



# Colonial Park

UNITED METHODIST

Monthly Newsletter

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## Missional Motives: Hands-on Mission

By Pastor Jathaniel

Since April, I have used this space to reemphasize some very important parts of our identity as Colonial Park UMC. It's not unusual for any of us to gloss over what it is that makes us who we are as a congregation and fall into making assumptions about what is important to us as a church. One of the primary reasons for my use of this space over the previous four months is to keep before us very important hallmarks of our life as a congregation. Our Missional Motives not only are to characterize what we do as a church, but they are also an important piece of our mission principles as a church—remembering that our mission principles are an important part of how we define who we are as Colonial Park UMC and what our primary values are.

When we talk about mission, often we might be thinking of missions. *Missions* is typically referred to the service oriented, outward work of the church, *but mission* is a big part of how we understand God and ourselves. God is a sending God: God the Father sent the Son, Father and Son sent the Spirit, and the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit sent the Church (from theologians J. Moltmann and D. Bosch). What does that have to do with *our* church? *The church in our most basic nature is a body that is sent to participate in what God is doing in our world.* We are the laborers in His harvest. As the church we are sent out and called back in to gather. So, gathering as a church is an important part because that is where we are encouraged, equipped, and inspired to go back out into the world continuing our work of Kingdom collaboration.

Our final Missional Motivation is Hands-on Mission. Every disciple of Jesus is commissioned and sent. There is not minimal standard or prerequisite or certification that is needed. Being a disciple is giving yourself to be formed in the character and competency of Jesus—learning to be the kind of person Jesus is and doing the kind of things Jesus did. While we might learn a little bit of information, true and deep learning requires us to turn outwardly and try it/do it. While disciples may be equipped to some degree in a worship service, class, group, or study, disciples are ultimately formed through learning that happens by applying that information in service to others—especially people outside the church (recall the three dimensions of Jesus' life up, in, and out).

So, our Missional Motive of Hands-on Mission speaks to this. It's a part of our outreach, but it also a huge part of our formation as disciples of Jesus. We demonstrate Hands-on Mission by holding on to the understanding that **life change is experiential**. This means that while information is important, we are ultimately impacted and formed by our experiences—where we personally engage in living out Jesus' ways among other people. This also means that **we value being sent out to get our hands dirty for Christ's sake**. Getting our hands dirty is about firsthand engagement in the life of others. That can be physical service or even intentional, personal investment in the life of people far for Christ. Finally, we also understand that **Hands-on Mission is really about understanding that Jesus Christ is already at work in our community in ways that we may not readily see, but as we go about our life we want to be open and engaged fully where we see Jesus at work already—you can join with someone else with something that is already happening or Jesus may be presenting you a unique opportunity to be his hands and feet.**

All five of our Missional Motivations are vitally important hallmarks for our congregation and our personal discipleship of Jesus. I pray and hope that you continue to lean into this life of following Jesus—continuing to grow in the likeness of Jesus as you learn from Jesus as his apprentice.

Yours because I am His,  
Pastor Jathaniel

## Outreach Ministries

I would like to take this opportunity to say a BIG THANK YOU for all the well wishes I have received since accepting the position of Director of Outreach at CPUMC. I would also like to thank you in advance for your active support in our outreach ministries. As Colonial Park UMC lives into the vision to go beyond to lead people of a hurting world into a new life through Jesus Christ.

Although things may look a little different as we move forward it doesn't mean our goals are changing. I am totally committed to a Christ Centered Ministry.

Some of our tools to name a few such as Room in the Inn, The Community Garden, Recreation, The Food Bank, U-Can and Sea Isle Community/School I believe are good examples of ways we can ALL actively participate in advancing God's Kingdom.

Forgive me for jumping back to the days of my youth... and surprise, I have a sports story to share! I grew up in Millington, TN. Every summer I played baseball from the age of 6 to 16. This baseball program was well known as one of the best in the Southeast. It started with a Man's Vision aided by his 2 assistants. It grew to 40 teams consisting of 500 kids and 80 coaches. The personnel changed from year to year as new kids joined the league and other kids moved on. Coaches some of which changed from season to season came from the community as volunteers. The businesses and churches throughout the entire community sponsored the teams with uniforms and equipment. The three baseball fields and their maintenance as well as concessions and score keepers were also volunteers from the community.

I watched an entire community of folks make a huge impact on the lives of so many. What I witnessed wasn't easy for most of the folks. Dads and husbands leaving work and heading to the fields to work or practice a team. Moms and neighbors would be rounding up kids and getting them to the practice or the game. The stands were filled at the three parks with enthusiastic fans four nights a week. I saw people laughing, working, crying and loving together for a common goal. I saw how a community of folks could and did make such an impact. You know, after the Man with the Vision passed away the only thing that changed was the main park was named after him. The program never missed a beat as it was The Community that was ALL IN that made it a continuing success. I learned that nothing is too BIG if we ALL join for a common cause.

Our goal is to engage, equip and empower our congregation and community to be missional disciples. To go BEYOND to lead people of a hurting world into a new life through Jesus Christ.

They will know we are his by our LOVE.

**I only know one way to be IN and that is to be ALL IN. Are you?**

Peace and Blessings,

Gary W. Vaughn

Director of Outreach Ministries

## Discipling Ministries

What brings you joy?

What makes you smile?

What leaves you feeling fulfilled or renewed?

I've been reminded over the past several months that our culture has changed. The church has changed. Our lives have changed. Our behaviors have changed.

But, Jesus hasn't changed. His word hasn't changed. God hasn't changed.

For years, we've been moving away from being a membership church into a discipleship church. This isn't to say that the way things have been done have been wrong. On the contrary, our history has shaped us as a church. Our history has prepared us to see what's possible. Our history has shown us that we are resilient if we lean into God's Biblical command to make disciples and intentionally go beyond to people of a hurting world into new life through Jesus Christ.

What's the difference between a membership and discipleship church?

Membership churches focus on money, attendance, and the building

Discipleship churches recognize the role those have but measure discipleship relationships, shared experiences, and Christ-centered community.

Membership churches plug people into volunteer roles to meet needs and fill spots.

Discipleship churches assess passions and challenge one another to live into our God given gifts to make volunteers roles more meaningful for those involved.

Membership churches have participants who ask, "how did worship lift me up today?" or "what programs are being done for me?"

Discipleship churches have participants who ask, "what are the vehicles in which I can celebrate and grow in God?" or "how can I be equipped and empowered to love my neighbor as God commanded?"

Membership churches rely primary on the pastor to lead and guide ministry efforts.

Discipleship churches rely on one another as a family of believers who want to use Colonial Park as a platform with which to share the love and life of Jesus with others.

Membership churches focus on those who already know Jesus.

Discipleship churches yearn to connect unbelievers with Jesus through love and action.

As a discipleship church, we want you to serve and be involved in areas in which God calls you - ministry areas that present opportunities for you to experience God and refuel. That doesn't mean it'll be easy - there may be a healthy challenge involved - but God has given you passions and interests for a reason.

If you want to talk about your passions and interests, I want you to email me at [mwarren@colonialpark.org](mailto:mwarren@colonialpark.org) to schedule a coffee or lunch. I do not know what's on your heart until you share it with me. I want to know how God is speaking to you. Colonial Park has a special place in my heart. The Sea Isle community has a special place in my heart. YOU have a special place in my heart. There is a place for you - no matter your interests, gifts, time constraints, family dynamics, etc. Let's have coffee. It can change our life. It can impact God's Kingdom.

Megan Warren

Director of Connecting Ministries



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Join us Sundays for In-Person Worship at 9:00 am for Traditional Worship & at 10:30 am for Casual Worship. Not ready to be in-person yet? Catch us on Facebook or YouTube at 10:30 am @ Colonial Park UMC. Or you may call the worship service hotline at 901-329-6527 to listen from your phone.

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Scan the QR code with your smartphone to go directly to Easy Tithe. This is an easy way to remain faithful to the ministries of Colonial Park.



Accelerate Update:

Total 3 year pledge: \$623,184.00

Given to Date: **\$332,433.25**

This is a newsletter of Colonial Park United Methodist Church. The newsletter is published monthly & mailed third class, and e-mailed weekly except holidays.

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