

MARCH
2026

COMMUNITY OUTREACH NEWSLETTER

Chautauqua Learning Lab

Leaders from Chautauquas gather annually for an immersive learning lab designed to foster the exchange of ideas, shared experiences, and collaborative planning for the future. This year's convening was held in Syracuse, Indiana. We are especially grateful for the representation of Gulfside Assembly by Executive Director Cheryl Thompson.

Chautauquas remain vibrant institutions, serving as spaces for faith, education, recreation, culture, spiritual development, and fellowship. Often described as camp meeting grounds, they have historically provided opportunities for worship, music, and community engagement, continuing to nurture both individual growth and collective connection.



The vision for Gulfside Assembly was born when Bishop Robert Elijah Jones visited a Chautauqua in Ohio. Inspired by what he experienced, he envisioned a place where all people could gather—regardless of race, socioeconomic status, or sexual orientation. His vision of inclusivity and community became a reality in 1923.

Today, Gulfside Assembly stands as a testament to that enduring vision, continuing to embody the values of hospitality, unity, and shared purpose.

Community Garden of Hope Growing Through Generational Support

Middletown's Community Garden of Hope continues to flourish thanks to the generous support and collaboration of our community. What makes this project especially meaningful is the way it brings together people of all ages to work toward a common goal.



Earlier this month, children from the Boys and Girls Club helped plant seedlings, gaining hands-on experience while learning about gardening, teamwork, and caring for the environment. Their excitement and curiosity helped kick off another season of growth for the garden.

On March 28, volunteers from St. Stanislaus High School will join the Men of Pearlington to install and prepare six new raised garden beds. Together, they will transplant the seedlings into the new beds, helping expand the garden and create more opportunities for fresh produce and community engagement.



The Bay St. Louis Garden Club's master gardeners have also committed their time and expertise to assist with planting and the ongoing upkeep of the garden. They were present to guide and encourage the children as they planted the seedlings, sharing valuable gardening knowledge and fostering a spirit of mentorship.

The Community Garden of Hope is a shining example of what can happen when a community works together across generations. Through shared effort and dedication, this beloved project continues to strengthen connections, encourage learning, and cultivate hope for the future.

Teamwork Gets it Done!

Community leaders from nonprofit organizations meet on the second Tuesday of each month to collaborate and strengthen their impact. During these meetings, members share community outreach opportunities, discuss unmet needs, and work together to develop effective responses. By pooling resources and supporting one another, the group enhances its ability to serve the community and carry out meaningful outreach initiatives. I had the pleasure of connecting with Terra Griffin (center) and LeAnna Saucier (right)—both shining examples of selfless dedication and commitment to making a difference in our community.



Lunch & Learn Series

On March 25, 2026, Daphne Ferdinand, PhD, RN, FAHA, FPCNA, Director of Healthy Heart Community Prevention Project, Inc., facilitated an engaging Lunch and Learn Workshop for Gulfside Assembly. She provided valuable education on the causes, effects, and management of high blood pressure.



The session was highly interactive, featuring real-life scenarios that encouraged participant involvement and discussion. Attendees actively shared their responses, and ample time was provided for questions and meaningful dialogue.

We are truly grateful to Dr. Ferdinand for sharing her expertise and empowering our community with knowledge to promote health and wellness.


Upcoming Events

- 4/1/2026 Meeting with Ochsner Health System
- 4/13/2026 MS State Extension Garden Committee Training at Gulfside Assembly
- 4/14/2026 GOALS Meeting at Gulfside Assembly
- 4/ 16-17/2026 Gulfside Assembly Board of Directors Meeting
- 4/22/2026 Senior Lunch & Learn at Gulfside Assembly
- 4/27/2026 MS State Extension Garden Committee Training at Gulfside Assembly
- 4/28/2026 Faith-based Coalition Meeting at Gulfside Assembly
- 5/12/2026 GOALS Meeting at Gulfside Assembly
- 5/26/2026 Faith-based Coalition Meeting at Gulfside Assembly
- 5/27/2026 Senior Lunch & Learn at Gulfside Assembly
- 6/1,8,15,22,29/1016 Summer Feeding Program partnership with HC School District at Gulfside Assembly
- 6/3-5/2026 Mississippi Annual Conference
- 6/1/2026 Life Skills Training Workshop @ HCBGC
- 6/9-12/2026 Louisiana Annual Conference, Baton Rouge, LA
- 6/18/2026 Life Skills Training Workshop @ HCBGC
- 6/24/2026 Senior Lunch & Learn @Gulfside Assembly
- 6/25/2026 Life Skills Training Workshop @ HCBGC

Want to Donate to Gulfside?

We at Gulfside Assembly are grateful for your support of our ministries. Your support helps provide impactful ministries to our communities. Prayers, supplies, and monetary donations are always welcomed.

For monetary donations, there are several ways to give:

<p style="text-align: center;">Through the Advance of the United Methodist Church</p> <p>https://umcmmission.org/ advanceproject/760235/</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">By Mail Make your check payable to: Gulfside Association Inc. PO Box 27 Waveland, MS 39576</p>
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