

SHARING

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF HOHENWALD

JULY- AUGUST 2014 NEWSLETTER

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK



The United States of America is 238 years old. That's a long time for a nation to remain free. But, when you look at our history in the context of world history, America is just a CHILD among the nations. Egypt, China, Japan, Rome, Greece all make America's history seem so short. Consider what a brief time we've really been here as a nation: When Thomas Jefferson died, Abraham Lincoln was a young man of 17. When Lincoln was assassinated, Woodrow Wilson was a boy of 8. By the time he died, Ronald Reagan was a boy of 12.

There you have it. The lives of four men can take you all the way back to the beginning of our country, 238 years ago. We are so young. And yet we stand tall among these nations because of the principles on which we were established: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights and among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

Thus begins the Declaration of Independence, which we celebrate on July 4th. And do not let anyone fool you. Freedom ought to be and needs to be celebrated. So many churches and ministers today loathe patriotism in the pulpit. I am not one of those. I celebrate with you the freedoms which God has blessed this great nation of ours. Now I cannot tell you whether God has blessed us with liberty and therefore we are free, or if we have wisely and simply built our liberty based on Biblical principles. In any case, our freedom is from God.

Now let me temper our celebrations with a caution: With freedom comes great responsibility. We are not free to live excessive lives. We are not set at liberty to pursue selfish ends. Our independence should not make us infidels. As Paul so eloquently puts it: "You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature."

What is true for the church is true for the nation: Liberty demands civility. Freedom requires righteous behavior. On this Fourth of July and every day, let's celebrate Freedom and Civility.

- *Drew*

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

VBS was very successful, and I would like to thank everyone who donated, volunteered, and gave their time and resources to help make this a wonderful educational experience for all the kids involved.

We had an attendance of 34 children; we learned lessons about building our relationship and witness with and for God, praised and worshipped our God of Wonders, watched Bible-storytelling skits, invented blueprints, buildings, clay creations, plants, experimented with principles of science, and even made cards that said "Jesus loves you" in Mali's native language of Bambara for our mission project for Shasta Carroll.

The volunteers who participated were: Katie, Sydney, Levi Thompson; Jerry and Retha Tibbs; Dewey and Myra Hinson; Cherith, Ilya, Imanuel, Johanan, Maddiah Boardman; Jennifer Bowen; Judy, Miya, Ashley Ford; Camille Kelley; Kellie Spitzer; David, Pauline, and Darbi Ganus; Amelia Dicus; Natali Runions; Charlotte and Trey Morgan; Cora Criss; George and Ruth Wise, and their daughter; Jasmine; Erica Caberello; Rebecca McClain; Debby Campbell; Deborah Baker; Rita Grow; Glen and Janice Pancake; Cindy Graves; Lara Brewer. If I have inadvertently left anyone out, please know I appreciate their participation nonetheless.



This upcoming month we have more activities planned. Wednesday services begin again July 9th at 3 p.m. On Saturday, July 12, I would like to take the children to the river for an afternoon of water play, meeting at the church at 1 p.m., and treat them to dinner at Snappy's Pizza, followed by a movie (possibly the LEGO movie) back at the church. I welcome parental and older sibling participation and supervision with this event.

Also for the month of July, we will be holding a special service for our children and would like to invite all the grownups to participate too. Details will follow in the next few weeks. And towards the end of the month, we will partner with our Director of Youth Ministries, Jennifer Bowen, and our youth to have a spa day fundraiser to get you pampered up for the dog days of summer. We look forward to your support that will enable them to go to camps and events like Acquire the Fire.

Thanks again to everyone,

- Monet Boardman
Director of Children's Ministries

TRUSTEE NEWS

Darrell Lanagan, Chairman of the Trustees, wants the congregation to know that the enclosing of the walkway between the sanctuary and the CLC will begin in July. Our subcontractors are in place!

In addition, we will be acquiring two portable, fold-up type signs that can be placed outside at the ramp on the north side to reserve space for the loading/unloading of those that need some assistance in gaining access to the building.

The Trustees ask the congregation to contact the church office in **writing** if you have suggestions as to improving our church facilities (repairs, additions, etc.). We appreciate all your past support and welcome your suggestions. Your ideas are encouraged!!

For those who would like to support our building improvements financially, they are encouraged to contribute to the funding by "earmarking" their donations for use by the "Building Fund."

- Larry McCutcheon, Trustee

MARATHON SPONSORSHIPS/DONATIONS SOUGHT

A Message from Ashleigh Smith:

I'm participating in a 10K to raise money for A-T Children's Project. A-T (ataxia telangiectasia) is a rare genetic disease that attacks children, causing progressive loss of muscle control, immune system problems, and a high rate of cancer.

You can donate online at www.atcp.org/marathondonations

Click 2015 Disney World Marathon, then enter Ashleigh Smith in participant search, then donate. The website also has a form you can use if you would rather mail in your donation. It has a line to write the name of marathoner you're sponsoring. Or you can give your donation to me directly. Checks should be made out to A-T Children's Project. Later this summer, I will be having a yard sale to raise more funds for the A-T Children's Project. Thank you in advance for your support. I've always been proud of having such an amazing church family that helps make the world a better place.

THE BODY OF CHRIST

Editor's Note: *As members, we each have special talents, skills, abilities and ways in which we serve the Lord. Collectively, we strive to serve as the hands, arms, legs, voice and heart of Christ in reaching others and in sharing His love. From time to time, "Sharing" will feature a member of our church family. This issue features Kenny Graves.*

Over the years, Kenny Graves has worn a lot of hats: musician, band director, principal, school superintendent, choir director, youth counselor, and university administrator, among others. These days, although officially "retired," he continues to pursue excellence in all he does, as he demonstrates each week as our Choir

Director. Not content to rest on his laurels, he continues to look for new and beautiful ways to showcase the talents of others, such as the first-ever Patriotic Concert featuring the Hohenwald First United Methodist Church Choir held at The Strand Theatre and at the church in late June. Both concerts were very well-received, inspiring and uplifting. **Kenny is pictured below setting up for the concert at the Strand with helper Jim Darden (photo by Cindy Graves).**



In his "spare time," Kenny makes the home and garden he shares with his wife Cindy (to whom he has been married since Christmas Day of 1959) a showplace of beautiful flowers and artwork, in addition to serving as manager of the Strand Art Gallery in Hohenwald and an active member of the Hohenwald Arts Council. Kenny has also found his own personal outlet as an artist in his own right. Largely self-taught, he experimented with and became proficient in art photography, and is now well-known and respected for his breath-taking photos.

Born in Perry County, Kenny's lived most of his life in Middle Tennessee surrounded by the beauty that abounds in this part of the state. But while living for three years on a houseboat in Fort Pierce, Florida, where he ran a program for youth, he discovered and began to develop his passion for photography.

"Seeing the spectacular sunsets and the brilliant colors of the landscapes and foliage in Florida opened my eyes to what I could

do with a camera,” he said. “I began taking photography more seriously – and taking my camera with me wherever I went.”

On his travels with Cindy, Kenny has photographed lighthouses in New England, exotic birds in Florida, starkly beautiful bridges in Perry County, eagles and other wildlife throughout Tennessee, pandas in San Diego and majestic areas throughout the southwestern U.S., such as Arizona, the Valley of Fire State Park and the Grand Canyon.

“I have always loved the outdoors. When I was growing up in the country, we all went fishing and hunting. But now, I could not kill an animal. I shoot them with my camera now, and it gives me great pleasure when those photographs are pleasing to people who see them,” Kenny said.

Whether shooting photographs, designing a garden spot or directing the choir, Kenny is, like his camera, steady and focused on the big picture and mindful of the beauty in the small details.

“Sharing” is happy to salute Kenny Graves!



Kenny and Cindy Graves

SHALL WE GATHER AT THE RIVER?



The church youth gathered for a float trip down the Buffalo River on July 2. Fourteen youth and five chaperones spent the day in fellowship cooling off and having a river adventure. The group was treated to a cook-out at the home of Joyce and Jim Darden. ***Below, Jim is preparing to grill some hotdogs for the wet and hungry river riders!***



“Sharing” is the newsletter of First United Methodist Church of Hohenwald, TN, published six times a year as a service of the Christian Witness Committee. To submit news for “Sharing,” please contact Deborah Baker at 931-285-0058; email deb.baker@wildblue.net, or contact other members of the Christian Witness Committee.