

# FOREST FIRE

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

September 2025

## A Word from Pastor Drew

### Luke 17:5-6

The Mustard Seed parable from Luke 17 is a favorite of so many. I am old enough to remember “mustard seed necklaces”, little glass ball with a tiny mustard seed in them. That was JC Penny’s idea, by the way. He distributed them. As I recall, you could write to him, not to the corporation, but to him personally, and he would send you one. JC Penney was an active churchman. He practiced tithing in his personal life. He believed that tithing was the reason for his success in business. It is just a fact I remind you of as we approach our charge conference this fall. Giving a tithe of your income is an act of faith. It may not be much, but it is an act of faith. Jesus said, “If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, be uprooted, and it will obey you!”

In the gospel of Luke, this parable is preceded by the disciples asking Jesus, “*Lord, increase our faith!*” In this context, the disciples have just returned from trying to be disciples. Jesus has sent them out to spread the gospel. They have gone out into the world to try to help people, and they have failed. They were sent out to conquer the world, and they came back having fallen on their faces. So, naturally, they assume something is wrong. And their diagnosis is: *maybe we don’t have enough faith*. That’s why they asked Jesus, “*Increase our faith.*”

The assumption they make was a common one. It is still common today. Their assumption is that faith is a *quantitative* thing, something you can store up, something you can measure or accumulate, so that the more you have, the more you can do. But Jesus seems to totally confound that assumption. Jesus says that if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, (which, in those days was believed to be the smallest seed there is) then you can move mountains, and you can uproot mulberry trees. You don’t need a lot of faith, because faith is not a thing. Faith is a gift. So, use it! Sometimes I confess, I get so discouraged by Christians who live pessimistic and fearful lives. I want to yell, “Where is your faith? Have you forgotten that God is trustworthy?”

It is in that same understanding of faith, that Jesus says to the disciples, “*God is still doing these wonderful things in this world. You can order this Mulberry tree to be uprooting, and to be planted in the sea, and it will obey you, if only you had faith the size of a mustard seed.*” That’s the message. The problem is not that you don’t have enough faith. The problem is you aren’t using what you have!

Drew



## *Friendship ..... Linda & Mike Poole*

We feel so Blessed & happy to call FHUMC our new church home! We truly feel God's love, grace, and spirit here.

When T.J. asked me to "write about myself" so our church family "will get to know you better," I didn't realize it would be so "thought provoking." Trying to include just the highlights of our family. But realizing my faith journey is really the reason I'm here.

I was born in Jackson, TN in the "infamous" Westover Gardens, but moved to Jacksonville, FL when I was 5. I grew up with sand in my shoes, and going to the beach a lot. When I was in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade we moved back here and I became a country girl, living out on the Bells Hwy. We attended Poplar Corner Baptist Church, and a Union University Theology student was often our pastor. "We" is my mom, Iris Marcom, and my brother, Johnny Marcom, married to Valeta Johnsey Marcom. (They are members here), My Dad did not ever attend church with us. I tell this with honesty, as I do believe it is important to my faith journey.

I went to Pope school and graduated from North Side. I attended Jackson State, Lambuth, and Union's nursing school (twice), but never received my paper certificate!

My husband Mike and I will celebrate our 31<sup>st</sup> anniversary this coming Thanksgiving Eve. We are a little like the TV "Brady Bunch" with 5 children between us. My 3, son Chase and 2 older daughters, Cyra and Leslie Rice, and Mike's son Matthew and daughter Lauren. Those were very busy years with 3 in high school and then 3 in college at the same time. But kids grow up and move on, and today our 7 precious grandchildren live from Chicago to Atlanta, in Nashville and Memphis. We keep the roads pretty busy doing what we love most, visiting these Grans. Have I told you I have driven to Chicago 57 times?

I was on Emmaus Walk #12 and it truly was the most spiritual gift I have ever received. Mike went on Emmaus Walk #25 the week after our first date, so we have always felt a special bond with God's timing.

I love gardening, flowers, all creatures great and small, art and drawing. I am a bird nerd, I even journal our birds. We have a Koi fish pond and I have been tracking and videoing our resident turtles to send to our grands.

But our son Chase keeps me the busiest and us on our toes. If you have seen Chase you may have been curious about him. He has Down Syndrome. He is pretty much non-verbal now, and uses a communication device. He also has a very Big Heart. Like his sister, Lezlie wrote when she went on the Chrysalis Walk, "Chase loves everyone, just like Jesus, he loves unconditionally!"

We ended up at FHUMC partly because of Chase. He attends a special class at another church and we needed an 11:00 a.m. service. God's timing, not ours. My heart is thankful we are here, the music always lifts my spirits, and makes me sway, or rock, or tap my foot. I often feel God's embrace through the music. Taking me back to our "Ole Time Reunions" and Religion on the Bells Hwy.

Drew's sermons just speak to me, and I often tear up with the gratitude feels for being here. I grew up Baptist, but have been in the Methodist Church for over 50 years now. My sister-in-law, Valeta, first invited me to come visit and hear Drew preach. Now I want everyone to hear these touching stories and sermons at FHUMC.

God's timing is amazing. Blessed to be worshipping with you All, and making new friends.

## *Friendship, from one to the other ..... Be blessed*

## Nurture Area News

**Freezer Blessings meals** are currently limited because of a temporary freezer problem requiring us to empty the freezer. We do have Potato Soup and Frozen Cherry Salads available along with a few other items. We will be restocking as soon as possible.

**Fall Bible Study:** Brother Drew will be starting Fall Bible Study sessions starting on September 17<sup>th</sup> and continuing through November 5<sup>th</sup>. The study will be on Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. in the Resource Room. The book God's Relentless Love a Study of Hosea by Sharla Fritz will be used for the study. It is available from Amazon for \$15.28

## United Women in Faith

Thank you to everyone who supported our casserole sale to benefit the Reelfoot Rural Ministries Teen Room. It was a huge success and we are excited about the possibilities we now have to support that ministry.

On Thursday, August 21, fifteen women attended our "Dinner Out" at Brooksie's Barn. We had a wonderful time relaxing and enjoying each other's company. We hope to make this an annual event!

Our next meeting will be held Thursday, September 18<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. in the church fellowship hall. Diane Sanford will present the devotional and Susan Montgomery will provide refreshments.

The TCRS United Women in Faith Annual Meeting will be held, Saturday September 27 in Nashville. Registration begins at 9:00 and the cost is \$15 which covers lunch. If you would like to attend Susan Montgomery has the registration forms which are due by September 15<sup>th</sup>. At this time Susan and Beverly Ann plan to attend and would love to have others join them!

## Outreach / Missions

**Room at the Table:** Our next service date will be on Tuesday, September 16<sup>th</sup>. Please plan on joining us as we reach out to others in the name of Christ. Service opportunities include: Cooking (12 noon), setting up and serving (4 PM – 6 PM), clean up (6 PM – 7:30 PM), leading a devotional (5 PM), RIFA is now providing a large portion of the food we serve but we still have items that you can provide. Please see the sign-up list on the Communication Table by the church office.

**School Supplies:** If cooking or serving meals is not your cup of tea, consider bringing school supplies for Ms. Amy's closet. In September we are filling her classroom with much needed items. Her wish list includes:

- Notebook paper – lots and lots of notebook paper!!!
- Highlighters
- Expo markers & erasers
- Pocket folders
- Index cards



**A HUGE Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Christmas Shoebox Project** – from shoppers, to packers, to truck drivers – ya'all done good!!! Together (with the other churches in West TN and Western KY) we shipped 1,014 boxes.

## Thank you – From our Preschool

Dear FHUMC,

We are truly grateful for your generous gift. Your thoughtfulness and support mean so much to our preschool community. Your contribution will help us continue providing meaningful experiences, nurturing growth, learning, and love in every child's day. Thank you for thinking of us and your kindness!

Nicole & Julie

(Editor's note: the honorarium from the Minnesota Luther League we hosted in July was split by decision of the Church Council between our preschool and the United Women in Faith to support the Reelfoot Rural Ministry's Christmas Toy Store Teen Room)

## **Preschool Steering Committee**

The Preschool Steering Committee (with the approval of the Church Council) is asking church members to donate money in September to the Preschool for school supplies. There will be a "Treasure Box" in the foyer for anyone who wishes to donate. Or checks can be written to Forest Heights with "for Preschool" on the memo line.

## **JOIN THE READ TEAM!**

Since 2014, our community has paired volunteer coaches with second grade students in five (now six) elementary schools to improve sight word recognition. From the very beginning, the Read Team has encouraged members of our area churches to be involved with this program to reach the children of our city. We know that children who read on grade level are much more likely to be successful in school and in their daily lives. Coaches agree to volunteer one hour per week to coach two students, one at a time for 30 minutes each. Sight words are learned through word lists, games, and books. You don't need to be an educator to do this. You just need to care about children and be willing to consistently show up, one day a week.

Forest Heights UMC has provided volunteer coaches since the early days of the program, including both lay members and ministers. The Read Team is in need again of new volunteer coaches. To sign up to coach, go to [www.uwwt.org/thereadteam](http://www.uwwt.org/thereadteam), click on "Become A Reading Coach", and complete the form. You will be contacted by email regarding training. Marianne Archer is one of the head coaches at Lincoln Elementary, and she would love to have you join the coaches at Lincoln. She would also be happy to talk to anyone who would like more information about the program. You can reach Marianne at 731-935-9696. Please consider this opportunity for mission in our community.

# *Happy Birthday & Anniversary*

## September Birthdays

3 Bill Wyatt  
 7 Mike Poole  
 15 Rev. John Archer Sr.  
 16 Carol Bryant  
 17 Richard Gulledge  
 24 Roy Morgan Jr.  
 26 Richard Hudson  
 29 Greg Clanin

## September Anniversaries

20 Brenda & Richard Gulledge

## Calendar for September 2025 - find the **Weekly Calendar** under the "Events" tab on [fhumc.com](http://fhumc.com)

September 1	<b>Church Office Closed: Labor Day Holiday</b>		
September 2	6:30 p.m.	Gymnasium	Wheatley Team
September 3	11:00 a.m.	Choir Room	Tapestry Practice
	12:15 p.m.	Fellowship Hall	Ladies of the Yarn
	4:30 p.m.	Rm 204A	Handbell Practice
	5:30 p.m.	Choir Room	Choir Practice
September 7	9:15 a.m.	Fellowship Hall	Fellowship Time
	9:30 a.m.		Adult & Youth Sunday School
	11:00 a.m.	Sanctuary	Worship Service
September 8	10:00 a.m.	Fellowship Hall	Worship Committee
September 9	6:00 p.m.	Gym	Wheatley Team
September 10	11:00 a.m.	Choir Room	Tapestry Practice
	12:15 p.m.	Fellowship Hall	Ladies of the Yarn
	4:30 p.m.	Rm 204A	Handbell Practice
	5:30 p.m.	Choir Room	Choir Practice
September 14	9:15 a.m.	Fellowship Hall	Fellowship Time
	9:30 a.m.		Adult & Youth Sunday School
	11:00 a.m.	Sanctuary	Worship Service
September 16	12:00 p.m.	Kitchen	Cooking Rm @ the Table
	4:00 p.m.	Studio 54	Room @ the Table
	6:00 p.m.	Gym	Wheatley Team
September 17	10:00 a.m.	Resource Room	Fall Bible Study - Hosea
	11:00 a.m.	Choir Room	Tapestry Practice
	12:15 p.m.	Fellowship Hall	Ladies of the Yarn
	4:30 p.m.	Rm 204A	Handbell Practice
September 18	5:30 p.m.	Choir Room	Choir Practice
	3:00 p.m.	Fellowship Hall	United Women in Faith

## **Calendar September (cont)**

September 21	9:15 a.m.	Fellowship Hall	Fellowship Time
	9:30 a.m.		Adult & Youth Sunday School
	11:00 a.m.	Sanctuary	Worship Service
September 22	10:00 a.m.	Fellowship Hall	Worship Committee
September 23	6:00 p.m.	Gym	Wheatley Team
September 24	10:00 a.m.	Resource Room	Fall Bible Study - Hosea
	11:00 a.m.	Choir Room	Tapestry Practice
	12:15 p.m.	Fellowship Hall	Ladies of the Yarn
	4:30 p.m.	Rm 204A	Handbell Practice
	5:30 p.m.	Choir Room	Choir Practice
September 28	9:15 a.m.	Fellowship Hall	Fellowship Time
	9:30 a.m.		Adult & Youth Sunday School
	11:00 a.m.	Sanctuary	Worship Service
September 30	6:00 p.m.	Gym	Wheatley Team