

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - August 30, 2009
The Pastor's Pen

My friend and ministerial colleague, the Rev. Dr. Phil Sumrall, now pastor of Red Bank Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Chattanooga, sends me his newsletter every week. Phil's column in this past week's issue evoked in me some thoughts that I believe are worth sharing, especially in light of our meeting on Sunday night August 23rd. I hope he won't mind my quoting him and then using his comments as a spring board for some further comments.

In his column he said, "If you haven't noticed, I love the Marines. They teach us so much that is important in life. They embody the United States Navy's core values of honor, courage, and commitment. They also add to these a fourth value, 'faithful.' The logo of the United States Marine Corps is *semper fidelis*. This Latin phrase in English is translated 'always faithful.'"

Phil continues, "A Marine is committed to 'Semper fi do or die.' By this he or she means that they will always be faithful, faithful to the flag, to the corps, their fellow Marines, their friends and their family, even if it means laying down their lives to demonstrate that faithfulness."

The idea of faithfulness, do or die, is what really struck a responsive chord in me in light of our meeting on this past Sunday night the 23rd. Phil describes a faithfulness that doesn't ever give up. He writes about a faithfulness that doesn't ever quit, even though it would sometimes be easier to do just that.

In serving our church here at First United Methodist I know that there are many of us who do a lot for the church and in the church. I also know that sometimes we get tired, and I know that there are times when we think "I've done my duty and now it is someone else's turn." Let me assure you that if these thoughts have entered your mind, you are not alone. I get tired. I imagine Alecia gets tired. We all do. I've found myself at times lately thinking that it is "somebody else's turn." But the greater point is this. Faithfulness isn't easy, but it is necessary. Whether one is a marine or a disciple of Jesus, faithfulness that isn't easy but is most assuredly necessary applies.

On Sunday night the 23rd I placed before us some things I think we as a congregation need to do. Those things, if they get done, will require more from us than we are already doing. Those things, if they get done, are going to require faithfulness. They are going to require perseverance. Those things, if they get done, are going to require our "keeping on" even after we have gotten tired. It's "Semper fi do or die." And if the United States Marine Corps can ask that of its soldiers, then can not the Lord Jesus Christ ask that of his disciples? I think he can.

Let me now quote the third paragraph of Phil's column. Hear what it says.

"For twenty five years now I've been a Naval Reserve chaplain. For thirteen of those years I served with Marines around the world. As both a battalion and regimental chaplain, it has been my great honor to be on numerous missions with the "Mean Green Team" and observe this faithfulness. It has also been my sad duty to knock on the door of a home and watch the shock and disbelief, the anger and the grief, and yet the pride of parents as they were told their son or daughter had died fighting for America and the ideals of *semper fidelis*."

Being faithful is not easy. It requires sacrifice. But did you hear the words faithfulness and pride together in that paragraph? There is an appropriate feeling of pride that comes with being faithful, with having done one's duty. In the kingdom of God, serving our Lord Jesus Christ and his body, the church is our duty. Therefore faithfulness and perseverance must permeate all that we do and all that we attempt, and then when we have been faithful and when we have persevered, there is no shame in feeling a sense of pride that we have served our Lord well. The Apostle Paul said, "So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest-time, if we do not give up." There will come a time when we can say with an appropriate pride, "I served my Lord, and I served him well."

I know that many have served well and served long in our church. I am also well aware that sometimes we get tired, but let us not grow weary in being faithful. We will reap at harvest-time, if we do not give up. Thank you Phil for your inspiring words and

most of all thanks be to our Lord Jesus Christ who did not grow weary in the work of our redemption. Just something to think about.

Until next time,
Bro. Jim

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Finance Committee meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 8, at 7:00 p.m.

Administrative Board meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 8, at 7:30 p.m.

Nurture Committee meeting on Thursday, Sept. 10, at 6:00 p.m.

UMW DATES TO REMEMBER

****There will be no UMW executive board meeting in the month of September**

September 11 -13

- Conference Spiritual Life Retreat @ Beersheba Springs Assembly Grounds
(Church van will leave CLC September 11, at 3:00 p.m.)

October 10

- TN Conference Annual Meeting "Who's at Your Table?"
Shelbyville FUMC at 9:30 a.m.; Register by September 30. Cost is \$15.00; forms are in the church office. Everyone is asked to wear orange and bring a love offering for *Bethlehem Centers of Nashville. The church van will leave the CLC at 7:30 a.m.

***Bethlehem Centers of Nashville needs our help!** Christy Cookies has a contest going on that will provide \$10,000 to a charity with the highest number of votes, and \$5,000 to three other runners up. All that is required to vote for Bethlehem Center of Nashville is to log onto www.christiecookies.com and follow the directions about how to vote. No purchase is required and only one vote can be submitted per email address.

October 17

- Pulaski District Fall meeting, which will be held at Prospect UMC at 9:00 a.m.
Participants register at the door (registration is \$5.00). The church van will leave the CLC at 8:00 a.m.

November 15

- Autumn Harvest - 8:00 a.m. until 12 noon
- Bake Sale
- Breakfast
- Carry-Outs (Stew, Chili, Chicken & Dumplings, Chicken Salad, Pimento Cheese)

COME ONE, COME ALL - TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, AT 6:30 P.M. IN THE CLC

Join Carol Beasley, Alecia Fischer, Mary Ann Clayton, Jane Jennings and Bonnie Thigpen in planning menus for the Wednesday night suppers which will be starting back on **September 16th**. **Any interested persons are invited, but it is extremely important that we have at least one representative from each adult Sunday school class to attend.**

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

A very special thank you to all who were involved in the Tuesday lunch program that was held during July and the first of August. This was an experimental program that showed an our-pouring of love from our congregation to the people who participate in the Loaves and Fishes program. I can't tell you how proud I am of everyone who cooked, cleaned, served, donated, or blessed us with your prayers. The gratitude that was expressed from the people who participated showed us how important the outreach of our church is to the community. Thank you, thank you, thank you for helping to bless others in this way.

Carol Beasley

ROUND UP BEGINS THIS SUNDAY!

Youth and children will gather in room 108 in the Education building from 9:15-9:30 a.m. for some singing, devotional and more. Don't forget!

HISPANIC MINISTRY

Lawrenceburg First has had an active Hispanic ministry for the last several years. Ministry volunteers provide childcare for parents attending English classes at the Adult Learning Center on Mahr Avenue. First Church has been very gracious to host this ministry; church members have supported it in so many ways. They have given of their time and talents; they have provided snacks, toys and school supplies.

The English classes follow the local school system calendar. This year those English classes are tentatively scheduled for Monday and Thursday nights, beginning at 5:00 p.m. on September 14th. The children, preschool through about fourth grade, are dropped off at the CLC around 5:00 and picked up immediately after class. Volunteers do not need to speak Spanish; the children all speak English fluently. Generally, the schedule is the children come in and do their homework, there is a playtime, then a snack, more play, clean up, and they going home. Sometimes a video might be shown or the children might be taken for a walk.

The teacher of the English class is Mrs. Rachel Counce. She continually expresses her sincere gratitude for this important ministry. If you volunteer, you will find the parents to be just as grateful. They are well-mannered, hard working, people who are trying to make a better life for their families. If you find yourself called to devote your time or talent to this ministry, you may also find yourself truly blessed by the experience.

Persons who have volunteered on a regular basis for this ministry opportunity are Gayle Wright, Polly Marsh, Martha Jo Gibbs, Alecia Fischer, Beverly Duke, Anita Story and Judy Benson. If you are interested in participating, you can talk to any of them about it or you can call Terri at the church office. Persons can volunteer for any amount of time; every night, every other night, part of the night, or even just occasional nights.

Thank you First United Methodist for your service in the community. You are making a positive difference in so many lives in so many ways.

AN OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE

On Thursday, September 17th, there will be a meeting to organize a Pulaski District Volunteers in Mission (VIM) Team for local missions work. This district team is not intended to take the place of existing church VIM teams on projects such as homes and churches within the bounds of the Pulaski District. There are persons (lay and clergy) who have wanted to do VIM type work locally but have not been able to form their own teams. This will give them an opportunity to be a part of a team. The motto of VIM is "Christian Love in Action." We envision persons from many different churches within the district sharing their talents and resources in order to work together to reflect God's love to others.

We already have two projects tentatively scheduled. The first is making the district office accessible to those with disabilities (ramp and restaurant). The second is building a covered walkway and dividing a building into Sunday school rooms at one of our UMC churches. You do not have to be a skilled craftsman to be a part of the team. We need people with various 'talents' which could include running a shop vac and clean-up.

If you want to find out more, please join us at Antioch UMC in Leoma on Thursday, September 17, at 7:00 p.m. For directions or more information, contact Earl Davis (pastor of Antioch UMC) at 931-852-4658 or brotherearl@lorettotel.net.

WITH ONE ANOTHER

David Robertson
Freddie Mae Jackson

Oscar and Agnes McCarter
 Bill Evans
 Scottie McMackin
 T. J. Moore
 Norman Marston
 Jean Cone
 Scott Dean
 Brian Beller
 Robert White
 Flora Benson
 Aaron Kirby (serving in Iraq)
 Charlie Krieger (serving in Iraq)
 Rob Nelson & Family
 Jim Weatherford
 Bill King
 Tom Stillwell
 John Paley
 Donnie Kilburn
 David Bass
 Debbie McMahan
 John Cathey

NOTES OF THANKS

A special thanks to the Lawrenceburg Lions club for their recent donation of a commercial grade microwave oven for the kitchen in the CLC.

Thanks to you all for the huge number of items donated for the Loaves and Fishes ministry this past Sunday (5th Sunday). Your response to this need was very generous. In addition to canned baby formula and assorted food items, we received several boxes and bottles of detergent and dish detergent, shampoo and conditioner, toothbrushes, papers items such as toilet paper, napkins and paper towels. We also received packs of diapers, soap, and deodorant. Thank you for your support of this ministry which serves so many in our community.

The Church Office will be closed on Monday, Sept. 7, in observance of Labor Day.



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

Sunday, August 30, 2009
 8:15 a.m. Worship Attendance.....45
 Sunday school Attendance.....95
 10:30 a.m. Worship Attendance.....110

My Service: Sunday, Sept. 6, 2009
Acolytes: tba

Loaves and Fishes: Tues. & Thurs.
Tues. Sept. 8, Loulie Brown, Jean Grimsley, Anita Marston, & Jerry Gibbs
Thurs. Sept. 10, Joan Cochran, Belinda Wayne, Martha Jo & Jerry Gibbs

NEWSLETTERS

If anyone would like to receive their weekly newsletter by email, please call the church office, or contact Teresa Glover (who does the church website). Teresa's email is terrijogATyahooDOTcom, and she will be glad to put you on the newsletter by email list.

Send us an address if you would like for your college student to receive a newsletter.

LYDIA CIRCLE MEETING

The Lydia Circle will meet on **Monday, September 14th**, at 9:30 a.m. The program will be on Anglicanism.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

Children's Church begins on Sunday, September 13th! Don't forget to bring your quarters for our Quarter Jar, for the Nicaragua students.

