



MAY 2022 | ISSUE 5



# ENGAGE

Go beyond to lead people of a hurting world into new life through Jesus Christ.

## From the Pastor's Desk

Since the last time I sat down to write one of these articles, it was announced that I would not be returning as your pastor at the start of the new conference year in July. That was a tough announcement for me and my family as well as it was for many of you.

As I write this, we are smack dab in the final days of Holy Week, and we have about another week before any official announcements will be made. Although my time with you isn't up for another couple of months, I have already begun to reflect on all that we have done together and the faithful way that we have journeyed together over the past five years.

### THIS MONTH'S FEATURED ARTICLES

From the Pastor's Desk  
Discipleship Ministries

# From the Pastor's Desk continued

One of the things that I am most proud of is the fact that I have had the opportunity to be your pastor. I am so glad that God brought me to you. I am grateful for the vision of healthy and fruitful ministry that God has given us and that we work to fulfill. That work will continue because it doesn't just stop with one person. Over the last four years, we have worked to live into a different way of organizing ourselves for faithful mission. Some call it a "One Board" structure, but is only ¼ of the whole. We organized to into a simplified accountability structure that I believe will be helpful not only in a time such as this where we are transitioning pastoral leadership, but it organizes us in a way that makes it a little simpler to be faithful to Jesus in our work. Here is the structure for accountability in a nutshell (I will go from left to right to save space):

Jesus > Church Board > Pastor > Staff > Congregation

Jesus is the head of His Church. The board and its members are the stewards if the mission, vision, direction, and governance of our church. The pastor is accountable to the board, but he/she is responsible for leadership to support the mission, vision, and direction of the church. The staff serve to equip the congregation for ministry. The congregation is responsible for doing the ministry of the church.

Why does this matter? It matters because what I want you to understand is that in this time of transition, the mission, vision, and direction of our congregation does not change (at least not until Jesus leads the board to change that). The primary change will be that there will be a new leader who will bring wonderful gifts to use in leading our congregation in faithful mission and ministry. And God will continue to see the new work that He began in you through to completion. You all continue to be in prayers as you prepare for the next leg of your missional journey, and I hope that you will continue to keep me and my family in yours.

I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. - Philippians 1:6

Yours because I am His,  
Pastor Jathaniel

## OUTREACH MINISTRIES

## WAKE UP, SLEEPER

The Big Picture is not easy to see as we focus on ourselves or on an event in which we are participating. I think that's where I get lost when I don't realize God has a Plan that includes me, but not solely about me. Not to say that my part of the plan isn't important, however it's more important to the Big Picture than when it stands alone.

It's kind of like when Tennessee plays Arkansas in basketball. Well, we know Arkansas is going to win, but that's for another article. Let's say Arkansas is leading in the 2nd half by 15 points and Arkansas's coach starts substituting players. The fans really want to beat Tennessee by 30 points so they are focused on winning the game by as much as they can and not on the need for players to get experience that will help the team as the season progresses. Winning the game by a large margin is not nearly as important as just winning the game and getting other players experience, they will need further down the road.

We all have a part to play in the Big Picture that sometimes we just don't see. OK let's say for instance we can't help with the Room in The Inn on Monday nights. First of all, I wish we could lose the words can't, won't, couldn't, shouldn't etc. Anyway, back to Monday nights and we have something else scheduled, or we don't get out after dark or those folks make us uncomfortable or so forth and so on.

Let's step back and look at the Big Picture. What if by teaching Sunday School or working with the youth we influence the lives of these young folks by showing them God's Love and an example of Serving. These same young folks help cook meals that we supply to the RITI or to our U-Can Ministry. Also, these same youngsters help put together Manna Bags for the less fortunate. Haven't we actually contributed to these Outreach Ministries by doing our part? I would say Heck Yes!!

I challenge you to find your Part of the Big Picture. If you need help, then ask what can I do to be the Hands and Feet of Jesus. Don't sit in the back and wait on someone to call on you. Actually, you have been Called already. It's time to Shake UP that 80%---20% rule. Wake Up Sleeper.



# DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRY

As a member of Colonial Park and as a member of the staff team, I've so appreciated the Colonial Park UMC Board's hard work in prayerfully discerning and prioritizing our strategic goals for the next 3-5 years. Not only have they spent a considerable amount of time streamlining our focus as a church, but their work is instrumental in how I lead and equip disciples.

Vision Bites, that have been presented in worship and in our e-newsletter, are helpful in breaking down the strategic goals and why they are important. The Discipleship Ministry Leadership Team (DMLT) has been living into the goals and objectives that equip us as disciples of Jesus. We've seen the fruit of our work in Launch Point Lunches that introduce new guests to Colonial Park and launch them on their discipleship journey. We've seen people engage and go deeper in their discipleship through Equipping Nights that are held once a month. We've seen a newly created Christ Centered Community blossom into a robust group intentionally modeling Jesus' 3-dimensional life. We've equipped people to read their Bible daily in community, confront and grow in their emotionally healthy relationships, and walk with Jesus during Lent. The DMLT continues to explore ways and steppingstones to launch people on their discipleship journey and continue to go deeper and deeper in growing in the character and competency of Jesus. It is a journey, after all – a life-long one. As a team, we use the goals and objectives to guide us in our kingdom work.

As an individual, I had the privilege on Sunday at our Easter Festival to witness God affirming Colonial Park's faithful efforts. I saw our Vision Bites lining up with the world outside our door. I worked one of the craft tables and it was a joy to engage with our neighbors. I met Brooklyn who attends Sea Isle Elementary and used to hate math but now loves it. Our table sang "Happy Birthday" to Addie who was turning 8 and thought the festival was the best part of her birthday. We made bunny bracelets with a family who lives in the neighborhood on Murff and homeschools their children. I met "Little James" who had a wild head of curls and was a spitting image of his kind father. All this to say, I see hope and opportunity blooming in our strategic objectives as a church and I saw that come to life on Sunday – an intentional focus on our neighbors, connections with our neighborhood school, engaging Christ-like love activities and relationship-building opportunities, and FUN!

If you have grown to be more like Jesus in prayer or community or service, if you had a blast seeing energy and life at the Easter Festival, if you feel as though God is moving and shaking in your life – ask yourself, "how might he use me to share that joy and life with others?"

I invite you to be in prayer as Colonial Park lives into our strategic objectives – as a church, as teams, as individuals. I challenge you to pray for guidance how God might use you to live into the objectives and make new disciples for the transformation of the world.

## FROM FESTIVALS TO FELLOWSHIP

Since a few days have passed since our Easter Festival, I find myself sitting here in awe. I am in awe of the turnout we had. I am in awe of the fun. But most importantly, I am in awe of our church! Between the set-up, tear down, crafts, bounce houses, face painting, treat bags, and conversations, we worked together seamlessly as a church to nurture our congregation and our neighborhood. As someone who is new to Colonial Park, and this being my first big event here, I would be lying if I said I wasn't a little nervous leading up to the event. Did I order enough crafts, did I add enough details to the plan for the front lawn, will we have enough volunteers to make sure kids aren't climbing up the slide, and the biggest one...will we be connecting with the community in a meaningful way? I am overjoyed to say that all those questions were answered and then some!! Not only were the little details taken care of, but you, our wonderful congregation, showed up, had fun, and made connections with all of those who attended. The conversations that were had at the craft and face painting tables or with those who were passing our treat bags put us in our surrounding community and engaging in a way that we have not really been able to in a few years. That was beautiful to witness and no better way to celebrate the true meaning of Easter.

So now I would like to pose a question: Now what? What can we do as a congregation to continue pouring into our own kids as well as the kids in our community?

While we reflect this Easter on everything that this holiday means to us as Christians, it's also a good time to take a long look at Jesus's teachings and what that means for our discipleship journey. I challenge you to do just that. Think about how Jesus lived his life, how he died for our sins, and how we are commissioned to make disciples ourselves. I also want to remind you that you are not in this alone. Just like we want to be here for our community, your church is here for you. If you have questions about what is next for you, let us know. We (your church staff and board) are here to answer your questions and help you along this journey.

U-Can Ministry will be collecting the following items for the month of May:

- cereal
- oatmeal
- canned mixed vegetables

## Mark Your Calendars!

5/5: Mobile Food Pantry Distribution

5/12: Equipping Night @ 6:30 pm Fellowship Hall

5/14: Men's Breakfast @ 8:30 am Fellowship Hall

5/19: Mobile Food Pantry Distribution



5330 Park Avenue, Memphis, TN 38119

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit  
Organization

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**Join us Sundays for In-Person Worship at 9:00 am for Traditional Worship, 10:00 am for Sunday School and 11:00 am for Casual Worship. Not ready to be in-person yet? Catch us on Facebook or YouTube at 11:00 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.

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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