FAITH @ FOREST

August, 2015

Dear Friends,

This month I want to begin a series of articles clarifying and specifying what I want to accomplish, with your help and blessings, as your pastor. "Seeds of Change", will be our overall theme. There are four seeds I want us to plant and nurture. I have shared these seeds with the SPRC and the Church Council. It is now time to begin sharing with all of you.

So here goes. The first seed, "Make disciples of Jesus Christ, not the Bible". I'm in no way want to discount nor dismiss the writings in the Old Covenant. These writings help to inform us from whence we came. But we are people of the New Covenant and the teachings of Jesus the Christ have priority over our thinking and acting. In Matthew 5, Jesus begins to spell out some differences in the old and new covenant. At one time, says Jesus, "You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy," (Matthew 5:45 NRSV) was the standard for living a life of faith. Not anymore. Now, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? (Matthew 5:44-46 NRSV).

We are going to explore the terms and conditions of the new covenant as recorded in the gospels and in the other writings we call the New Testament. With every disciple Jesus called he said, "Follow me." He never said, "follow the rules, follow the books, follow the teachers. " No, he said, "Follow Me."

This will be the cornerstone teaching our journey of faith. It will not always be easy and I cannot pretend that it will be. But I dare to believe that the grace of God will always be more than sufficient to empower us to continue the journey.

I've often wondered if a part of the reason for our overall decline in Christendom is due in a large part to the fact that we have been engaged with the word made text than with the Word made flesh.

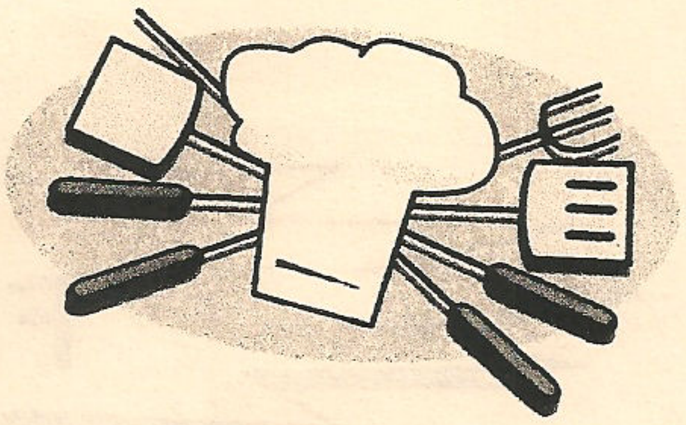
Jesus once addressed the religious leaders of his day, and perhaps we need to overhear this conversation," You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life and it is they that testify on my behalf. Yet you refuse to come to me to have life." (John 5:39-40 NRSV)

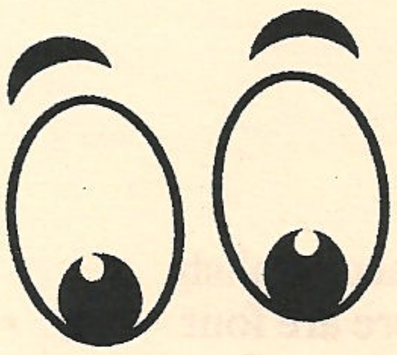
I want to continue the conversation about this first seed next month because I believe it is imperative that we know why following Jesus is truly a matter of life.
And we need to know why he can make that claim on our lives.

Grace,

Harrell

Room in the Inn – The House Church is taking the lead in hosting Room in the Inn for August. You are invited to come for supper and visit with our guests. The gentlemen always enjoy seeing families and talking to members. **We are looking for 2-3 people to host September's dinner and 1-2 people to host Breakfast.** Please see Brian Martin if you are willing.





WOW! Did you see those beautiful hats knitted by The Ladies of the Yarn? Over 50 hand knitted hats were presented to the Kirkland Cancer Center. The hats are designed to beautiful and soft and help bolster a woman's self-confidence during a difficult time in her life. Over 60 prayer squares were also prepared for the ICU bags and several prayer shawls were also made. Would you like to learn to knit (or crochet for those who think two needles are too difficult ☺)? Evelyn Sutton is a very patient teacher. We have two knitting circles that meet on Wednesday – 10 AM and 5 PM. (note: the circles are taking August off – will meet again in September.)

The Ladies of the Yarn have received several thank you notes from people who have received a prayer shall, prayer square, or a hat. We recently received a call from a woman in Philadelphia who had seen the ICU bags and prayer squares while visiting at JMCGH. She was so touched by that ministry that she wanted to start a similar ministry in her community. Another card came from a man who received a prayer square. Upon receiving it he ran up to the surgery holding area and gave it to his wife who was awaiting surgery.

IT'S BACK – Out sound system and recorder for the sanctuary has been repaired. We are once again in the business of making CDs of our Sunday morning worship service. Would you like to receive a CD of the worship service? Just call the church office (668-5209) and let Miss Betty know the frequency you want to receive them – weekly, monthly, or only special occasions. A BIG thank you to Richard Hudson for manning the controls & making the copies. He is the driving force behind this project.

WELCOME, WELCOME, WELCOME – to our newest church members. Julie Billings joined our church by transfer of membership. Her infant son, Foster Leroy Billings III (Chip) was baptized last Sunday. They were joined by a large family to help celebrate this occasion.

Note: Mr. Mingledorff came and checked our system. Only minor adjustments were needed. Cost: $40. It is noted that our system is old and will need to be replaced at some point.

Church Security – All doors will be locked after the worship service has started with the exception of the front door (facing Forest). Signs will be placed on the canopy door and Wyatt Hall doors directing people to enter through the front door. In the past the canopy door was left unlocked requiring Bill Simpson to have to sit in the hall to monitor the doors.

Chairs for Fellowship Hall – Linda Montgomery requested that we look at purchasing new chairs for the fellowship hall. Our current chairs are very uncomfortable. If needed each person can purchase 1 or 2 chairs. Ernie Wilson to check out different styles and prices and report back to the council.

Bible Study – Beverlyann Jetton asked about the Beth Moore Bible Study that was planned for this fall (originally scheduled for spring/summer but postponed). Rev Nation said he would rather have a different Bible study. He is currently working on a plan to do a Bible Study on Wednesday evening, possible with a meal. We could also have a lunch Bible study.

Salt and Light Banquet – The church council voted to have the church pay the remaining portion of 1 table that the Wesley class could not pay. **Salt and Light Banquet is on Thursday, August 20th.**

Church Council meetings – Rev Nation suggested that we have quarterly Church Council meetings rather than monthly. We can always have called meetings if urgent business comes up. This was approved. **Our next regularly scheduled meeting would be in October.**

Rev. Nation indicated that he see the need for 4 seeds for growth or change:

1. We need to make disciples for Jesus Christ and not just teach the Bible
2. Everything needs to be built around the Sunday morning worship service.
3. Prayer is essential. Remember when Jacob wrestled with the angel? He said "I will not let you go until you bless me" We should have that urgency in our prayer life. Prayer should be a natural conservation with our Lord.
4. We need a clear purpose. If you don't know where you are going then it does not matter which direction you take.

Please make these additions to your church directory. If you need the new directory, please see Miss Betty.

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There is A LOT happening in August because Aug 20th is also Yada night. The guest speaker is Bishop James Swanson. Bishop Swanson is often described as one of the MOST POPULAR pastors, but don't let the title Bishop trip you up. It's true that he is one of the most sought after speakers among adults and youth alike. This will be his 3rd appearance here at Yada – and the dance just might break out if you know what I mean. When he "gets wound up," some spiritual things "comes undone." God has gifted him with a wonderful teaching gift that will keep you hanging on every word. It's going to be one of those "crazy good in the Lord" kind of nights. Ink in the night and wear your comfy shoes. Just saying...! Yada is held at The Northside UMC. Doors open at 6PM. Bring a dish and bring a friend. (See T.J. or Beverlyann if you want to join us – we will save you a seat)

Forest Heights United Methodist Church
Church Council, July 14, 2015

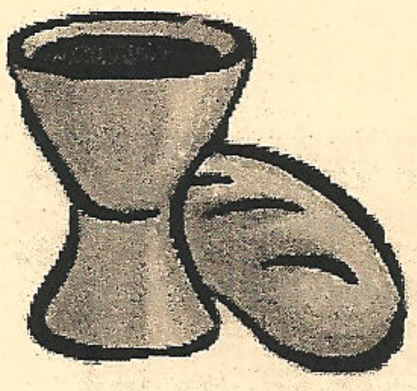
New Business:

Pre-School – Laura Winbush reports that the gym floor coverings have become a safety issue. The edges are curling causing the children to trip. (This was also an issue in November at The Market). She requests permission to remove the protective covering and allow the children to play on the gym floor. The riding and rolling toys will be inspected to be sure there are no rough edges that could scratch the floor. Most children wear soft sole shoes that would not damage the floor. Our last floor held up under normal play for 13 years. With proper maintenance this floor may last even longer. The pre-school is willing to pay for the maintenance to keep the floor in good condition. **After a brief discussion a unanimous vote was cast allowing the covering to be removed.** Laura Winbush will arrange for its removal and storage.

Laura Winbush requests permission to replace the five exterior doors in the B hall. The current doors are > 35 yrs old and are very weathered. Replacement doors will cost about $1,500 each (installed). The Pre School will cover the cost of the replacement. The doors would be replaced as funds are available with projected completion in 12-18 months. The door lock on the exterior door, Hall C (Wesley Class hall) also needs to be replaced. Laura will have that examined and replaced.
Unanimous approval for Pre-School to replace doors.

Lay Leader - Paul Finney has agreed to serve as the Lay Leader until the end of 20125 (to fill Olive Ann's position). **Unanimous approval.**

Sanctuary Sound Equipment- We are once again having difficulty with the sound/recording equipment in the sanctuary. A request was made and approved to have Mike Mingledorff check the equipment. The speakers in the vestibule also need to be checked.

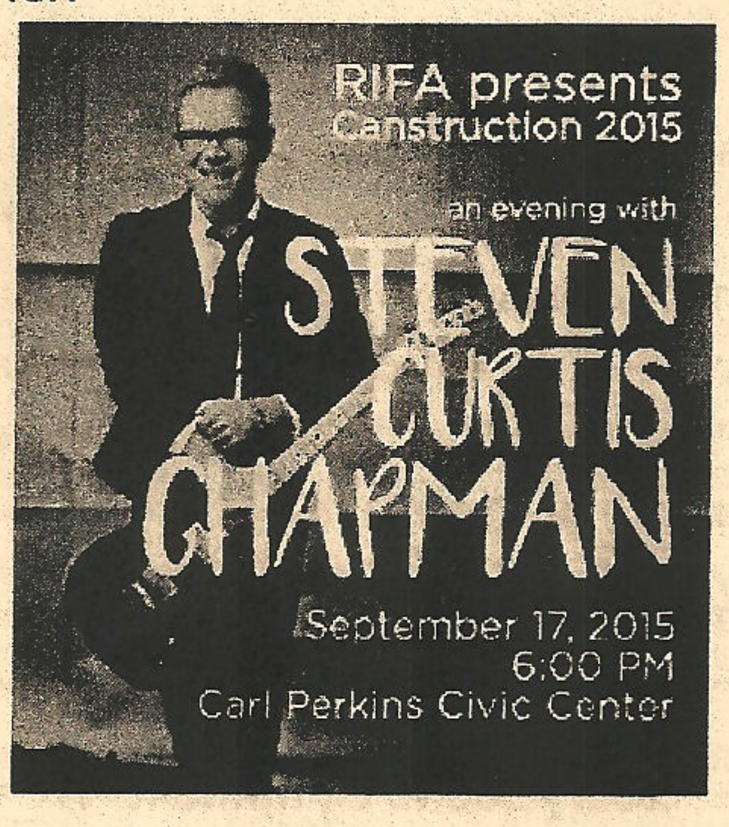


Homebound Communion is scheduled for Monday, August 3rd. If you would like to be added to our communion list, please call the church office. Last month we served 12 members communion. I never know who is blessed more – the receivers or the servants. Thank you Joyce Lewis and Miss Betty for coordinating this event.

Our Children's Dept. is GROWING (in fact 300%). In addition to Sarah, Edy & Paisley, we welcome Jeremiah, Deasia, C.J. and Marques to our primary dept. and Leah and LaChrista to our Jr/Sr high class. The primary department has been studying the super heroes of the Old Testament. We saw the children ride stick ponies (err donkeys) when they studied Baalam and his talking donkey, and dine on edible baskets when they studied about baby Moses. I saw a 3 ft. fish leave the Cande's and Cheryl's class (talk about being fishers of men!). The kids are having a great time as they learn.

Pictures Needed – I would like to do a special display on our Welcome Table for Veteran's Day (November). If you served in the Armed Service please give Beverlyann a picture of yourself in uniform. I know we have several months but you may have to dig deep to find one.

You don't want to miss the Salt and Light Banquet, August 20th at the Carl Perkins Civic Center. This year's banquet will feature Dr. Logan Hampton, president of Lane College and Dr. Samuel "Dub" Oliver, president of Union University. This is Area Relief Ministry's largest fund raiser. This event makes possible all the services offered by ARM – emergency shelter, case management, transitional employment and Hub Clubs (an after school program). For tickets, please see Harold Montgomery or Frank Bratcher.

Here is another event you won't want to miss - Sept 17th Steven Curtis Chapman is coming to the Civic Center.

Steven is one of the most prolific singer/song writers of the time. He has released over 20 albums and has received 5 Granny awards and 58 Dove Awards. DON'T MISS THIS EVENT! Tickets can be purchased on line at *RifaJackson.org* for $27.24. If we purchase as a group (10 or more) tickets are $22. See Miss Betty if you want to be part of the group tickets. Balcony seating (for concert) opens at 7 PM.