



Ramonalynn Bethley—Lead Pastor

The Master's Key

“on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

--Matthew 16:18b-19

I am coming up on my 38th year of ministry. On August 16, 1984, I was given my first set of keys to a church, and except for about 48 hours between moves I have never been without a church key all these years. Sometimes I am left a fist full of keys that I must sort, walk the building or buildings and figure out on my own what goes where. Other times, like here, I am handed a master key belonging to the former pastor that gets me in to everything. The master key or better yet, “The Master’s Key”, that is how I like to think of it anyway. It is an honor and sacred trust to care not just for the building for which the Master’s Key fits, but to also care for the people who dwell within and are yet to come. For 175 years this key has been passed down from pastor to pastor to pastor, and along with it a rich history, beautiful people and transformative ministries. We stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before us. Let’s make them proud as we keep unlocking the mysteries of faith. Invite someone to join you on the journey,
Pastor RL

The Ministers’ Portraits Are Back! Post renovation, the portraits of our former ministers have finally been located, cleaned, some re-matted, some re-framed, and all re-installed. Bill Sumrall provided a beautiful photograph of our immediate past pastor, Ashley McGuire, which she approved. RL, our current pastor, had her beautiful portrait made for us to use. Due to doors added in the renovation, the ministers all hang on the wall opposite where they were originally. Their names and dates are on the plaque on the original side of the hall by the Sanctuary leading to the Music Suite. Everyone from 1882 on is there for us to know and to be grateful for their service to FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH ALEXANDRIA. When you see the portrait of The Reverend JOHN MACON JOHNSTON, perhaps look for familiar features in his descendents in our congregation, Mim Moore Kieswetter and Sylvia Munsterman, fifth and 6th generations later. Mim provided the following family lore about “Preacher Johnny.” As a circuit rider, he rode from Mooringsport to the confluence of the Red River in Pointe Coupee Parish, up on one side, then down on the other on a horse. Mim’s cousin has seen the actual documents making him an elder and a deacon. His son was practicing medicine in the Alexandria area so he and his wife (Caroline Elizabeth Moore Johnston, married February 14, 1850) settled here. Their son was Julius Alphonse Johnston, M.D., who married Alice Dudley from Montgomery, Alabama, February 11, 1877. Family lore tells that Preacher Johnny, as he was called, had a riding crop with “loaded” head. The explanation why he carried a ‘weapon’ was that God told him to spread the gospel, but don’t be foolhardy as he travelled. The head was probably filled with lead. A side note is that one of the those from his sixth generation, and who was baptized, confirmed, and attended this church is now a Methodist minister herself. The daughter, Mary Rachel Moore, of Mim’s brother, Hugh (Hoopy) Moore, now serves at Asbury United Methodist Church in Lafayette. A direct legacy of both Preacher Johnny and the congregation of FUMCA.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN NEWS

Our April meeting was at the Cenla Pregnancy Center where we assembled gift baskets that they use in their store to reward young ladies for attendance, healthy practices and nutritional diets during their pregnancies.

Katie Vanderlick, Executive Director of the YWCA, spoke to us at the May meeting. The “Y” works to enrich lives of women and girls through various programs. Of interest were the After School Care, Summer Day Camp that includes swim lessons and Girls on the Run. The latter works to inspire all girls to build confidence and make intentional decisions, while fostering care and compassion for self and other. Our special treat was having the P-K 4 children sing for us. Special thanks to Allison Byram and Shelly Hislop for arranging that for us.

On June 28, we will have our annual Call to Prayer and Self-Denial Service highlighting the work of the lay Order of Deaconess and Home Missionary, administered by the United Methodist Women. We are very fortunate to have two retired ladies who are beloved members of our group, Missionary Margaret Wade Campbell and Deaconess Carolina Labrada who will be honored at our meeting for their service. Our guest speaker from Baton Rouge, Brenda Thomas Nero, a newly consecrated Deaconess, will tell us all about the programs. Finally, to add to the excitement of this program, we will close the meeting with our traditional salad luncheon. Please join us Tuesday June 28, 2022 at 9:30 in the Lounge.

All FUMCA women are welcomed and encouraged to participate in UMW.



Brandon Tubbs—Program Director

In just a little while, we will have hosted scores of children, youth, and their families. Are you ready? A team has been planning for Vacation Bible School (June 20-24). It's a food truck theme, and yes, there will be food trucks for the kids and volunteers on one day. There will be much more, also. Through fun activities grounded in Old and New Testament stories, Food Truck Party VBS opens children's eyes to the ways God provides, loves, and cares for us while inviting us to join God in those acts. Classes in science, crafts, recreation, Bible, snacks, and music entertain while reinforcing the lesson.

VBS is just one summer ministry offering. We're hosting our inaugural 'oli'oli camp (July 25-29). 'oli is Hawaiian for joy. This year's camp will focus on music and will include opportunities to dance. Just before music camp, youth are going on a mission trip to Central, Louisiana (July 20-24). We will worship, serve, build community, and have fun. Two weeks of Buddy Camp will be June 6-10 & June 27-July 1. On Sunday evenings, youth will be hosted by church families who are graciously extending the gift of hospitality. There'll be more opportunities like that in the future. On Wednesdays, the youth will gather for meals and serve in the community. Children will gather for swimming, devotions, and other activities. All of this is in addition to the loving, dedicated ministry that our preschool directors and teachers lead throughout the year.

We're going to look up at summer's end and celebrate many blessed ministerial moments. Lives will be shaped and molded. We ask for your prayers, presence, and support as we dream and embark upon all ministry plans. Will you share these opportunities with your friends and their families?

What else can you do to help promote the event? Share it on social media, perhaps. Invite someone to visit our website. Take someone to coffee? Who can you tell about VBS, music camp and the mission trip? Who can you invite? With whom will you share and come alongside in building community and serving as the hands and feet of Christ in each others' lives?

In Christ's love and mine ~ Brandon Tubbs



COMING THIS SUMMER

Buddy Camp	June 6-10	8:00-2:00
Annual Conference	June 14-17	
Vacation Bible School	June 20-24	9:00-12:00
Teen Buddy Camp	June 27-30	
Youth Mission Trip	July 20-24	
Music Camp	July 25-29	

(Register at www.fumca.org)



Vacation Bible School
June 20-24 9-noon
Pre-K-5th Grade
Register at
www.fumca.org



Music Camp
July 25-29
1:00-5:00
K-12th grade
Register at
www.fumca.org

Current Worship Series



Lenten Sermon Series:

Catch the Spirit on 5/29

Mama said there would be days like this, so did Jesus. The good news is we are not alone. The spirit of the Lord is with us so we do not have to be afraid or anxious. So how do we identify and live into that Spirit today?



THE MESSENGER

June 2022



2727 Jackson Street Alexandria, LA 71301
Phone: 318.443.5696
Fax: 318.484.2692
Website: www.fumca.org
Office Hours Monday-Thursday
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Senior Pastor:
Dr. Ramonalynn Bethley
DrRevRL@fumca.org
Cell: 985.259.1128



To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Transforming our community by BUILDING relationships to GROW active disciples who SHARE the life changing lessons of Jesus.