

FOREST FIRE

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

October 2025

A Word from Pastor Drew

To Whom, Then, Shall we Go? John 6:60-71

Do you remember the story of Scheherazade? She was one of the wives of the Emperor of Persia. And Persia's emperor was a man who was convinced that all women were unfaithful. So, he vowed he would marry a new wife each day, have his way with her at night, and would have her executed early the next morning. Which constitutes a rather large problem. Except that Scheherazade was a very clever woman, who set out to save all the women of Persia. So, on her wedding night she began to tell the emperor a tale that so fascinated him, he decided to stay her execution for an additional night so he could hear the rest of the story. Scheherazade kept on talking and so fascinated the emperor that he listened to her tales for 1001 nights, after which he was sufficiently convinced of her fidelity that he made her his wife. Stories are powerful things.

Let me ask you a pair of questions. How do you get from one day to the next in a world where, sooner or later, everything "dear to you" dies? And where do you hear the stories that stay the execution.... Or, at least, point beyond it? I say this is what the church is for. Now, I'm the first to tell you that the church is not perfect. Life in the Christian community can be hard. At one time or another, everyone wants to "walk away." We hear things that we don't like; we see things that we don't approve of; we are forced to pray with people with whom we don't always agree. And that's hard. But from these communities come our most powerful experiences of God.

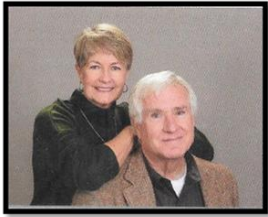
The church is the place into which we Christians were born, and out of which most of us will leave this life. We are called through baptism into a distinctive place in the church. That means that we are called not only to enjoy its fruits, but to labor in its vineyards – even when that vineyard is filled with thorns, and the day is late, and we are exhausted, and the harvest seems scarce, and the sun is beating down on us seemingly without mercy. It is in our church that we will work out, difficult as it may be, impossible as it may seem at times, our salvation, alongside other sinners – sinners, just like us.

There can be tough times in the church for all of us – from the pastor to the people in the pews. But those aren't the times to leave. Those are precisely the time when the church needs you the most, just like Jesus needed the disciples – to stay.

"Will you also go away?" "Where shall we go, Lord? You alone have words of eternal life."

Pastor Drew

Friendship Cande & Tommy Russell



I agree with everyone else that it's hard to condense your life into a few paragraphs, but here goes: Tommy and I have been married for 48 years as of June the 12th (if you ask Tommy, he will tell you it's been 48 LONG years.) Tommy spent most of his life here in Jackson, graduating from Jackson High School in 1968 along with Drew. After graduation he received a scholarship to play basketball at The Citadel in Charleston, SC. In his junior year he received a severe ankle injury and knew that his playing days at a division I school were over. At that time, and still wanting to play basketball, he transferred to Southwestern in Memphis (now Rhodes) and was able to play a few more seasons before graduating in '73.

Meanwhile, I grew up not far away in Bells, TN. Upon graduating from BHS I attended Lambuth College for the next 4 years. I knew of Tommy but had never really met him. Because of different high school and college allegiances I always viewed Tommy as "the enemy!" Around 1975 mutual friends officially introduced us and as they say "we hit it off" and married in '77.

Five years later our daughter, Erin, was born. Erin lives in Jackson and is an art teacher at Thelma Barker. She is married to Nick Nerren, (yes, she is Erin Nerren) a long time Jacksonian and fellow graduate of Jackson Central Merry. They have blessed us with our first grandchild, Emmy, who after getting off to a rocky start, spending her first 2 ½ months in the NICU, is now thriving and is very excited to be in "big girl" school at Community Montessori. Emmy attended Forrest Heights Day Care prior to that and I cannot say enough good about our school, the teachers, or Julie Hall!

Three years after Erin our son, Luke, was born. Luke lives in Knoxville and he and his wife, Cameryn, had a baby boy born last December. They named their son, William Thomas because they thought the name had a nice, dignified sound to it...my side of the family has already started calling him Willy T.! We don't get to see them as often as we would like. Thank goodness for FaceTime!

I would like to add that Tommy and I were very fortunate that both our children had the opportunity to have Kitty Hawkins as a teacher in elementary school!

Tommy spent 43 years as a teacher and coach before retiring nine years ago. He began his career in Knoxville at Holston High School before moving to Jackson. After being briefly at Southside Jr. High and Northside High School he took the job as basketball coach at Lambuth and was there for 11 years before moving to USJ where he was until retirement. He presently works at HCI.

I have always worked for Bob and Marcia Graves in one capacity or another. I began in their frame shop, Graves Gold Leaf Gallery, soon after marriage and worked there until Erin was born at which time I became a stay-at-home mom. When Luke entered middle school, I returned to work for the Graves but by this time they had added a gift shop to their business and were soon to also get into the business of art restoration. When they transferred me to the restoration side of the business, I found my "true love." I continued doing restoration for them until they closed their business in 2017 because of health concerns.

Neither Tommy or I grew up in the Methodist church. He and his family attended West Jackson Baptist Church and I grew up in Bells First Christian Church. For us the Methodist church was a compromise. After spending several years at various churches in Jackson and not feeling satisfied we were invited to visit Forest Heights by one of Erin's friends. After our first visit we felt like we had finally found our church home. We loved Jerry Jeffords, the pastor at the time; we found the congregation very warm and welcoming and our children enjoyed the excellent youth program.

Friendship, from one to the other Be blessed

Nurture Area News

A big Thank You to all who helped prepare for our Fifth Sunday Fellowship lunch. Special thanks to Jerry Ervin for smoking the delicious bar-b-que. The meal, fellowship and celebration of Averi's baptism was enjoyed by all. Our next Fifth Sunday Fellowship will be November 30th. Watch the Forest Fire for details.

Opportunities to Serve

Ushers needed: If you would like to join our Ushers Team by serving on a rotating schedule, please contact Sue Wyatt or Paul Finney for information. Ushers collect the offering and serve, as needed, at funerals and other worship services.

Handyman Ministry: We are exploring the possibility of establishing a Handyman Ministry for our members. This ministry would provide help with small home repairs such as changing ceiling light bulbs, changing fire alarm batteries, and other minor home jobs. If you are interested in serving on this team, please sign the Handyman List on the Communication table.

All Saints Day – Sunday, Nov 2nd

We will remember and celebrate the lives of our members who have died since last years All Saints Day. Those to be remembered are:

Karen Johnson
Mary Wright
Jackie Morgan
Ann Phillips

United Women in Faith

In October, the United Women in Faith will meet on the **fourth** Thursday of the month, October 23 at 3:00 in the church fellowship hall. Marcia Tate will have a short devotional and refreshments will be provided by Cheryl Thomas and T.J. Clanin. If you would like to attend, visitors are welcome at every meeting! During the October meeting we will be finalizing the plans for purchasing gifts to the Reelfoot Rural Ministry Christmas Teen Room which is our ministry focus for 2025. We thank everyone who supported this ministry through our casserole fundraiser earlier in the year. If anyone else in the congregation would like to make a donation, gifts of cash or check (made out to United Women in Faith) can be left in the church office by October 20th.

Laity Sunday

“And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? I tell you; he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?” – Luke 18:7-8

In Luke 18:1–8, Jesus tells the story of a persistent widow who kept seeking justice until she was heard. Her persistence reminds us that faith is lived out through steady, everyday action. On Laity Sunday, we celebrate the ministry of all God’s people—not only pastors, but every church member who prays, serves, leads, and carries Christ’s love into the world.

Join us Sunday, October 12 for worship as we celebrate Laity Sunday and give thanks for the everyday faithfulness of God’s people. Dr. Kevin Wheatley will be the lay speaker and special music will be provided by the Men’s Quartet and the Handbell Quartet.

Outreach / Missions

Room at the Table: We had a wonderful time serving at Studio 45. We have met new friends and have been able to share not only food but a time of worship. As the year closes, we will be transitioning from Room at the Table (Studio 45) to Room in the Inn. Please look for the sign-up list on the communication table by the church office. Thank you to everyone who helped provide items needed for the meals.



The fall Walk to Emmaus retreats will be on October 2nd – 5th for the men and Oct 16th – 19th for the women. This retreat is held at our Methodist Conference Center at Lakeshore. The Walk to Emmaus is a special time of spiritual renewal, worship, and fellowship. If you are interested in attending one of these events, please see Pastor Drew. The spring retreats will be March 5 – 8th for the men and March 19 – 22 for the Women. Forest Heights has been privileged to host the Send Off Celebration and the closing worship services in our building.

Address Change

Kathleen Wilson has moved to a new home. Her new address is:

54 Grande Pines Cove
Jackson, TN 38305

Her telephone and email remain the same.

Special Invitation

On Sunday, October 12th, Russell and Carroll Gallimore will be celebrating Russell's 90th birthday and expressing their appreciation for the loving care of this congregation with a reception being held in our Fellowship Hall. The gathering will be immediately following the Sunday Worship Service. All are invited to attend.

From the Preschool Steering Committee

You are invited to participate in "Trunk or Treat" at the Preschool on Friday October 24 at 3:30 pm. Arrive a few minutes early and park around the perimeter of the upper parking lot. Sign-up sheet for participants will be on the table by the office.

For more information contact Janette or Paul Chaplin.

Happy Birthday & Anniversary

October Birthdays

7 Diane Sanford
9 Kim Borden
12 Valeta Marcom
12 Frances Eubanks
12 Russell Gallimore
16 T. J. Clanin
17 Brenda Gullede
20 Marianne Archer
24 Dot Simpson
24 Sue Bryant
25 Pam Finney
25 Ernie Wilson
28 Callie Ummel

October Anniversaries

7 Bill & Sue Wyatt
29 Linda & Ernie Wilson

Calendar for October 2025 - find the **Weekly Calendar** under the "Events" tab on fhumc.com

October	1	10:00 a.m.	Resource Room	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
October	2	10:30 a.m.	Fellowship Hall	Finance Committee Mtg.
		11:30 a.m.	Office Closing - Admin. Asst.	½ day vacation
		3:00 p.m.	Fellowship Hall, Gym	Emmaus Sendoff
October	5	9:15 a.m.	Fellowship Hall	Fellowship Time
		9:30 a.m.		Adult & Youth Sunday School
		11:00 a.m.	Sanctuary	Worship Service
		3:00 p.m.	Fellowship Hall	Emmaus Luggage Return
		6:00 p.m.	Sanctuary	Emmaus Closing

Calendar for October 2025 (cont.)

October	6	10:00 a.m.	Fellowship Hall	Worship Committee
October	7	6:00 p.m.	Resource Room	Emmaus Follow up
		6:00 p.m.	Gym	Wheatley Team
October	8	10:00 a.m.	Resource Room	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
October	12	9:15 a.m.	Fellowship Hall	Fellowship Time
		9:30 a.m.		Adult & Youth Sunday School
		11:00 a.m.	Sanctuary	Worship Service Laity Sunday
		12:00 p.m.	Fellowship Hall	Gallimore 90 th Birthday
October	14	6:00 p.m.	Gym	Wheatley Team
October	15	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
October	16	10:00 a.m.	Fellowship Hall	Financial Audit - 2024
		3:00 p.m.	Fellowship Hall/Gym	Emmaus Send Off
October	19	9:15 a.m.	Fellowship Hall	Fellowship Time
		9:30 a.m.		Adult & Youth Sunday School
		11:00 a.m.	Sanctuary	Worship Service Laity Sunday
		12:00 p.m.	Fellowship Hall	Church Council Meeting
		3:00 p.m.	Fellowship Hall	Emmaus Luggage Return
		6:00 p.m.	Sanctuary	Emmaus Closing
October	20	10:00 a.m.	Fellowship Hall	Worship Committee
October	21	6:00 p.m.	Fellowship Hall	Emmaus Follow up
		6:00 p.m.	Gym	Wheatley Team
October	22	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
October	26	9:15 a.m.	Fellowship Hall	Fellowship Time
		9:30 a.m.		Adult & Youth Sunday School
		11:00 a.m.	Sanctuary	Worship Service Laity Sunday
October	28	6:00 p.m.	Gym	Wheatley Team
October	29	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