

FIRST THINGS

SEPTEMBER, 2018

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
501 Church Street, Sweetwater, TN 37874
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“Glorifying God—Offering Christ Making Disciples—Serving Others”

Church Staff:

Ron Fisher, Pastor

Jacqueline Mason, Children’s Minister

Crystal Ragan, Youth Minister

Margareth Urias, Music Minister

All Christians, Ministers

Anne Wilson, Administrative Asst.

Melinda Hendricks, Custodian

Patricia Richesin, Organist

Janet Standridge, First Kids Director

REFLECTIONS FROM PASTOR RON

“LABORERS IN THE VINEYARD”

Jesus told a parable about a landowner who went into the market place early in the morning to hire laborers, a common practice in the ancient world. He agreed to pay those he hired the standard wage for a day’s work. Three hours later he saw that he was going to need more laborers if the work was going to get done. He returned to the market place and hired some more. About noon he again found it necessary to hire more workers, then again at three o’clock, then again at five. Quitting time was six o’clock. At six o’clock he had his foreman line up the laborers to be paid. He began with those who had worked only one hour. He paid them for a full day.

Those who had worked since six in the morning were watching this. They rubbed their hands in delight. “Wow,” they thought to themselves, “if he pays them a full day’s wage for working just part of a day, think how much he will pay us!” When their time came, however, they also received the standard wage for one day’s work. They were mad. They had worked all day and they were receiving the same amount as those who had worked just one hour. It wasn’t fair. But the landowner said, “Didn’t I pay you what we had agreed on? If I want to be more generous with these others is it not my right? Is it not my money to do with as I please?”

This parable isn’t about harvesting grapes. It’s about grace. AND IT SAYS TO US LOUDLY AND CLEARLY THAT GRACE CANNOT BE EARNED. The workers in the vineyard expressed their outrage to the owner of the vineyard. “These last worked only one hour,” they said, “and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.” They were outraged and were vocal about what they thought was

a grave injustice. Their reaction took the landowner somewhat by surprise. In his mind he had done nothing wrong. He promised them one day’s wages for one day’s work. He paid them what he had promised.

“Friend,” the landowner replied to one of the disgruntled workers, “I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage?” It was true, of course. They got paid what was promised. The landowner did not cheat them in any way. He did no wrong. Then he asks them an interesting question, “Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me?” Here is an important lesson about the grace of God. God’s grace is a gift.

Whether we have been in the family of God for a long time or are a recent arrival, the benefits of faith are the same. On Sunday, August 26 at Tsali Notch Vineyard we will explore the story of “The Laborers In The Vineyard” (Matthew 20:1-16). We will be in the perfect setting to reflect upon this story. I encourage you to read this parable and ask yourself what the story teaches us about God, what it teaches us about ourselves, & what God is calling us to do. I look forward to seeing you this Sunday at 10:30 am at Tsali Notch Vineyard for our 10th Annual Engage.

Blessings, Pastor Ron

OFFICE HOURS

Commencing August 13
the office will be open from
8:00 am till 1:00 pm.



MUSIC MINISTRY

PRESCHOOL CHOIR

The preschool kids will be learning songs for the Christmas Program being presented on Sunday, December 2nd at 5 pm. This year our mini musical is called "Baby Jesus Came for Me." We will sing about angels, the star, the animals and most important of all: The special Baby who was born in Bethlehem!!

Preschool Choir will resume practices on Wednesday, September 5th from 4:30 to 5:00 pm in the KIDS Sunday School Classroom. All kids ages 2 to 5 year olds are invited.



CHILDREN'S CHOIR

The kids are going on a journey by train this Christmas! We are visiting Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. All aboard on The Christmas Express Train to celebrate the birth of Christ!! The Christmas program will be presented on Sunday, December 2nd at 5:00 pm. The Children's Choir will also be singing at the Sunday morning services!



We will resume practices on Wednesday, September 5th from 5:00 to 6:00 pm in the Choir Room. All kids K through 6th grade are invited!!

Note to parents of 5-year-old Kindergarteners: The change between Preschool choir and Children's choir may be a big one for some of the 5-year-olds. Therefore, we ask you to consider both choirs before choosing the best one for your child. If you need more details, please feel free to contact Margareth at mthurias@hotmail.com or (865)247-3679.

CHANCEL CHOIR

The Chancel Choir has a very busy semester ahead. We will be participating at the Thanksgiving Service at Cokesbury UMC once again and presenting the Cantata "Let the Glory Come Down" on Sunday, November 18th, at Cokesbury in Knoxville. The same Cantata will be presented at our church in 2019. The date will be announced soon. If you would like to participate in the Thanksgiving Service just come to Choir Practice on Wednesdays from 7:15 pm to 8:30 pm in the Choir Room.

We also will be preparing our beloved Christmas Cantata to be presented on Sunday, December 9th, at 10:30 am in the Family Life Center. Our Cantata this year is "The Wonders of His Love." God in His great love for us sent His Son as a baby to redeem us. This is an amazing Cantata filled with songs about hope, peace and joy!! All the congregation is invited to join the choir for Christmas! Rehearsals start on Wednesday, September 5 from 7:15 pm to 8:00 pm in the Choir Room.

NEW: "MADE TO WORSHIP" CHOIR

This is our new Praise Choir that will be singing at the 9:00 am Service every 4th Sunday of the month except in December. The choir will lead the worship with the Praise Team on the 4th Sunday. We will rehearse only two times a month and the schedule for September is as follows:

Rehearsals Thursday, September 13th and 20th, from 6:15 pm to 7:15 pm in the Choir Room. The choir will sing on Sunday, September 23rd at the 9:00 am Service. ALL the congregation is invited to participate!! "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!" Psalm 150:6

If you have any questions about our choirs, please contact Margareth Urias @ mthurias@hotmail.com or (865)247-3679



WEDNESDAY NIGHT CONNECTION



It's always so exciting when we begin our Wednesday Night Connection (WNC) sessions with activities for all ages to include the whole family! You can come to enjoy a nice meal prepared by members of our congregation and have fellowship with old and new friends, followed by a variety of interesting Bible studies available for adults of all ages.

The children, K-6th grade, can attend choir with Miss Margareth and this is open to all children in the community. This group also can attend WEB (Wednesday Evening Bible) with Miss Jacqueline where we will doing "Quest," a study by Beth Moore, that takes us on an expedition toward a deeper relationship with God. There's also fun crafts and gym time.

There are sessions for the tots, ages 2-5, for Preschool Bible studies and Preschool choir. They love being a part of the musical in December too.

We even have a nursery for the babies.

So please plan to come for a very enjoyable family night. You are welcome to attend all or part of the activities. The time schedule is below.

THERE IS NO WNC ON HALLOWEEN (OCTOBER 31)

WEDNESDAY NIGHT CONNECTION ACTIVITIES

Please come out and join us

| | | |
|-----------|---|---------------------|
| 4:30-5:00 | Preschool Bible & Choir (Ages 2-4) | Starts September 5 |
| 5:00-6:00 | Children's Choir (Ages 5-11) | Starts September 5 |
| 5:30-6:30 | WNC Supper | Starts September 5 |
| 5:30-8:00 | Youth (Grades 6-12) | Ongoing |
| 6:30-7:30 | Wednesday Evening Bible (WEB) (Ages 5-11) | Starts September 5 |
| 6:30-7:30 | Adult Small Group Studies | Starts September 12 |
| 7:00 | Adult Choir | Ongoing |

PLEASE NOTE: There will be sign-up for Adult Small Group Studies at Engage and on September 5 at WNC, but Small Group Studies will not start until September 12.



NEW FALL PROGRAMS

NEW SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS "FEARLESS CONVERSATIONS"

Are you missing something? Are you looking for a time and place to connect with people your age who understand what you're going through? Are you wanting to learn more about what the Bible and Jesus have to say?

If you are 20-49 we have a new exciting place for you to find those connections. Commencing September 9 from 10:15-10:55 am, in the old Wesley Classroom, there will be a Sunday School class for you.



NEW SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR CHILDREN BIRTH TO 10 YEARS

There are new Sunday School classes for kids from birth to 10 years starting September 9 from 10:15-10:55 am. It's a wonderful opportunity for our kids to learn all about the Bible.



EVENTS FOR THE LADIES



LADIES BREAKFAST
Saturday, September 8
9:00 am @ Dinner Bell

Ladies, bring some friends and join us for a yummy breakfast and fellowship. It's a great place to get to know new people. Hope to see lots of folks out this month.

SECOND TUESDAYS FOR WOMEN OF ALL AGES

Second Tuesdays is a place to connect with other women on the second Tuesday of each month in Knoxville. You are welcome to join us at 6:45 pm for light refreshment and good conversation, then we'll dive into worship and the Word. If you are interested, please meet in the church parking lot on Tuesday, September 11 and we can carpool. We must leave by 5:30 pm. Contact Karen Sadikoff for further information.

Location: The Watershed at Cedar Springs Presbyterian
9132 Kingston Pike, Knoxville, TN

KIDS NEWS FROM MISS JACQUELINE

TASK (Tuesday After School Kids) Grades K-5

TASK will begin for the fall season on Tuesday, August 21st, at 3:15 pm in the FLC. We will do several Acts of Kindness for people in our community, working on scripture verses, crafts and politeness in our daily lives. There will also be free time for the kids to play and be kids.



ATTENTION TASK KIDS & ADULTS

On Tuesday, September 18
at 3:30 pm
we will have a special weather presentation
from Shea Sorenson, meteorologist
from WATE.
Everyone is welcome to attend.



GROW FIRST KIDS MINISTRY SEPTEMBER 9, 2018

At our Center, children are given the opportunity to learn and develop in a safe, loving, Christian environment. On September 9 First Kids will have a **Money Bucket Fundraiser** to GROW our ministry. Also if you would like to sponsor a family unable to pay the fees for this program, please contact Janet Standridge at 423-404-4885. Thank you so much for your generosity.

First Kids is starting our 2018/2019 school year. We are so pleased to announce that two of our teachers, Ms. Amber and Ms. Lauren both gave birth to beautiful girls. Mothers and babies are doing well.

I would like to thank the church for the blessing of your support, love and prayers as many lives are being touched. We would like to extend an open invitation for anyone who would like to come read a story, do crafts, or just come visit with the kids as they would thoroughly enjoy your presence.

We are still in the process of filling one teaching position, and hopefully that will happen quickly. We pray that this year we continue to do God's will and let him lead and guide us in everything we do for the children.

Please keep us in your prayers and again we thank you and love you!
May God always Bless you! Janet Standridge, Director, First Kids

**SPECIAL BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
TO OUR SENIOR ADULTS
BORN IN SEPTEMBER**

Sep 5 Pat Richesin
Sep 7 Billie Sue Hicks
Sep 8 Greer Heatherly
Sep 10 Carolyn Meeks
Sep 10 Jim Thomas
Sep 12 George Johnson
Sep 12 Betty Williams
Sep 16 Joe Sherlin
Sep 22 Betty Tallent
Sep 27 Judy Waters

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

**“YOUNG AT
HEART” POTLUCK
Sunday
September 2**



“Young at Heart” luncheons will begin again on September 2nd following the traditional service. Everyone is invited to bring their favorite dish, and our guest speaker will be Bob Fugitt. Bob will present a power point presentation titled "A One Way Ticket to Alaska." He has been lucky enough to have visited the state several times and will highlight wildlife, places, people, and culture. We look forward to seeing everyone there and tasting the wonderful food we have missed all summer! See you on September 2nd!

Who Am I?

I am a local girl born and raised in Sweetwater. I have a younger brother and growing up we lived on a 20 acre farm where we played, and I took care of my rabbits and pony. Momma was a housewife and daddy worked in communications. After graduating from high school, I attended a 2-year college to pursue a degree in Business Administration. Now I've been a country girl all my life and love farm food like greens, beans, and corn...but my favorite food is steak. I like everything Volunteer, especially football and softball. My favorite color is blue and I enjoy making crafts and reading, and I also volunteer in our church in my spare time. As for my favorite music...that is “oldies” of course, and I love Three Dog Night. I enjoy watching TV and am hooked on HDTV and the Food Network. I also love old movies and my favorite is “Fiddler on the Roof.” Now I'm pretty easy going but must admit that inconsiderate drivers who honk their horns at you are annoying. My favorite part of church is the music, and I have one very close and special friend in our congregation who has always been there to support me. Lastly, I enjoy traveling...my best trip so far has been to Alaska and I'd love to visit the west coast someday. Who am I?





MISSIONS

This year seven members of FUMC journeyed to Baldwin, La. to the UMCOR Sager Brown Depot for a week of work and fellowship. They were Teresa Hickey, Tony & Tonya Martini, Fred & Mary Seals and Micky & Greer Heatherly.

This trip has started to feel like going to see family each year, as we have really gotten to know the staff. Some worked in the wood shop on projects. Several members worked in the warehouse, which now has an air conditioned area. People from other churches went into the community and worked projects on the Sager Brown campus.

This year in the warehouse we verified over 3000 school kits. UNCOR is making changes to their collections. They will only be collecting health kits, school kits, and cleaning buckets. After the first of the year FUMC will be collecting Health kits for the district. More info will follow in January.

As the Bible tells us to reach out beyond our own community, we made our usual visit to Chez Hope to deliver items donated from FUMC. We also delivered 3 sewing machines donated to Sager Brown by Jamie Gruenenfelder. They were very grateful for the items donated.

Ten spots have been reserved for next year, July 28-August 2, 2019. By the time we reserved our spots the summer of 2019 had been filled. If you are interested in going during these dates, a \$25.00 (non-refundable) deposit needs to be made to the church. Also, there is a mission fund for those who need financial assistance. Regarding getting other dates for summer if anyone is interested, with commitments, I can book after the new year for 2020. The depot is open year around. If you are interested in going during a different time of year, contact me and we can see if we can support another trip. If anyone would like information regarding this trip or going on another mission trip contact Greer Heatherly ([423-337-1092](tel:423-337-1092)) or any of the above participants.

