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WDN Photo | Mona Moore Cristiano Rizzotto practices traditional hymns for a service in First United Methodist Church's sanctuary.



By [Mona Moore](#)

'Real Church': Churches offer modern and traditional worship services

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Derik Davis was raised in a traditional church, but he has found home in one of Beaufort County's most nontraditional churches.

He is a member of Good Shepherd Church, which recently completed renovations of its residential garage-turned-sanctuary.

"I was a minister for eight years, and I didn't think I had been to church unless you had an organ playing and stained glass," Davis said. "The idea of having church in a garage would have blown me away."

He and members of the church call it the "ultimate garage" where God can take the broken and do some major work on them.

"The growth I've had here is nothing short of a miracle," Davis said. "It just feels like home."

Jane Griffin has been a member of First United Methodist Church for 35 years. She said she still finds herself calling the sanctuary the "real church."

For her, the sanctuary is full of memories. A number of her friends were married there, her children were baptized there and as a child she sat in a sanctuary pew every Sunday.

"It's just an entirely different feeling with the stained glass windows and the wood. The wood is very comforting. My dad, grandmother and uncle went there," she said.

Today, Griffin opts for the contemporary service held in FUMC's Wesley Hall. The hall has an altar, crosses, candlesticks and chalices made by the members.

Behind the altar sits a drum kit; behind the pulpit are bongo drums. Rocking chairs line the back wall. They were donated for mothers with crying babies.

"This service is much more informal," Griffin said.

Griffin likes the music and loves that members can follow along with the proceedings on large screens that flank the altar.

"I like going to visit both (the sanctuary and Wesley Hall)," Griffin said. "The Lord is present everywhere."

Russell Smith grew up at First Church of Christ. He has been known to attend the traditional and contemporary services in the same day. Smith said he attends the traditional church with his dad, but the contemporary service is where he meets new members and sings.

The trend can be found in many local churches. Longstanding members attend traditional services, complete with organs and hymns.

Modern services attract new members and keep young members involved.

Cristiano Rizzotto considers himself an oddball. At 23, he says he favors the traditional services he grew up in and loves the traditional music. Rizzotto plays the organ at FUMC.

"I think the organ is the most traditional instrument in Christianity, very old and traditional," he said.

He said he would hate to see the traditional service disappear in favor of modern ones.

"I would feel that it would be a great loss because tradition is a great part of religion," Rizzotto said.

There is no need to look for Beebe Memorial Christian Methodist Episcopal Church's website or Facebook page.

Reverend Edward Moultrie, the church's pastor said it's not that kind of church and not that kind of crowd.

Moultrie said many churches have added contemporary services to attract the younger set. His church has remained traditional.

"I think it takes different spices to make a church but you have to look at your demographic," he said. "I would never want to take away the traditions. And I love the hymns."

Beebe Memorial CME Church member William O'Pharrow said he was raised in a traditional church, but he wouldn't mind it if his church added a few modern changes, especially if it resulted in more young people attending.

"I believe it serves the same principles. I don't mind a combination," he said. "I have a friend or two that would criticize it, but I figure to each his own."