

SHARING

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF HOHENWALD

JANUARY – FEBRUARY 2017 NEWSLETTER



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

“And a voice came from heaven, ‘You are my Son, the Beloved, with you I am well-pleased.’ And the Spirit immediately drove him out of the wilderness.” (Mark 1: 11-12)

The spiritual life is like an ocean. To be chosen by God is to ride one crest of the wave to the next... and in between are moments, even days, of uncertainty and fear. So don't feel bad when you find yourself tempted on every side. Even Jesus was tempted immediately following his baptism. According to Mark, temptation is a natural consequence of deep spiritual experience. And the way to overcome temptation is to remember our baptism.

Because of the unbelievably rapid changes in Eastern Europe recently, it is easy for us to forget the oppression and the hopelessness there in the years following World War II. Robert McAfee Grown tells of a day in 1960 when he participated in a Lutheran worship service in East Berlin, only a short time before the Berlin Wall was built. There were not many people present, because at that time church attendance was viewed with suspicion by the state. The East German Republic had developed secular alternative to replace all the rituals of the church.

Still, a young couple was there in the services, presenting their child for baptism. Brown was amazed. Why, he wondered, would these young parents jeopardize their future and that of their child by insisting on this ancient ritual of baptism, when a secular alternative was readily and painlessly available? He wrote these words: “The couple does not have to answer my question. Their very act of bringing their baby to church is a public statement of their priorities. They engage in significant risk because of their faith. In the face of their quiet courage, I feel unworthy.”

You see, this couple knew a secret about their child which no secular government could take away: this is a child of God. Temptation, for those who trust, can only affirm the story. For we also belong to God, baptized in the very name of the one of whom God said: “This is my beloved Son! In Him I am well-pleased!”

- Drew

Why not begin your New Year with a resolution to be a regular participant in our **Wednesday evening Bible studies**? On Wednesdays at 6 p.m., in the Wesleyan Fellowship Classroom, we study the readings from the lectionary for each Sunday of the church year. Just bring your Bible (any translation). Come join us!

Donations to Little Swan Hunting Club Brightened Christmas for Local Children



For the second year in a row, more than 100 local children had a Merrier Christmas, thanks to the generosity of HUMC members who donated more than \$2300 each of those years.

In 2015, \$2700 was raised by our church members, and in 2016, \$2310 was donated. In addition, we provided a Christmas meal, prepared by our members, to the children and their families. Coupled with donations from others, the Little Swan Hunting spent at least \$75 on each child, more than \$10,000 this year, enabling us to clothe each child from head to toe: shoes, socks, underwear, pants and shirts, as well a coat if needed.

Toys received by Toys for Tots were also distributed, along with toys we supplied if needed. And, we also provided food baskets to elderly shut-ins if a name was provided, and assisted flood victims with clothing.

Thank you all for your generous giving to help the less fortunate in our community!

- Mark Warrington

Our Church Website: A Great Resource for Members and Non-Members Alike

Can't make Church on **Sunday**? Feeling left out? Want to hear that sermon again? Visit our website at hohenwaldumc.org for the latest Church Bulletin, "Sharing" Newsletter or listen to a sermon.

The Bulletin is updated every Friday or Saturday for the upcoming Sunday Service.

"Sharing" is updated every two months with three years of newsletters available for review.

Sermons are uploaded by Sunday or Monday evening with the entire roster of sermons for 2016 available to hear. Sermons can also be found on YouTube by searching for Hohenwald First United Methodist Church.

If you know of neighbors or newcomers interested in checking out our church before they visit, our website is a good way to introduce them to some of what we do!



Lend a Welcoming Hand!



Help welcome visitors to the Church.

Volunteers are needed to help with "Porch Visits" for our visitors. Contact the church office at 931-796-2681 or Sue Brown at 931-796-3385 for more information.

- Sue Brown, Chairperson, Witness Committee

News and Notes



“Thank you for all your prayers and other support during my recent medical emergency. Glory to God for the wonderful outcome.” – Joyce McCutcheon

On Sunday, January 15, during worship, we will install all church officials, leaders, and committee members for 2017. If you were chosen at last year’s Charge Conference to serve, please plan on being present for this special ceremony.

“A special thanks to Jason and Teresa Drum for the work done at the parsonage in December trimming the trees and clearing debris, and also to Camille Kelley for her generous gift of parsonage upkeep. Thank you for your stewardship!” – Drew

Reminder: The UMW will meet on the second Monday each month, at our new time – 1 p.m.

Featured Member

Cora Criss is like the Energizer Bunny. Talented in many ways – ranging from rebuilding cars to being an expert hunter and fisher, it seems like Cora is always on the move, always accomplishing what many people would never attempt.

Cora says that even as a child, she enjoyed being outdoors more than indoors and relished such activities as racing cars and motorcycles. Over the years, she has added a number of other hobbies such as camping, hunting, fishing, shooting, sports, marathon running (she runs full marathons, and plans to run in the upcoming Nashville Rock ‘n’ Roll marathon this summer), cooking and quilting.

While she was in college, Cora took on such non-traditional summer jobs as working in construction and working cattle on a ranch in Texas, where she worked on round-ups, branding and vaccinating cattle. “It was definitely hard, physical work, but it was also a lot of fun,” she said.

Although she earned a degree in Occupational Therapy, the lure of working outdoors and with her hands soon won out, and she went back to school to become an Auto Mechanic.

And Cora uses her expertise and talents to give back to the community and to her church family here at Hohenwald United Methodist Church.

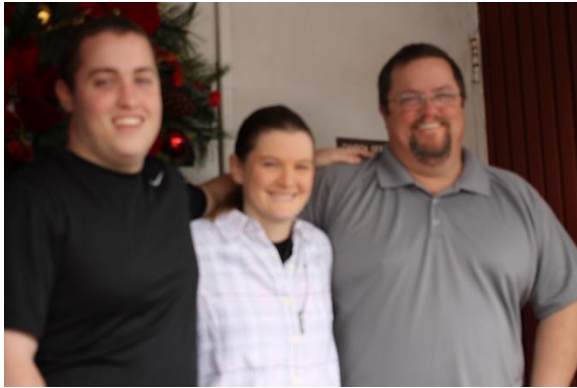
For example, Cora not only enjoys deer season here in Lewis County, filling her freezer each year with deer meat, she supplies enough meat to needy families to get them through the winter. Another example can be found in the beautifully redone church bathroom near the office, which Cora handled.

In addition, Cora is filling in on Wednesdays at the church, handling secretarial duties and the duties of Youth Director, in addition to driving the Church Van to get kids to and from the church. “I love the kids,” she said. “You can learn a lot about them and from them when you are driving that van or playing basketball with them.”

Her optimistic, can-do spirit is especially inspirational when one learns that Cora is

doing all that she does while climbing what she calls her “Daily Mountain” – a diagnosis of Lupus she received three years ago. “I won’t let it interfere with my life,” she said, “and I refuse to let it get me down. I am going to live life on my terms, and that’s that.” She has already had several surgeries and is scheduled for chemotherapy this month.

Later this year, she and her husband Kenny plan to go elk hunting in Idaho. In addition, Cora is an excellent “fisherman,” enjoying all kinds of fishing – salt-flat fishing, wade fishing, fly fishing and off-shore fishing. Her fishing adventures have taken her to many spots throughout the country, such as Alaska.



Born in Napierville, IL, she grew up in Texas, where she met her husband Kenny. When they married, she became an “instant mom” to Kenny’s children Sharon and Hayden. Together for 12 years and married for over 10 years, she considers both Sharon and Hayden her children and is very proud of them. “My family is my number one priority,” Cora said. Sharon graduated from high school here in Hohenwald and is getting ready to graduate from the University of Houston this summer. Stepson Hayden plans to move here after high school and is planning to join the service. Her family also includes Al Capone, the pug, Snickers the cat and her mustang Bam-Bam.

Cora, who comes from a long line of Methodists, has been attending HUMC for

the last five years. One of the best things about HUMC, she says, is the “Open Hearts, Open Minds” attitude displayed by its members.

A COVENANT PRAYER

*I am no longer my own, but thine.
Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom
thou wilt.
Put me to doing, put me to suffering.
Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for
thee,
exalted for thee or brought low by thee.
Let me be full, let me be empty.
Let me have all things, let me have nothing.
I freely and heartily yield all things
to thy pleasure and disposal.
And now, O glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it.
And the covenant which I have made on
earth,
let it be ratified in heaven.
Amen.*

"A Covenant Prayer in the Wesleyan Tradition" is used in the Covenant Renewal Service, often celebrated on New Year's Eve or Day.

“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.