

SHARING

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF HOHENWALD

NOVEMBER – DECEMBER 2014 NEWSLETTER



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

“The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.” – Matthew 13:44

Some people absolutely love surprises! These folks wouldn't dream of trying to find out where the gifts are hidden, and they certainly wouldn't shake a present before opening it to try and guess the contents. People who like surprises read mystery novels, buy anything that advertises **“Free Surprise Gift Inside,”** and believe a birthday hasn't been properly celebrated unless a surprise party has been planned and executed.

Other people absolutely hate surprises. They need to know the when, the where, the how, the what, and, if possible, the why of everything that happens. They would not think of simply hopping into a car and letting a map take them on vacation without knowing in advance exactly what they were going to see and do. They write gift-suggestion lists for the families and friends, and tend to exchange the things they received but didn't ask for. They often read the end of the book before the middle, and are uncomfortable in any ambiguous situations.

In the parables of Jesus, the spirit of God is seen as being continually unleashed, continually providing opportunities and instances in time's fullness to sense God's

presence and God's grace, often when and where we least expect it. In fact, there is a sense in which God's grace **must** be a surprise. When we begin to expect it, it is no longer grace.

Do you ever feel the need, as I feel the need, to be drawn by purposes beyond the range of my own ego needs...to simply rest in a blind trust that God, and not me, knows what I best need at any given moment?

A boat pilot who skillfully guided his craft into a difficult port was once praised by an observer: **“You know where all the shallow places are, and you avoid them so well!”** The pilot replied, **“You are wrong about that. All I know is where the deep waters are to be found.”** It is easy to know the shallow places of life. We spend most of our time there. But God often calls us to deeper waters, waters that are quiet, and sustaining, and unknowable...far beyond the ripples of the shallows.

The amazing worth of the Kingdom of God, given root and substance through Christ our Lord, provides for us the courage and the trust to live our lives not knowing, or even wanting to know, all the answers – but instead simply seeking, believing, responding – surprised by joy. According to Jesus, it is only in this attitude that our peace of mind can at last be found!

- Drew

Choir Notes



The Sanctuary Choir is rehearsing diligently for the upcoming Christmas Cantata, entitled "Three Gifts," which will be presented at 7:30 p.m. in the church sanctuary on **Sunday, December 21**. Several vocal soloists will be featured in the production along with instrumentalists that are new to the group.

Instrumentalists for the Cantata will include Lanette Durham on clarinet, violinist Zach Newbold, Nancy Sharpe on flute, percussionist Justin Bell, along with faithful organist Mac McLemore and pianist Brenda Duncan.

The Choir will also be joined in performing the Cantata by a group of Lewis County High School students who are members of the L.C.H.S. Glee Club. The Glee Club is under the direction of Justin Bell. There will also be members of the Oak Grove United Methodist Church participating with the group.

The Choir rehearses each Wednesday night, not only in preparation for the Cantata, but also for special anthems that are performed on Sunday mornings. Soloists Kenny Durham, Graham Kilsby, and Rebecca McClain, continue to provide inspiration to everyone with their outstanding musical presentations.

- Kenny Graves, Choir Director

Holiday Calendar of Events



- Sunday, November 30 has been designated as **Pastor Appreciation Sunday!** We want to "fill the house to capacity" with members and guests to let Pastor Drew know how much we appreciate him! Encourage everyone to join us for this special Sunday, honoring this special fellow. A note of invitation will be sent out to visitors and others as identified; names and addresses of persons to be contacted can be left with Jennifer in the church office, by phone 796-2681 or with Kathryn Kozlinski in person or phone 796-2729.
- Sunday, November 30 is the next **5th Sunday Pot Luck luncheon**. This is the Sunday after Thanksgiving (maybe someone will bring meat balls, turkey soup or turkey and dumplings!).
- **Christmas Decoration Day** is set for Tuesday, December 2 beginning at 9 a.m. Everyone is invited to assist preparing the sanctuary for the Holy Christmas Season.
- On Saturday, December 6 from 2 – 3 p.m., FUMC will be participating in **A Christmas Tour of Historical Churches in Downtown Hohenwald**. Church historians Kenneth Kistler and Sue Bouldin will greet our guests, and Brother Drew will provide a brief presentation on the history and traditions of our historic Methodist Church.

Additional hosts/hostess will be needed to assist with the tours.

- On Wednesday, December 17, The **Choir will perform in Linden.** Time and place to be shared when confirmed – check the Church Bulletin over the next few Sundays!
- On Sunday, December 21, our **Christmas Cantata**, “Three Gifts,” will be presented at 7:30 p.m.
- On Wednesday, December 24, Christmas Eve, we will hold our **Candlelight Service** from 5 - 6 p.m.

- Kathryn Kozlinski, Chair, Nurture Committee

United Methodist Men’s Fellowship Makes Strides (and delicious pancakes)

The United Methodist Men’s Fellowship has been meeting for nine months now, and we have been fortunate enough to have had good food and fellowship during that time. Our average attendance runs around 18-20 per month.

Our first fundraiser, a pancake brunch, was held on September 28, and we feel it was quite an achievement for us! We fed approximately 80 people and had more than that number of tickets sold. We realized a profit of \$569, which will be used to fund a future, yet to be determined, project. To our cooks, good job; to our helpers, thanks for making it run smoothly, and finally to all who attended, a big thank you is in order.

- Jim Darden, UMM President



Food and Clothing Bank Needs YOU!



One of the hallmarks of the Methodist Church is service to others, serving God by serving our fellow man.

Many families in Lewis County are in need of basic essentials – food, clothing, soap, shoes. And as we enter the season of giving and sharing, the Food and Clothing Bank has a need for additional volunteers, especially men.

If you can spare any time during your week and want to be of service, please contact the Food Bank at (931) 796-2588 and speak with either Virginia or Brenda. The Food Bank is not open on Tuesdays or Sundays.

And don't forget about donations of non-perishable food items and gently worn (or new) clothing and other personal items.

Important!

A note to ALL Building Key Holders: Please be sure to **securely close and lock the doors** behind you as you exit a building for the day or after an event. There have been concerns over unlocked doors, possible intruders or misuse of the church properties.

“Revival” Bible Study Continues

A new Bible study, “Revival,” began in late October, and there is still time to join in. The 6-8 week study uses Adam Hamilton’s book and DVD to trace the roots of the Methodist Church to its founder John Wesley and provides insight into how issues in John Wesley’s day were addressed in the early days of the church, and the relevance to today’s world. Join in on Sundays at 5 p.m.! Books may be purchased through cokesbury.com; you can also check with the church office to see if copies are available.

“Angel Whisper” – An Original Poem by Jeffrey Brown

I’ve thought of Peter stuck in jail and guards within his cell,
And even though his chains were on, he slept there very well.
The guards were also fast asleep, the angel saw to that,
But wakened Peter with his touch or just a gentle pat.

Now that woke Peter really fast; he sat up with a start.

The angel whispered, “Grab your coat.
You’re going to depart.”
His chains fell off. The door swung wide.
The gate creaked open too.
The angel left, and Peter ran.
He knew just what to do.

He went directly to a house where prayers were being said,
And told them he was out of jail and that he wasn’t dead.

I’ve often thought of Peter – how he slept within that jail.
He must have known within his heart his God would never fail.

Another thing is clear to me: the awesome power of Prayer.

So folks, just when we need Him most,
Our God is always there.

- Acts 12: 6-10

- Written by Jeffrey Brown, son of Susie Brown Miller

Thank You, Lord

Just this once, Lord, I want to come to you without problems simply to say Thank You:
For your forgiveness when I fail.
For the sheer joy of sleep when I’m terribly tired.
For the silent strength of humility when pride overtakes me.
For the justice of your laws when men are cruel.
For the remedies for sickness when I am ill.
For the simplicity of orderliness when I face confusion.
For the assurance that you have made a place especially for me when I feel inadequate among my peers.
For the joy of helping others when I see people in need.
For the reality of your world when I stray too far into fantasy.
For the rightness of reasonableness when I panic too quickly.
For the fun that refreshes when everything gets too serious.
For the renewal in moments of silence when I’m dizzy from being busy in a hectic world.
Thank you, Lord, for all these things. But most of all, thank you for your abiding presence that makes every day I live a day of thanks.

“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.