

FOREST FIRE

The Monthly Newsletter of Forest Heights United Methodist Church
863 West Forest Ave., Jackson, TN 38301

September 2024

A Word From Pastor Drew

Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words. And God, who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. (Romans 8:26-27)

Have you ever tried to pray, and found it difficult? Were the words hard to come by? Or have you ever been asked to pray in public, and panicked, saying, “I can’t do that?” If you have had that experience, and most of us have, then we are amazed when we hear someone stand up in public and deliver a beautiful, eloquent, lengthy prayer.

I heard about a man down in Texas who was a “professional pray-er.” For a fee he will come to your convention, meeting, or club, and give an invocation. His pious eloquence has made him famous and earned him a fine living. He pleases his audience. Sometimes, they give him an ovation after his invocations. But something does not seem right about that. Can we really call that prayer?

Years ago, in Boston an article appeared in the newspaper which read, “Rev. Parker prayed the finest prayer ever delivered to a Boston audience.” There is something wrong with that too.

I do not know much about prayer, but I do know this: Prayer is supposed to be addressed to God. There is that famous story about Bill Moyers when he worked in the White House for Lyndon Johnson. The President asked Moyers to pray before a meeting, which Moyers did. Johnson interrupted him, saying, “Speak louder, Bill. I can’t hear you.” Moyers replied, “With all due respect Mr. President, the prayer is addressed to God, not to you.”

It may be possible to make your prayer beautiful, polished, and eloquent, if you prepare it for an audience. But prayer should be addressed to God, in which case you may be speechless. To lay ourselves open completely before God can often leave us grasping for words. Speaking to the Almighty God can be a terrifying prospect. Annie Dillard suggests that if churchgoers really considered whose presence they were invoking in worship on Sunday morning, if they really expected God to show up, they would hand out crash helmets at the door when they came in.

Just pray. God knows what you need long before you ask. And if you can’t find the words, remember, the Holy Spirit will intercede for you, “with sighs too deep for words.” -Drew

Thank You-Dear friends in Christ, you are long overdue a THANK YOU from Carroll and me for the wonderful meals you have brought during Carroll’s continuing bout with a broken neck. Your visits with Carroll lift her spirits every time. We thought we would be writing this many months ago but each time Carroll has a CT Scan, she is told the vertebrae are not healing (she is diabetic and has osteoporosis) and to continue wearing the neck brace 24/7. She has begun her sixth month in this brace and has two more months to go before the next scan. Your love and prayers, food, and social visits have humbled us. We are truly appreciative of every kindness as we continue in this slow healing process. May God generously bless you for so generously blessing us! Lots of love, Carroll and Russell Gallimore



Serving Each Other and Our Community

Fifth Sunday Fellowship is September 29 at 6:00 p.m. We will have a Friends of Old Time Music Concert under the pavilion. Join us for an evening of music, lemonade, cookies, and fellowship! Bring your lawn chairs and be ready for some toe-tapping music!

Chancel Choir Notes



We are beginning rehearsals of our Christmas cantata and invite you to join us. The cantata will be presented on Sunday, December 22nd at 3:00 p.m. If you would like to sing with us, join us on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 p.m. in the choir room. Cantata music will be rehearsed prior to rehearsal of music for the weekly service. See Elaine Jones for further information.

New Members

We welcome Kevin and Susan Wheatley to our congregation membership. They are already sharing their gifts through the Chancel and Handbell Choirs. The following information can be added to your directories: 198 Seavers Rd., Jackson, TN 38301 731-431-6945 knsheat@eplus.net

Wednesday Bible Study is examining the Gospel of Luke at 10:00 a.m. Join us upstairs in the resource room whenever you are able.

Project 20/20 Forest Heights took almost 100 pairs of eyeglasses to Emanuel UMC in Memphis. Emanuel serves as the collection hub for Project 20/20. The eyeglasses came from our members and from other United Methodist churches in Madison County.



United Women in Faith met Thursday, August 15th with 14 members attending. Pam Finney and Marcia Tate provided delicious refreshments. Jean Ralston presented an inspiring devotion. Pam Finney was the prize winner in our “What do you have in your purse?” game. Her prize was an assortment of more items to carry in her purse! Members brought items or donations for the RIFA backpack program for school children. 85 pounds of food items and \$50 cash were collected. Thanks to Margaret Harrison and Gayle Crocker for taking the donations to RIFA.

During the business portion of the meeting, Jean Ralston agreed to chair the Candle Burning Committee with the help of Sue Wyatt and Elaine Ervin. The UWF Candle Burning Service will be held on Laity Sunday, October 27, 2024. UWF will serve as hosts for the reception that will be held after the Chancel Choir’s Christmas Cantata on Sunday afternoon, December 22. If you have not visited a United Women in Faith meeting yet, we would love to have you at our next meeting which is Thursday, September 19th at 3 p.m. in the church fellowship hall. Beverly Ann Jetton will have the devotion while Kitty Hawkins and Marilyn Kemp-Pennel will provide refreshments.



Winter Coat Collection-It may be 92 degrees outside with a heat index of 105 but winter is coming. Ms. Mavis Johnson served as the principal for many years at Lincoln Elementary. We have many other members who have taught or worked with children at that local school. They can tell you of the heartbreak of seeing children come to school without a winter coat. During September and October, we will be collecting children's coats, scarves, and gloves to donate to local schools. Items do not have to be new but should be clean and in good repair. Please talk to Ms. Mavis if you have questions. The collection box will be located near the pastor’s office.

Room at the Table We will be serving meals at the Studio 45 Suites on Monday, September 23, and again on October 14. Please see the sign-up sheet on the communications table by the church office. Thank you to the many people who have signed up to provide food items or to serve. Many hands make for light work.

Friendship

This month's Friendship article will be a little different. This month you get to play the detective in a real-life "Who Dunit" mystery. Put the clues together and see if you can identify this mystery member. The first person who calls the church office with the correct name will win a FREE one-year subscription to the Forest Fire! (Teasing here)



The old Allman Brothers song "I was Born to be a Rambling Man," just might describe my life. I was born in Chicopee Falls, Massachusetts to parents from Detroit and Baltimore. For a long time, I told people I was from Boston because I could not spell Chicopee – or Massachusetts. You could describe my parents as migratory workers. I had a wonderful childhood and visited many exciting and interesting places. Wanderlust never left my blood, and I continued traveling in my adult life. My chosen career in healthcare morphed into teaching and more recently into the legal field. I had the opportunity to work with three Christian attorneys. God gave me a wonderful spouse – just the person I needed. Together we continued to travel as we raised four children. Our tribe now counts one daughter, three sons, two daughters-in-law, one son-in-law, and fourteen grands.

As a young child, I learned of Jesus' love for me. I was baptized at the age of eight (while living in Alaska) but it was not until my late teens that I began to realize what God's call more fully on my life really meant. That journey continues to this day. It has not always been easy – life lessons never are. In looking back over my life, I can see the hand of God leading me through those valleys.

My prayer is that as I pass through this life I will have (and take) the opportunity to touch people's lives and share with them the love of Jesus Christ. The Bible verse I struggle with the most is Psalm 46:10: "Be still and know that I am God." Eight simple words – but the life lessons are so deep. Knowing God takes on a new dimension with each struggle and journey. Being still is always a challenge for me. It is in being still that I learn to know God.

FRIENDSHIPfrom one to another....be blessed

Adult Sunday School – The Sojourners Sunday School class invites you to join them on September 1st as they begin their new quarterly study. The new title is Claiming Identity written by Rev. Dan Dick. The Sojourners meet from 9:30 until 10:15 in the Resource Room on the second floor of the main building.

The Sojourners Sunday School met for fellowship and shared a potluck meal at the home of Paul and Janette Chaplin on Saturday evening, August 17th. Fifteen members of the class were present. It was a wonderful evening of food and fellowship.





The Walk to Emmaus is a 3-day spiritual retreat helping Christians find a deeper relationship with God and equipping active church members for Christian action in their homes, churches, workplaces, and communities. The West TN Emmaus community (a division of The Upper Room) offers a retreat twice a year – in the spring and fall. The fall retreat will be held at Lakeshore on October 3-6 (men’s retreat) and October 17-20 (women’s retreat). If you are interested in attending this retreat, please see Marcia Tate or the pastor. Our church has been hosting the Emmaus planning committee on Saturdays as they prepare for this life-changing event.

Laity Sunday FHUMC will be celebrating Laity Sunday, October 27th. Methodism has a long history celebrating and recognizing the ministry of the laity. In the early days of American Methodism, the laity served and maintained congregations between visits of the circuit riders. Archives suggest the earliest plans for a Laity Sunday began in 1928. The first recorded observance of “Laymen’s Day” was in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South in 1929. Laity Sunday is a time to recognize the work and mission of all laity, not only within the walls of the church but in everyday lives. It is a special Sunday defined by General Conference “to celebrate the ministry of all Christians” (The Book of Discipline – 2016.) Traditionally observed on the third Sunday in October, Laity Sunday is one way we express the deep conviction that all are called to participate in God’s mission and live this calling through the ministry of the church. If you are interested in participating in Laity Sunday or helping to plan the service, please contact Susan Montgomery. The United Women of Faith group will be conducting a candle burning ceremony as part of this Laity service. This ceremony is an opportunity to share in giving to missions while honoring a loved one. Additional information on this ceremony as well as Laity Sunday will be shared in the October newsletter.



Shoebboxes are in transit- Our shoebboxes were successfully loaded on a trailer and transported to Decatur, Alabama to begin their international trip. A hearty thanks to everyone who helped with this project. Forest Heights prepared over 100 boxes and provided a collection point for other West Tennessee churches. All total we sent 971 shoebboxes! YAHOOO!

Mission/Outreach Opportunities: To help you plan your mission giving the following activities are planned: Room at the Table Sept. 23 and Oct. 14, Room at the Inn begins in Nov., and our annual Reelfoot Christmas Toy Store collection will begin in November.

Want to change your worship experience at church?

- **Pray before you get there. Ask God to speak to you.**
- **Listen to worship music on the way.**
- **Take a Bible with you.**
- **Sing loudly and focus on God.**
- **Don't run late.**
- **Take notes.**
- **Expect God to move.**



Happy Birthday in September to:

1	Julia Howell
3	Bill Wyatt
16	Carol Bryant
26	Richard Hudson

No Anniversaries this month

Calendar for September 2024 and beyond

September 1 New study begins in Sojourners Sunday School Class 9:30 a.m.

September 19 Thursday -United Women of Faith meeting in Fellowship Hall 3:00 p.m.

September 23 Monday -Room at the Table

September 29 Fifth Sunday Fellowship 6:00 p.m.

October Emmaus Walks: 3-6 Men, 17-20 Women

October 14 Monday-Room at the Table

October 20 Church Council Meeting in Fellowship Hall- 12:00 p.m.

October 27 Laity Sunday service- 11:00 a.m.

November 28 Thanksgiving

December 22 Sunday-Christmas Cantata 3:00 p.m.

December 25 Wednesday-Christmas Day!