

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Lawrenceburg, TN - SEPTEMBER 22, 2008

Once there was a family of mice who lived in a fairly large grand piano. Living in such a place music filled their home. Now the mice had no idea about the origination of the music. They just knew that it was. To them the music that filled their lives was simply the music made by the "Unseen Player."

One day one of the mice got brave and went exploring. The mouse climbed up and over, around and through, and came back to the family of mice with a great discovery. This mouse had found taut strings. There were long strings, short strings, and strings of varying lengths in between all pulled rather tightly, and this was the phenomenon that produced the music that filled their lives daily. And with this discovery the family of mice no longer understood their world in terms of the "Great Unseen Player," but rather they understood their world through the image of taut strings. And even though the mice now understood their world in a mechanical kind of way, the wonderful music that filled their world played on.

Well, with this experience of exploring their world more widely, the mice began to explore even more of their world, and one day one of the mice came back with another discovery. This mouse had seen hammers that would beat these taut strings, and with this discovery the mice no longer understood their world in terms of taut strings. They now understood their world in terms of hammers hitting strings. And even though this added to the mechanical understanding of their world, still the wonderful music and harmony that filled their world played on. It didn't stop.

While the mechanical understanding could explain the how, it still did not explain the ultimate questions of how the hammers came to beat, how the strings were invented, nor the inspiration for the great and wonderful music and harmony.

In a fairly recent edition of U. S. News and World Report I read three or four interrelated articles about human beings and life here in this universe. One article addressed the subject of human beings somehow adapting to the circumstances of the world in which they live, and in particular this article addressed the subject of human beings adapting to a culture in which much of our work involves what might be called "brain work." Another article addressed what we might find as exploration continues farther and farther out into space.

The thing that got my attention about these articles was how in each article the particular subject was always viewed through the lens of evolutionary theory. I think it would be correct to say that each article assumed evolution to be the one correct lens through which to view things. And yet in the article concerning the way humans seem to adapt to the circumstances around them at any given era in history, I couldn't help but ask the question, "Why does this subject have to be addressed from the standpoint of evolutionary theory as if there is no other explanation for human adaptability?" Really all the article was about was the capacity human beings have to adapt to new and different circumstances, and frankly, I couldn't figure out how adaptability proves evolution. It seemed to me that all that the instances cited in the article proved was that humans do adapt. It didn't prove that we necessarily evolve. We just adapt. I'm not sure adaptability and evolution are necessarily the same thing.

Sometimes I think we post-modern human beings, as we are now called, almost outsmart ourselves. We're kinda like the family of mice living in the piano. Every time we make a new discovery we think that explains our world, when it really doesn't. Each new discovery only takes us further into our world and explains a part of our world, just as was the case in the analogy with the family of mice. All the while the music, as it were, continues to play on. Just as the mice didn't find the true source of the music in the taut strings and the hammers, I'm not sure we can say we've found the source of the music in evolution.

Now I don't think that there is any question that there is evidence of an evolving process in our world. It seems to me that with empirical observation we see that. However, when we human beings have to explain everything in our world through the lens of evolutionary theory only (and here I mean Darwin's Theory of Evolution), we do ourselves an injustice. In a way we put ourselves in a box. We reduce everything to

one way of understanding. We limit our perception to what we can “put our hands on so to speak.” We ignore what may lie beyond.

And we do something else when we reduce our perceptions to an evolutionary lens only. We do what Paul talks about in the first chapter of Romans. We create an idolatry that shuts out God, and Paul says that such is the very essence of sin.

Now I realize that the proponents of scientific understanding and theory, and the proponents of evolutionary theory in particular, would say that we who are Christian are guilty of looking at things through only one lens, that being the lens of God as Creator. And in some segments of Christian faith, granted the “God as Creator” lens can be quite narrow, but I think it is time that science admitted that it too is often guilty of idolatry. When we come to the point when we have to view everything through the lens of evolutionary theory, then we are guilty of idolatry - a science idolatry.

The discoveries of science are great and wonderful. Science has enabled many things that make human life so much better than it otherwise would be, but when we get to the point as a human race of all understanding having to come through the lens of evolutionary theory, then science is guilty of sin too. It has created an idolatry. Just something to think about. Until next time, **Bro. Jim**

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.**

LAY LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE TO MEET SEPTEMBER 28

The Lay Leadership Committee will meet Sunday, September 28, at 4:00 p.m. Members of the Lay Leadership Committee are: Rev. Jim Gardner-Chairperson, Bonnie Thigpen, Mark Brewer, Beverly Philpot, DeAnna Saliba, Leslie Hunt, Keri McMahan, Linda Newton, Judy Benson, and Beth Benson.

STAFF-PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

The Staff-Parish Relations Committee will meet Monday, September 29, at 7:00 p.m. Members of the SPRC are: Chris Thigpen-Chairperson, Rick Lucas, Barbara Brewer, Virgil Crowder, Gayle Wright, Marc Lerner, Jansen Holt, Bobby Belew, Judy Brewer, Jerry Moore (Lay Leader) and Nancy Moore (Lay Member-AC).

OUTREACH MINISTRIES MEETING

The Outreach ministries committee will meet on Monday, September 29th, at 6:00 p.m. Members of the Outreach committee are: Jerry Gibbs-Chairperson, Sonny Duke, Beverly Duke, Martha Jo Gibbs, Harlon Griffin, Frances Griffin, Sid James, Carol James, Judy Benson, John Benson, Polly Marsh, Pam Shaffer and Jeff Shaffer.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH CHILDREN’S OUTING - SAT. OCT. 4TH, 2008

Sign up in the Church office to ride the Church van to Nashville, to see a Live Veggie Tales show. See Larry and Bob and all your favorite Veggie Tales characters live! \$12 secures your spot on the Church van. The bus only holds 14, so first come first serve. Children under the age of 10 must be accompanied by a parent. For more information, contact Alecia Fischer in the office.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE TO SPONSOR SWAMP JOHN’S - OCTOBER 5

The Outreach Committee is sponsoring a Swamp John’s Dinner on Sunday, October 5, from 11:30 - 1:30 p.m., in the CLC. The price for one ticket is \$10.00. The proceeds benefit the Nicaragua Education Scholarship Fund.

ADOPT - A - HIGHWAY

Please mark your calendars. The next scheduled Adopt - A - Highway is Saturday, October 25, beginning at 7:30 a.m. Everyone is invited and encouraged to participate in this highway clean-up.

AGE LEVEL MINISTRIES MEETING

There will be an Age Level Ministries meeting on **Wednesday, October 1, at 5:00 p.m.**

in the large classroom next to the church office. Members will be meeting to discuss the Safe Sanctuaries policy for Lawrenceburg-FUMC, as well as upcoming activities and opportunities for ministry. Members of the Age Level Ministries committee are: Judy Benson-Chairperson, Kathy Burns (Children), Keri McMahan (Youth), Leslie Hunt (Young Adult), Linda Ledbetter (Adult), Bruce & Barbara Edwards (Family), Harlon & Frances Griffin (Older Adult) and Jean Robertson (Older Adult).

DISASTER TEAM MEETING

The Disaster Team will meet on Tuesday, September 30, at 7:00 p.m.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH HAND BELLS

Children and Youth hand bells will resume on **Wednesday, October 1st**. Youth bells will meet at 5:00 p.m. and Children's bells will meet at 6:00 p.m.

A NIGHT IN BETHLEHEM

Please note the insert in this newsletter concerning "A Night in Bethlehem", a community outreach event scheduled for **December 6 & 7**. You may put your volunteer sheet into the offering plate or the church office. If you misplace your volunteer sheet the church office has more. Everyone's help is needed for this special event.

NEWS FROM THE HAPPY ELDERS

A "Flower Arranging Class" has been re-scheduled for Saturday, October 4th, from 9:30 until 11:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Our instructors will be members of the Flower Lovers Circle. If you can attend, please call Frances Griffin (****), Anita Johnston (****), or the church office (762-3696). Bring flowers to arrange, a container or bowl and a frog or material to anchor the flowers in your arrangement.

OPEN DATES FOR ALTAR FLOWERS

October 19

November 16

December 28

Happy Elders!!

Thank you, thank you, to all members who cooked and brought food to the CLC last Thursday. Carry out meals were then prepared and delivered to our shut-in friends. Following this, we enjoyed a nice social visit while consuming the delicious left over food. Memorable contacts were made, both with the delivery of the lunches and the phone calls made arranging them. Our next meeting and lunch is scheduled for Nov. 20th.
Frances & Harlon Griffin

MAKE PLANS TO JOIN US SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8!

8:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon

This year our UMW will not be having our traditional Fall Luncheon and Bazaar. Instead **Bake Sale, Breakfast and Beyond** describes our new fall event.

- **Bake Sale** - tables full of goodies including homemade breads, cakes, pies, cookies, candy, spiced tea and hot chocolate mix. The latest edition of the First United Methodist Church Cookbook will make its debut. Also, look for an assortment of jellies, jams, canned fruits and vegetables. Plenty of great gift choices!
- **Breakfast** - Sausage & biscuit, juice and coffee to be enjoyed while you shop.
- **Beyond** - Homemade lunch items such as pimento cheese, chicken salad, stew, chili, chicken & dumplings, and desserts conveniently available for carry out.

Prayerfully consider how you can plug in. Success depends on everyone's participation.

*****Please remember to bring pint and quart jars that can be used for carry-outs.**

WITH ONE ANOTHER

David Robertson
Freddie Mae Jackson
Oscar and Agnes McCarter

