

## SHARING

### FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF HOHENWALD

#### JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2015 NEWSLETTER

200 South Court Street \* Hohenwald, TN 38462 \* [www.hohenwaldumc.org](http://www.hohenwaldumc.org)

931-796-2681 \* [firstunitedme680@bellsouth.net](mailto:firstunitedme680@bellsouth.net)

#### FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

***"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." (Revelation 1:8)***

Alpha and Omega.

Alpha is, of course, the first letter in the Greek alphabet, and Omega is the 24<sup>th</sup> and last letter. ***"I am the A and the Z,"*** we might say (though without the grandeur of the Greek). In other words, God of the past, the present and the future. He is the great ***"I Am."*** His Kingdom is forever and ever. Before the world was created He was. When all matter ceases to exist He still will be.

We need the assurance of the permanence and the faithfulness of God. Old Testament writers gloried in that assurance:

***Before the mountains were made, or the earth and the world was formed; from eternity and to eternity, thou art God...For a thousand years in the sight are as yesterday, which is past. And as a watch in the night, things that are counted nothing, shall their years be."***

***Psalms 89: 2,4,5***

You may remember in Greek mythology the epic poem, the ***Odyssey***, which is concerned with Odysseus traveling around the world. Meanwhile his wife Penelope is pursued by many suitors. She says that when she finishes weaving a particular garment, she will then decide on a suitor. The suitors do not know that each night Penelope undoes the stitches she put in during the daytime and thus remains faithful to Odysseus until he returns.

The faithfulness of Penelope was faithfulness for a lifetime. But the faithfulness of God toward his people is for eternity.

Many of us are so fearful of the future. We are a bundle of anxieties concerning our health, our finances, our children, and the safety of our world. Our constant anxiety reminds me of a story that Mark Twain once told about a friend of his who came to him at the races one day and said, ***"I'm broke. I wish you'd buy me a ticket back to town."***

Twain said, ***"Well, I'm pretty broke myself, but I'll tell you what to do. You hide under my seat and I'll cover you with my legs."*** It was agreed, and Twain then went to the ticket office and bought two tickets, without saying anything to his friend. When the train was underway and the supposed stowaway was snug under the seat, the conductor came by and Twain gave him the two tickets. ***"Where is the other passenger?"*** asked the conductor. ***"That is my friend's ticket. He is a little eccentric and likes to ride under the seat."***

I have a vision of many of us riding into the future hiding with our anxieties under a seat. What a tragedy that is. Do you think that the God who has loved you and sustained you to this point is suddenly going to forget you? Of course not. The future is in God's hands. God is with us. He has always been with us. He will never forsake us. He is the God who is, who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

. Drew

## ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Our Sunday School classes have begun the Winter study season. Adult Bible Studies are focused on "Acts of Worship," which include learning to pray and stewardship. Numbers in all classes have been affected lately by holiday travel and several bouts of illnesses. However, we are seeing class growth and invite everyone to participate.

Enhance your spiritual life this year by joining one of our Sunday morning classes. Sunday School is open to all ages and runs from 9:30 - 10:15 a.m. JUST DO IT!

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

The children's ministries have resumed for the year after having taken a break over Christmas. In the year 2014, we had our weekly lessons, but also field trips, a pizza and swimming party, a successful VBS, pantomime skits, carolling at the Senior Center, a three-month challenge that forged continuing bonds between children and adults within our congregation, and much more.

So far this year, we have made many resolutions to serve more and we look forward to announcing activities and events soon. The children have also undertaken to read the entire New Testament before June 1<sup>st</sup> for a chance to have dinner with Miss Monet, and they would appreciate your support and encouragement in reading their books. If you would like to contribute monetarily to the prizes and rewards system, please donate to the children's fund.

The time has come to begin the planning stages for VBS 2015. Looking ahead, the week of June 22<sup>nd</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> appears to be a good time to have it. (If anyone has objections to that week, I am open for discussion.) Here's the big news that I want

to get out early: **VBS time is being lengthened to 9 a.m.-2 p.m.!** This will give more time for lessons, meals, and getting to and from classes.

As always, volunteers will be crucial to VBS' success, and I look forward to hearing your suggestions and ideas this spring when we have a meeting for VBS. I am announcing these details early to give you plenty of time to plan your summer activities around this week and to remind you that if you would like to be a leader or teacher this year, please make no other plans for any day during VBS between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. You'll be hearing more from us soon.

- Monet Boardman,  
Director of Children's Ministries

## UNITED METHODIST WOMEN



On November 8, the UMW held its annual bazaar. We did a donation fundraiser for this beautiful quilt embroidered by Geraldine Crowell and hand-quilted by Virginia Berry. The quilt was won by Lydia Floyd. We want to thank everyone for making this event a huge success.

As part of the UMW being a 5-star unit we gave Special Mission Recognition pins to the following people Pat Barnett, Mary Jane Ellison, Jim Darden, Darrell Lanagan, Tony Kozlinski, and Jerry Tibbs. We also gave a gift in honor of the birth of Jerry Turner's

new grandbaby and one in memory of Frank Bobo.

## FEATURED MEMBER

**Editor's Note:** *As members, we each have special talents, skills, abilities and ways in which we serve the Lord. Collectively, we strive to serve as the hands, arms, legs, voice and heart of Christ in reaching others and in sharing His love. Our featured member this issue is Debby Campbell.*

For all the hats she wears, Debby Campbell needs a great big hat rack. On any given day, you can spot Debby as she goes about serving the church and the community in one of her many roles.

Originally from Michigan where she was a Special Education teacher for 32 years, Debby moved to Hohenwald about six years ago. She had come to attend a nephew's graduation in Middle Tennessee and was drawn to the area, she said. And since moving to Hohenwald and joining First United Methodist, she has immersed herself in service.

Among the many hats she wears are Liturgist, singing soprano in the choir, Sunday School Superintendent and beginning this month, she is the new UMW President. She also serves on several church committees, such as the Pastor-Staff Relations committee, the Nurture Committee, the Christian Outreach Committee. And Debby is filling in for church secretary Jennifer Bowen this winter and into the spring by working in the church office several days a week.

As part of her work with the Outreach Committee, Debby is actively involved in the local Food Bank, where she has been a volunteer for the last three years.

"Our church provides a lot of the volunteers at the Food Bank," she said. "The number of families served by the Food Bank keeps going up, so there is a real need in this

community for the food, clothing and household items offered there. But we always need more volunteers, especially men who are able to help lift and carry boxes and heavier items. The folks at Buffalo Valley have been good about sending in people to help out, but we would love to see more volunteers." Volunteers must be at least 16 years old. The Food Bank is open every day except Sunday and Tuesday.

With all the work she does, she still manages to enjoy her free time. She travelled out West, staying with a group of Hopi Indians for a week, and loves outdoor activities like rock climbing, camping, whitewater rafting and cross-country skiing. She has even skydived and worked on getting a pilot's license. "I would really like to learn to fly an ultra-light," she said.

Also on her "to-do" list are mastering the art of Southern cooking ("I made a sweet potato casserole during the holidays, and it actually tasted like it was supposed to," she laughed) and learning to play the mandolin ("but it makes my dogs howl," she said).



Debby was not raised in the Methodist Church, but studied the beliefs of other religions. She found what she was searching for in the beliefs in the Methodist Church and became a Methodist when she was living in Michigan. Once she attended Hohenwald First United Methodist, she said the connection and desire to worship here were "instant." "The people here are wonderful. They care. They miss you when you're not here," she said.

In addition to her church family here, her family includes her mother who lives in Florida, two sisters, three brothers, three nephews at UT-Knoxville, and her beloved pets, two dogs - Molly and Gabe - and two cats - Miss Kitty and Dixie.

## CHRISTIAN NURTURE COMMITTEE



The church Prayer Chain is our way of notifying members of illnesses, deaths, and other important news at a moment's notice. If you are not currently on the list and would like to be, please contact Debby Campbell at 796-2681 or 796-2626. If you would like to pass along information on the Prayer Chain, please use the same phone numbers.

## A Letter to Jesus



October 20, 2011

*Dear Jesus (God),*

*This is actually the first love letter that I've written you! The beautiful*

*fall colors of the trees and all the birds remind me of the love you show me.*

*I hear you whispering to me during the dark hours of night, and in the early morning I hear you telling me to be alert and enjoy a beautiful day with you. Without you by my side to protect me and guide me, I would feel so alone.*

*You have been such a comfort to me during loss of my companion of 51 years. Like him, you are by my side, and love me in all situations. You are aware of all my mistakes, and when possible help me to overcome them.*

*Because of your love, and the love of my wonderful family and friends, my life has been so good.*

*Thank you, Lord*

*Sue Bouldin*

## A LITTLE FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Suppose you had to run for church membership as a candidate runs for political office. Would you win or lose?

Suppose your membership was good for only one year and that your reelection depended upon the good you had done in the church during that time. Would you be reelected?

Suppose your name would be dropped from membership if you didn't win to Christ at least one person a year. How long would you remain a member?

Suppose you were asked to explain just why the church should keep your name on

the roll. Do you have a record of helpful service to offer in your defense?

Suppose every member of the church did as much work for the church as you are doing presently. Would more seats be needed or would the doors of the church be closed?

Suppose you were arrested for being a Christian. Would there be enough evidence to convict you?

**“Sharing” is the newsletter of First United Methodist Church of Hohenwald, TN, published six times a year as a service of the Christian Witness Committee. To submit news for “Sharing,” please contact Deborah Baker at 931-285-0058; email [deb.baker@wildblue.net](mailto:deb.baker@wildblue.net), or contact other members of the Christian Witness Committee.**

## **MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

### **Sunday Evening Bible Study Begins**

**Jan. 18!** Our new Sunday evening Bible study, “The Women,” begins at 5 p.m. January 18 and will run for six weeks. The study will highlight various women from the Old and New Testaments, and everyone is encouraged to attend. There is a \$7 fee to cover materials, and scholarships are available. Please see Pastor Drew if you need scholarship assistance.

### **Living Well with Chronic Conditions Workshop**

A free six-session Living Well workshop is offered by the Lewis County Health Department beginning February 6. There is no cost to attend but pre-registration is required. Call 931-796-2204, extension 107 to pre-register.

### **Upcoming Committee Meetings**

Committee on Christian Witness – Jan. 20, 10 a.m.  
Committee on Christian Outreach – Jan. 20, 6 p.m.  
Trustees – Jan. 21, 10 a.m.  
Finance Committee – Jan. 22, 11 a.m.  
Pastor-Staff Relations Committee – Jan. 22, 6 p.m.  
Administrative Board meeting – Feb. 1, 6 p.m.