

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Lawrenceburg, TN

SEPTEMBER 08, 2008

In an article that appeared in Guideposts Corrie Ten Boom talked about forgiveness. She told of being unable to forget a wrong that had been done to her. She had forgiven the person, but she just could not forget the wrong that had been done. It kept haunting her memory day and night, such that she couldn't sleep at night. In the midst of it all she asked God for help.

Her help came, and it came in the form of a Lutheran pastor. As Corrie was confessing to this kindly man the fact that she could not forget a wrong that had been done to her, he pointed out the window up to the bell tower of the church. He said, "Up in that church tower is a bell that is rung by pulling on a rope. But do you know what? After the sexton lets go of the rope the bell keeps on swinging. First ding, then dong. Slower and slower until there's a final dong, and it stops."

The pastor went on to say, "I believe the same is true of forgiveness. When we forgive, we take our hand off the rope, but if we've been tugging at our grievances for a long time, we shouldn't be surprised if the old angry thoughts keep coming for a while. They're just the ding dongs of the old bell slowing down."

After that there were a few more sleepless nights for Corrie Ten Boom, but gradually those old thoughts began to go away and sleep returned. The pastor was right. After we let go of the rope, there are a few more ding dongs, but they too soon pass.

I once had a person ask me, "Bro. Gardner, how **do you** forgive?" At first I was kinda taken aback by the question. I wanted to respond by saying, "You just do." I wish I had known this story at that time. Forgiveness is a matter of letting go of the rope. You've got to let go of the hurt and quit nursing it. The problem many of us sometimes encounter is that we don't want to let go of the hurt we feel.

Now there is no magic answer for letting go. Forgiveness is a matter at some point of sheer self-discipline. Because Jesus has told us that we are to forgive, and because Jesus is Lord of our lives, we forgive. We let go of the rope. We quit nursing the hurt.

But then the memory of the hurt doesn't go immediately away. In fact, I would suggest that the memory of old hurts and/or disappointments may never go away. I have told people from time to time who have asked me if one has really forgiven if they don't forget, "You can't just take your brain out of your head and erase a memory of a painful time as you would erase a chalk board." The memory is going to linger, but if we let go of the rope, as the Lutheran pastor told Corrie Ten Boom, the dinging eventually gets slower and slower until it quits. That is to say, if we truly let go of the hurt, we can expect the anger that comes with the memory of hurt to eventually begin to just fade away. We may never forget the incident, but the anger associated with it can cease to be a stimulus in our lives.

The key to it all, however, is first letting go of the rope. When it comes to forgiveness, there is no substitute for first letting go of the hurt and giving it to the Lord. And by that I mean that we allow the Lord Jesus to deal with that person and what they've done that may have been wrong. In the final analysis there simply is no substitute for letting go of the rope. Just something to think about.

Until next time, **Bro. Jim**

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.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

The Preschool/Kindergarten class is using the Rock Solid curriculum. The theme for Rock Solid is: Building a heart of faith! The Theme for September is: God creates the world. September's Bible Verses are: *Genesis 1:10 & Genesis 6:9*. The leaders of the preschool/kindergarten class are: Anita Story and Mary Alice Clayton.

The Elementary class is using the Live BIG Curriculum. The theme for September is: The Beginning of the Story. September BIG Idea is, "We believe the stories in Genesis help us understand God's plan for God's people. September's Bible verse is: *"The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it."* Psalm 24:1. The leaders of the elementary class are: Ben & Shelly Boston, Laura Stanfill and Carol Cheatwood.

The Youth class is using Linc. Linc is a curriculum that helps youth connect faith and life. Each week, Linc is emailed to the youth, and then they discuss the week's topic in Sunday school. Gayle Wright is the leader of the youth class.

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.

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.**

CHRISTMAS PACKAGE - OPRYLAND HOTEL RESORT - NOVEMBER 14-15, 2008

1. Opry Mills Mall/Ice Experience/Treasures for the Holidays/Dinner at the Water Slide Restaurant/Rockettes Christmas show/Lodging at the Opryland Hotel.
2. Leisure morning-Tour the Beautiful Hotel/Ride on Delta River Flatboat/General Jackson Holiday cruise/Cool

Price per Person:	Single (\$499)	Double (\$399)
	Triple (\$379)	Quad (\$359)

Package includes: Round-trip deluxe motor coach transportation, 1 nights lodging at Opryland Hotel, admission to Rockettes, Lunch and show cruise on General Jackson Showboat, Dinner buffet at Water Front restaurant, ICE! Treasures for the Holidays, one ride on Delta River Flatboat, and shopping at Cool Springs Mall. Taxes and gratuities on included meals, tour director, luggage handling. Not included: Gratuities for tour director and motor coach driver.

2 meals: 1 dinner, 1 lunch

Deposit deadline: \$100 per person; deposits must be received by September 20

Balance due: Must be paid not later than October 13.

Call Jean Robertson at **** or contact 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).

UMW NEWS

Often we ask you, our church family, to help out as our First United Methodist Women strive to support local missions like **I Am for Kids, Women's Shelter, and A Kid's**

Place. What a blessing that we are also connected to something bigger! Here is an excerpt from the UMW Conference Newsletter.

“For 2007, the Tennessee Conference United Methodist Women sent \$153,014.19 to Women’s Division for mission. This included designated gifts of \$17,342.25 for projects such as Red Bird Mission, UMCOR Disaster Relief, Sisterhood of Support, Africa University, and Elmira Sellu. Additionally, we made \$12,865.62 direct contributions to Tennessee projects. These projects included Miriam’s Promise, Sadie Tillman Scholarship, Bethlehem Center, Beersheba Springs and others. Tennessee United Methodist Women are truly putting their money where the PURPOSE is.

WHAT: UMW B, B, & B (bake sale, breakfast and beyond)

WHERE: FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH CLC

WHEN: SATURDAY NOVEMBER 8, 8:00 A.M. UNTIL 12:00 NOON

WHO: YOU, Please dust off your favorite recipes and bring items for the B, B, & B. Our committee members will be contacting you soon.

MAKE PLANS TO JOIN US SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8!

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.

NURTURE COMMITTEE NEWS

An effort has been made this fall to involve more people in providing meals to those experiencing a death in their family. Anyone touched in this way understands the blessing of having a meal served at home or in the Christian Life Center. Three food committees have been formed to be led by Carol James, Mary Ann Clayton and Linda Newton. It is our hope that each of you will take the opportunity to be a part of this special ministry when called upon. If you have any questions please contact the church office (762-3696).

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. Deadline to sign up for the fabulous trip is Monday, September 22, 2008. For more information, contact Alecia Fischer in the office.

WITH ONE ANOTHER

David Robertson
Freddie Mae Jackson
Oscar and Agnes McCarter

Bill Evans
Selene Crews
Edythe Edwards
Robert White
Elmer Hackney
Scottie McMackin
Ivene Hammond
Rev. Clifton Johnston
Ruby Lopp
Bill Marsh
T. J. Moore
David Shaw
Meredith Nordin
Elmer Cooke
Norman Marston

ATTENTION: HAPPY ELDERS

We are planning a Take-Out/Eat-In meal for our shut-ins on Thursday, September 18, 2008. We will meet in the CLC at 10:30 a.m. to assemble the take out meals.

We need cooks, servers and drivers. If you can help, please contact Frances or Harlon Griffin at ***** ..

FYI

Crayons have been provided for use with the children's bulletins that are printed to use in the Sunday morning worship services. The crayons and bulletins will be placed in baskets at each entrance of the sanctuary as well as the Rose Chapel. We hope our children will enjoy these. Please let our visitors know these are available. **Help us by returning the crayons to the baskets as you leave the sanctuary or chapel.** Thank you for your cooperation.

LAWRENCE COUNTY LAITY CLUB

The Lawrence Count Laity Club will meet at the St. John's United Methodist Church on Monday, September 15, at 6:30 p.m. A program of music will follow the meal.

**I Will Be Loyal
To The United Methodist Church And
Support It With: My Presence:
Sunday, September 7, 2008**

8:15 a.m. Worship Attendance.....47
Sunday school Attendance.....98
10:30 a.m. Worship Attendance.....126

My Service: Sunday, Sept. 14, 2008

Acolytes: tba

Nursery Helper: Kathy Johnstone

Loaves and Fishes: Tues. & Thurs.

Tues. Sept. 16: Linda Newton & Ray Price

Thurs. Sept. 18: Elmer Cooke & (volunteer needed)

OPEN DATES FOR ALTAR FLOWERS

October 12 & 19
November 16, & 30
December 28

JERRY THOMAS CLASS BREAKFAST

The Jerry Thomas class will have a breakfast on September 27, at 8:00 a.m. at the Taste of the Town Restaurant. All members & spouses and former members & spouses are invited to attend.

CARE GROUP TO MEET - SEPT. 15

The Care Group will meet for visitation on Monday, September 15th, at 5:30 p.m.

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