

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - May 4, 2009

The Pastor's Pen

Elijah was afraid. He had challenged the prophets of Baal to a kind of spiritual duel on Mt. Carmel, and the prophets of Baal lost. When they tried to call down fire from heaven to burn the sacrifice on their altar, nothing happened, but when Elijah called upon the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses to send down fire to burn the sacrifice on the altar he built, fire came and consumed not only the sacrifice but the altar itself. And with that Elijah rose up and killed the prophets of Baal.

When the news of what Elijah had done came to Queen Jezebel, she was not happy. Queen Jezebel was the one who had helped to introduce the worship of the gods of Baal into Israel, and Jezebel sent word to Elijah that his life was going to be like those of the prophets he killed. So Elijah was afraid, and he ran to the wilderness to get away from Jezebel's threat.

In the wilderness Elijah found refuge in a cave on Mt. Horeb, but while in the cave he heard the voice of God telling him to go out to the opening of the cave. Once there Elijah witnessed a great windstorm. The wind was so strong that it was breaking rocks and blowing debris all around. Then Elijah witnessed an earthquake. The earth shook beneath his feet. And then Elijah saw fire come down from heaven. But the odd thing was that God's voice was not in any of those powerful things he saw. God's voice was not in the powerful wind, the shaking of the earth beneath his feet, nor in the fire that came from the sky.

Rather God's voice came to Elijah once he returned to the cave, and it came in a whisper barely audible to Elijah. Nevertheless in that still small voice God spoke ever so clearly to Elijah. "Elijah, what are you doing here?" "I'm afraid," said Elijah, "because I am the only one left in Israel who is faithful to you, God." Then God said to Elijah, "Elijah, you don't have to be afraid. You are not by yourself. You are not the only person in Israel that has remained faithful to me. I have reserved for myself 7000 in Israel who have not bowed their knees to Baal. Now, go back to Israel in confidence and courage."

On Sunday I shared in prayer time my encounter with the man at Cokesbury who had some very difficult questions and wanted someone to talk to. As I talked to the man I got the impression that he was looking for God to manifest himself in some great magnificent way, but that great magnificent manifestation of God was not forthcoming. There was no great show of power - like the wind, or the earthquake, or the fire in the story of Elijah running from Jezebel. And I got the impression this man was disappointed because there was no great display of God's presence to him.

Sometimes, as was the case with Elijah in the cave, God doesn't come to us in great displays of power. God won't always sweep in and overcome our lives with great displays of magnificence. Sometimes the manifestation of God is in the simple, the mundane, or the everyday occurrences. Sometimes it is that God comes in that "still small voice," that simple whisper of our name. We must learn to look for God and expect God to come in the simple and the small as well as in the big and the powerful.

That's the lesson Elijah learned on Mt. Horeb. It's a lesson worth our taking to heart. Just something to think about.

Until next time, **Bro. Jim**

LOAVES AND FISHES MINISTRY (APRIL REPORT)

The Loaves and Fishes Ministry served 162 families in the month of April and 396 individuals. We received \$2435 in donations. Please continue to support this ministry with your prayers and your donations.

Attention: Linda Sowell continues to send cards to church members/new people, but she needs people to call her with information (on those who have missed, are sick or are visiting the church) Linda's number is *****

LAWRENCE COUNTY SINGS

Several of our First UMC children/youth performed at the Crockett Theatre recently as seven elementary chorus groups performed in Lawrence County Sings last week. Those participating were: Breonna Lindsey, Lynsey Burns, Katie Wayne, Lucy Benson, Katie Rochelle and Breanna Slater.

CHRISTIANS CONNECT - MAY 10TH

Christians Connect will be hosted by the Jerry Thomas/Stellar classes on Sunday, May 10th. Please join everyone in the Friends & Fellowship classroom following the 8:15 a.m. service.

TN CONFERENCE DISASTER RESPONSE & RECOVERY TRAINING

There will be a Tennessee Conference Disaster Response & Recovery team training on Saturday, May 16, from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. This event will be at Blackman United Methodist Church in Murfreesboro, TN. \$20 covers lunch, a manual and official T-shirt. If interested, contact the church office.

NASHVILLE SOUNDS BASEBALL UNITED METHODIST NIGHT

Nashville Sounds baseball will host a United Methodist night on June 28, 2009 at Greer Stadium. There will be a concert at 4:30 p.m. and the Sounds vs. Oklahoma City Redhawks game will begin at 6:00 p.m. The \$12 ticket includes hotdog and soft drink. You may sign up at the church office.

LAWRENCE COUNTY LAITY CLUB

The Lawrence County Laity Club will meet at the Coleman Memorial UMC on Monday, May 11, at 6:30 p.m. A program of music will follow the meal.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

The Lydia Circle will meet Tuesday, May 12th, (11:30 a.m.) at the home of Frances Griffin.

UMW Executive Committee meeting on Tuesday, May 12th, at 4:15 p.m.

Finance Committee meeting on Tuesday, May 12th at 7:00 p.m.

Administrative Board meeting on Tuesday, May 12th at 7:30 p.m.

VBS - JULY 20-24, 2009

Check out our website for more information, to register or to volunteer. www.vacationbibleschool.com/firstumclawrenceburg. This year's VBS theme is **Studio Go Game Show**.

WITH ONE ANOTHER

David Robertson
Freddie Mae Jackson
Oscar and Agnes McCarter
Bill Evans

