

FOREST FIRE

The Monthly Newsletter of Forest Heights United Methodist Church
863 West Forest Ave., Jackson, TN 38301
APRIL 2026

A Word from Pastor Drew

WHAT DOES EASTER REALLY MEAN?

Until the coming of Christ we were bound by our own sinfulness and our own attempts to extricate ourselves from that condition. Resurrection is what God does when we have done all that we can do and it's not enough. Resurrection is what God does when we have done all we can do and it turns out to be crucifixion. It is what God does when we exhaust our attempts at freedom and forgiveness. Resurrection is the freedom and forgiveness of God among us and in us through the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ with us.

Christ **IS** with us. Not some fond memory, but the living, breathing, life giving spirit of Christ. Christ is with us through the Holy Spirit. Jesus is sympathetic to our worldly struggles because he has been through them. Christ is with us to quietly whisper encouragement in our daily lives. And you can hear that whisper. He says: *"I too have been tested. I've been tempted and tried. But because I died and was raised without giving in, I'm here to strengthen you to withstand temptation just like I did. Put your life in my hands and I will empower you with grace."* But to do that, we have to die, too. We have to die to sin and selfishness.

A cartoon in Leadership Magazine show two couples sitting together with Bibles in their laps. Apparently, they are discussing one of the passages. One of the women says: *"Well, I haven't actually DIED to sin, but I did feel kind of faint once."*

If we miss the point of Easter, then we will be just like that woman. But the Good News is that we don't have to be like that woman. We don't have to settle for a close encounter with salvation. The Good News of Jesus Christ is the most important event in human history because it is the earthly culmination of God's atoning work on the cross. Through it, God empowers our lives to die to sin and be raised to new life in Christ. Through the resurrection God restores meaning to life.

Pastor Drew



Friendship Greg and T.J. Clanin



This month, we are turning our looking glass 180 degrees and featuring our Friendship editors Greg and TJ Clanin. Twyla June, whom we lovingly call TJ, has been writing our Friendship column for over 4 years. It's past time to feature the Clanin's – and I am here to spill the beans!

As with most fairytales, it began a long (long!) time ago. TJ recalls the day when her brother invited a friend over to play ping pong. TJ answered the door without make up and her long hair rolled up on tin cans (girls you remember that era, don't you). If that didn't scare Greg off, nothing would! - and nothing did. Greg and TJ have been married almost 60 years.

Greg and TJ moved to Jackson from Muncie, Indiana in 1980. They were in town for a matter of hours before they had a run in with the law. A neighbor saw them opening and moving stuff into a vacant house. The neighbor was unaware that the Clarins had purchased the house. Needless to say, quick explanations and introductions were needed to clear things up and develop lasting friendships. TJ recalls an earlier trip to Jackson as a teenager. Her parents thought she was safely in the backseat of their car after stopping for gas. They pulled away leaving a very confused TJ standing at the gas station. It was several hours before the family was reunited.

Greg worked for Westinghouse in the high voltage lab (both in Indiana and Alamo). TJ found her niche in cosmetology. She worked for 24 years in local salons. Upon retiring in 2004, TJ volunteered for the American Cancer Society and taught their Look Good, Feel Good, classes. She also worked in the RIFA thrift store.

Greg and TJ love to travel, visiting Alaska, Hawaii, and most of the 50 states. They are both avid fishermen and can tell you a story about "the big one that got away".

When Greg and TJ relocated to Tennessee, finding a church home was top on their list. They visited several churches. Their two children had been invited to Forest Heights by their friends and were excited when mom and dad decided to call Forest Heights "home". New friends they had met, Brian and Jamie Collins, had invited them to worship services here. And as they say... the rest is history. Greg and TJ have been active and served in many capacities – as a trustee, chair of the trustees, outreach, witness, contributing editor of the Forest Fire, and singing in the choir. If it needed to be done, they were willing to give it a try.

When asked to share a verse that was meaningful to them, TJ showed me a plaque she had made with the verse from Leviticus 2:13 on it (go ahead and look it up). Not only are our lives an offering to God, but we are called to live salty lives – being a positive, godly influence in this world.

Friendship, from one to the other Be blessed

Nurture Area News

A Big Thank you... to the Young Adult Bible Study group and their helpers for hosting the 5th Sunday Fellowship lunch for March. The add-a-dish lunch did not disappoint. Everything was delicious. We enjoyed celebrating Callie's baptism and hearing about the progress on the renovations to the sanctuary and other spaces of our church building and property.

Thank you to Cheryl and Sue for providing the table decorations. Your gift of creativity added to the celebration.

The next 5th Sunday Fellowship will be Sunday, May 31st. Watch the newsletter for details.

Holy Week

We invite and encourage you to participate in the meaningful services planned for this special week. Word, music, communion and a Tenebrae service will add to our remembrance of these events in Jesus' life.

Thursday, April 2nd "Holy Thursday"

5:00 p.m. – Fellowship Meal. Catered meal – 15\$ per person

6:00 p.m. – Holy Thursday Worship

Friday, April 3rd "Good Friday"

6:00 p.m. – Tenebrae Service. A Readers Theater will have an account of that day's events in the life of Christ. Our handbell choir and Tapestry will provide special music.

Sunday, April 5th "Easter Sunday"

11:00 a.m. – Worship. We will celebrate this Risen Lord with trumpet, bell, song and word. **Bring fresh flowers to adorn the Easter Cross.**

United Women in Faith

Our next meeting will be Thursday April 16th at 3 p.m. in the fellowship hall. Janette Chaplin will have the devotional and Marilyn Kemp and Kitty Hawkins will provide refreshments. All women of the church are invited to attend.

I am also happy to announce these upcoming TWK UWF conference events:

April 18 - Social action event on "Human Trafficking from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Lexington First UMC. The speaker for this event is Mrs. LINDIA SPEER of Alamo, Tennessee. Lunch will be provided.

May 1-3 - Women's Retreat at Beersheba Springs Assembly. The theme is "Gather and Grow, Together We Flourish". The speaker is Rebecca Gwunn-Dixon

May 15-17 – Assembly 2026 in Indianapolis, Indiana. This is a once every four years gathering. It is a weekend that uplifts your soul, strengthens your faith and brings you together with an unstoppable sisterhood. The theme is "Dream it! Believe it! Do it!" and the inspiration speakers are Stacey Abrams and Rev. Carolyn Abrams.

June 15-27 – Mission U at Scarritt Bennett Center in Nashville. This year's study, "A Deep Knowing", was written by our conference's very own Rev. Linda Furtado who is also the presenter.

September 26 – TWK UWF Annual Meeting at South Pleasant Grove UMC in Hazel, Kentucky. The theme is "Mapping our Way Forward" based on the 2026 UWF Program Resource.

As you can see UWF provides many opportunities for fellowship, enrichment and meaningful worship. I encourage you to attend at least one of these opportunities!

Candle-Burning for Missions:

On Mother's Day, May 10th, during the worship service, UWF will sponsor a candle-burning service to honor and remember special people in our lives by offering the opportunity for you to donate to UWF sponsored world-wide missions. On April 26 and May 3, the church bulletin will contain an insert with more information and the order form. We hope everyone will participate in this opportunity for giving.

Outreach / Missions



Room in the Inn We are approaching the end of the Room in the Inn season. Sunday, April 19th will be our last time to host the men until fall. Some of the men will remain outdoors, others will find shelter with family or friends, and others will travel on to new locations. We pray for their safety and pray that the bread we broke with them touched not only their bodies but their hearts and souls. Please check the sign-up list to see what you can provide for the April 19th dinner. As Room in the Inn closes for the season, our **Room at the Table**, serving low-income families residing in local hotels, will begin in May. Thank you for all your support.



For the dyed in the wool United Methodists (yes, you know who you are!) : We did not miss the UMCOR collection – we simply moved it to the 3rd Sunday in April due to the early Easter season. Our special offering will be taken up on Sunday, April 19th. You are welcome to donate at any time. Special envelopes are available at the UMCOR display near the pastor's office. This UMCOR collection supports the administrative work of our disaster relief effort. Without the organizational support, relief work would not be possible. Supporting the administrative work now allows 100% of funds collected for specific disasters to go directly to the people in need.

It's Coming Our shoebox emphasis is only 8 weeks away!! More info to follow.

Note of Thanks from our members

Cheryl and David Thomas wish to express their thanks for all of the remembrances that have been extended since the death of Cheryl's brother. Jerry Michael passed away on December 13th in Tullahoma, TN.

New Address:

Jean Ralston has a new address. Her new address is: Jean Ralston, 92 Samuel Dr., Jackson, TN 38305.

Happy Birthday & Anniversary

April Birthdays

3 Susan Wheatley
4 Sandy Thomas
8 Linda Wilson
19 Tommy Russell
24 Marcia Tate
27 Margaret Harrison

April Anniversaries

Calendar for April 2026 - find the **Weekly Calendar** under the **"Events"** tab on fhumc.com

| | | | | | |
|-------|----|------------|--|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| April | 1 | 11:00 a.m. | Choir Room | Tapestry Practice | |
| | | 12:15 p.m. | Fellowship Hall | Ladies of the Yarn | |
| | | 4:30 p.m. | Bell Room | Handbell Practice | |
| | | 5:30 p.m. | Choir Room | Choir Practice | |
| April | 2 | 11:30 a.m. | Office Closing – Admin Assist ½ day vacation | | |
| | | 5:00 p.m. | Fellowship Hall | Maundy Thursday Meal | |
| | | 6:00 p.m. | Sanctuary | Maundy Thursday Service | |
| April | 3 | 6:00 p.m. | Sanctuary | Tenebrae Service | |
| April | 5 | 9:15 a.m. | Fellowship Hall | Fellowship Time | |
| | | 9:30 a.m. | | Adult & Youth Sunday School | |
| | | 11:00 a.m. | Sanctuary | Worship Easter Service | |
| April | 7 | 5:30 p.m. | Resource Room | Young Adult Bible Study | |
| | | 6:00 p.m. | Gym | Wheatley Team | |
| April | 8 | 11:00 a.m. | Choir Room | Tapestry Practice | |
| | | 12:15 p.m. | Fellowship Hall | Ladies of the Yarn | |
| | | 4:30 p.m. | Bell Room | Handbell Practice | |
| | | 5:30 p.m. | Choir Room | Choir Practice | |
| April | 12 | 9:15 a.m. | Fellowship Hall | Fellowship Time | |
| | | 9:30 a.m. | | Adult & Youth Sunday School | |
| | | 11:00 a.m. | Sanctuary | Worship | |
| | | 12:00 p.m. | Fellowship Hall | Church Council Meeting | |
| April | 13 | 10:00 a.m. | Fellowship Hall | Worship Committee | |
| April | 14 | 5:30 p.m. | Resource Room | Young Adult Bible Study | |
| | | 6:00 p.m. | Gym | Wheatley Team | |
| April | 15 | 11:00 a.m. | Choir Room | Tapestry Practice | |
| | | 12:15 p.m. | Fellowship Hall | Ladies of the Yarn | |
| | | 4:30 p.m. | Bell Room | Handbell Practice | |
| | | 5:30 p.m. | Choir Room | Choir Practice | |
| April | 16 | 3:00 p.m. | Fellowship Hall | United Women in Faith | |
| April | 19 | 9:15 a.m. | Fellowship Hall | Fellowship Time | |
| | | 9:30 a.m. | | Adult & Youth Sunday School | |
| | | 11:00 a.m. | Sanctuary | Worship | |
| | | 3:00 p.m. | Fellowship Hall/Gym | Room in the Inn | |
| April | 20 | 9:00 a.m. | to | 2:00 p.m. | News for May Newsletter due |
| April | 21 | 5:30 p.m. | Resource Room | Young Adults Bible Study | |
| | | 6:00 p.m. | Gym | Wheatley Team | |
| April | 22 | 11:00 a.m. | Choir Room | Tapestry Practice | |
| | | 12:15 p.m. | Fellowship Hall | Ladies of the Yarn | |
| | | 4:30 p.m. | Bell Room | Handbell Practice | |
| | | 5:30 p.m. | Choir Room | Choir Practice | |
| April | 26 | 9:15 a.m. | Fellowship Hall | Fellowship Time | |
| | | 9:30 a.m. | | Adult & Youth Sunday School | |
| | | 11:00 a.m. | Sanctuary | Worship | |
| April | 27 | 10:00 a.m. | Fellowship Hall | Worship Committee | |
| April | 28 | 5:30 p.m. | Resource Room | Young Adults Bible Study | |
| | | 6:00 p.m. | Gym | Wheatley Team | |
| April | 29 | 11:00 a.m. | Choir Room | Tapestry Practice | |
| | | 12:15 p.m. | Fellowship Hall | Ladies of the Yarn | |
| | | 4:30 p.m. | Bell Room | Handbell Practice | |
| | | 5:30 p.m. | Choir Room | Choir Practice | |