



April 30, 2020

Good morning. May the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Please read the end of this letter to know when we are starting church again.

The waiting is over. Due to Pastor Larry's retirement from our church, we have been very *actively working* with our district superintendent, Dan Jackson, to find a new pastor. We started this process back on January 20, 2020. That wait is now over, and our prayers have been answered.

We are pleased to announce our new pastor is **Pastor Peggy Moss**. Pastor Peggy will start here at the church on **July 5, 2020**. We will welcome her and get acquainted with her, with a meal **after the service**.

Pastor Peggy, as a full-time pastor, will share her gifts with us and the Sun Ray United Methodist church. Sun Ray UMC is about a 15-minute drive from Avon Park, Florida. She will be living in the parsonage in Sun Ray.

Since both of our church's start at 10:00 AM, in our negotiations with the Dan Jackson, DS and Sun Ray, *both of our churches had to make the following changes to our worship times*.

- Sun Ray will start their service at 9:00 AM
- First United Methodist Church will start their service at **10:45 AM**. Please make a note of this time change.
- We will split her salary with Sun Ray UMC evenly.

THIS IS PASTOR PEGGY'S BIOGRAPHY

Pastor Peggy Moss comes to the First UMC of Avon Park, from Northeast UMC in Tampa, Florida, where she served as pastor for two years.

She is a lifetime member at Hillsborough UMC in Tampa, where she served in numerous leadership roles throughout those years, including youth ministry, discipleship, missions, outreach, and trustees.

She has two sons. Russell and his wife Jennifer who live in Harrisburg, PA. and Will and his wife Leslie, and two beautiful grandchildren Brody and Brooklynn who live in Buna, Texas.

She says "*that she aspired to be a preacher at a very young age*" and recalls holding church in her garage on Saturday mornings when she was around 10. However, she says, "*I must have been a slow learner*" as it was many decades later that she heard God calling her into ministry.

At that time, Pastor Peggy realized the first thing she must do was obtain higher education. Four years later, Pastor Peggy graduated Magna Cum Laude from St Leo University with specializations in Religion and Sociology. She is continuing with her education at Candler School of Theology at Emory University.

After graduation, Pastor Peggy served as a missionary in St Marc, Haiti where she taught school at the El Shaddai Learning Center; she also served with the Clean Water for Haiti organization for one year. While serving in Haiti, Pastor Peggy entered the candidacy for ministry in the United Methodist Church, and subsequently received her license as a Local Pastor in 2018.

Pastor Peggy believes in the sovereignty, grace, and mercy of God Almighty our everlasting Father, the never-ending love and peace of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Redeemer, and the power of the Holy Spirit, our Protector and Helper.

She says she loves preaching, adding that *“preaching is more than delivering God’s Word on a Sunday morning.”* Moreover, she said that St Francis of Assisi once said, *“preach the gospel at all times and sometimes use words.”* She continues, *“Preaching may start at the pulpit; however, preaching is also loving our neighbors, feeding the hungry, being kind to a stranger, consoling those who are grieving, bringing comfort to those who are sick, and sharing the love of God with those who are lonely.”*

She says, *“the joy of the Lord is my strength and ain’t nothing gonna steal my joy. I hope that God’s love shines so bright in my life that people will point and say, **“I want what she’s got.”**”*

We are all brothers and sisters in Christ, and God has appointed each one of us to be ambassadors of Christ, in fellowship and in unity as God’s church and for God’s glory as we build his kingdom here on earth, through the making of disciples for the transformation of the world.”.

I am beyond blessed and thrilled to be your Pastor as we journey together on this new path that God has placed before us. God bless you all.

In closing I want to *thank Pastor Larry for all of his hard work last year.* Through his tutelage we have grown as a church, and learned more about the Book of Discipline. We will keep him and his family in prayers as he continues to recover from his surgery and illness. **Thank you, Larry.**

I also want to *thank Pastor David Borger,* who stepped up, when the church council asked him to continue giving the message on Sundays. **Thank you, David.**

I also want to *thank Tom and Isla Coburn, who are taking no salaries,* while this virus is going around. **Thank you, Tom & Isla.**

I also want to thank **each and every one of you** for your prayers and your **gifts to this church, and to God,** as we are dealing with not having services on Sunday. Please continue to pray for this church and our *members, neighbors, and our new pastor.*

We are very close to having video capabilities for our church services. We already have the audio for the services from March to our current date on the web site. This will continue every Sunday. These audio file and video files are designed for people who are sick, shut in, or could not make it to church.

We are watching what is happening in the world, the state of Florida, and our local communities. As of today, our governor has decided to let the church’s start again on May 10th. In a meeting with the church council this morning we decided the following:

- 1. We are thinking safety for our congregation. We want to give this virus a chance to work its way out of Highlands County. We care about you and want everybody to feel you are in a safe environment.**
- 2. We think it is to early to start church right away.**
- 3. We have decided to start having church again on May 31, 2020 at 10:45 AM.**
- 4. If something changes in the next 5 weeks, we will let you know immediately.**

Until then, for information about Pastor Peggy, for a picture of her, to hear some of her messages to our church, for those with internet access, continue to check our website at www.fumcap.com to keep informed about

our church. Check it often, a couple of times a week, as I update it regularly. For those without internet access, this letter will be mailed to you.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call me at **863-214-1923**. May God Bless and keep you until we meet again in person. Your brother in Christ.

SPRC Chairman and Lay Leader Sam Dunn