



# Church Spotlight

## Surfside UMC, Marion District

Reverend Scarlett Hester, Pastor

### Staying Active and Eating Healthy!

When you come around Surfside UMC, be prepared to take steps toward better health! Last fall, committee member and pastor Rev. Scarlett Hester suggested a steps challenge for the church. The challenge was called "The Walk to Bethlehem" where the FAN committee calculated the number of steps it would take to walk to Bethlehem. For the next couple of months, participants logged their steps, and together, they walked to Bethlehem! Church members kept logging their steps and by Easter, they walked around the world!

Ms. Linda Manning (co-FAN Coordinator with Ms. Sandra Mayhew) appreciates the enthusiasm and support for FAN from Rev. Hester. FAN may be small, but Surfside UMC remains committed to meeting their activity and nutrition goals by gently integrating into other programs within the church. They do not plan on letting up anytime soon!

Their nutrition goal is to include alternative healthy choices at church meals. Although members were hesitant to seeing their favorite dishes removed, Ms. Manning said, *"We never did. We just made subtle changes."* With assistance from Ms. Sandra Wetter (FAN Community Health Advisor and FAN committee member), menus for catered or potluck meals are sure to include fruits and vegetables. Ms. Mayhew and FAN committee member Ms. Jane Chamberlain also helped lead healthy cooking demonstrations and lessons for the Dandelion's girls group. At coffee hour, in addition to traditional donuts and pastries, nutrition bars are now offered. Now, Ms. Manning says, *"People are looking for the healthier alternatives."*

In June, the youth, led by Youth Coordinator and FAN committee member Ashlee Johnson, hosted a church splash party with a picnic-style meal. Then, the choir, along with Ms. Manning, hosted a "Christmas in July" event with Christmas ham and healthy sides. Attendees, including Mr. Claus, and the youth were encouraged to stand and move to the Christmas music. Ms. Mayhew continues to get the message out about FAN. She makes sure the church newsletter, bulletin board, and handouts on children's health are updated regularly to include FAN tips and announcements of upcoming programs and events.

Ms. Manning suggests that churches that are thinking about making changes *"look at what you already have that works and look for ways to supplement and enhance."* When forming a committee, *"it's all a collaboration with different people."* She encourages others to consider that they do not have to reinvent the wheel every time. Instead, she suggests they start by examining what is already happening in and around the church and then find ways to support, adjust, and promote those activities!

**Congratulations to Surfside UMC for your success and commitment to the health and well-being of your members and community!**



*FAN Committee (L-R): Jane Chamberlain, CHA Sandra Wetter, Rev Scarlett Hester, Sandra Mayhew, Linda Manning, Rev Laura Whitt. Not pictured: Ashlee Johnson*

