



## Important Announcement

June 8, 2021

Dear Beautiful People of God -

This month we celebrate the ordination of Ashley Wilkinson Meyer and bid her farewell as she begins her new extension ministry appointment as Executive Director of United Ministries on July 1st. As you know she will deliver the sermon this Sunday and we will honor her with a celebration following the 11:00 am worship service.

Once again, the Holy Spirit has led us through many weeks of discernment and prayer. And amid all the holy transition we are witnessing as a church, we are pleased to announce, on Tuesday, July 6th, we will welcome Josh Blount as our Associate Pastor. Josh comes to us from his current two-point charge and is most excited to move to Pensacola. He is grounded, wise and energetic.

Please pray for Josh as he transitions from his current appointment into our Cokesbury community of faith. We hope you will share our excitement for what God has in store for Cokesbury and our community. Take a moment to hear from Josh and read a little bit about his work and ministry. Let's join together to give thanks to God and proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ.

"Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God." Romans 15:7

Blessings to you,  
Pastor Sheila Bates  
SPR Committee

### **Pastor Josh Blount Bio**

I was born in Montgomery, Alabama to loving parents that encouraged me to pursue a strong relationship with Christ. Growing up, I attended a large United Methodist Church where my youth pastor influenced me to the point that I felt God's call in my life to be a pastor.

At first I felt as though youth ministry was my call, but as I grew, I learned that God gifted me with discipleship. At the University of Alabama, I was involved with a discipleship and evangelism centered ministry. The director began mentoring me, and showed me what it meant to lead others to Christ and guide them into deeper relationship with Him.

During my senior year of college, I learned that God could use me when I took three freshman fraternity brothers under my wing to influence them spiritually. By the end of the year I thought I wasted my time, but one of them took me aside after graduation and said he was thankful God put me in his life, as he didn't know where he would be if I hadn't mentored him. This revelation was warming and led me to continue in my call.

After graduation I worked for Campus Crusade for three years and learned how to navigate collegiate ministry. I thoroughly enjoy working with young adults and seeing them grow in their

faith. Young adults are in a place where they are being challenged spiritually and a firm foundation in Christ is needed more than any other time in their lives. It is the age where most stop attending church and most never come back. Providing ministry that connects them to God so they may become lifelong disciples is why I feel drawn to minister to young adults.

I continued my education to earn a Master of Divinity from Asbury Theological Seminary and in my time there focused on classes about young adults and discipleship. At Seminary, a verse that God used to encourage me was 1 Timothy 4:13: "Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching." I am committed to teaching all people the love of Christ and guiding them into becoming faithful disciples that actively seek out places to serve inside and outside the walls of the Church.

Another area of ministry that I am passionate about is congregational care. Jesus called us to go and make disciples, and addressing the needs of the community is the center of that call. Caring for those that have physical and spiritual needs is a central tenet of my ministry. Initiating new avenues to provide ministry to the community is a passion of mine; I enjoy creatively finding ways to bring Jesus to people through servant ministry.

To me, congregational care also looks like truly caring for the sick and dying. This is an area of ministry that I find rewarding, to provide comfort and the peace of Christ in difficult times. Herstel Carter, at Crosspoint UMC, and Dr. Don Winslett have shown me that congregational care is an important ministry. Their influence has given me the desire to provide faithful care to those that are in need of congregational care.

From 2015-2017, I was the Wesley Foundation Director of Discipleship at the University of Alabama Birmingham and also was the Kitchen manager at Chick-Fil-A. While working there, I was able to minister to students as well as many workers that were in recovery. Ministering to my co-workers in recovery allowed me to share the hope of Christ in a relevant way. Many of my co-workers still call me to help with their spiritual needs.

In 2018, I took an appointment at East Mt. Zion and Springhill UMC in Graceville, Florida, fulfilling God's call in my life. Over the last three years, God has been developing me into the pastor He wants me to be. It is exciting to see where God takes me as I continue to follow Jesus' teachings. On a personal level, I enjoy University of Alabama sports, Atlanta Braves baseball, Crossfit, anything on the water, being involved in community events, and trying to wrangle my English Lab, Tua!

