

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - February 09, 2009

The Pastor's Pen

To date in my columns I have talked about love, joy, peace, and patience. This week I want to address another of the fruits of the Spirit-gentleness. Gentleness just may be one of those things we tend to overlook because it doesn't seem as glamorous as love, joy, peace, or self-control. But in the Christian life gentleness, as I hope to show shortly, is very important.

Gentleness is one of the traits that if asked to identify it, we all could. Everyone knows gentleness when they see it. And yet if we were asked to give a definition of gentleness, it might just be one of those qualities we would attempt to define like this. "Well, gentleness-you know-it's gentleness." We know what it is. We can easily identify it, but when it comes to an exact definition, it may not be so easy.

When I think about gentleness, I think about the 23rd Psalm. The words of the Psalm paint a picture of gentleness. "The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul. He leadeth me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake." Even though one of the verbs in the Psalm is "make," implying force, the context of the psalm is such that "maketh me to lie down in green pastures" does not sound like force. It is a more gentle quality of finding those green pastures for the sheep to indeed lie down in.

And as the Psalm continues, that gentle spirit is still evident. The Psalmist talks about walking through the valley of the shadow of death, no doubt implying some kind of danger or foreboding circumstance in life, but as he does he mentions God's rod and staff. "Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me." Now the rod and staff are not instruments of punishment or even of discipline. Rather they are instruments of care. The rod is an instrument of protection from animals of prey, and the staff is an instrument of rescue.

Then the final part of the Psalm is the image of a fugitive finding refuge in another's tent. "Thou preparest a table before in the presence of mine enemies." The fugitive has been received into the tent of his host, and that is off limits to his pursuers. They must not, yea cannot, enter that tent. The fugitive has asylum there. And his host treats him not as a fugitive, but as an honored guest. He prepares a meal for the fugitive, and as the Psalmist says, "Thou anointest my head with oil." "My cup runneth over." The fugitive is granted asylum for as long as he needs it. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

The 23rd Psalm is picture of gentleness, but just what is gentleness? Gentleness is the way that refuses to be governed by anger or violence. Gentleness is the way of Jesus. Gentleness is allowing oneself to be governed by tenderness, care, and compassion. Therefore, gentleness could be called a discipline to be adopted in one's life. And the Apostle Paul says we can have it as a gift through the Holy Spirit. We don't have to be governed by anger or violence. Gentleness is available to us by surrender of our lives to the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and as the Lord of our lives.

My uncle once told this story about my grandfather. My grandfather-

"Papa" as we called him-chewed tobacco off and on all of his life. Uncle Jake said that one Sunday the preacher preached about things that can take control of a person's life, and the preacher maybe even mentioned tobacco, among others, is one of those things. Uncle Jake said that when they got home from church that day, Papa pitched his chewing tobacco onto the middle of the kitchen table, pointed his finger at it, and said, "You'll not rule over my life."

The Lord knows that there is more than enough anger in our world these days to go around, but anger does have to control people's lives. Anger and violence do not have to rule. There is another way, and that way is the way of gentleness. And all one has to do to receive it is to surrender one's life to Christ and let Jesus be the Lord of his or her life. Jesus through the Holy Spirit offers us gentleness as one of the characteristics of living in his will. Just something to think about.

Until Next time, **Bro. Jim**

NURTURE COMMITTEE NEWS

If you know of someone who is ill, has been ill, or has missed church recently due to surgery or another reason, please see or contact **Linda Sowell at ******* (member of the Nurture committee). Linda will see that the person or persons receives a card from the church letting them know they are missed.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT MENU FOR FEBRUARY 18th

Salisbury steak, Creamed potatoes, Carrots, Rolls, Banana pudding

Workers: Fellowship Class

Join us each Wednesday for a great meal and fellowship

Cost of meal is only \$5 (adults) and \$3 (children).

HAPPY ELDERS NEWS

The Happy Elders have 14 tickets to The Renaissance Center in Dickson, TN, to see the play "Shirley Valentine", March 6, 2009. Middle-aged housewife Shirley gets tired of talking to the wall and gets her groove back on an adventure to Greece in the Tony Award-winning comedy by Willy Russell. After feeling like her life is stagnant and in a rut, Shirley drops everything and heads abroad with a friend, finding romance and what her existence can be with just a little effort on her part. This is a senior matinee luncheon and play. **They have gone up \$5.00 on the ticket and lunch, making the cost for the trip \$30 - \$25.00 for ticket and lunch and \$5 to cover gas for the van and ticket for the driver. We need to sign up and pay by the 28th of Feb.** We will leave the church west parking lot at 9:45 a.m. and usually get back by 5:00 p.m. You can sign up at the church office or call Jean Robertson at *****. First come, first served.

THE LAWRENCE COUNTY TRAVELERS

The Lawrence County Travelers have a 3-day REDISCOVER ATLANTA TOUR March 31-April 2, 2009 via a luxury motor coach with a professional driver. Five (5) meals are included, along with a city tour, the Aquarium, dinner at Mary Mac's Tea Room, Margaret Mitchell House, Lunch, New World of Cocoa Cola, Broadway musical "Happy Days", The First Emperor: China's Terracotta Army @ High Museum, 2 Deluxe Continental Breakfasts and lunch at Classic on Noble. Price per Person: Single is \$655, Double is \$525, Quad is \$505. Deposit of \$100 will hold seat and balance by March 10. See Jean Robertson or phone ***** to sign up and for more information.

TRIVIA NIGHT & SILENT AUCTION - FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Sunday, February 15, 2009 at 5:00 p.m.

\$10 per person or \$100 per table

All proceeds to benefit Youth Summer Mission Trip
Popcorn and drinks (coffee, lemonade, and water) provided
Call 762-3696 to reserve your table today!

HAND BELL NEWS

Adult Hand bells will not practice this Sunday evening, due to the Trivia Night & Silent Auction event.

SOCK HOP IN THE CLC

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28TH, 6:00 - 9:00 P.M.
\$10.00 PER PERSON INCLUDES BURGERS, HOTDOGS, CHIPS AND SODA
ALL BENEFITS GO TO HELP BRING A NICARAGUAN DELEGATION
TO VISIT OUR CHURCH AND COMMUNITY

CHURCH-WIDE YARD SALE

SATURDAY, MARCH 28TH, BEGINNING AT 7:00 A.M.
ALL BENEFITS GO TO HELP BRING A NICARAGUAN DELEGATION TO
VISIT OUR CHURCH AND COMMUNITY
BRING YOUR DONATIONS TO THE CLC THE WEEK OF THE YARD SALE

FLOWERS FOR THE ALTAR

The following Sundays are available in the month of March for altar flowers: March 8, 15, 22 and 29. Please call the church office if you would like to place altar flowers on any of these dates.

UPCOMING EVENT

Lawrenceburg-First will host the first noon Lenten Service/Lunch on Feb. 25th.

MEMPHIS ICE STORM RECOVERY VOLUNTEERS

On a limited basis, the Memphis Conference is available to receive local church volunteer groups to help in NW Tennessee and Western Kentucky. Many of the requests are to remove trees. On a limited basis, the Memphis Conference is available to receive local church volunteer groups to help in NW Tennessee and Western Kentucky. Many of the requests are to remove trees and/or branches from driveways and yards. Not everyone needs a chainsaw and only persons with experience using one should be involved in cutting. One person to cut, several to drag, push, and pull, along with others to talk and pray with residents makes for a great team. If persons on your team can help provide some of your own meals and/or help those churches hosting volunteers, that would be a valuable service. The latest information from the Memphis Conference indicates they will be involved in tree/limb removal for months to come. Other church or district groups that can do lighter removal will be needed over the next several months.

Due to power, plumbing, and space issues in some of the churches/communities, their ability to receive volunteers on certain dates will vary. They estimate at least a couple of weeks of opportunity for needing volunteers. There are immediate openings for 2-3 teams of 7-10 on Thursday and Friday working out of Goshen UMC in Murray, KY. If you feel called and able to send a group over the next several weeks, please contact the **Memphis Conference Disaster Call Center at 1-866-966-7161 (please note: beginning Monday, February 16, all offers to volunteer through the Memphis Conference will be routed through one toll free number, 877-552-7337)**. They will take your information and forward to those coordinating groups in the three affected Districts. They will call you back to let you know if they can receive you. Be ready to say **when you can come, how many you can bring, and what you can do**. If you schedule your group, **please let me know** so we can keep you in prayer and perhaps connect you with individual volunteers who may not have a team of their own. Please feel free to email or call me with questions you may have.

Currently, the Kentucky Conference is only receiving specially trained UMVIM Early Response Teams. We'll send and update if that changes.

WITH ONE ANOTHER

David Robertson
Freddie Mae Jackson
Oscar and Agnes McCarter
Bill Evans
Edythe Edwards
Elmer Hackney
Scottie McMackin
Rev. Clifton Johnston
T. J. Moore
Meredith Nordin
Norman Marston
Willodean Grinnell
Rosie Coleman
Jean Cone
Kris Fann
Gracie Henson
Landon Burns

AN INVITATION

Please join us for a Bridal Tea

Honoring

Pamela Roberts

Bride-elect of

Jon Mark Brewer

Sunday, March 1, 2009

1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

First United Methodist Church

Christian Life Center

212 Waterloo Street

Lawrenceburg, TN

Selections:

Green's Gift Shop,

Target

Dillard's

&

Lawrenceburg Florist

UMW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

The UMW Executive Committee will meet on Tuesday, **February 17th**, at 4:15 p.m.

I Will Be Loyal

To The United Methodist Church And

Support It With: My Presence:

Sunday, February 08, 2009

8:15 a.m. Worship Attendance.....42

Sunday school Attendance.....87

10:30 a.m. Worship Attendance.....104

My Service: Sunday, Feb. 15, 2009

Acolytes: Katie Rochelle & Alexis Fann

Loaves and Fishes: Tues. & Thurs.

Tues. Feb. 17: Linda Newton & Ray Price

Thurs. Feb. 19: Elmer Cooke, Jean Robertson and Jerry Gibbs

**Attention: The Food Pantry has gotten so busy that three people are needed. If you would like to volunteer to work in the Food Pantry ministry, please contact the church office.

FLOWERS FOR THE ALTAR

The following Sundays are available in the month of March for altar flowers: March 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th. Please call the church office if you would like to place altar flowers on any of these dates. Flowers are not placed on the altar the first Sunday, due to being Holy Communion.