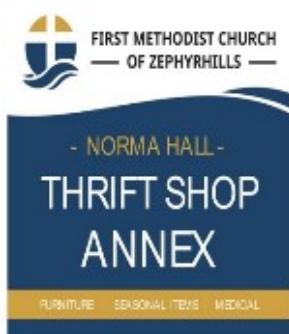


### Thrift Shops [Team Leaders ~ Lyn Sears, Main Shop; Terry Dutkiewicz, Annex]

We lost our Children's and Ladies Clothes Coordinators this year. They have moved and we are having a hard time replacing them. We could really use 2 people to fill these positions. Just 2 days a week would really help. Please see Lyn Sears for more information.

All our volunteers are working very hard to make the Norma Hall Thrift Shop the premier place to buy good quality merchandise at a fair price. If you haven't visited us yet, come by on Wednesdays and Saturdays 8am – noon and see for yourselves!

#### Regularly Featured In the Annex



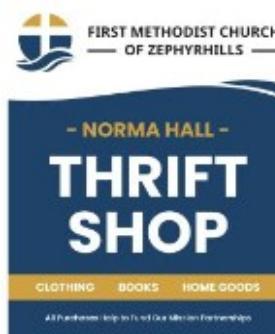
Furniture ~ larger home goods ~ Christmas decor

#### Regularly Featured In the Main Shop

Clothing, books, smaller home goods  
and general home décor

Mondays 8am–12pm  
Donations only

Wednesdays & Saturdays 8am–12pm



**THRIFT  
SHOP**

CLOTHING BOOKS HOME GOODS

All Proceeds Help To Feed Our Mission Partnerships

## Spotlight < Wednesday Night Refuel Returns >

### **Wednesday Nights January 14th to March 25th**

This popular study and group series is back with new classes, new groups, and new opportunities to GROW, CONNECT, AND LEARN.

10 SESSIONS - ONE EACH WEEK  
~ Except February 18th,  
Ash Wednesday ~

FELLOWSHIP AND FOOD SERVED  
BEFORE CLASSES  
FILL UP HERE EVERY WEEK

**Not signed up for a class? Everyone is welcome for dinner and fellowship every Wednesday evening!**



### **Wednesday Refuel Meals**

**Feb 4th: Pork Roast, Mashed Potatoes, Vegetable, Rolls**

**Feb 11th: Shepherd's Pie, Rolls**

**Feb 18th: No Refuel ~ Ash Wednesday**

**Feb 25th: Chicken Spaghetti, Salad, Rolls**

**All meals come with drink and dessert. Dinner is served from 5:45 to 6:30pm. Only \$5/person or \$10/family.**

## UWF Ladies Salad Luncheon and Fashion Show [Spring Fundraiser]

Please save the date for this highly anticipated spring fellowship and fundraising event organized by our local United Women in Faith group.

Saturday, March 28th, 2026

1:00 - 3:00pm

Cooper Hall East

Tickets are only \$10 and will go on sale starting in March. Contact any UWF member for additional details!



## Spotlight < Salvation's Rock ~ Praise Song Playlist



Welcome to Praise Playlist, a monthly feature where one of the Salvation's Rock members will suggest a song that they think should be added to your own Worship Playlist, even if the track is not in our music library or available to play at worship service.

This month's song is suggested by Patricia Pedigo, the band's multi-skilled keyboard player and vocalist. Patricia is often unseen up in the choir loft, sitting behind the altar platform, but her musical contributions to nearly every Sunday's Contemporary worship service resonate throughout the sanctuary.

Patricia's song of choice for February is "Create in Me a Clean Heart" by Keith Green. Patricia writes, "This is such a beautiful song. All of us have thoughts in our heart that we need to ask God to forgive and we need to forgive ourselves and each other. We want to have that peace that only God can bring to our souls. This song was taken from Psalm 51: 10-12, where David cries out to God in the heaviness of his heart because he is carrying the penalties of sin. Today we have Jesus Christ who has cleansed us through the cross. The words of this song still fill our heart today to cleanse our mind, body and soul to be right with the Lord, to be right with us and forgive us and give us that peace. Sometimes we can feel so alone, but through Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, God hears our prayers and we can know He is with us. He holds us and cares for us. This song helps me cry out to Him with all my heart, seeking Him."

Listen to it here: ["Create in Me a Clean Heart" performed by Keith Green](#)

## Long Term Prayer List [For February 2026] updated 01-15-26

Along with the weekly list of those connected to our congregation in need of prayer support, our team of prayer warriors maintains 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. The team asks all church family members to keep these individuals in your own prayers as well throughout the month ahead. **As Jesus reminded us, "Ask, using my name, and you will receive."**

Chloe Budge, Richard Dreyer, Jim Elliot, Randy Hall, Brystol Loftis,  
Gary McLean, Suzanne Morgan, Roxanna Young.

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

### February's Mission of the Month ~ Loving Hands Ministries

Loving Hands Ministries, located in Dade City, is a program based on the Word of Jesus Christ for young men who have life-controlling addictions. It is an eighteen-month Christ-centered residential discipleship training program. Loving Hands is a non-denominational, not-for-profit organization working in harmony with churches and other rehabilitation ministries such as Teen Challenge, Youth Challenge and Mission Teens to provide a Christian family environment in which Jesus Christ changes lives and destinies. Loving Hands serves as God's hands of love in action to this generation's troubled young men. If you would like to contribute to this wonderful local organization place your cash or check in the special envelopes in the pews or pay on-line using Loving Hands in the comment section.



## SERVICE TEAMS: Community Self-Care

### Faith Community Nursing [Team Leader ~ Druann Briggs RN 813-420-7919]

Next Blood Pressure Checks ~ Sunday, February 8, 10:30 - 11:00am in Cooper Hall

Next One Blood Blood Drive ~ Sunday, March 1, 2026 in front of the Sanctuary



PLEASE CHECK THE BULLETIN BOARD IN COOPER HALL FOR OTHER UPDATES



### **10 Steps to Lower Triglycerides**

**Watching your cholesterol is nearly as common nowadays as watching your blood pressure or your weight. But do you watch your triglyceride levels?**

Triglycerides are a type of fat that gives you energy. Similar to cholesterol, triglycerides are produced by your liver but can also come from food. Knowing the level of triglycerides circulating in your blood is important because high triglycerides indicate that you may be at increased risk for heart attack and stroke. Here's advice to help reduce your triglyceride levels.

**Lose weight.** If you're overweight, losing 5 to 10 percent of your body weight will reduce your triglycerides by approximately 20 percent.

**Cut the sugar.** Individuals whose added sugar intake is less than 10 percent of daily calories have the lowest triglyceride levels. The American Heart Association recommends that only 5 percent of your daily calories come from added sugars.

**Stock up on fiber.** Instead of consuming sugar and other refined carbohydrates, focus on more fiber-rich foods, such as vegetables, fruits and whole grains.

**Limit fructose.** Studies have found that consuming too much fructose -- a type of sugar -- leads to high triglycerides. High-fructose corn syrup is a major source of fructose. You can determine whether a food contains sugar or high-fructose corn syrup by reading the ingredients list.

**Eat a moderately low-fat diet.** You may be surprised to learn that diets that are very low in fat are not as effective at lowering triglycerides as diets moderately low in fat. The American Heart Association recommends that people with high triglycerides get about 25 to 35 percent of their daily calories from fat.

**Watch the type of fat you eat.** Cut back on saturated fats, which are found in red meat, poultry fat, butter, cheese, milk, and coconut and palm oils. Keep trans fats, found in shortening and stick margarine, to a minimum.

**Add omega-3 fatty acids.** Fatty fish such as salmon, herring, sardines, lake trout and albacore tuna are abundant in omega-3 fatty acids -- a type of fat that is actually good for you. To reap the benefits, the American Heart Association recommends that you eat fatty fish at least twice a week.

**Exercise.** If you have high triglycerides, getting at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity most days of the week may lower your triglyceride levels.

**Take triglyceride-lowering drugs.** If your triglycerides are very high (500 mg/dL or above), your doctor might recommend a medication shown to lower triglycerides, such as fibrates, niacin, omega- or statins.

Proverbs 4:23 "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it."

Through Christ, Druann Briggs RN Parish Nurse Ministry Coordinator 813-420-7919

## Stephen Ministry [Team Leader ~ Dave Hill]

Stephen Ministry is a Christian organization that trains and equips church members (Stephen Ministers) to provide confidential, one-on-one emotional and spiritual care to people facing life difficulties, guided by the principle of, "Christ caring for people, through people". These trained caregivers support individuals experiencing crises like illness, grief, job loss or divorce, offering a listening ear, prayer, and practical support within their congregations and larger communities.



A new class of Stephen Ministers will begin their 50 hours of training this January. We have seven people signed up for the class. After training, each will be matched with a hurting person, men with men and women with women.

On February 7th, Stephen Ministry will hold a celebration at Lake Magdalene Church in Tampa to mark 50 years of helping those in need.

If you are dealing with a hurt or life difficulty and feel a Stephen Minister could be beneficial to you contact our church 813-782-5645 for more information and to be connected with the Stephen Ministry team.

May your day be filled with all the JOY your heart and spirit chooses to enjoy!!

If you would like more information about becoming a Stephen Minister, contact Dave Hill at: [dhill1944@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:dhill1944@tampabay.rr.com) or call 410-409-9132.

## GMC Women of Hope Conference [Brandon New Hope Church]

An invitation from Rev. Vicki Harrison, GMC Elder

On Saturday, February 21st, New Hope Methodist Church is hosting a spirit-filled conference just for women in our area.

This year's opening keynote is led by Dr. Elaine Friedrich from Mount Bethel Church, Marietta, Georgia. Dr. Friedrich is a speaker known for helping women uncover their God-given purpose and live with intentional, Christ-shaped clarity. Her teaching blends biblical depth with practical wisdom, inviting women to rediscover joy, confidence, and a life of holy anticipation. You'll also hear from our very own Pastor Taylor Fohr, an exciting young voice from University Carillon in Oviedo, Florida. In addition to our key speakers, your ladies will have the opportunity to experience heartfelt worship and choose from inspiring breakout sessions designed to help you delight in the Lord in every season.



For more information: <https://www.findnewhope.com/blog/1qk4nv05zt6e495y7a0poqggazvvyi>

Rev. Harrison is Presiding Elder for the GMC Gulf South District. She has served at New Hope Church in Brandon, Florida, in various roles for 17 years, building strong roots in the Brandon community. She has been senior pastor at New Hope since June of 2021. Vicki is incredibly excited to be part of the Global Methodist Church with its emphasis on evangelism and revival in the local church, two of her passions.

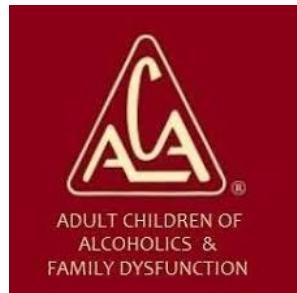
## Support Groups On Our Campus

### 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.



### 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.*



### 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.

### Meeting Information:

Wednesdays, 4:00 - 5:30pm

January 7th to April 8th, 2026

Crusaders Classroom - Education Building



For information, contact Gaynell Jeffries at: [eldis.jeffries@gmail.com](mailto:eldis.jeffries@gmail.com) or call or text at this number: 813-838-3319. You can register directly at <https://www.griefshare.org/findagroup>

This 14 week session features a video seminar, group discussion, and personal workbook (cost: \$25.00), all 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.



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

## SPECIAL EVENTS: Information, Fellowship, Music

### Young At Heart Presentations [Team Leader ~ Gary Hartman]

**What is YOUNG AT HEART?** Our mission is to honor and celebrate the lives, wisdom, and enduring spirit of our senior community through the Young At Heart Luncheon. The gathering serves as a formal expression of gratitude and respect, providing a dignified space where seniors are recognized for their contributions, cherished for their presence, and uplifted by fellowship. We are committed to fostering an atmosphere of joy, appreciation, and connection that reflects the value of every individual, thereby ensuring that each guest feels celebrated as an integral part of our shared story.



Speaker: Terri Poulin  
Branch Leader

**SENIOR LUNCHEON**  
**Thursday, February 19th**  
**11:30am—1:00pm**  
**Cooper Hall East**  
**AmeriLife of East**  
**Pasco, LLC**

Good Food ~ Good Fellowship ~  
Good Times



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

### Special Scripture-Based Puzzle Feature

I R B I E N E L I B A M A B R  
D K E N A N O M E L I H P J A  
S I T L G E M A R I A H Z A P  
M A O U L L A L E E M A N A H  
T E L N S U M E D O C I N Z A  
A E H O Y H F O S H E A S I E  
B A B E H S H T A B M H T E L  
I R R S T C I R D A G P A L J  
T N E E B A I U A O L E M E H  
H E L R A A B N S O W R A I A  
A S W A H E B E N E Z E R R R  
E T O H A C H I L A H Z A B U  
S A F F R O N E S I M U S A T  
S U I C U L I C H A B O D G E  
L A M E C H A I S A M A N R K

Search for these words in the puzzle  
either across, up and down, or  
diagonally.

Abilene, Amasiah, Bathsheba,  
Cinnamon, Dionysius, Earnest,  
Ebenezer, Fowler, Fuller, Gabriel,  
Gad, Gemariah, Hachilah,  
Hanameel, Ibri, Ichabod, Jaaziel,  
Jesimiel, Kenan, Keturah,  
Lamech, Lucius, Mehetabel,  
Naaman, Nicholas, Nicodemus,  
Onesimus, Oshea, Perez,  
Philemon, Rahab, Raphael,  
Rephaiah, Saffron, Serah, Tabitha,  
Tamara, Zachariah, Ulla.

Once you have found and circled all  
the names in the list, unscramble the  
remaining letters to reveal a mystery  
name.

## Global Methodist Church ~ Grand Camp

Christian Grandparenting Network is excited to share that the Lake Yale Baptist Conference Center in Leesburg, FL, will be hosting its inaugural GrandCamp from February 6-8, 2026! We warmly invite all grandparents and grandchildren connected with the Global Methodist Church in Florida to join us for this memorable experience.

GrandCamp is an incredible faith-based adventure designed to take grandparents and their school-age grandchildren away from everyday distractions. The camp creates an environment where God can significantly impact their lives and build a legacy of faith from one generation to the next. During this special event, grandparents and grandchildren engage in new adventures, share heartfelt stories, discuss God openly, study Scripture, and build a foundation of trust through shared experiences, all the while drawing closer to Christ and one another.

For more information and registration, connect with Katelyn Norton at [katelyn.norton@lybcc.com](mailto:katelyn.norton@lybcc.com) or call 352-483-9800



## Trustees ~ Campus Renovations [Team Leader - Greg Brooks]

Thanks to the dedication and hands-on work of our volunteer Trustee Board members, FMCZ continues to move forward on campus stewardship and improvements. An unfortunate sign of our modern times, many church members have noticed that the office door is now equipped with a buzzer controlled lock and a Ring camera for security purposes. Main access ways around campus are being outfitted with crash bars that allow enhanced security in regular use and also provide code compliant exits in the event of a fire emergency. A recent professional security walk-through highlighted many elements already in place for the safety of our church members and property, while suggestions were offered for upgrading and expanding our efforts. This month, we will be working on creating interior room signs and emergency exit maps throughout Cooper Hall and the Education Building in order to meet local codes. All these efforts acknowledge the extent to which our campus facilities are in active use every week and help to keep everyone safe and productive while here.

On a lighter note, the existing swing set has received a bright, new coat of weather-resistant paint and we look forward this month to seeing the final pieces of the new playground structure assembled and readied for full use. When that happens, we will have a special dedication ceremony to mark yet another campus stewardship milestone. Watch the eBlast and bulletins through February for this happy event!



## SPECIAL NOTES: Information and Fellowship

### New Members Class [Pastor Steve Ezra]

Our next New Members class will be on Sunday, February 8 from 12:00 to 1:30pm in the Crusaders classroom located in the Education Building. Lunch will be provided for attendees. You may be transferring your membership from another church, you may be new to church membership, or you may have a regular church home up north but want to become an affiliate or associate member here. This class is for all of you! We'll talk about what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ and a member of His Church, and we'll discuss how you can get connected here beyond Sunday mornings. You'll also get to meet some of our staff team and other people considering church membership. New members will be received the following Sunday, February 15, during both worship services. Even if you're just considering the prospect of church membership right now, I strongly encourage you to come to the class. Please call our Office Manager, Teresia Gale, at 813-782-5645 to register for the New Members class, or you can email her at [tgale@fmcz.org](mailto:tgale@fmcz.org).



### New Porch Addition [Norma Hall Thrift Shop]

On December 21st, Pastor Steve and volunteers from the Norma Hall Thrift store had a dedication ceremony for Terri Hensley who gave the church a large donation to enclose the outside porch. With help from members Peter Richter and Greg Brooks the construction began in November with the store being shut down for 2 weeks. A plaque was designed and presented to Terri with a big thank you from all the other volunteers. We appreciated Terri's faithful presence as Ladies Coordinator and miss her greatly as she has moved to Marianna, Florida with her daughter and granddaughter.



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

- Even if you are NOT signed up for our weekly eBlast email-based communication, you can still access all the features and information right on the FMCZ website. Go to our home page and you will find a link that will take you to a copy of each week's eBlast. Unfortunately, the copy there is not able to display the live point-and-click links that are included in the email version, but you can still keep up with everything that's going on in and around FMCZ weekly.
- If you would like the convenience of live links to information and sites of interest to our church family, sign up for our weekly eBlast! You can sign up using the link at the bottom of our home page, or send your request with your email address to [tgale@fmcz.org](mailto:tgale@fmcz.org)

## 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  
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  
Monteira, 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**

### FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

02/01 Jason Phillips  
02/01 Sandra Wyman  
02/03 Kay Milligan  
02/03 Billy Palmer  
02/04 Deanna Calhoun  
02/04 Joan Gaskill  
02/07 Janet Davis  
02/07 Tommy McCormick  
02/08 Diane Belles  
02/11 Virginia Cimorelli  
02/12 Josiah Boggs  
02/12 Todd Palmer  
02/14 Dennis Dutkiewicz  
02/16 Jay Austin  
02/16 Aidan Levasseur  
02/17 Pat Fletcher  
02/17 Carol Scheckler  
02/20 George Pattison III

### FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

02/02 Debbie and Gary Adams  
02/04 Druann and Richard Briggs  
02/14 Bob and Cheryl Wilson  
02/15 Charles and Patricia Pedigo  
02/24 Nancy and Orville Bowers

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



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## This Month's Cover [February - "Whispers of Spring"]

Just when we are ready to put the sweaters and hoodies back in long-term storage and begin to remember the consistent sunshine and warmth that Florida offers when there, comes another cold snap and we're right back in winter. We offer thankful prayers that the strawberry farmers were able to cover their fruits with protective ice in time, and that the kumquats have thus far avoided damage. Our area's signature mid-winter festivals, celebrating these fruits, are safe for another year! But still we stay tuned in to the weather reports and keep our warm clothing ready as insurance against more random cold snaps. And we grumble, when will the promised sun arrive again to stay?

As often happens, our hearts focus on the shouts of winter rather than the whispers of spring, and we have to remind ourselves to look ahead to the warmth we know is coming rather than dwelling in the uncertainty of today. The well-known passage from Isaiah is meaningful here: *"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?"* The answer is that we often DON'T perceive it because we are looking outward rather than inward. That sun we yearn for is already, or can be, here in our hearts and souls; a warmth that always whispers to us, not from ahead but from wherever we dwell within God's promises.

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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**

Beulah Zeller

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

Shirley Griffin, Memory Unit

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

Geneva Dunford

Barbara Kehr

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

Shirley Force Washington Unit

Dorothy Lundeen

### **ROYAL OAKS NURSING CENTER ~ 37300 Royal Oak Ln, Dade City, FL 352-567-3122**

Joan Donaldson

### **GARDEN OF WESTBROOK ~ 6701 Dairy Rd., Zephyrhills, FL (813) 782-4417**

Glenda Wilson

### **AT HOME ~ Personal Addresses and Phone Numbers**

Luci Knepper

Terri Stanley

### **HILLSIDE HEALTH ~ 38220 Henry Dr., Zephyrhills 813-715-1749**

### **COMMUNITY CARE CENTER~ 2202 W Oak Ave, Plant City, FL 33563 813-754-3761**

### **ADVENT HEALTH ZEPHYRHILLS ~ 7050 Gall Blvd, Zephyrhills, FL (813) 788-0411**

# 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  
[tjgale@fmcz.org](mailto:tjgale@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 [Investing in Gardens and Orchards]

Charitable investment is a lot like growing fruits and vegetables. In the pursuit of planning and planting, growing a garden of vegetables and growing an orchard of fruit trees reflect two different but complementary paths, one focused on short-term production and the other on more long-term development. Garden investment reflects the weekly and monthly giving that makes our day to day functions and stewardship possible. We focus on funding those ongoing needs and supporting the ongoing activities of our members and missions. Garden investment may be in the forms of monthly tithing, regular electronic donations through our online portal, or even giving cash or checks in the Sunday offering plate to support specific funds and activities. The needs are on-going and the level of funding may rise and fall with the seasons. We plant and harvest in regular rotation, just like a vegetable garden and, in doing so, keep our family fed and our "lands" productive.



But, as any Florida gardener knows, vegetable growing is a fleeting pursuit. Crops are planted and replanted on a continuous rotation and as one crop is growing, you are already starting the seeds for the next. Orchards, on the other hand constitute larger investments and longer outlooks. They must be planned more carefully but usually require less daily work. Where the garden gives smaller, immediate returns, the orchard is an investment that can, with careful nurturing, provide sustenance not just now but far into the future, fruits for the good of those we don't even know. Gardens are for us now. Orchards are for us and our children and their children. Both investments are critical to feed a church family both now and in the future. As you give this year consider ways you can plant a garden for today's needs, while nurturing an orchard for tomorrow and beyond.

