

## FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**August 25, 2008**

The place was a little town in Wisconsin on the southern tip of Lake Superior. The setting was a cold January Saturday morning on the side of the lake. It was time for the annual dog sled derby on the ice. The one-mile course had been marked out by little fir trees stuck in the ice. The entrants in the race ranged from larger boys with several dogs in their team to one little five year old boy with one dog hitched to his sled.

When the signal was given and the race began, the little five year old boy and his dog were quickly left behind. He seemed not to have a chance. Everything was going quite smoothly until after the first turn. The second place team tried to pass the team that was in the lead, and as this team tried to pass the lead team, the dogs from the two teams got in a fight. The second place team in trying to pass had gotten too close to the first.

As other teams came around the turn, the dogs from that team would join in the fight. Soon there was just one big, black mass of dogs, that is, except for one little speck on the horizon. The little boy with his one little dog pulling the sled stayed on course and navigated his way around the mass of dogs, boys, and sleds and crossed the finish line. He was the winner. And he was the winner because he stayed on course. He did not get pulled to the side.

I suppose there are any number of morals one could draw from this story. One is that if you believe you are on the right course, stay with it and follow it to the finish. Another moral might be that there are any number of things that can draw our attention away from the road we need to be traveling in life, and when we turn our attention to those "side issues," we lose track of where we were going and the reason for our journey. So it is important to keep our eye on the prize.

In the church and in our lives as Christians there can be any number of side issues that would draw our attention away from the road we need to travel. In fact, most of our difficulties in the church often arise because of too much attention to "side issues," that is, things that don't really have much to do with the mission of the church. When that happens, we take our eyes off the course we need to follow, and we get bogged down in things that in the long run don't really matter.

The Apostle Paul in writing to Timothy, his beloved son in the faith and his valued colleague in ministry, said, "As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith." When Paul says that he has "kept the faith," I believe he means that he has kept his eye on the prize. He did not let side issues pull him away from the ministry to which he had been called, and because of that he could say, "I have finished the race." And when Paul says, "I have finished the race," I believe he does so with a great deal of satisfaction, knowing that he had been faithful to the calling and the claim God in Christ had placed on his life.

That is our mission as well, both as the body of believers, the church that gathers here at the corner of Waterloo Street and Mahr Avenue, and as individual Christians. We are to live out in faithfulness the claim that God in Christ has placed on our lives, keeping our eyes on the course set out for us, and when we do that we will one day be able to say as did Paul, "I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith." Just something for us to think about.

**Until next time, Bro. Jim**

### FIFTH SUNDAY COLLECTION FOR LOAVES AND FISHES MINISTRY

This month has a fifth Sunday (**August 31**), which means this Sunday is designated to collect non-food items for the Loaves and Fishes food pantry. Items we need donated are:

- Toothpaste

Thank you in advance for supporting this ministry.

**\*\*\*The Food Pantry needs bags (paper or plastic) to pack food in.**

**FIFTH SUNDAY SINGING AT MARS HILL UMC**

## **SUNDAY (AUGUST 31) BEGINNING AT 6:00 P.M. TIME OF FELLOWSHIP TO FOLLOW PROGRAM**

### **HAPPY ELDERS TRIP TO SEE "GREATER TUNA"**

The Happy Elders will be traveling to Dickson, Tennessee on Thursday, September 4, to see the play "Greater Tuna", at the Renaissance Center. We will meet in the West parking lot of the church and leave at 9:30 a.m.

### **NEW SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES WILL BEGIN ON SEPTEMBER 7<sup>TH</sup>**

Our new Sunday school year will begin on Sunday, **September 7**. For classes using new literature, this will be the Sunday to start. There will also be some new teachers starting on September 7. Anita Story and Mary Alice Clayton will be teaching the Kindergarten class (previously taught by Tony & Carla Clayton); the 1<sup>st</sup> grade through 6<sup>th</sup> grade class will be taught by the following rotation of teachers: Ben & Shelly Boston, Laura Stanfill and Carol Cheatwood (previously taught by Judy Benson and Kathy Burns). The junior/senior high class will continue with Gayle Wright as the teacher. Sunday school is very important to the life of a church and we wish to thank those teachers who have been teaching and for their commitment these past years. We also wish to thank the incoming teachers for their commitment to the church in accepting these teaching positions.

### **NEWS FROM THE HAPPY ELDERS**

A "Flower Arranging Class" has been scheduled for Saturday, September 6<sup>th</sup> from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Our instructors will be members of the Flower Lovers Circle.

Bring flowers to arrange, a container or bowl and a frog or material to anchor the flowers in your arrangement.

If you plan to attend, please call Frances Griffin, Anita Johnston, or the church office (762-3696).

The following dates are **open** for flowers for the altar in September:

**Sept. 14 and Sept. 28**

### **DISASTER TRAINING - SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6<sup>TH</sup>**

At some point, tornadoes, flooding, earthquakes and ice storms will affect your church and community in some capacity. The UMCOR District Disaster Readiness Training Schedule includes Pulaski on Sept. 6 from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. at the Antioch United Methodist Church. The following persons will be attending the training from Lawrenceburg-First: Pastor Jim Gardner, Associate Pastor Alecia Fischer, Ken Nelson, Pam Shaffer, Janice Bailey, Keri McMahan and Beverly Duke/Carol Beasley. Some of the topics covered will include:

- How disasters affect individuals and local communities
- How individuals and organizations work to provide Relief and Recovery
- How UMCOR partners with annual conferences to provide training and funding
- Prepare a Disaster Readiness Plan to take care of Members, Facility and Community

### **SPEAKER FROM THE HENDERSON SETTLEMENT - SEPTEMBER 21<sup>ST</sup>**

On Sunday, September 21, Vicki Stevenson from the Henderson Settlement will be speaking at both services. The Henderson Settlement serves the needs of those living in the Appalachia areas of Kentucky and Tennessee. Mission opportunities are available in Frakes, Kentucky and White Oak, Tennessee. The Henderson Settlement has a variety of ministry areas which Mrs. Stevenson will be speaking about.

### **UMW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

There will be a UMW Executive Committee meeting on Tuesday, September 9, at 4: 15 p.m.

### **UMW NEWS**

Mark your calendars - the UMW Fall Luncheon and Bake sale will be Saturday, **November 8**, from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.

Those of you, who are collecting soup labels with UPC codes along with the labels for education, and the General Mills box tops for the UMW, may turn them into the Wesley classroom or the church office. These labels will be taken to the Fall District meeting on **October 18<sup>th</sup>**, which will be at Waynesboro First UMC (9:00 a.m.). We will take the church van to this event.

There will also be a group attending the Conference meeting in Columbia on **October 11** at Columbia First UMC at (9:00 a.m.). We will take the church van to this event.

### **CHARGE CONFERENCE**

Our Charge Conference is scheduled for Sunday evening, November 2, at 6 P.M. The following written reports will be expected at that time: Committee on Finance; Trustees; Staff-Parish Relations Committee; Parsonage Annual Inspection Report; Lay Speakers Reports; Martin Representative's Report; and Celebration of Missions Report. **The forms for each are available at the church office.**

### **PULASKI DISTRICT LAY SPEAKING/SERVANT MINISTRY TRAINING WEEKEND**

The Pulaski District will offer a Lay Speaking/Servant Ministry Training weekend on September 20 (9am-4pm) & 21 (2pm-5pm) at the Coleman Memorial UMC. The basic course is: Intro to Laity Ministries (Instructors-Rev. Brad Smith & Marvin Dale Smith) and the Advanced course is: Lead in Mission Outreach (Instructor-Rev. Earl Davis). The cost is \$40 per person and the registration is due by September 5. Anyone interested in attending may pick up and application at the church office. Questions? Contact Elizabeth Eubanks Graham (District Lay Ministries Chairperson ([info in church office](#))).

### **UMCOR**

The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) is coordinating medicines and medical supplies being provided through U.S. government sponsored emergency airlifts to the conflict zone in the former Soviet of Georgia.

The South Caucasus nation has been fighting with Russia over the contested region of South Ossetia since August 7. A cease-fire agreement, reached on August 12 and brokered by France, apparently was not holding the next day, according to news reports.

As a member of the United Nations Health and Nutrition Coordination group. UMCOR Georgia is heavily involved in organizing and distributing supplies. UMCOR also is providing health kits to displaced people and assisting local hospitals.

The World Council of Churches and Conference of European Churches issued a statement calling for prayers and assistance for those affected by the conflict in the Caucasus. The statement affirmed the interventions of the Russian Orthodox Church, the Georgian Orthodox Church and the Evangelical Baptist Church of Georgia, all of which have called for a cease-fire, a negotiated solution to the conflict and urgent relief for those affected.

Donations to support UMCOR'S work in Georgia, including its response to the conflict, can be made by giving to Georgia Emergency, UMCOR Advance #250305. Checks can be mailed to UMCOR, P.O. Box 9068, New York, NY 10087. Write the Advance number and name on the memo line of the check.

### **WITH ONE ANOTHER**

David Robertson  
Freddie Mae Jackson  
Oscar and Agnes McCarter  
Bill Evans

Selene Crews  
 Edythe Edwards  
 Robert White  
 Elmer Hackney  
 Scottie McMackin  
 Ivone Hammond  
 Rev. Clifton Johnston  
 Ruby Lopp  
 Bill Marsh  
 T. J. Moore  
 Mark Brewer  
 David Shaw  
 Rebecca Johnston  
 Mrs. Myrtle Otto  
 Lisa Ann Givens  
 Tennie Roark  
 Meredith Nordin  
 Elmer Cooke  
 Hunter Hardy  
 Bruce Edwards  
 Catherine Springer

**A NOTE OF THANKS**

The Nurture Committee would like to thank all who participated in Sunday night's "Bible Bowl" and cookout. We had several teams (all ages) to participate and everyone had a great time. A special thanks to Jean Grimsley who provided the questions and Tony Clayton and John Benson for cooking.

**An Invitation**

*Please join us in celebrating  
 Elmer Cooke's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday at a reception given by his daughters  
 Cookie Tankersley, Cathy Cunningham & Peggy Cooke  
 This event will take place at the Christian Life Center parlor on  
 Sunday, Sept. 7<sup>th</sup> from 2-4 p.m.  
 No gifts please;  
 He will be delighted with your presence.*

**I Will Be Loyal  
 To The United Methodist Church And  
 Support It With:**

**My Presence:**  
**Sunday, August 24, 2008**  
 8:15 a.m. Worship Attendance.....45  
 Sunday school Attendance.....75  
 10:30 a.m. Worship Attendance.....97

**My Service: Sunday, August 31, 2008**  
**Acolytes:** Lance Egly & Katie Rochelle

**Nursery Helper:** Kim McKnight

**Loaves and Fishes: Tues. & Thurs.**  
**Tues. Sept. 2:** Linda Newton & Ray Price  
**Thurs. Sept. 4: Need (2) Volunteers**

**NURTURE COMMITTEE MEETING**

There will be a Nurture Committee meeting on Tuesday, September 2<sup>nd</sup>, at 6:00 p.m.

**UPCOMING SEPTEMBER MEETINGS**

There will be a Finance Committee meeting on Tuesday, September 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

There will be an Administrative Board meeting on Tuesday, September 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m.

**The Church Office will be closed on Monday, September 1<sup>st</sup> in observance of Labor Day.**