

# FOREST FIRE

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

## A Word from Pastor Drew Believing, Belonging, Becoming

It has become a trend in our day for churches to adopt a slogan, a brief phrase that proclaims the mission statement of that church in a few words. *"The happy church"* or *"the people's church."* We haven't quite gotten around to having such a slogan around here, but plenty of churches have them. These slogans are usually positive: I suppose you wouldn't want a slogan that said, *"We're the grumpy church."* Although it might be interesting to peep inside to see what goes on in such a place.

Preacher and writer Barbara Brown Taylor admits to being a little puzzled by these slogans, and wonders if they can really be true. No church, she says correctly, can be *happy* all the time. Maybe churches ought to adopt a slogan that is a little more truthful – even if they are not so upbeat. She suggests that a church might adopt the slogan: *"Enter at your own risk"* or my favorite, *"We're doing the best we can."* A church like that might actually be more interesting than one that bills itself as a "happy" church.

That being said, what about our church? We are embarking upon a task to come up with a mission statement, a vision statement, about our own church. I see this effort as a way both to remind ourselves, and to let others know, what we are all about. Why are we here? What do we offer?

Thinking about this, I came up with an idea based upon how I, as a pastor, perceive our mission and our identity as a faith community in this day and age. And since I like to play around with words, (I suppose it is part of my nature), I came up with three words which I believe folks both inside and outside our faith community can understand. See if they resonate with you.

The first word is **Believing**. We are a believing church. We are united in our firm belief in the love of God, the grace of Jesus Christ, and the fellowship and power of the Holy Spirit. This belief inspires everything we do – worship, fellowship, and service. It is foundational to our reason for being; it is why we exist.

The second word is **Belonging**. We strive to be a community of faith that welcomes and includes all kinds of people, believers, and seekers. Our desire, our hope, is that everyone will find in this community a place to belong, a place where the spiritual gifts of each individual are recognized, nurtured, cherished, and used – in ministry, witness and service.

The third word is **Becoming**. We are not there yet, and we realize it, but we are pilgrims on the road ... together. Realizing we are "not there yet" keeps us humble. We do not claim to have all the answers, or to know fully the mind of God. We welcome questions, and we encourage prayer and study of the scriptures, but we also listen to one another, even when we disagree.

What do you think? Are we a *believing, belonging, and becoming* church? Is this a way to remind ourselves and to tell others who we are? Pray about it, talk with each other about it, and let me know. I am eager to hear your thoughts.

Pastor Drew

# *Friendship .....from T. J. Clanin*

Greetings to all!      Some times in life we slow down on our prayers. This prayer may say or  
make you feel God's Love.      You all enjoy.TJ



## **August**

*I will sing of your strength,  
In the morning I will sing of your love;  
or you are my fortress,  
My refuge in times of trouble*  
**PSALM 59:16 (NIV)**

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

## Nurture Area News

Mark your calendar for our ~~5<sup>th</sup>~~ 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday Fellowship on August 23<sup>rd</sup>. Yes, you read that right, we will gather for lunch and Cokesbury Hymnal Sing on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August instead of the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday. The meal of grilled hot dogs, burgers and sides will be provided by the church. Donation are welcome as we invite you to help fill the Supply Cabinet of our wonderful childcare center. The Grill Masters are ready, the Cokesbury Hymnals here, and the opportunity to support our childcare center awaits. We look forward to the time of fellowship. (If writing a check, please make check to Forest Heights with notation to Childcare Center).

Our weekly Bible Study with Drew on the Book of Romans continues through August. We invite you to join us each Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. for the discussion-based class.

Our sympathy to the family of Bob Reeves who passed away this past week. May God's love, comfort, and Grace surround you during this difficult time.

## Outreach / Missions

**Christmas Shoeboxes:** Hallelujah!! The boxes are packed and ready to begin their journey. Our West Tennessee churches packed almost 900 boxes (I haven't got an exact count yet – boxes keep coming in and I only have 10 fingers and toes!!!) Thank you to the entire church for all your help. Now it's time to prepare for next year. As you shop (thrift or retail) look for small toys and stuffed animals to add to our boxes.

**Room at the Table** continues at Studio 45 on North Highland. Each month, we feed approximately 75 men, women and children. Our next buffet will be Saturday, August 22. We welcome our highly acclaimed chefs, Callie Ummel and Cheryl Thomas. Please check the sign-up list on the communication table.

**Amy's Closet:** With school starting again, our teachers are needing your support – both in prayer and with material supplies. Let's fill Amy Tate's closet again this year. Please bring your items to the church office. (Did you know, you can order on AMAZON and have it delivered directly to the church – saves gas and time!) Her needs list includes:

- Notebook paper
- Pencils
- Pocket folders
- Kleenex
- Hand Sanitizer
- Disinfectant wipes



**Pack the School Bus:** With the beginning of school comes the need for simple but nutritious snacks to fill students' backpacks. Unfortunately, many children in our community go home to little or no food on the weekends. The RIFA backpack ministry works to fill this gap by filling their backpacks each Friday with healthy, easy to prepare food items. **RIFA'S Pack the Bus will be on Saturday, August 15** at Kroger (Stonebrook and University Pkwy locations) Christmasville Food Giant, Sam's Club, and Walmart South. Items needed include:



- Ravioli – single serve pop top containers
- Mac and Cheese – individual packs/bowls
- Pop Tarts
- Ramen Noodles (chicken or beef)
- Microwave popcorn (individual packs)
- Oatmeal (single serve packets)
- Apple Sauce (with foil lids)
- Chicken Noodle soup (pop top lids)

## **Forest Heights UMC featured in Conference Weekly E-News**

Our church's participation and leadership in the Shoebox Ministry was featured in the July 23 edition of the TWK Conference Weekly E-News. If you don't receive this newsletter through your email, you can read it on our church website. Go to [fhumc.com](http://fhumc.com), click on the Newsletter tab on the menu, and select TWKUMC Conference Weekly E-News. You can then click on the link for July 23 to read the article (along with other conference news). Thank you, Beverlyann Jetton, for submitting the article to share how our congregation is connecting with others to share the gospel of Christ!

## **United Women in Faith**

On August 20<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. United Women in Faith will meet for our annual dinner meeting at Brooksie's Barn, taking part in their wonderful buffet dinner.

The United Women in Faith are again having their casserole sale to support the mission project with Reelfoot Rural Ministries Christmas Toy Store. 8 x 8 casseroles will be available for \$20/each. Casseroles can be picked up in the church fellowship hall on Thursday, August 13, 3:30 – 5:30 p.m. Option 1 is Baked spaghetti. Option 2 is Poppy seed chicken. There will be order blanks placed in the bulletins on July 26 and on August 2<sup>nd</sup>. Fill out the order and place it in the offering plate. You can also call the office 731-668-5209 Monday through Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. no later than Thursday August 6<sup>th</sup>. Pay by cash or check upon pick up (checks should be made out to United Women in Faith)

## **AED Training**

The Automatic Electric Defibrillator purchased by the church for medical emergencies has arrived and will soon be installed. Training in its use is planned for Monday evening, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, at 5:30 p.m., in our Fellowship Hall. All members of the church are welcome at the training.

## **MEET THE CHURCH STAFF** *For the next few months, a different staff member will be highlighted in this section of the newsletter. This month we focus on Drew Brewer*

### **Our pastor – Rev. Drew Brewer**



Most of you probably feel like you know Bro. Drew pretty well. After all, you hear from him each Sunday morning during worship. Some of you have also gotten to know him more personally through Wednesday morning Bible study or in Sunday school. But there are a few things you may not know.

Drew grew up in Jackson as the oldest of three brothers. Following the death of his father when Drew was five, his mother went to nursing school first and continued her training to become a nurse anesthetist. During that time, Drew's family lived with his grandparents in a house that his grandfather had built in 1924 - the very house on Whitehall where Drew lives now! While with his grandparents, Drew began attending Hays Avenue Methodist Church. This church would become foundational in his faith journey.

Drew attended school in Jackson and was in the first Jackson High School class (1968) to graduate in what was then the Coliseum. After high school, Drew attended SMU for 2 years and completed his college degree as an English major at Lambuth. He then worked for 8 years in the mental health field at Jackson Mental Health Clinic. During that time, Drew began teaching Sunday School at Aldersgate United Methodist Church. He would soon have a decision to make – should he continue his education to become a clinical psychologist, or should he answer the call to become an ordained minister? He sought advice, and we are blessed that he answered the call to the ministry. Drew commuted daily to Memphis to attend Memphis Theological Seminary and began serving the Pinson/Bear Creek charge. Now, 40 years later, and after a very brief retirement, he serves as the pastor at Forest Heights. He continues to enjoy preaching and teaching, and we are so glad that he does!

In addition to “church work”, Drew enjoys being part of a monthly bridge group. Most especially, he treasures his Friday night dinners with his daughter, Jennifer, and grandson, Abram, both of whom make him very proud and bring him great joy.

Thank you, Drew, for your witness to your faith and your service to our church.

## ***Happy Birthday & Anniversary***

### **August Birthdays**

|    |                   |
|----|-------------------|
| 1  | Paul Finney       |
| 1  | Kristen Alvarado  |
| 10 | Arlene Murphy     |
| 10 | Jane Huckabee     |
| 11 | Marilyn Deaton    |
| 12 | Beverlyann Jetton |
| 15 | Reid Finney       |
| 26 | Amy Tate          |
| 31 | Jean Ralston      |

### **August Anniversaries**

|   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| 6 | John & Kim Borden      |
| 9 | Susan & Kevin Wheatley |

**Calendar for August 2026** - find the **Weekly Calendar** under the “Events” tab on [fhumc.com](http://fhumc.com)

|        |    |            |                               |                              |
|--------|----|------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| August | 1  | 8:00 a.m.  | R.R. & Fellowship Hall Emmaus |                              |
| August | 2  | 9:15 a.m.  | Fellowship Hall               | Fellowship Time              |
|        |    | 9:30 a.m.  | Resource Room                 | Sunday School                |
|        |    | 11:00 a.m. | Sanctuary                     | Worship                      |
| August | 3  | 10:00 a.m. | Fellowship Hall               | Worship Committee            |
|        |    | 5:30 p.m.  | Fellowship Hall               | AED Training                 |
| August | 5  | 10:00 a.m. | Resource Room                 | Bible Study – Romans         |
|        |    | 11:00 a.m. | Choir Room                    | Tapestry Practice            |
|        |    | 12:15 p.m. | Fellowship Hall               | Ladies of the Yarn           |
|        |    | 5:30 p.m.  | Choir Room                    | Choir Practice               |
| August | 9  | 9:15 a.m.  | Fellowship Hall               | Fellowship Time              |
|        |    | 9:30 a.m.  |                               | Sunday School                |
|        |    | 11:00 a.m. | Sanctuary                     | Worship                      |
| August | 11 | 5:30 p.m.  | Resource Room                 | Young Adult Bible Study      |
| August | 12 | 10:00 a.m. | Resource Room                 | Bible Study – Romans         |
|        |    | 11:00 a.m. | Choir Room                    | Tapestry Practice            |
|        |    | 12:15 p.m. | Fellowship Hall               | Ladies of the Yarn           |
|        |    | 5:30 p.m.  | Choir Room                    | Choir Practice               |
| August | 15 | 8:00 a.m.  | Fellowship Hall & RR          | Emmaus                       |
| August | 16 | 9:15 a.m.  | Fellowship Hall               | Fellowship Time              |
|        |    | 9:30 a.m.  |                               | Sunday School                |
|        |    | 11:00 a.m. | Sanctuary                     | Worship                      |
| August | 17 | 10:00 a.m. | Fellowship Hall               | Worship Committee            |
| August | 19 | 10:00 a.m. | Resource Room                 | Bible Study – Romans         |
|        |    | 11:00 a.m. | Choir Room                    | Tapestry Practice            |
|        |    | 12:15 p.m. | Fellowship Hall               | Ladies of the Yarn           |
|        |    | 5:30 p.m.  | Choir Room                    | Choir Practice               |
| August | 20 | 5:30 p.m.  | Brooksie’s Barn               | United Women in Faith        |
| August | 22 | 5:30 p.m.  | Studio 75                     | Room @ the Table             |
| August | 23 | 9:15 a.m.  | Fellowship Hall               | Fellowship Time              |
|        |    | 9:30 a.m.  |                               | Sunday School                |
|        |    | 11:00 a.m. | Sanctuary                     | Worship                      |
|        |    | 12:00 p.m. | Fellowship Hall               | 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday Lunch |
| August | 25 | 5:30 p.m.  | Resource Room                 | Young Adults Bible Study     |
| August | 26 | 10:00 a.m. | Resource Room                 | Bible Study – Romans         |
|        |    | 11:00 a.m. | Choir Room                    | Tapestry Practice            |
|        |    | 12:15 p.m. | Fellowship Hall               | Ladies of the Yarn           |
|        |    | 5:30 p.m.  | Choir Room                    | Choir Practice               |
| August | 27 | 10:00 a.m. | Fellowship Hall               | Preschool Steering Committee |
| August | 29 | 8:00 a.m.  | R.R. & Fellowship Hall        | Emmaus                       |
|        |    | 3:00 p.m.  | Fellowship Hall & Gym         | McSweeney set up             |
| August | 30 | 9:15 a.m.  | Fellowship Hall               | Fellowship Time              |
|        |    | 9:30 a.m.  |                               | Sunday School                |
|        |    | 11:00 a.m. | Sanctuary                     | Worship                      |
|        |    | 1:00 p.m.  | Fellowship Hall & Gym         | McSweeney party              |