

News From the Griffin District

A monthly publication of
The Griffin District of The United Methodist Church

Rev. Richard Winn
District Superintendent

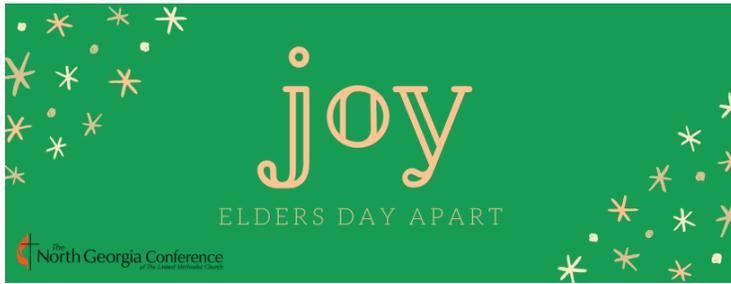
December 2019

*Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year*



*From Richard and Denise in the
Griffin District Office*

Elders Day Apart with Bishop Sue



The North Georgia Conference Order of Elders invites all Elders in Full Connection to a day apart at Glisson Camp and Retreat Center in Dahlonega on **Thursday, January 16**. The theme is "Joy in the New Year!"

The day will begin at 9:30 a.m. and sending forth will be at 3 p.m. The day will include worship, dialogue with Bishop Sue, breakout activities and fellowship. There is no charge for the event, but registration is required.

<https://northga-reg.brtapp.com/EldersDayApart>

Training Opportunity for those working with youth and children

Two Workshops are being offered on **Thursday, January 30 at Griffin First UMC**. Rev. Debby Fox will lead a workshop on Best Practices for Children's Ministry and Rev. Sam Halverson will lead a workshop for Best Practices for Youth Ministry. Any clergy and laity in the district are invited to attend at no cost. Dinner will be served at 6:00 pm and the workshops will begin at 6:30 (choose 1). Please RSVP to the District Office so we can have a count for dinner. Reply to Denise at grfn@ngumc.net or 770-227-1074, by January 23.

North Georgia Delegation Listening Session

The North Georgia delegation to General and Jurisdictional Conference has scheduled another listening session to hear from North Georgia United Methodists. It will be Saturday, March 21, 1:00pm, at Griffin First UMC.



Clergy and laity of the North Georgia Conference are invited to address the delegation on topics related to the 2020 General Conference. Maximum length of presentations will be communicated to registrants prior to the session. To speak, you must register on the conference website.

[Registration is now open](#) for the second session

A Word from the District Lay Leader, Debby Stikes

“The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.” Deuteronomy 31:8

I love that Bible verse. I could tell you all about Moses preparing the people for Joshua to take over as their leader, but, frankly, I think that verse was written for all of us!

This is such a beautiful time of year. All the hustle and bustle of the Christmas season, Advent services, choirs singing, candles, Chrismons, nativity scenes...but in the back of our minds we know the new year is just around the bend and there are always uncertainties in the new. There will be new appointments in the new year, there will be decisions at General Conference, there will be church growth and church closures. All of the uncertainties should simply remind us in truly wonderful ways that God has gone before us and is with us as we travel into the new year. God will not leave us and so there is nothing to fear, no reason to be discouraged. Look to the new with anticipation that we will find God in the new. We will find God in the appointments and the decisions and the growth and the closures.

God is with us. And I am so grateful for that reality!

End of Year

As we approach the end of the year, churches are reminded of a couple of things. First, **End of Year Reports** must be submitted through Data Services before the end of January. In preparation for these annual reports, you can print blank copies of the forms and begin gathering information now. Go to the End of Year Reports page from the home page of the Conference website. (Be on the lookout for information about an End of Year Workshop in January.) Second, church treasurers are encouraged to check your Apportionment and District Work Fund payments on the Conference website. From the homepage of the Conference website, go to the Apportionment Payments page and look under the Local Church Reports section. By entering your church number, you can see payments made by your church during the year. Be sure that your numbers match those on the site. You will have until January 8 to fulfill 2019 obligations.

DCOM meets with all Local Pastors

Tuesday, March 31

(time and location will be provided after the first of the year)

In preparation for this meeting, Local Pastors should schedule an evaluation with their SPR Committees. Forms are available on the District website and are being mailed out in the next week. Completed evaluation forms must be submitted to the District Office by March 17.

Church Development Grants Available

The Griffin District Trustees, Finance Committee, Board of Church Location & Building, and the District Leadership Team have recently approved the creation of District Church Development Grants that will be available to assist churches with a variety of property related issues. The grants will be funded through proceeds from the sale of closed churches in the district, and will be available to vital and active churches that are current with apportionments and District Work Fund, have at least 1 outreach ministry, and have some funds on hand or pledged for the project. Projects could include parking lot paving, making the facility more handicap accessible, major upgrades or repairs to the facility, etc. Grants will not exceed \$5000, except in rare cases. Applications will be accepted quarterly, with the first deadline of March 15, 2020. To receive an application and more information, contact the District Office (grfn@ngumc.net or 770-227-1074.)

Send some high school youth to visit college campuses on the next Campus Crawl

How do you help your high school students focus on continuing their faith journey after they take off from youth group and head toward college? Wouldn't it be great to help them recognize the benefits of being a part of a Wesley Foundation or campus ministry?

[Campus Crawl](#) is a bus tour designed to introduce 9th through 12th grade students to United Methodist campus ministries featuring our Georgia United Methodist Colleges and Universities. In one weekend high school students will meet representatives from our United Methodist Colleges and Universities in Georgia as well as meet several Wesley Foundations on public university campuses.

This year we're visiting the following campuses and ministries: KSU, Reinhardt, Georgia Tech, Clark Atlanta, LaGrange, West Georgia, and Emory.

The weekend is Feb. 27 - 29 and the cost is only \$95 per person. (Your youth couldn't plan a weekend visit of ONE campus for that price.) Youth who participate need not have adults from their congregation, though we would love to have one per seven participate. Feel free to recommend this retreat to individuals. The retreat could fill up early, so register now.

Complete Steps to Be a Church of Excellence in Outreach

By Year End

Each year the North Georgia Conference recognizes Churches of Excellence in Outreach and Mission. There are 10 criteria to meet to receive this award. In 2020 the North Georgia Annual Conference will focus on mission and outreach so there is no better year for your congregation to be included in this category of excellence. Find the criteria

at www.ngumc.org/churchofexcellenceinoutreach. Applications are now online.

[VIEW CRITERIA](#)

Thank you

The offering collected at the Griffin District Charge Conference for Disaster Relief totaled \$3,024.50
Thank you for your generosity!

GUMF Certificate Rates are Changing December 1

Effective December 1, 2019, the Georgia United Methodist Foundation will be lowering our Certificate Program investment rates. Georgia United Methodist churches, ministries and members who invest a minimum of \$5,000 will be eligible to receive the higher rates as long as new certificate applications are received with a postmark dated on or before November 30, 2019. Current and future rates are listed below.

November 2019 Certificate Terms and Rates

4 Year = 3.20%; 3 Year = 2.80%; 2 Year = 2.60%; 1 Year = 2.50%

December 2019 Certificate Terms and Rates

4 Year = 2.95%; 3 Year = 2.55%; 2 Year = 2.35%; 1 Year = 2.25%



To learn more, please visit <https://www.gumf.org/gumf-certificate-rates-are-changing-december-1> or contact Carol Johnston, GUMF Controller, at 877-220-5664, 770-449-6726 or cjohnston@gumf.org.



The District Office will be closed for vacation and the Christmas/New Year holiday, December 20 – January 1. We wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



Happy Birthday to the following pastors celebrating birthdays in December:

3 - Joe Peabody, Jr.
13 – Jimmy Vinson
14 – Max Hill
18 – Keith Harris

21 – Arianna Eberle
28 – Jordan Thrasher
29 – Dale Fuller