



April 2020

Footprints

“New Director of Our YMCA”



Lee Mulder

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In a presentation before the Outreach Committee, newly appointed Executive Director of the McArthur YMCA pledged that even as the organization has evolved, the “M” now includes women AND men and for the “Y” some members are not so young, that the Christian orientation of the facility... the “C”... will always be at the heart of the organization and its programs. The Chapel is a longtime supporter of the Y. Chapel member Bruce Comrie has joined their advisory board.

Cezar Gonzales is a 31-year veteran of the YMCA. Originally from El Paso, TX, he has led individual and groups of YMCAs throughout the country and served the national organization based in Chicago for many years. He has been at Fernandina Beach since the beginning of 2020. “We love this place,” he said. “I will most likely work here until I retire.

Cezar presented some interesting facts about the Y. It was founded in London, England in 1844 as a safe haven for boys and young men living on the streets. The Y came to America at Boston in 1885 with a building that housed the world’s first indoor swimming pool. In 1851, basketball was invented at the Y using peach baskets. In 1895, volleyball was invented to take team sport outdoors. The McArthur Y at Fernandina Beach was built in 1995. Today, each Y is an “association” like a franchise. There are 900 associations nationally with 2700 YMCAs serving nine million youth and 22 million total members. He assured us that offspring of the Y such as YWCA for women and the secular YMHA, Young men’s Health Association in New York City are not associated with the U.S. organization.

“We have many challenges at this Y,” he said. “Some of them are physical, such as enlarging the building and making more parking space. We are building a new facility at Wild Light. But most of the things we plan about are community challenges. How do we better meet the needs of our aging population? How can we promote family togetherness? How do we fight obesity in youth? What can we offer kids to battle isolation? And how do we continue to build character in our young people?”

“The Y has great staff here at Fernandina and a good start on further enriching the lives of our neighbors and young people. If we do our job right, everyone will know we are Christians by our love. My wife and I are delighted to be a part of this community.”



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Love Bus II: Educational, Inspirational, Hopeful

By Lee Mulder



On Ash Wednesday 2020, a group of 14 curious souls stepped onto a van in the church parking lot to travel to three ministries supported by Amelia Plantation Chapel. Called Love Bus II: Safari into Yulee and Beyond, the itinerary would take us to three Chapel ministry partners in Jacksonville and Yulee. The day was organized by the Chapel's Outreach Committee.



Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary

At Gordon Conwell in Jacksonville we were greeted by Professor Justin Young. The school has been a multi-denominational evangelical seminary since its founding in 1969; the Jacksonville campus opened in 2006. "This school serves as a high level educational resource for Masters of Divinity students, church and para-church personnel. Our goal is to get students to fall in love with God's word."

Love Bussers were impressed with the large library and with fascinating old and new testament time lines displayed on the walls. Justin added: "We are finding ways to teach more efficiently in the electronic age with on-line, real-time classes. Your support helps us equip people to enthusiastically build the world Jesus wants for us with skills, joy and motivation."

Set Free Ministries

Our next stop was in Yulee at Set Free Ministries, an organization that helps people to kick addictions solely by using God's word. We all have heard of rehab facilities that depend on medicines, exercise and counseling to deal with addiction so we were curious: How can it be done simply through the Word of God.

Pastor Mark Souter, explained: "The men who come here... 55 of them now, ranging in age from 20 to 70, have hit rock bottom. Nothing else has worked and they desperately want their lives back. So we don't get people off drugs, we get them on the Gospel. Residents commit to a 150-day regimen, of which the first two weeks are Bible study three times a day. This is a residential program; men sleep here, eat here, study here and go to church down the road."

Souter invited us to lunch which was hearty and delicious. We then sat in on the afternoon Bible study, today covering Hebrews. The men asked intelligent questions. They took notes. Their eyes were bright, their minds engaged. The teaching was excellent.

"We have facilities here for working out, wood shop, auto shop. We do outreaches into Jacksonville," Souter said. "The rooms of this former motel serve us well. But we must look to the future where we can start a women's program. I'm sure I'll be doing this for the rest of my life. I'm proud of what God has done here; y'all are welcome to come back whenever you're around."



Faith Christian Academy

We were greeted at Faith Christian Academy Secondary School in Yulee by headmaster Brian Alvaré and Ella Vacirca, an FCA student and daughter of chapel members Frank and Suzanne Vacirca. Started in 1996 as a home school cooperative, there is now a lower school campus and a high school campus.

“Besides normal academics, we offer sports teams for soccer, football and cross-country and a full curriculum of arts music, orchestra and theater,” the headmaster said. “We teach as though each kid has greatness within and adapt to each one... and we make sure Jesus Christ is at the center of it all.

Thanks to Clara Leonard’s excellent driving skills, the Love Bus was back at the Chapel at 3PM. Participants rated the experience an average 9.2 out of 10 and reported that seeing these ministries at work strengthened their faith. Stay tuned for news of Love Bus III coming in May.

Sowers, Seeds, and Soil

By Claudia Smith



THANK YOU to all who helped with the Nassau County Homeless Children Easter Basket Ministry. Thank you to our generous donors, shoppers, assemblers, and drivers.

On March 9th, thirteen dear, spirit-led ladies, “Sowers,” gathered in the Fellowship Hall to fill and deliver 120 Easter Baskets—30 each for four age groups, ages 2 through 19. Easter Story and activity books, Bible verse coins, scrolls, and stickers, bracelets, Footprints in the Sand book-marks, and cross necklaces, all sharing the Gospel of Jesus, “Seeds,” were included in every basket. The children also received crayons, personal care items, toys, and treats. The baskets are distributed by the volunteers “*more Sowers*” at the Families In Transition (FIT) Clothes Closet in Yulee. Families can pick up baskets Monday afternoons through April 6 for their children, “*Soil, especially Good Soil,*” who are part of the FIT program. A heart-felt thank you to the three grandmas in the check-out line behind me at Walmart a few weeks ago. During the lengthy check-out process for the overflowing shopping cart of items for the baskets, these grandmas became curious and we talked about the ministry. They opened their hearts and donated to children through a ministry they had never heard about. God works in such wonder-full ways! ...When we delivered the baskets to Yulee, the Clothes Closet manager, Judy, told about the 6-year-old boy who came in with his mother last April. There was one basket remaining and it became his! This young child of God joyfully spun around the Clothes Closet with his hands in the air. He couldn’t believe the basket was his! We, “Sowers,” are preparing and planting “Seeds.” God prepares His children, “Soil,” to receive the message of Jesus. To God be the Glory! (Mark 4:3-9)

All Bible study classes have been canceled for the month of April. We are diligently working to keep with the CDC and Governor's guidelines for gatherings. We will keep the congregation updated on the status of all the classes via email and Facebook page.

For The Beauty Of The Earth

Lord of all, to thee we raise



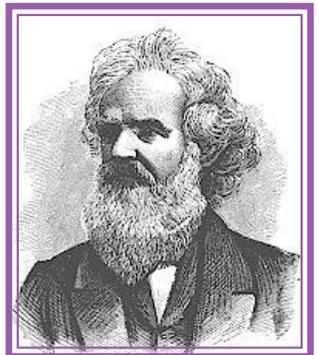
Folliot Sandford Pierpoint authored this beloved hymn. He was 29 when he was walking in the countryside surrounding his home in Bath, England. It was a beautiful spring day as he stared mesmerized by the green ocean, heaven's blue ceiling, and the winding River Avon cutting through the flowery landscape. He was overwhelmed with God's creative brilliance and wrote his memorable poem, intended primarily for Communion services in his Anglican Church. It was not long before the piece jumped the Atlantic and soon became associated with America's Thanksgiving holiday.



Bill Hilles



After graduating from Cambridge, Pierpoint taught at Somersetshire College near Bath, but spent most of his later years moving from town to town, teaching some, writing hymns, and publishing his poetry. Gratitude is at the heart of his hymn, but some observed that many often exhibit gratitude in reverse proportion to the number of blessings received, i.e., the more we have, the less thankful we are. God wants to make us people who show thankfulness in proper proportion to the gifts and blessings we receive.



*For thyself, best gift divine,
To our race so freely given;
For that great, great love of thine,
Peace on earth and joy in heaven;
Lord of all, to Thee we raise
This our hymn of grateful praise*

In The Beginning—Our Pastors

Thirty Years of God's Grace



Marlene Strobach

When the dream of a few families at the south end of the island materialized in the year 1977, it became necessary to find local pastors who would hold Sunday services at various spots on the Plantation. The congregants were fortunate to find Dr. Walton Grady of the First Presbyterian Church in Fernandina along with Rev. Jim Powell and Rev. Bruce Pickering of the local Methodist Church who would alternate Sunday worship. Then in 1979, Dr. Tom Luke, a retired Methodist preacher, became Dean of the Chapel. It was not until 1987 that the Rev. Dr. Don McGarity became the Chapel's first full time pastor charged with the building of our Chapel as we know it today.

These are words from the Rev. Dr. Don McGarity:

It was July 1987 when I held my first service at the Property Owners Club at Amelia Island Plantation. The Presbytery of St. Augustine gave me permission to minister and to help organize the chapel into a full congregation. The people were so enthusiastic and could not have been more welcoming.

At first the Chapel was thinking about putting a very small chapel in Drummond Point Park. I informed the board that perhaps it would be good to have several meetings to talk to the members about what they envisioned for the Chapel. A Lutheran pastor friend of mine in Jacksonville was working on his doctorate with an emphasis on church architecture and I got him to lead us in the three meetings. He asked important questions such as: What kind of a church did you come from? What do you want the Chapel to say about God? What is your dream for the purpose of the Chapel? The answers from the three meetings were collated and presented to the board and congregation. Immediately everyone realized we were thinking too small. So a task force was formed to see about a larger piece of property. At first it appeared there was no suitable property available. However, I asked Chapel member Jane Smith to establish a women's prayer group who met in her home every week. I named the group "The Boiler Room." When things seemed to get cold I called upon the women's prayer group to "warm things up." To everyone's surprise our two-acre building site was acquired in two parcels, October 28, 1988, and April 28, 1989. So, we thoroughly believe God working through the "Boiler Room" helped in purchasing the property where the Chapel now stands. The Board recommended to the congregation that I become their first full time minister entirely supported by the Chapel and I was installed by the Presbytery of St. Augustine May 1, 1989.

From the beginning of my pastorate, I emphasized that we were an Interdenominational Church as our March 15, 1977 charter stated. We needed to celebrate that God had brought us together from different Christian traditions and denominations but we were One In Christ. That was my constant goal.

When looking for an architect we determined to use the results of the original congregational input as to what they wanted in a church. So when David Beer who lived on the Island asked us: "What do you want your church to say about God?" we knew we had found the right architect for the job. For the ground breaking we set up a tent on the property and I preached "Spread Forth the Tent Pegs." It was a beautiful sunny day and even the birds cooperated. Emphasizing our Interdenominationalism we asked people to bring or send soil samples from the various churches they were or had been members of. We received 125 soil samples and in grand fashion had a backhoe operated by Norm Bryant dig a large hole in which we intermingled the soil. So, from the beginning the emphasis was to proclaim our oneness in Christ and our desire to minister, not simply to ourselves, but to those around us.

Dr. McGarity resides south of us here in Florida and we have sincere hopes that he and his wife will join us for our 30-year anniversary celebration in October.

He's Got The Whole World In His Hand



A time for reflecting is upon us as a World in pandemic crisis. We see first hand how vulnerable humankind truly is when it comes to a vicious virus being emitted into the environment. No person is exempt from its attack, not even the healthiest and strongest of us. Survival of the fittest seems to pale in light of known victims who have been diagnosed with Coronavirus. However, facts thus far do indicate most people in good health are able to conquer the virus, yet it still possesses so many mysteries that our medical community cannot yet solve. Every nation around the globe is experiencing the exact same thing. We are in this together, whether we want to be or not!



Jennifer St. Clair

Perhaps we Americans can take a moment to give thanks for our freedom to worship God and speak our truths during this period of quarantine. Despite the complaints about the digital age and its many pitfalls, we are blessed at a time like this to be able to communicate with one another and share information pertinent to our safety and wellbeing from our homes. Why, we can even continue to attend church services via the internet!!!

Some of us go outside and observe the wonders and beauty of God's World when it gets too overwhelming and simply take a break from everything. I am finding myself more attentive to every detail than usual. The palm trees seem more exciting and magical than ever to me. I catch myself looking up at the different shapes, sizes and directions of the fronds. The skirts formed beneath the new growth render a fun trait to paint; I now have three total!

My day always appears brighter when watching those amusing little shoreline birds, especially the sanderlings dancing on the sand in rapid synchronicity of a perfect Nature choreography. And how can I ever resist putting my feet in the water? I cannot! Yesterday I even watched seven dedicated swimmers at sunrise performing their two mile ritual. I'd be scared silly of sharks feeding on something other than fish!

As you can tell, I'm doing my best to remain positive and grateful in these challenging times. We Christians know that God is watching over us and He does have the whole World in His hands. And so it is. Amen!

Psalm 95:7 For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

Pastor Rob Goyette Proclaims India A Mission Force



The Chapel men's breakfast met on Friday, March 13 defying both superstition and the threat of contracting Coronavirus in order to share a hearty breakfast and hear from Pastor Rob Goyette about evangelism in India.



Lee Mulder

“In India, the mission field has turned into a missions force,” the pastor said. “All the work done by evangelists and church builders over the last 200 years has resulted in a contagion of conversions to the Gospel. New believers are on fire for God throughout the 2,400 unreached people groups in the country. And, even though the current government is trying to stifle Christian activity and religiosity in general, many churches there have adopted a mandate to spread the Gospel.”

Rob Goyette is pastor of Living Waters Church in Fernandina Beach and is also the founder of Faith Christian Academy, with upper and lower schools serving students whose families attend some 40 local churches including the Chapel.

As a longtime witness to the strategic importance of spreading the gospel in India, Pastor Goyette asked some probing questions: “We are praying for heaven on earth but what does that look like? Revelations 4 speaks of God on a throne surrounded by 24 elders and served by six-winged Seraphim. What does this mean to us?”

“If we consider the scene, we realize each of the elders is viewing God from a different angle. No two of them perceive Him the same. Meanwhile, the Seraphim are saying “Holy, holy, holy,” (Isa.6:3) but they are speaking to each other. They are spreading the message. “To me, this says diversity is good. It’s OK for different denominations, different tribes and nations around the world to perceive God differently; He is still God. He loves us all and we all worship Him. In India where diversity is everywhere, this is a welcome message.

“Then we see the Seraphim spreading the word about worshiping God, another good example for us and another welcome message for Christians in India. In some areas with up to one million people in one square mile, you can believe word spreads quickly. There are more than thousands of home churches in India. Christ’s teachings of peace and joy and everlasting life are unknown to most but are craved by those who hear. They want to follow Acts 10:38 where Jesus demonstrated the power of doing good for others which starts with the Gospel.”

Pastor Goyette concluded with words of great gratitude for the Chapel’s longstanding support of Faith Christian Academy and for being a truly great example of an interdenominational church.

Petal Pushers/Pedal Express

"These flowers have been on the Altar of Amelia Plantation Chapel. They come now to you still fresh from the Holy Atmosphere of Worship, bringing with them our loving thoughts and tender prayers." The Petal Pushers



Lori Flemming

These meaningful words accompany beautiful flower arrangements created on Monday mornings by a group of special Chapel ladies named "The Petal Pushers." Petal Pushers is a ministry made up of dedicated ladies who rearrange the altar flowers into individual bouquets for members who are ill, home-bound, bereaved or celebrating a joyful event. The ladies are experts in flower arranging and thoughtful note writing, and they really enjoy their time of fellowship on Monday mornings. The group includes Ann Adele Allf, Bev Arnold, Lucy Bryan, Cheryl Donaldson, Barrie Hooley, Nancy Jewell, Linda Kamback, Latrelle Maddox, Billie Parkin, Dee Phillips, and Vicky Easton.

Preparing the flowers and writing encouraging notes are aspects of the ministry, but how about getting the bouquets to the recipients? That's where The Pedal Express committee comes in! The Pedal Express team makes sure the flowers are delivered promptly and with a smile. Currently, Ned Flemming, John Hopkins, Bob Hughes, Howard and Sandy Jones, Toby Schubert, and Stan Wilson make this happen every week. Petal Pushers/Pedal Express is truly a group effort.

If you wish to commemorate a special day or event in your life, please find the sign-up book in the Narthex. The cost is only \$50 for a beautiful bouquet and there are a number of slots left in 2020.

The thoughtful sharing of flowers each Sunday brings the recipients some of the peace and blessings that are present at Sunday services. What a special way to share God's love!

p.s. If you have been a recipient of a Monday flower arrangement, we would appreciate you recycling/returning the bud vases to the Fellowship Hall for future use.

Profile: Rev. Tom and Jan Hilton

By Ed Weihenmayer



Rev. Thomas Hilton always was a man on the move. Fortunately he stopped by Amelia Island long enough to serve as the Pastor of Amelia Plantation Chapel from 1994 to 1999. He was raised in the Kenilworth Union Church (inter-denominational) in Illinois and ended his pastoral service at our inter-denominational Chapel here; they were his book-ends. In between, he served the Lord at Presbyterian churches in Minnesota, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Florida; and Wyoming, Ohio, where he was the pastor to Cecil and Ann Adele Allf before they moved to the Plantation.



Tom's original thinking was to be the Interim Pastor of the Chapel, but he liked what he saw, both the area and the Chapel; so Tom and wife Jan asked to be considered for the permanent opening. Mary Henning, head of the search committee, Hal Latimer and others, decided favorably and we enjoyed their spiritual leadership for 6 years. The inter-denominational character appealed to Tom, because the centerpiece was Jesus and not denominational creeds. Tom also served as a Trustee to the Princeton Theological Seminary, a Presbyterian seminary founded in 1812, during this period and longer; and taught at the Chautauqua Institution (NY) during the summer. Jan sang in the Chapel choir and with the Amelia Island Chamber Singers. Tom knew Conrad Sharps who was then a young pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Fernandina.

Today the Hiltons live at the Fleet Landing Retirement Community in Atlantic Beach, near two of their daughters, who have lived there for 20 years. A neighbor there was Marge Crawford, whose husband Tex was on the management team of the original Amelia Island Company; and today Imogene Coleman, who with husband Neal served the Chapel for many years.

Good memories as the Chapel approaches its 30th anniversary in October.

Take Them A Meal



Lori Flemming

You will soon notice a new button on the Chapel website entitled “Caring Meals for Members.” We have decided to start using technology in the form of the “Take Them A Meal” website to more efficiently coordinate meal prep and delivery for our beloved Chapel members in their time of need. When you click the button, you will see a list of recipients and a way to choose when and what meal you would like to bring.

Etiquette Guidelines for Taking a Meal

When taking a meal to a friend or loved one, follow these simple guidelines to guarantee success. Plan in advance as much as possible, adhere to the meal recipient’s requests and above all extend grace to yourself and others.

1. Observe allergies, dietary restrictions and sensitivities—our meal coordinators will list favorites and/or foods to avoid for each recipient.
2. Enter what you plan to bring into the schedule—The goal is for meal providers to be able to see what everyone is bringing, provide a variety of meals and eliminate overlap and duplication of meals.
3. Consider the size of the family (and appetites)—Appetites vary greatly, especially when one is recovering from an illness or surgery. Plan for the specific family accordingly and follow requested portion sizes.
4. Provide clear cooking instructions—Don’t forget to include simple instructions for heating. The fewer decisions the meal recipient has to make the better.
5. Use containers you don’t need returned—In times of grief and other major life events, the last thing a meal recipient needs is the extra stress of identifying and returning dishes to meal providers. We know you want the meal to be a blessing.
6. Do not share germs—A meal recipient with a compromised immune system would much rather have you cancel if someone in your household is sick. An option is to arrange to have a meal delivered or contact the meal coordinator to find a substitute.
7. Show up on time—Do your best to deliver the meal during the designated drop-off time, as the meal recipient has planned for your arrival.
8. Don’t overextend your stay—Keep your visit brief and offer to come back later if it would be helpful.
9. Communicate schedule changes - Use courtesy and consideration when the need arises to cancel your meal or adjust the sign-up date.
10. Thank you notes are optional—Meals are greatly appreciated during life’s times of deep pain, grief and joy. I guarantee your thoughtfulness is appreciated whether you hear from the meal recipient by mailbox, inbox or text (or not at all). Your kindness was delivered at a time it was most needed. If you receive a thank you note, consider it an extra blessing. Know that some meal recipients might not be up to the task, and a thank you note should not necessarily be expected.

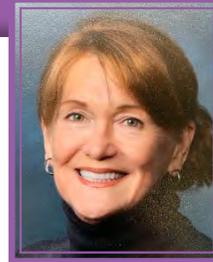
Showing up matters more than what you bring. Give yourself and others grace and keep striving to care for others so well.

Four Easter Choices

Reliving the Passion

By Walter Wangerin Jr.

No story has more significance than the death and resurrection of Jesus. The daily meditations in *Reliving the Passion* follow the story as related in the Gospel of Mark, from the moment when the chief priests plot to kill Jesus to the Resurrection. More than simply a recounting of events, it is an imaginary reenactment, leading the reader to experience the Passion once again or perhaps to see it fully for the very first time.



Carol Ann
McKay

Bread and Wine

Readings for Lent and Easter

C.S. Lewis, G.K. Chesterton, Philip Yancey, Frederick Buechner, and more

Containing selections grouped around such themes as temptation, crucifixion, resurrection, and new life, *Bread and Wine* can be dipped into at leisure or used as a guide to daily devotions.

Easter Stories

Classic Tales for the Holy Season

C.S. Lewis, Leo Tolstoy, Oscar Wilde, and more

This anthology of short stories spotlights the true meaning of the season. Selected for their spiritual value and literary quality, these classic tales capture the spirit of Holy Week and Easter in a way that will captivate readers of all ages.

Resurrection Morning

By Max Lucado

This tiny illustrated book tells the story of a Roman soldier assigned to guard Jesus' tomb after His burial. You might guess that the soldier's watch was very eventful. After all he witnessed, the soldier sought out Jesus' companions to discover the truth about Jesus' life and His mission.

May the blessings of Easter fill you with JOY, PEACE, and LOVE.

My Word is the Light

By Janet McGugan

My Word is the Light that shines forevermore. Dwell in it and on it, keep it in your heart to feed upon. It will lighten your load and lead you into all wisdom, all knowledge and all truth. In the days that are to be it will be important to be rich in My Word. The whole world will be in turmoil but My Word will stand as a beacon of Light to all who believe in Me. It shall lead My people to Me and their salvation. My Cross is before you; it is for you to follow with the Light into all nations. Shed My Light upon the

multitudes, it shall illuminate the path that leads to Me. It shall set the captive free and unbind hearts from the fetters of fear. Be of good cheer, great glory approaches, the goal is in sight. Great joy awaits for all My children, persevere with singleness of purpose. Press on for I AM ever with you.



APRIL EVENTS 2020

All gatherings and events are canceled. Sunday 9:15a services will be available online at our website www.ameliachapel.com via livestream. You may view the service anytime after the livestream has ended on our website. We will keep everyone informed of upcoming events and services returning to normal by our email blasts and Facebook page. If you have any questions please call the Chapel office at (904) 277-4414.