

Experience L.I.F.E. Downtown: Living, Inclusive, Faithful, Emerging

The Downtowner



Dear Friends,

Happy New Year! I am delighted to be writing to you as 2012 begins. I will once again call this a kind of “State of the Church” address as we look back and look ahead together.

First, I want to report on a magnificent Advent and Christmas season in our church. Our service of Blessings and Carols on December 18 was meaningful and inspiring with music, readings and blessings for the season. I want to thank everyone who participated in that special service of worship. **Christmas Eve 2011** was meaningful for a number of reasons. We celebrated the birth of Christ with music, candles and a variety of voices from our congregation sharing in reading and testimony. *This year we raised over \$2,500.00 for our Christmas offering.* Thank you for your support of our ministries by giving a gift to Jesus in honor of his birthday!

Also, Christmas Eve was a special night because it was the *grand opening* of the recently renovated men’s restroom. Last year we celebrated the women’s restroom renovation and this year the men’s. It might sound silly to rejoice in such things but much effort and sacrifice went into the success of this project and it was a great sign of accomplishment to see it completed. Plus, it’s simply a handsome restroom (if such things can be said)! We are thankful for our ability to show hospitality and love to those who enter the campus of our church.

I am thrilled to report that 2011 ended with all bills paid (including 100% of our apportionments to the United Methodist Church) and money in the bank. Please offer a prayer of thanksgiving for your faithful part in this and for the Lord’s guidance in our stewardship. This is a significant accomplishment. Our offerings for 2011 exceeded what was budgeted. That, along with Endowment earnings, our partners at Miami Dade College and American Car Parks, allowed us to meet our budget faithfully. **This is the first time in many years that our offerings were UP from the previous year.** Please know of my great appreciation for your faithfulness.

I rejoice in our ministry together and look forward to a great 2012! I am proud to be your pastor and pray for God’s blessings on each of you.

Pastor Cynthia Weems

MARATHON SUNDAY



Sunday, January 29 is Marathon Sunday! We will let the runners have the roads of downtown Miami that morning. **There will no morning worship services.** Instead, we will **worship at 2:00 p.m.** Come in casual dress and bring a friend for an afternoon of song, celebration and refreshments in the courtyard.

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WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

SUNDAY

Morning Praise in the Chapel
8:30am

Traditional Worship in the
Sanctuary
*11:00am

WEDNESDAY

Prayer and Praise Worship in
the Sanctuary
6:30pm

**Nursery Provided*

INSIDE:

- Opportunity to Serve.....2
- Restroom Renovation update.2
- Membership News.....2
- Calendar.....3
- Upcoming Events.....3
- Webmaster’s Corner.....4



*Annual Foot Washing
For the Homeless*

**Calling all volunteers! FUMC is
busy planning our Annual Foot
Washing for the Homeless**

**Saturday, March 24
1:00 p.m.**

We will need volunteers for set up, footwashing, water running, kitchen duty and clean up.

There is something for everyone!

If you cannot make it to the Foot Washing and would like to help, we are once again asking for donations of new white socks for men, new shoes (sizes 10-13 for men and sizes 6-9 for women), and financial contributions to offset costs for food and materials. Please send all contributions to the church at 400 Biscayne Blvd., Miami, FL 33132 or contribute online through our web site at fumcmiami.com.

Blessings and thanks!

Mary Weden

Missions Chair, Homeless Ministry

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

We welcome the arrival of **George Russ** as a new member. George joined the church on December 25, 2011.

We extend our sympathy to the family of **Eugene Bridges**, a long time church member and dedicated member of the Board of Trustees. Gene died on Christmas Day and his funeral was held at the church on January 7, 2012.

We also remember the family of **Debbie Winebrenner** who also died on Christmas Day. Debbie was the niece of Larry and Opal Winebrenner. A memorial service was held for Debbie on January 10, 2012. Please remember these families in your prayers.

**RESTROOM RENOVATION FINAL
UPDATE**

Many thanks to the Trustees, Plantation UMC Demolition Crew, Gustavo Betancourt, and our many contractors for a job well done on the Restroom Renovation. It looks magnificent! The work is complete and the restroom is open. Many thanks to those who contributed financial support to this important project.

**PRAY FOR OUR 2012 CHURCH
LEADERS**

On Sunday, January 22 we consecrated our church leaders for 2012. The entire list is too extensive to share here but we lift up to you our committee chairpersons and team leaders for the year ahead that you might pray for them and for our ministry together in the year to come.

Church Council —Ginnie Cronk
Lay Leader—Steve Wilkinson
Stewardship—Opal Winebrenner
Finance—Dick Weden
Trustees—Steve Wilkinson
Staff Parish—Sheldon Rattigan-Grey
Missions —Mary Weden
Worship—Lib Carter
Congregational Care—Larry Winebrenner
Evangelism—Walter Baggesen
Children's Ministry — Belinda Bacon, Joanne Rattigan-Grey, Camille Smith, Joyce Ivey
Lay Delegate to Annual Conference—Odette Lightbourne

REMINDER—We Need Eggs!

We need 15 dozen boiled eggs to help support our homeless ministry for the first week of the month. Please bring your boiled eggs on the first Sunday of each month. If you are unable to bring them to worship, bring them anytime the first week of the month. Thank you in advance!

FEBRUARY 2012

SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

7:30 am Breakfast Club - Fellowship Hall
 8:30 am Informal Worship Service
 9:30 am Sunday School Classes
 11:00 am Traditional Worship Service
 12:15 pm Refreshments - Fellowship Hall

WEDNESDAY NIGHT PRAYER & PRAISE

Join us for Wednesday Night worship and Bible Study at 6:30 p.m. each week. We share in prayer, song, and reflection on scripture. Meet in the Chapel for an hour of mid-week renewal.

OTHER CHURCH MEETINGS/ACTIVITIES

Christian Yoga—every Wednesday at 11:00 a.m.

Young Adults Second Friday—Feb. 10 @ The Barnacle in Coconut Grove; 7:00 p.m.

CHURCH COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Trustees: February 1 — 7:30 p.m.

Finance: February 15 — 7:30 p.m.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN (U.M.W.)

February 12 — 12:30 p.m. UMW Meeting following general church service. All women are invited. Lunch provided.

Circle information:

- ◆ February 10—Esther Circle, 11:30 a.m. Sandwich Luncheon at the home of Joy McGarry
- ◆ Ruth Circle Meeting—TBA
- ◆ February 9—Miriam Circle, 2:00 p.m. Epworth Village

COME SERVE A MEAL

FUMC's team that serves a meal at Community Partnership for Homeless (1550 N. Miami Ave.) is up again on the fourth Tuesday of the month, **February 21**. Arrive at CPH just before the 4:45 meal begins for a meaningful night of service. Call the church office for more information.

UPCOMING EVENTS— MARK YOUR CALENDARS

DAILY LENTEN DEVOTIONS

This year we will once again be offering **daily Lenten devotions** via e-mail. These will begin on the first day of Lent, February 22. To sign up, send your e-mail address to the church at info@fumcmiami.com or go to our web site and enter your e-mail there. This is a wonderful way of participating in a daily discipline during the season of Lent.



Ash Wednesday Services and marking of the beginning of Lent February 22, 2012

Receive ashes any time between 12:00-1:00 p.m.
 Worship at 6:30 p.m. with the receiving of ashes
 in the sanctuary.

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First United Methodist Church of Miami
400 BISCAYNE BOULEVARD
MIAMI, FLORIDA 33132-1913
• VOICE 305-371-4706 • FAX 305-371-4707



CHURCH STAFF

Pastor	Cynthia Weems cweems@fumcmiami.com
Church Administrator	Danny Rodolico
Director of Music	Walter Busse
Financial Secretary	Chantal Falby
Custodian	Maria Lopez
Missionaries	Marilyn Beecher Delbert and Sandy Groves

A Note from Our New Lay Leader:

For those that don't know, I am the new Lay Leader at FUMC Miami. I have been asked to represent the laity of our church and work in coordination with our Pastor. It's a wonder to me that being a member of this church less than 3 years I find myself at this station in life. However, I like what Paul says in 2 Corinthians 3:5 "Not that we are competent in **ourselves** to claim anything for **ourselves**, but **our competence** comes from God."

My calling to this church was one of the more incredible events in my walk with Christ; it was unmistakable and as I like to say, irrevocable. Irrevocable because God gave me a sign, a miracle of sorts, to demonstrate I was finally home. I felt it from the first footsteps on this Kingdom ground in downtown Miami. Since putting Christ as the center of my life and claiming Him as Lord and Savior nearly 20 years ago, I have never ceased to be amazed at the things He has in store for me. I am in awe of a God who can use even someone

like me to help lead a church like this with such a storied history and exciting future.

In this walk with Christ, I've found myself at the foot of many paths and ascended a lot of summits on the way. For me, this appointment as Lay Leader is a challenge to higher summits. I can only trust in Christ that he will lead me through the process, and along the way find those grander summits and amazing victories. My prayer is that you may also hunger for higher summits and bigger victories in your walk with Christ.

I cannot truly represent you until I know you better. Consider this an invitation to spend time with me and hold a conversation about what this church means to you, and ways you think this church can meet your needs and desires better. I am available to you and anyone in this church. Will you join the conversation?

Always and forever in Christ,
Steve Wilkinson
eklaysea@gmail.com