



Grand AveNews

June 2021

Welcome Home, Andrew Fleming!

Join us for worship on Sunday, June 6 as we welcome Andrew Fleming home. Andrew, the son of Pastor David Fleming and his wife, Karla, will preach at all services—both online and in-person. His message “Charity and Justice” based on Isaiah 58:5-12 will remind us that as children of God we are sometimes called to serve each other with charity; other times we are called to fight for each other’s justice.

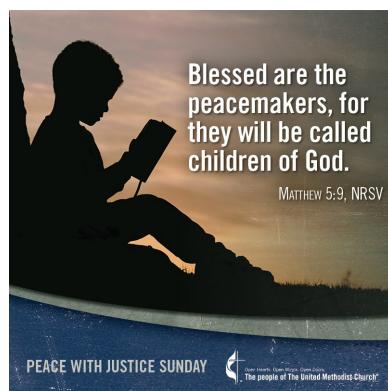
In his message, Andrew will reflect on his work as a Global Mission Fellow. “Generation Transformation: Global Mission Fellows” is a 24-month, faith and justice-centered leadership-development and mission-service program for adults ages 20-30 who are interested in partnering in solidarity with faith-based organizations, either in their home context or abroad. Global Mission Fellows are commissioned as UMC missionaries who integrate faith and justice by learning, walking, and working with communities in their struggles to address systemic injustice and human suffering.



Andrew has been working with “Metropolitan Ministries” in the Tampa/St. Petersburg, Florida area. His assignment involves offering spiritual care to clients and staff working in the areas of transitional housing and homelessness prevention and outreach. You can learn more about the mission here: www.metromin.org

Please join us in supporting Andrew with your prayers and with your presence at worship this weekend. If you would also like to offer financial support to help Andrew complete his work this summer, mark your check or envelope “for Andrew Fleming” or contact the church office.

June 6 is “Peace With Justice” Sunday



This Sunday as we worship we will take a special offering for “Peace With Justice” Sunday. Pentecost celebrates the outpouring of the Holy Spirit calling for God’s shalom. “Peace with Justice” witnesses to God’s demand for a faithful, just, disarmed, and secure world. (Par. 263.5, The Book of Discipline 2116) Your contributions enable United Methodists to work for peace, love and compassion for God’s children everywhere. Fifty percent of the receipts for Peace with Justice will be used for ministries in communities throughout Arkansas. (The conference board of church and society or an equivalent structure administers these funds.) The remaining 50 percent is used for Peace with Justice ministries related to the General Board of Church and Society. A card available during in-person worship and a link online will provide more information. You may make donations in cash, by check (mark “for Peace with Justice”) or online this Sunday or any time during the month of June.

Thank the Lord for Handbells!

It has been delightful to work with the Jubilee Bells these past months during the pandemic. Being able to ring and share music (even at a distance and with all pandemic protocol in place) has been a blessing. The blessing was not just for us but especially for our church when singing was not allowed. I know you all have enjoyed their performances at church and online for services, QuaranTunes Tuesdays, and special events over these past months.

We have also developed small quartets of ringers that give us more flexibility in arranging equipment and scheduling music. These ringer quartets will perform during June and July while the full ensemble has a break for those months.



I want to express my appreciation to our ringers for being flexible and working so hard in setting up and taking down tables, equipment, and bells and working so hard to serve the Lord and his church during this time. I especially want to thank Joe Peters and any that helped him in doing the heavy work for us. My appreciation to you all knows no bounds!

The last full Jubilee Bell ensemble performance will be Sunday, May 30th, in the second service. Hope you can be there to hear them ring "Promised Land." It's a great piece!

Chancel Choir



The Chancel Choir is rehearsing again on Wednesdays at 6:30 pm in the sanctuary. We will continue to meet during June and July with a break during the month of August. We are ecstatic to be together again, singing, and without the mask mandate, but we are also trying to be careful and sensitive to the concerns and needs of others. As we have all learned, things can change quickly with this virus, so we do not want to push beyond what is safe and recommended.

If you would like to join our "summer choir," please let me know. We will welcome you with great music and a huge dose of fellowship!

Kathie

Thank you, Volunteers!

The year 2020 was both more than and less than we expected! I would like to thank all of the volunteer leaders who persisted through the unusual and changing circumstances of the past 14 months. When each person volunteered for their leadership positions for our church, they had no idea of the work ahead to navigate a world-wide pandemic. What a shock to realize our everyday church activities were not possible in a traditional sense! I appreciate each person on the GAUMC Administrative Council, the Pre-Launch Team, the Re-Launch Team, our Stewards, Pastor David and our Trustees. The tasks were unexpected, but handled with research, respect, reverence, and responsibility. I'm grateful also to the members of our congregation who continued to *Build Faith, Bring Hope, and Reach Out in Love* in creative and flexible ways to "be the church."

God Bless,

Sheila McLarty
2020/21 GAUMC Administrative Council Chair



Grand Avenue UMC Trustees Announce Updates to COVID Guidelines

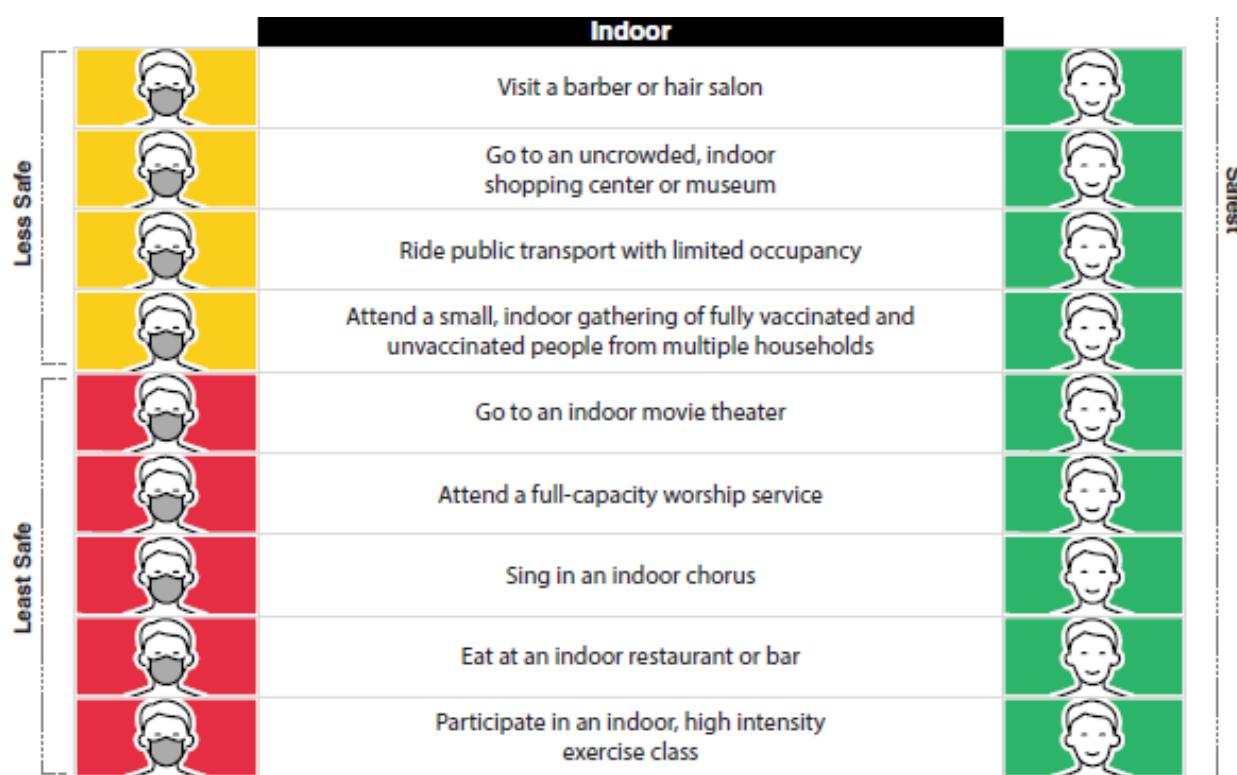
The COVID numbers have been in steady decline in our county, and many in our congregation have been vaccinated. In response to new guidelines from the CDC, our Trustees have voted to relax our COVID policies while maintaining a safe environment for all. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. As of Sunday, May 23:

- We no longer require temperature checks to enter the building.
- We offer in-person worship Sunday at 8:30 and 10:45 a.m. (We will continue to offer opportunities online as well.)
- We have re-opened the doors at the Quapaw Entrance on Sunday mornings (Enter at Quapaw for worship at 8:30; enter at Quapaw or at the Office for worship at 10:45.) Greeters will continue to record names and phone numbers for all who attend.
- Mask wearing is optional following CDC guidelines: Those who are fully vaccinated are not required to wear a mask or socially distance. Those who are not fully vaccinated are asked to wear a mask and practice social distancing. Regular hand washing is recommended for all. (Seating in classrooms at the back of the Sanctuary will be reserved for those who still choose to practice “social distancing.”)
- Sunday School classes and other groups may resume regular meetings in person beginning June 1.
- Meals will be served in Fellowship Hall, but only as part of our bereavement ministry. Pre-packaged snacks may be served to children and youth. Individuals may bring a personal beverage in a sealed container.

For more information, contact the church office (501 623-5626). For other activities, see the CDC guidelines below.

CDC Guidelines for Choosing Safer Activities

The CDC has published the charts below, with the green symbol representing the safest; the yellow symbol is less safe; and the red symbol is the least safe.



Get a COVID-19 vaccine



Prevention measures not needed



Take prevention measures

Wear a mask, stay 6 feet apart, and wash your hands.

• Safety levels assume the recommended prevention measures are followed, both by the individual and the venue (if applicable).

• CDC cannot provide the specific risk level for every activity in every community. It is important to consider your own personal situation and the risk to you, your family, and your community before venturing out.

Choosing Safer Activities

Accessible link: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/participate-in-activities.html>

Unvaccinated People	Examples of Activities Outdoor	Fully Vaccinated People
	Walk, run, wheelchair roll, or bike outdoors with members of your household	
	Attend a small, outdoor gathering with fully vaccinated family and friends	
	Attend a small, outdoor gathering with fully vaccinated and unvaccinated people	
	Dine at an outdoor restaurant with friends from multiple households	
	Attend a crowded, outdoor event, like a live performance, parade, or sports event	

Backpacks for Kids Update

Our backpack program has looked a bit different this year because of the pandemic. We have delivered food bags each week to Hot Springs Junior Academy and Main Street Visual and Performing Arts School, formerly Hot Springs Middle School.

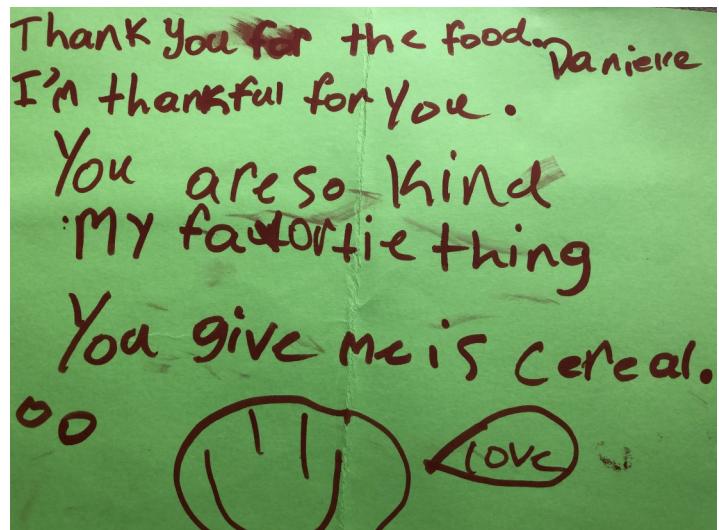
When we began the school year, because of COVID restrictions, we changed our delivery day from Friday to Wednesday because the bags of food had to quarantine for 48 hours before being given to the students. The number of bags delivered also changed because of virtual learning.

It was, as always, a rewarding experience. The schools are so appreciative of GAUMC. Leslie Whalen, the counselor at the Main Street School, has left us notes and cards from some of the students thanking us for the food. One little girl named Danielle wrote, "my favorite thing you give me is cereal."

Hopefully, next school year, we will be able to use more of our volunteers who are always ready to help.

I am so thankful for all who have volunteered to help and for those who have helped in the past. Thanks so much also to those who continue to support our program financially.

Becky Meadows



Outreach is collecting one pound bags of rice during June.



Wesley Foundation HSU/OBU

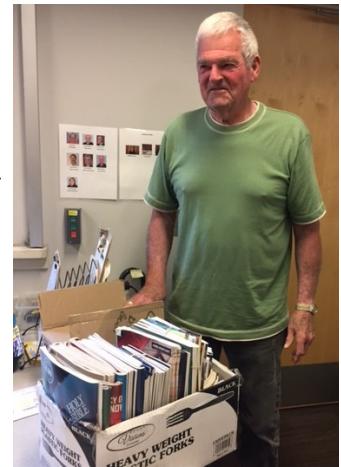
The Wesley Foundation in Arkadelphia will have a new pastor in charge beginning this month. Russ Breshears will move from pastoring Oaklawn United Methodist Church to work with college students at Henderson State University and Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia. The parsonage provided for this position has not been used by the current pastor, and was rented out to students for 12 years. A review of the premises in anticipation of the Breshears family moving in discovered major issues with almost everything. Several different organizations and churches within the Arkansas Methodist Conference are assisting with manual labor, skilled workers, and financial donations. Last Friday Oaklawn UMC hosted a free dinner from Smokin' in Style, followed by a homemade pie auction, preaching by Mama Peaches of Haven UMC, and music by small groups from 3 different churches. If you would like to help with the fix-up in any way, please contact Pastor Russ Breshears at 501-772-7919 or talk with Pastor David.



Mary Kratz and Jewel Larue enjoy the fun-filled gathering to support renovations at Wesley Foundation, Arkadelphia.

GARLAND COUNTY JAIL MINISTRIES

The Garland County Jail Ministries, Inc. is a program that ministers to the Sheriff's Department, Deputies, Detainees and their families. It was established in 1991. The purpose of the GCJMI is to provide inmates and their families a Christ-centered ministry through Christian Education, discipleship training, and pastoral care leading toward physical, spiritual, and emotional growth through a relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ. Department of Justice statistics reveal that within 3 years of their release from prison, 63% of inmates have been re-arrested on felony charges for serious misdemeanors. Now is the church's golden opportunity to change inmates' criminal behavior by using volunteers to share God's love and redemptive grace. GAUMC supports the Jail Ministry Program with donations of bible study material for groups and individuals. We also donate \$100 each year to support the bible study program. Volunteers are needed to teach bible study, lead worship, grade bible study papers, and clerical work for bible study. In addition, the Jail Library accepts paperback reading material for the inmates to occupy their time in worthwhile ways. A basket in Fellowship Hall is available for donations of paperback books and magazines. If you are interested in pursuing the possible volunteer opportunities with the Jail Ministry, contact Chaplain Dennis Brown at 501-651-7849



Morris Coston delivers donated Bible study books to the Garland Co. Jail Ministries program

Thank You from Teen Challenge

Praise God for new beginnings! In 2 Corinthians 5:17 the bible says, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come." We are so blessed here at Teen Challenge to see this promise experienced every day by the faithfulness of God and through your donation of \$250.00. We praise God for His miraculous working power for people like you who give so the message of Jesus can be shared with those in need.

Tim R. Culbreth, Executive Director



The following is a letter from a student gifted by GAUMC
Hello. My name is Cooper. I am a Teen Challenge Student. Before I came to Teen Challenge, I was in a VERY dark place in my life - on Drugs Bad and a Casino problem. Since coming here my life is changing. God has helped with all of that. Thank you for helping me change my life.



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We're Here to Serve You

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

#LiveWithLight
John 1:5

Arkansas Annual Conference
June 2-5, 2021 · Hot Springs, Arkansas

Annual Conference Worship Schedule

Wednesday, June 2
4:30 pm Opening Worship / Ordination

Thursday, June 3
8:00 am Worship
1:30 pm Celebration of Life Service

Friday, June 4
8:00 am Worship
5:00 pm Service of Sending Forth

**Note: Annual Conference will be
livestreamed for viewing on YouTube.
www.youtube.com/arkansasumc**