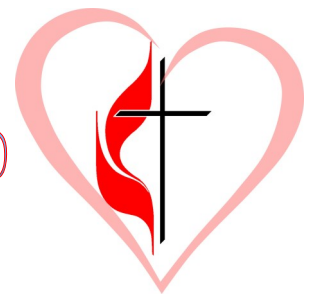




# MESSANGER



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF TITUSVILLE  
206 S. HOPKINS AVE, TITUSVILLE, FL 32796  
FEBRUARY 2022

## SIX STEPS TO GETTING YOUR CHURCH PAST POLARIZATION

by Rebekah Simon-Peter  
November 8, 2021

<https://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/11100/six-steps-to-getting-your-church-past-polarization>

At a time when polarization seems to be at an all-time high, most churches are not able to bridge the gap. Instead, they are caught up in divisiveness, too. This polarization limits the church's ability to lead or to distinguish itself as a spiritual institution. We'll consider six important steps toward getting your church past polarization.

In some ways, churches now resemble the US House of Representatives more than the house of prayer that Jesus envisioned. It's not that your church shouldn't wrestle with [important issues](#). By all means, it should.

But when the voice of the church is framed more by politics than ethics, or by who it stands against instead of the love of God that embraces all, this is bad news for your church and the community you serve.

## *The lure of polarization*

We know we are supposed to love God, love others, and love ourselves. We know we are supposed to turn the other cheek and do good to those who hate us. Yet we find that hard to do with fellow church folk, let alone the people "out there."

Unconditional love is hard to muster when news headlines play on fear, outrage, and worst-case scenarios. Or when social media feeds reinforce your perspective on the world. It takes true effort to get past these views of the world and believe that something else is even possible.

When churches try to speak to issues like the pandemic, immigration, or even school shootings from a political perspective, they get caught in either/or choices popularized by right- and left-wing media. This creates a lose-lose situation with no room for nuanced disagreement. Either/or choices are destined to polarize, and to pit people against each other.

Getting your church past polarization is based on

*(Continued on page 2)*



prioritizing ethics over politics.

### ***Prioritize Ethics Over Politics***

This six-step process for ethical thinking is not perfect or complete, but it will give you a starting point. United Methodists will recognize elements of the process as it engages the [Wesleyan quadrilateral](#), the four sources by which we live out Christian faith.

**Step 1:** When it comes to thinking ethically, the first and most important step is to get the facts. That means looking beyond Facebook memes and polarizing talking heads. It means digging deeper to find out what's really going on. "Some moral issues create controversies simply because we do not bother to check the facts," observe the authors of *Thinking Ethically*.

**Step 2:** Turn to the scriptures. Discover the biblical stories or principles that might apply. This means thinking deeply and widely about meta messages in the Bible. Resist the temptation to pluck one or two scriptures out of context that seem to fit the situation. Many ethical dilemmas we face today were never mentioned in scripture. Similarly, the scriptures themselves were written over centuries in response to situations that are far from our post-modern context.

**Step 3:** Look to other commentaries or sources of your faith. United Methodists will want to consult the Book of Discipline, the Social Principles, and the Book of Resolutions to see how other informed persons of faith have approached these issues.

**Step 4:** Look at the history of the issue. How has it been dealt with in the past? What has worked? What

hasn't? As thinking persons of faith, we engage our faculties of reason.

**Step 5:** Engage in prayer. But don't necessarily ask for specific answers to your specific questions; this type of prayer may lead to confusing our own solutions with God's divine guidance. Rather, pray for guidance and wisdom as you discern together.

**Step 6:** Engage in respectful, patient discussion about the resources at hand. To do so, first decide on ground rules and boundaries, so that your discussions don't become polarized or violent. At this point, don't try to come to final solutions or absolute positions. Rather, keep an open mind. Keep prayer present even in the discussion. Over time, discuss possible ethics-based approaches to addressing the problem at hand.

Don't worry if dialogue partners can't come to the same conclusion. You probably won't. That's okay, because you thought faithfully and ethically about the issues at hand. This ethics-based process creates trust, loosens polarization, and increases your skill at diving deep as a community of faith. It might even get you loving one another, differences and all.

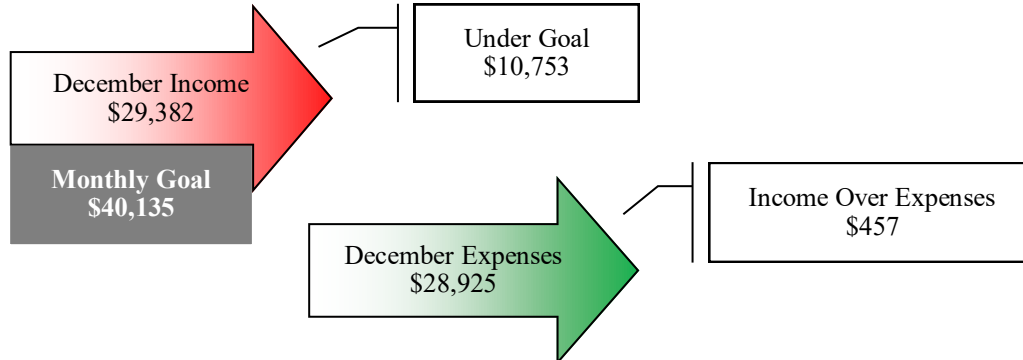
In [Creating a Culture of Renewal®](#), we empower church leaders to bring out the best in those who frustrate them the most. Not an easy task. But it is doable. I'm hosting a workshop called "[Platinum Rule Leadership in Changing Times](#)." Please join me for a communal experience in which you will learn how to love and lead others who challenge you. So that you can move past polarization.

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### The Church's Budgeted Finances

The Finance Committee appreciates your contributions and donations. With your support we will be able to continue sharing God's love with those around us.



The budget for 2021 is **\$481,620** which, divided evenly, makes each month's goal \$40,135 rather than being weighted differently throughout the year. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we are all feeling the financial pinch. If you are able to still contribute during these lean times, please help us to maintain our regular operating costs as you find you are able. Only with the generosity of our congregation have we been able to weather the storms of the past and even the current storm we are in.

Thank you for your loving generosity in keeping this church operating!

# FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

1 Brenda Pittman  
4 Charlotte Studstill  
5 Jason Kline  
8 Billy White  
11 Sara Coniglio

12 Russ Beeker  
14 Duane Torneden  
17 Debbie Grimes  
17 Nancy Torneden  
18 David Stallings

20 Grace Lazzari  
21 Deb Kerschner  
21 Ed Patterson  
24 Fay Kikta  
27 Bonnie Sego

# FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

3 Bob & Debbie Preston  
5 Marion & Joy Brady

5 Richard & Grace Barron  
15 Ted & Hillary Page

# Black History Month

History.com Editors Updated: Jan 19, 2022 Original: Jan 14, 2010

Black History Month is an annual celebration of achievements by African Americans and a time for recognizing their central role in U.S. history. Also known as African American History Month, the event grew out of “Negro History Week,” the brainchild of noted historian Carter G. Woodson and other prominent African Americans. Since 1976, every U.S. president has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month. Other countries around the world, including Canada and the United Kingdom, also devote a month to celebrating Black history.

## Origins of Black History Month

The story of [Black History](#) Month begins in 1915, half a century after the [Thirteenth Amendment](#) abolished [slavery](#) in the United States.

That September, the Harvard-trained historian Carter G. Woodson and the prominent minister Jesse E. Moorland founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH), an organization dedicated to researching and promoting achievements by Black Americans and other peoples of African descent.

Known today as the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH), the group sponsored a national Negro History week in 1926, choosing the second week of February to coincide with the birthdays of [Abraham Lincoln](#) and [Frederick Douglass](#). The event inspired schools and communities nationwide to organize local celebrations, establish history clubs and host performances and lectures.

In the decades that followed, mayors of cities across the country began issuing yearly proclamations recognizing "Negro History Week." By the late 1960s, thanks in part to the [civil rights movement](#) and a growing awareness of Black identity, "Negro History Week" had evolved into Black History Month on many college campuses.

President [Gerald Ford](#) officially recognized Black History Month in 1976, calling upon the public to “seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history.” Today, Black History Month is a time to honor the contributions and legacy of African Americans across U.S. history and society—from activists and civil rights pioneers such as [Frederick Douglass](#), [Sojourner Truth](#), [Marcus Garvey](#), [Martin Luther King Jr.](#), [Malcolm X](#) and [Rosa Parks](#) to leaders in industry, politics, science, culture and more.

## Black History Month 2022 Theme

Since 1976, every American president has designated February as Black History Month and endorsed a specific theme.

The Black History Month 2022 theme, “[Black Health and Wellness](#),” explores “the legacy of not only Black scholars and medical practitioners in Western medicine, but also other ways of knowing (e.g., birthworkers, doulas, midwives, naturopaths, herbalists, etc.) throughout the African Diaspora. The 2022 theme considers activities, rituals and initiatives that Black communities have done to be well.”

*Did you know? The NAACP was founded on February 12, 1909,  
the centennial anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln.*

### Citation Information

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IN HIM OUR  
*heart*  
REJOICE.

PSALM 33:21

# What's Happening!

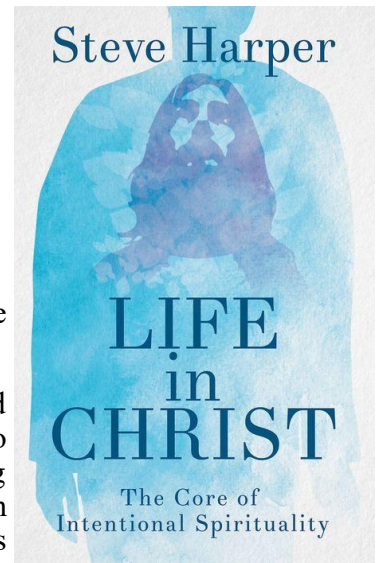
## Lenten Book Study

### *Life in Christ: The Core of Intentional Spirituality*

**Begins  
Tuesday, March 1st @ 1pm.**

Join Pastor Wayne in a book study in reading and discussing *Life in Christ: The Core of Intentional Spirituality* by Steve Harper.

Steve Harper helps us recognize our tendency to search for life through rules and dogmas rather than in relationships with other people and with God. He taught us to see spiritual life as a movement, where we are always on the way, continually taking steps to align our lives with Christ. He shows us how Christ can be the goal and pattern for our lives, and motivates us to live as God's beloved and as instruments of God's love.



Books can be purchased through [Smile.Amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com) or [Walmart.com](https://www.walmart.com).





## Welcome Connection Kids!

The [Connection Kids](#) day school will be moving into the Education Building on Tuesday, February 1st. Please welcome them with teacher appreciation cards. You can bring cards to the church office and our staff will deliver them to the school during the week. You can also mail cards to 213 S. Palm Ave, Titusville, FL 32796. Let's show our support for this great group of people and the amazing work they do.

# February 2022

## First United Methodist Church

| Sunday  | Monday   | Tuesday | Wednesday   | Thursday   | Friday  | Saturday  |
|---|--|---------|---|--|---|---|
|   |  | 1       | 2<br>9:00am Patchwork Friends<br>3:30pm Joyful Noise Rehearsal<br>4:30pm Chancel Choir<br>6:00pm Vivos Voco Rehearsal | 3  | 4<br>1-3:30pm Food Pantry<br>9:30am Ladies Day Out  | 5<br>7:30am Garden Club<br>8:00am Comm. Breakfast |
| 6<br>9:00am Sunday School<br>10:00am Worship  | 7  | 8       | 9<br>1:00pm Staff Meeting<br>3:30pm Joyful Noise Rehearsal<br>4:30pm Chancel Choir<br>6:00pm Vivos Voco Rehearsal     | 10<br>10:30am Retired Teachers Mtg                 | 11<br>1-3:30pm Food Pantry                          | 12<br>8:00am Comm. Breakfast                      |
| 13<br>9:00am Sunday School<br>10:00am Worship | 14 <b>Valentine's Day</b><br>10:00am Sara Fernandez Bible Study<br> | 15      | 16<br>9:00am ADK<br>3:30pm Joyful Noise Rehearsal<br>4:30pm Chancel Choir<br>6:00pm Vivos Voco Rehearsal              | 17<br>9:30am PEO Mtg<br>4:00pm Leadership Team Mtg | 18<br>1-3:30pm Food Pantry<br>9:30am Ladies Day Out | 19<br>8:00am Comm. Breakfast                      |
| 20<br>9:00am Sunday School<br>10:00am Worship | 21 <b>President's Day</b><br>                                     | 22      | 23<br>3:30pm Joyful Noise Rehearsal<br>4:30pm Chancel Choir<br>6:00pm Vivos Voco Rehearsal                            | 24   | 25<br>1-3:30pm Food Pantry                          | 26<br>8:00am Comm. Breakfast                      |
| 27<br>9:00am Sunday School<br>10:00am Worship | 28   |         |   |  |   |   |

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### FUMC Staff

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| Reception Desk                         | Ext 201  |
| Rev. Wayne Cook - Pastor               | Ext 202  |
| Mario Davis - Administrative Assistant | Ext 203  |
| Glenda Waring - Membership Secretary   | Ext. 204 |
| Leah Patterson - Finance Secretary     | Ext. 204 |
| Lisa Mick - Dir. of Children's Min.    | Ext. 205 |
| Lauren Peterson - Student & Adult Min. | Ext. 205 |
| Tom Mosier - Facilities Manager        | Ext. 206 |
| Leah Patterson—Custodian               | Ext. 206 |
| Carol Henn - Music Director            |          |
| J.D. Daniel - Organist                 |          |
| Steve Rossi - Sound Tech               |          |
| Josh Huss - Lights and Visuals         |          |
| Dr. Bob Titus - Pastor Emeritus        |          |

### **First United Methodist Church**

206 S. Hopkins Ave  
Titusville, FL 32796

Sunday School: 9:00 a.m.

Worship Services: 10:00 a.m.

Church Office Hours: 8am – 4pm, Monday - Friday  
Closed from 12:00 – 12:30 p.m.

Phone: (321) 269-7631

Fax: (321) 269-8359

E-mail Address: [office@fumctitusville.com](mailto:office@fumctitusville.com)

Website: [www.fumctitusville.com](http://www.fumctitusville.com)

Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/682694095204027](https://www.facebook.com/682694095204027)

Twitter Handle: [@MethodistFirst](https://twitter.com/MethodistFirst)

Instagram Handle: [@UnitedChurch321](https://www.instagram.com/UnitedChurch321)

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCChscOcLDe-wGkXHftvzGX9Q>

