

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - SEPTEMBER 1, 2008

This past Monday we celebrated Labor Day. The purpose of this holiday, as I understand it, is to pay tribute to working men and women, and well we should. Work is important. In fact, meaningful work is one of the components in life that gives purpose to life. Thus work is important, and we ought to celebrate it.

The Christian faith is very much in support of meaningful work. In fact, in the New Testament we find Paul saying in one of his letters that those who do not work should not eat (See II Thessalonians 3:10). Paul, I think, was making reference to the way the early church was organized. The first Christians shared everything in common and made sure that all had enough to be sustained in life, and therefore Paul was saying that those who shared in the sustenance that the church provided ought to be willing to contribute to that sustenance with their labors. Therefore, if they were not willing to give their labor for the good of the church, they ought not to partake of the sustenance it was providing. Work was seen as an honorable thing and not to be shunned, and work was seen as a way of contributing to the ministry of the church as well as the kingdom of God.

Work is important in serving the church today. Each and every member has something valuable to offer to the church. Each and every member has something they can do that contributes to the ministry of the church. Again making reference to the Apostle Paul, we read in Ephesians that "gifts are given to the church such that some are to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors, and some teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ."

The work of the church is ministry, and each of us has something to contribute to that ministry. Let us remember this and celebrate it.

As we enter the fall of the year we enter into that time when we prepare for Charge Conference. A part of the preparation for Charge Conference is the nomination of a slate of officers by the Committee on Lay Leadership to be elected at Charge Conference. Those officers and committees so elected will then lead our church in the coming year 2009.

As we enter into this time in the life of our church, let me urge all of us to be sensitive to the fact that Holy Spirit has given each of us gifts that will enable us to contribute to the work of the church, that is, ministry and building up the body of Christ. Let me also encourage us to be in prayer about how and where in the church the Lord would have each of us to serve so that we each may properly use our gifts for the good of Christ's church and for the good of the kingdom of God.

And this is an honorable endeavor for us. We can all be grateful that God has called us into the work of ministry and building up the body of Christ. Nothing can be more honorable than working for the Lord in his church and in the kingdom, and as we give ourselves to ministry in the church, I think we will find that it brings meaning to our lives. Paul said in I Corinthians 15:58, "Therefore my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain." It is an honor to serve our Lord through the church, and we are rewarded with a sense of purpose that such work gives to our lives.

So as we celebrate Labor Day and think about the place work has in our lives, let us not forget to give thanks for the calling the Lord has placed upon each of us, that is, to be laborers in his vineyard. Just something for us to think about.

Until next time, Bro. Jim

SPEAKER FROM THE HENDERSON SETTLEMENT - SEPTEMBER 21ST

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.

CHRISTIANS CONNECT WILL MEET ON SEPTEMBER 14

Christians Connect will be hosted by the Friends in Fellowship this month and will meet in the Friends in Fellowship classroom. Everyone is invited and encouraged to stop by.

NEWS FROM THE HAPPY ELDERS

The Flower arranging class scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 6th, has been cancelled due to unexpected circumstances. A new date will be scheduled later this Fall.

The following dates are **open** for altar flowers:

September 14 and Sept. 28

November 9, 16, & 30

October 12 & 19

December 28

UMW NEWS/UPCOMING EVENTS

There will be a UMW Executive Committee meeting on Tuesday, **September 9**, at

4: 15 p.m.

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.

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 18th**, which will be at Waynesboro First UMC (9:00 a.m.). We will take the church van to this event.

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.

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) at *****(info in church office).

OVERFLOW WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

The Overflow Women's Fellowship will meet on Thursday, September 11, at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship hall. Rev. Alecia Fischer will be speaking.

FLOOD BUCKETS NEEDED ASAP

Supplies of flood buckets at Sager Brown are extremely low after flooding this year in the mid-west, Texas, and Florida. While Gustav did not create the devastation of Katrina or Rita, many small and medium sized communities have had significant flooding and wind/tornado damage. In addition, many more will likely be needed in the coming months.

When Sager Brown reopens by early next week, we will be preparing to send the conference disaster trailer loaded with flood buckets and other various UMCOR kits. We have room for a few more flood buckets if you can deliver them to Nashville by Monday. After Monday, we'll be receiving flood buckets to replace our own supply and begin preparing for another shipment. Kit Instructions:

<http://new.qbgm-umc.org/umcor/getconnected/supplies>

Alternately, you can Donate Online Now, \$55 for UMCOR to purchase supplies for one Flood Bucket: <http://secure.qbgm-umcor.org/donations/advance/donate.cfm>, code=90140&id=3018981 or send \$55 to your local church treasurer, marked #901440, Material Resource Ministry.

We collect kits all year and ship them as we have a full load. For normal drop off locations (Nashville, Cookeville, & Columbia) go to:

http://www.tnumc.org/Diaster_Response/UMCOR_KIT_Deliver_Mini_Depots

WITH ONE ANOTHER

David Robertson
Freddie Mae Jackson
Oscar and Agnes McCarter
Bill Evans

