

## **FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - May 25, 2009**

### **The Pastor's Pen**

In the Old Testament Book of Kings we read about a man named Elijah the Tishbite. Elijah was a prophet during the days when Ahab was King of the northern kingdom of Israel and Jezebel was queen. Elijah predicted a drought, and sure enough a drought came. But the drought not only affected Israel. It affected territories around Israel. It affected the region of Sidon where a town by the name of Zarephath was located.

God told Elijah to go to this town of Zarephath in Sidon. God told Elijah that when he got there he would find a woman who would provide him with something to eat. The prophet who predicted the drought suffered from lack of food just like everybody else.

Well sure enough, as Elijah arrived in Zarephath he met a woman, a widow. He asked her for a drink of water, and she went to oblige him. But as she turned to go, Elijah called to her and asked her to make a small cake for him to eat. At that point the widow of Zarephath stopped and turned to Elijah and said, "I can't do that. I only have a handful of meal in a jar and a little bit of oil in a jug. In fact, when you walked up I was in the process of gathering some sticks to go and cook that little bit of meal and oil into a cake. My son and I were going to eat it, and then we were going to wait to die because that's all the food I have."

Elijah said to the woman, "Go ahead and get the water, and while you are there, fix that little bit of meal and oil into a cake. Bring me a portion, and take a portion for you and your son. If you do that, you won't die, but there will be enough food for you, me, and your son." So the widow did as Elijah said, and for the remainder of that famine that little bit of meal in a jar and the little bit of oil in the jug never ran out. She continued to cook from it and prepare meals for her son, herself, and the prophet Elijah. The little bit of meal and oil the widow had was enough.

The widow of Zarephath is an example of faith. She was willing to put the meager amount of food she had left into the hands of God and trust God, and God did not let her, or her son, or Elijah, down. God did provide.

Can we trust God to provide? Most of us have grown accustomed to trusting God when times are good. We've grown accustomed to talking about faith in God when we seem to have all that we need. We've talked about faith out of an experience of abundance, but that may really not be faith at all. We may not know what it really is to trust God.

I had an experience a little over a year ago that kinda shook me. As some of you may remember I had a pretty bad case of bronchitis. I was down for several weeks, and I really did feel badly. Up to that point I had always counted on my health. Only on one other occasion had I really felt it was a risk. But during that bout with the bronchitis when I felt so badly, I found myself asking the question, "Do you really trust God? Do you really trust Christ? Are you willing to trust Christ to restore your health?" It's when things are running out on us that we really are confronted with living by faith - confronted with really trusting God.

May I suggest something to us? In areas where we are poor can we trust these things to God? For instance, as a church congregation at present time we are poor in terms of our attendance at worship, especially in late worship. Can we entrust that scarcity to God and believe that God will make us more diligent in our attendance? In our personal lives is there an area where we are poor? For instance, are we poor in our devotional life? Do we fail to read the Scripture and pray like we know we should? If that is an area of poverty in your life, can you trust what little bit you have into God's hands and believe that he will make it enough, yea even make it more? If we are poor in terms of personal giving, that is, nowhere close to giving 10% to God as the Scripture suggests, can we entrust that poverty to God and believe that God will lead us to more sacrificial giving to his work? Is our health at present time not as good as we would like it to be? Can you entrust that to God believing that God will supply the health we need to be God's servants?

It is in our poverty that we really learn to live by faith. My suggestion to each of us is to find that place or those places of poverty in our own being and entrust them to God. That's how we learn to live by faith like the widow of Zarephath and Elijah learned. That's how we learn to really trust God that God will provide. Just something to think about - and do.

Until next time, **Bro. Jim**

### **FIFTH SUNDAY SINGING AT MARS HILL UMC**

Please join us for the Fifth Sunday singing which will be hosted by Mars Hill UMC, this **Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup>**. The music will begin at **6:00 p.m.** and there will be a time of fellowship following the program.

### **WITH ONE ANOTHER**

David Robertson  
Freddie Mae Jackson

Oscar and Agnes McCarter  
 Bill Evans  
 Scottie McMackin  
 Rev. Clifton Johnston  
 T. J. Moore  
 Norman Marston  
 Jean Cone  
 Gracie Henson  
 Scott Dean  
 Georgia Childress  
 Brian Beller  
 Al Harlan  
 Barbara Harlan  
 Olivia Grace Moody  
 Herman Dunkin  
 Herb Magee  
 Vita Mae Owens

...We extend our love and sympathy to Mary Clare and Dara Smith and their family on the passing of their mother Melissa (Mitchell) Smith earlier this week.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS**

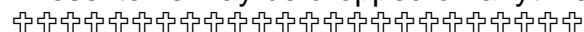
Students in both **Elementary and Jr./Sr. High Sunday School** classes will be recognized for this quarter's attendance on Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup> during the 10:30 service. This quarter's trip is planned for Monday, June 1. Children who have missed no more than one Sunday (*with exclusion of the snow day*) are invited to go to Cool Springs to ice skate, play in the arcade and have lunch. Sounds like fun!

**FIFTH SUNDAY COLLECTIONS FOR LOAVES & FISHES**

This month has a fifth Sunday (May 31), which is a Sunday set aside for donations to the **Loaves and Fishes** food pantry. Non-Food items needed are:

- Washing detergent (liquid or powder)
- Dish washing detergent      Diapers
- Toilet Paper                      Shampoo
- Toothpaste/Toothbrushes      Soap

These items may be dropped off anytime during the month if not brought on Sunday.



**I Will Be Loyal  
 To The United Methodist Church And  
 Support It With: My Presence:  
 Sunday, May 24, 2009**

8:15 a.m. Worship Attendance.....39  
 Sunday school Attendance.....59  
 10:30 a.m. Worship Attendance.....70

**My Service: Sunday, May 31, 2009  
 Acolytes: Maggie McKnight & Katie Wayne**

**Loaves and Fishes: Tues. & Thurs.**

**Tues. June 2** Loulie Brown, Anita Marston & Jerry Gibbs  
**Thurs. June 4** Joan Cochran, Joyce Holmes & Jerry Gibbs

**FATHER'S DAY CELEBRATION**

Ahoy, Mateys! Enter if you dare: All dads, sons, grandsons, grandpas, uncles and nephews are invited to a pirate adventure on the high seas! Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, at 11:30 a.m. in the CLC. Come and enjoy lunch and celebrate Father's Day! Please RSVP by June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009 to the Church office. Lunch will consist of: Green Guts Punch, Hardy-Har Hot Dogs, Wavy Cheese Curls, Mutiny Macaroni and Cheese and

more...come and live the adventure!

**ATTENTION:** A survey concerning the Wednesday meals will be included in the Sunday bulletin. Please fill out and return to the church office.

