

SHARING

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF HOHENWALD



MARCH – APRIL 2017 NEWSLETTER

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DREW'S MUSINGS

Very truly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. (John 12:24)

In God's wisdom, the power of sacrifice is built into the fabric of creation. Seeds die that plants may be born, mountains are laid bare that valleys might thrive, leaves die that new ones might sprout. Each time we look at the Cross, we are reminded of Jesus' words to Phillip and Andrew. "Unless a grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." Something has to die so that something new might live. The Cross teaches us about sacrificial love.

There's an old story of a little boy who would never behave. His parents tried everything -- nothing worked. They tried punishment, they tried showering him with attention...nothing. One afternoon something strange happened. This boy had a little wire-haired terrier which he adored. On this particular day, he was trying to teach the dog a new trick. The weather was hot, the dog was tired, and the boy was impatient. When the dog failed to understand what his master wanted him to do, the boy kicked the dog in great anger, cutting its mouth and wrenching its shoulder. For just a moment, the eyes of the little dog looked up at his master sort of

bewildered and puzzled, the painfully he crawled over to where the boy stood and licked his hand!

The boy broke down and wept. He ran to his mother crying, "Oh Mother, I've done an awful thing." You see, restrictions, spankings, rewards had not reached him...but suffering love had. That's what the Cross does to those of us who love Jesus. It makes us realize the greatness of His love for us. You and I might have walked away from that Cross – but not Him. Anyone who professes to follow Him has to understand the power of that love. Had Christ not gone to the Cross, we would question His willingness to share our suffering. The Cross makes us aware of sin, but it also teaches the power of love. It means that God knows what it is like to suffer.

There was a time in my life when I didn't really see the suffering in life. But the only reason I didn't see it then is because I wasn't looking for it. In the ministry of the Gospel, I have come to see teardrops in almost everything. Scarcely a day passes I don't talk to someone who is lonely, hurt, frightened or confused. The world, as nice as it can be, is also filled with suffering. Doctors struggling to keep patients alive, patients bravely enduring pain, parents weeping for children, children weeping for parents.

What could we say to people like that if there were no Cross? We don't have to preach a sermon. All we have to do is point to His hands and His feet and say, "Look there!" More convincing than any assurance I could ever offer, I can point to the Cross and say, "He understands. He knows what it is like!" Whatever else we believe about the Cross, we must believe that is where Christ showed us God identifies with us in our suffering.

Drew

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Our United Methodist Women's group is growing by leaps and bounds! If you haven't attended a meeting yet, please join us on Monday, [March 13th](#) at 1 p.m. in the church library.

On that same day, there will be a Mission Study at Columbia First 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. The topic is "Latin American People & Faith." Please call me at 796-2626 if interested in attending. There is no cost.

On Wednesday, [March 29th](#), we will host the "birthday party" at the Lewis County Nursing & Rehabilitation Center. We'll have a sign-up sheet at the March meeting for: ice cream, cakes, cheese puffs, sodas, cups and utensils.



We are already planning this year's bazaar and looking for new ideas to offer our guests. Please come to the March meeting with your ideas and samples if you have some.

Finally, UMW is a supporter of Bethlehem Centers in Nashville. They receive no assistance other than donations. There is a day care center, after school and [Saturday](#) programs for children, summer programs and support for the

elderly. A bin has been set up in the narthex for collections. A list of supplies is attached though any goods that can be of use for any of the programs listed above would be greatly appreciated.

- Debby Campbell
UMW President

SUNDAY SCHOOL

In March, the Adult [Sunday](#) School classes will begin our Spring studies, "God Loves Us." We will see how God pursues us, stays with us, and never lets us go. Join us as we grow in understanding of and gratitude for God's eternal love of each and every one of us.

Each [Sunday](#), a collection is taken in each [Sunday](#) School class to cover the cost of materials. The price of our booklets has gone up to \$12 each (\$16 for the large print). In order to keep costs down, we have reduced the number of booklets ordered. You are encouraged to take a booklet home but it is important to bring them back each week. If not, we tend to run out during class and not everyone has a booklet to use. This may cause us to up our order numbers again. We appreciate your cooperation.

- Debby Campbell
[Sunday](#) School Superintendent

JUNIOR & SENIOR HIGH NEWS

The Junior and Senior High School [Sunday](#) School completed the viewing of the entire TV series: "AD The Bible" last month. If you haven't seen this series, it's available for you to borrow from the church library; it is a wonderful screen portrayal of the book of Acts, which is commonly subtitled "The Acts of the Apostles." The entire series deals with what the apostles did to spread Christianity after the resurrection. Starting with the stoning of Stephen the DVD goes through the point where St. Paul is setting

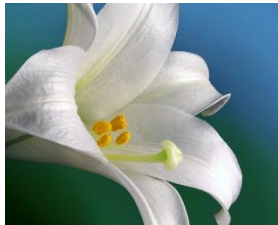
out on his ministry into Asia Minor and Italy. Much of the portrayal is based on some recently discovered material by the Roman historian Josephus and other sources never seen on screen before this series.

The next project for this class will be based on the book by Beth Moore entitled David. This text will likely take up the rest of this calendar year and deals with King David from his earliest notation in the Bible in the book of "Samuel" and concludes with the beginning of the reign of his son, King Solomon. From the point that David's own father would not have chosen him to be the new king until David faces his own demise at the end of his reign as king of Judah, most all the questions about the David story are answered in this extensive study.

-- Jerry Turner

EASTER CANTATA: "A JOURNEY TO HOPE"

The Adult Choir is currently rehearsing an Easter Cantata that will be performed at the church on **Good Friday** at 7 p.m. The title of the cantata is "A Journey to Hope," and was inspired by the great tradition of spirituals. The composer said, "These treasured songs of faith are incredible resources for beautiful melodies and powerful texts."



In addition to the regular choir members, several vocalists from Hohenwald churches and surrounding communities will be participating. An instrumental ensemble, made up of many musicians who performed in the Christmas Cantata that was presented two years ago, will be an integral

part of the presentation.

The cantata is directed by Kenny Graves with piano accompaniment by Brenda Duncan.

- Kenny Graves, Choir Director

NURTURE COMMITTEE REPORT

The Nurture Committee met January 17, 2017 to outline goals for this year and to discuss ongoing and future plans.

- **Sunday School:** A discussion ensued concerning the possibility of forming a new adult Sunday school class. This is an ongoing plan, and will depend on how many in our congregation might be interested according to a survey that will be sent out following Pastor Drew and Mike Spitzer's further preparation of the plan.
- **Church-Wide Bible Studies:** Bible Study on Wednesday nights have had approximately 12 members in attendance. The Sunday night study began on February 19 at 5 p.m. with at last count, around 35 people who have joined this interesting and enlightening study on the Apostle's Creed. This is a 7-week study; because the attendance reached far beyond expectation, the group now meets in the church sanctuary.
- **Children and Youth:** Justin and Letitia Bell practice with children on Wednesday afternoons. Cora Criss has taken over the youth activities while Jennifer Bowen is away. The Youth choir performs at least once a month as well as on special occasions. Cora Criss also picks up the youth and takes them to and from church on Wednesdays and Sundays.
- **UMM:** The men's group is planning their annual fishing rodeo again this year. They are also looking at

adding an addition to the church sign to show times of various functions. Further, they are also discussing having a turkey shoot sometime during the year.

- The date of the next CHRISTIAN NURTURE COMMITTEE has been set for 4-14-17.

- Cindy Graves, Chair

LENT AND EASTER



Lent is a 40-day period of preparation for the initiation of people into the Christian life in baptism. It is also a time for the church to journey together toward Easter and the reaffirmation of our baptismal covenant. It is a time to prepare for Easter, a necessary prelude.

The Sundays of Lent are not part of the 40 days of Lent and so remain "little Easters," as are all Sundays. Fasting and giving up things can be part of Lenten disciplines, but so can taking on some things.

With the aid of the list below, we hope that you will prayerfully consider at least some of the following commitments to discipline and growth during the season of Lent:

Inward & Personal Disciplines

- ♥ Spend time in solitude each day
- ♥ Share in the study series "The Apostles Creed" on Sunday evenings
- ♥ Go to the Ash Wednesday and Holy Week services
- ♥ Keep a journal of prayer concerns, questions, readings

- ♥ Pray for those with whom you need to be reconciled and let Jesus guide you in your thinking and feeling toward them
- ♥ Take time each day to inventory your priorities and plan how you will reorder them
- ♥ Give up a grudge or rehearsal of a past event. Forgive someone who has hurt you.

Outward and Social Disciplines

- ♥ Take on some loving task
- ♥ Plan to visit a "shut-in" church member or neighbor weekly
- ♥ Write a letter of affirmation to someone who has touched your life
- ♥ Listen and respond to Christ's call to a ministry of service
- ♥ Go to coffee or dinner with someone you want to know better
- ♥ Give blood and recall the Cross
- ♥ Say NO to something that is a waste of money and time
- ♥ Decide to become a member of the church or church ministry group and speak to the pastor or lay leader
- ♥ Rebuke the spirit of criticism and keep your tongue under control.

Lenten suggestion from Jane Tatum:
Using a large garbage bag, discard something from your closet each day for the 40 days of Lent, then donate. You'll be helping others as well as yourself.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Your new church directory has a section that allows you to add new families and individuals to the contents.

Please add this family:

Crystal and Brian Shook/two sons – Xavier and Gabriel

155 Yates Road

Hohenwald, TN 38462

(301) 707-0024

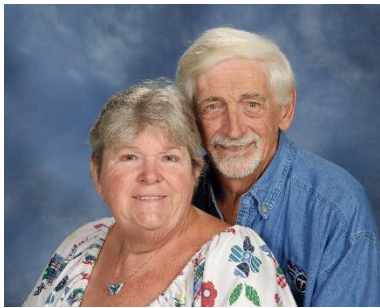
FEATURED MEMBERS

From working with children and youth to serving on various committee, **Retha and Jerry Tibbs** work hard for our church. And as a team, they work together in their home life as well. They are currently working together to renovate a house and get it ready for rental.

“We both believe in staying busy,” Retha said, “and we have definite strengths between us. “I’m more detail-oriented and Jerry tends to be more of a ‘big picture’ kind of guy.”

They also share a sense of humor, developed over the years of their marriage. They just celebrated – on Valentine’s Day – their 42nd wedding anniversary. They are parents to three daughters – Marie, Imajean and Edith Pauline, and have seven grandchildren.

Both are natives of Hohenwald and graduates of Lewis County High School – Jerry in 1963 and Retha in 1965.



Jerry spent 42 years working for Lewis Products and its successors (“The company changed names about five times,” Jerry said). As the children got older, Retha went back to school in her 40s, graduating from MTSU in 1998 with a degree in Social Work. She spent 11 years working for Centerstone, primarily with children, making home visits and school visits and meeting the social services needs of her young clients.

While Retha comes from a Methodist family, Jerry says that he was not raised in church,

but that he started attending church as a teenager as a “way to meet girls.” He jokes that he even sang in Baptist revivals to get in good with the young ladies.

These days, both can be found serving the church on a regular basis. Jerry is a Trustee and serves on the Outreach Committee, in addition to helping around the church with various repair and maintenance chores, like mowing grass, as needed. And Retha assists with Youth Sunday School in addition to serving on the Nurture and Outreach Committees.

“I’ve worked hard all of my life,” Jerry says. “As a kid, I cut wood with my dad, and my routine was to go to the woods early, cut wood, go to school, go back to the woods to work some more and then home to study.” And Retha quipped, “But these days, you watch the news with your eyes closed.”

“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 her at deb.baker@wildblue.net, or leave your news or a note in the Newsletter mail slot in the hall outside the church office.