



Jacob's Ladder



A NEWSLETTER OF OXFORD FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Rev. Roger Wilson, Pastor

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Chat & Chew 2.0 with Bishop Lewis by Rev. Mattie Gipson



It was all hands on deck as Bishop Sharma D. Lewis and her team arrived at Oxford First UMC on Sunday, February 25, 2024. People were gathered from all corners of the Tupelo-New Albany District, now known as District 5 to engage in conversation with Bishop Lewis and each other. Last year we gathered to hear from Bishop Lewis; this year we gathered for her to hear from us. She wants to know who we are, and what our

churches are doing toward carrying out the GREAT COMMISSION.

To that end, we were divided into 12 groups and were given four (4) questions to answer and after about 1 1/2 hours we reconvened in the Sanctuary and each group gave one answer to each of the four questions. Each question dealt with what we are doing in our churches as relates to our mission, what we

hope to do in the future and what would we like to see happen in Mississippi if money was no object. That last question provoked some interesting answers. I was a part of Group 12 and our answer was NO MORE HUNGER, NO MORE HOMELESSNESS, AND A GREAT BIG PARTY TO

CELEBRATE THE NEW DAY!!!!

We shared refreshments that were provided by the members of OFUMC. Bishop Lewis extended thanks to all who attended and bid us adieu with a closing prayer.

The Worship Experience 2



The Worship Experience 2 was just that – *a worship experience!* The Arc Benders, a partnership between First Presbyterian Church and Oxford First United Methodist Church, served as hosts for the evening.

About 15 years ago, Oxford First, then known as Burns United Methodist Church, held the first Worship Experience. The brainchild of Rev. Deborah Mingo Palmer, the Worship Experience hosted the Mississippi Mass Choir and an interdenominational, interracial choir to sing before the main event. Most of the choir members enjoyed participating, but the idea for a continuing community choir fizzled. Flash forward and the Arc Benders were seeking a community event that could bring the races together on one accord. One of the members who had participated in the previous choir suggested a similar event and

the Worship Experience 2 was born.

For Worship Experience 2, we recruited approximately 30 singers from both Oxford First and First Presbyterian, but also additional churches including, Beverly United Methodist Church, Buford Chapel United Methodist Church, and Providence United Methodist Church. Right from the start, choir members expressed enthusiasm for the overall vision. After 2 joint practices, we sang together on February 18, 2024.

Reverend Roger Wilson welcomed the audience and recognized the number of churches represented. Rev. Barrett Milner led the congregation in prayer. Then Karen Peairs gave the occasion by lifting up Galatians 3:28 which says “In Christ’s family, there can be no division into Jew and non-Jew, slave and free, male and female.

Among us, you are all equal. That is, we are all in a common relationship with Jesus Christ.” Julie Chadwick and Erma Goolsby presented that same Scripture in different versions. Then, Choir Director Rodney Buford and Director of Music, Creighton Holder led the combined choir in six musical selections. As the music culminated in a rousing rendition of “Do Not Pass Me By,” the Holy Spirit fell – again it was a true Worship Experience! As the Mistress of

Ceremonies reminded the audience repeatedly – “This is what Heaven will look like.”

Special Thanks to our musicians, who all came together to provide beautiful music, and to the kitchen crew who provided more than enough food for our packed audience. Thanks to “Creed” for her beautiful solo. As so many people said, this was the first but it won’t be the last of the Worship Experience Choir.



2024 Officers Inauguration: On February 11th, Rev. Wilson swore in Oxford First UMC's officer for 2024.

Black History Month Program: Led by Youth Minister Tressie Johnson, the OFUMC Youth put on a wonderful program on Sunday, February 18th.



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The Morning Doves: On Saturday, February 24th, the Doves had a wonderful first dinner and gifts swap in The Fellowship Hall. Everyone had a wonderful time.

