



# Messenger

A PUBLICATION OF FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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## John Wesley's Thoughts on Methodism

“I am not afraid that the people called Methodists should ever cease to exist either in Europe or America. But I am afraid, lest they should only exist as a dead sect, having the form of religion without the power. And this undoubtedly will be the case, unless they hold fast both the doctrine, spirit, and discipline with which they first set out.”

– John Wesley, *Thoughts Upon Methodism* (1786)

John Wesley wrote this toward the very end of his life. He had seen the incredible growth of the Methodist movement, which was still technically a part of the Church of England. But, as you can see, he feared that someday we might lose sight of what's really most important.

So, what is this doctrine, spirit, and discipline that Wesley had in mind? In short, it's this. First, Christianity is not merely outward form, but inner transformation. It's not just attending church, but a life changed inside and out by the grace of God. In essence, it's a life of holiness. It's being renewed in the Image of God, being made holy as God is holy.

Second, only the Holy Spirit can change us like that. You and I can't manufacture it, and we can't fake it. Only God can do this in us. It's a miracle of God's grace. It's why we talk about being born again of the Spirit of God.

Third, we receive this grace by faith in Jesus Christ. It is only through Jesus' atoning sacrifice on the Cross that we can not only be forgiven of our sin, but changed by grace to be holy in heart, mind, and soul.

Finally, anyone who is living this life of holiness, or at least sincerely pursuing it, is a true Methodist. That is, they are Methodist not only in name, but in heart. And, according to Wesley, if we will continue to pursue God like that, we will avoid what he feared most, because the power of the Holy Spirit will be at work within us.

*Brother Lauren*

## THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 29

- 9:00 a.m. Contemporary Service
- 9:50 a.m. Sunday School
- 11:00 a.m. Traditional Worship Service
- 11:00 a.m. Live Stream Worship
- 6:00 p.m. Solid Ground Youth
- 6:00 p.m. Bro. Lauren's Bible Study

### TUESDAY, JANUARY 31

- 6:00 p.m. Ladies' Bible Study

### WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1

- 4:30 p.m. Ladies Handbell Choir
- 5:15 p.m. W.O.W. Children's Ministry
- 6:00 p.m. Chancel Choir
- 6:00 p.m. Bro. Lauren's Bible Study
- 6:00 p.m. Snack Supper
- 6:00 p.m. Youth

### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4

- 9-12 noon Methodist Market



**Happy  
Birthday!**

- 29. Kathy Phillips  
Anna Ryan Angel
- 1. Amy Ray  
Drake Smith
- 3. Bonnie Holmes  
Katherine Phillips
- 4. Shirley Simmons

Sunday, February 12, 2023, there will be a **Combined Worship Service** at 10 a.m., followed by a Congregational Meeting at 11 a.m. Lee Ann Williamson, a representative of the Global Methodist Church in Mississippi, will share information on this subject.

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## Rob Renfroe from Good News Magazine



*A conversation with Rob Renfroe*  
Flora Methodist Church  
February 4, 2023 / 1pm

*Registration link in the comments*  
*Live streaming available on*  
*Mississippi WCA YouTube Channel*  
*A love offering will be received*



On **Saturday, February 4, at 1 p.m.** Rob Renfroe, the president of Good News Magazine, will be speaking at **Flora Methodist Church** about the state of the UMC, but even more about the potential of the Global Methodist Church.

Rob is an influential leader among conservative, traditional Methodists, and he offers keen insights for disaffiliating UMC churches. We are thrilled to have him with us here in Mississippi.

Attendance is free, but they are asking that we register in advance. To register, click the following link (or call Brother Lauren):

<https://forms.gle/wEeouxrzy6vmJu9LA>



If you would like to apply for Scholarships for the spring semester, please come by the church office for an application.

Deadline - February 1, 2023.

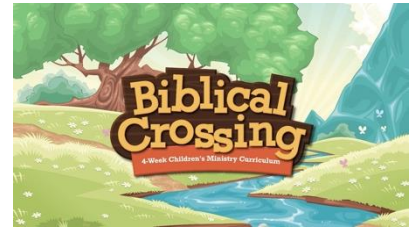


## Hiskidz and Bible in Life

This Sunday is our last lesson in the series, *Who Jesus is*. In the lesson this week, "Believing in Jesus," we will be talking about the Transfiguration. Jesus took Peter, James, and John up on a mountain, and they were able to see Him in all His glory. We will talk more about this special moment that these 3 disciples experienced when we meet for Sunday School.

## W.O.W. Wednesday Children's Ministry

W.O.W. Wednesday met last week for the first time this year. We are excited to be back and hope you will join us each Wednesday. We are starting off the year with a 4-week series called *Biblical Crossing*. These lessons will keep the children's attention, help them grow in their faith, and encourage them to share the Good News. Children will find out what it takes to tend to their "faith island" by connecting with Jesus in daily life. Last week we talked about the importance of staying connected to God. He is our life source and our guide. This week in our lesson, *Debug Your Life*, we are reminded that there are "bugs" that can get into our faith and make it difficult to maintain a solid relationship with God. In order to "debug" our faith, we must turn from sin, repent and ask for God's guidance.



## Youth Sunday School

This Sunday in our lesson, "Fuzzy or Focused," we will discuss and explore what it means to focus on following someone. As Christians, we should place our focus on following Jesus, but often we find the world creeping in and getting us sidetracked on following other things. We must learn to balance things in life but put our focus on Jesus.

## Youth Bible Study and Small Group

Sunday and Wednesday Night Youth Group has picked back up with Bible Study at 6:00 p.m. We will continue by wrapping up with a few more testimonies and begin a new Bible Study series.

## Spring Break Trip

If your youth is interested in the Spring Break trip planned for March 13-16, please respond to the information that has been sent out.



We wanted to take an opportunity to thank you for your prayers, gifts, and encouragement after the tragedies we've experienced, losing our home and our pets (little buddies). We know God has a plan (God always has a plan) whether we like it at every given moment or not, He has a plan and He has us. This experience has only been another excellent opportunity for us to share our testimonies with others and drive conversations to Him.

Because of your generosity, we have been able to afford living arrangements while planning a way to rebuild and return to our home. From the bottom of our hearts, we thank you for every prayer, dollar, word, or thought. Each one of you have blessed us, strengthening our faith through the sincerity you have shown.

The greatest thing to keep in mind for us throughout this time, is (and has been) exactly what Jesus' brother (James) tells us:

“Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”

James 1:2-4 ESV

May God bless you and keep you happy, safe, and healthy. Respectfully and thankfully,

Matt & Hannah Matrick

## Sunday, January 29, 2023

Greeters	Julie & De Paul/Brenda & Jim Oakes
Scripture	Luke 4:31-37
Sermon	<b>“The Holy One of God”</b>
Flowers	Pam & Hubert Hatfield

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS

### JANUARY

<b>29. 4th Sunday after the Epiphany</b>	<b>Mark 1:21:28</b>
30. Good news! God reigns!	Isaiah 52:7-10
31. Where were you?	Job 38:4-7

### FEBRUARY

1. Keep these words	Deuteronomy 6:4-9
2. Have you not heard?	Isaiah 40:21-31
3. The LORD lifts up	Psalms 147:1-11, 20c
4. For the sake of the gospel	1 Corinthians 9:16-23