

The Messenger

Pastor's Ponderings

Perhaps you are like I am . . . I thoroughly enjoy spring! I love the cool air in the mornings, seeing the farmers in the fields, the flowers poking through the earth, and the trees budding and the leaves forming. As the days get a little longer, signs of life are all around.



Spring is a time of renewal. It is a “beginning again.” Easter takes place in the spring as a sign, symbol, and reminder that everything has the potential of being reborn. We are Easter People. This means that we are those who live under a constant awareness that things which have died can live again! This includes hope, dreams, love, marriages, relationships and the list can go on and on. We serve the One who has the ability and desire to breathe new life into things, people, and situations where there seems to be no life. I love spring!

Spring is also a time of getting back to the basics. Spring training is a yearly reminder of this. Each spring baseball players begin again. They work on the fundamentals of hitting, throwing, fielding grounders as well as catching pop ups. Returning to the basics is one of the most productive ways of experiencing renewal.

In the Church we also have a need to get back to “the basics.” Our purpose is not to keep programs going. Our purpose is not to pay off the mortgage. Our purpose isn’t even to get folks to sit in a pew for an hour a week. Rather, our purpose is to produce fully devoted followers of Jesus the Christ! And what does a “fully devoted follower” look like? I believe that he/she is a person who is regularly working and exercising 5 specific spiritual muscles:

- An avid worshipper of God in public and private, (*worship*)
- A loyal friend who is spiritually-connected with other believers, (*fellowship*)
- A spirit-gifted servant who meets specific human needs, (*ministry*)
- A credible Christian witness in the eyes of nameable pre-Christians, (*evangelism*)
- A generous giver of energy & resources to God’s mission (*stewardship*)

So how are you doing? Are you regularly exercising and growing in each of the areas above?

On Sunday, May 2nd, we will be having a potluck following the 10:30 worship service. I want to encourage you to plan on participating. In addition to the fun and fellowship, there will be information and folks to talk with about various ministry opportunities coming up. This one day has the potential to help you exercise all the spiritual muscles listed above!! I look forward to this time together as we experience renewal by getting back to the basics this spring! ☺

Pastor Renner



United Methodist Women

What a beautiful spring we are having this year! The women have been busy with Easter Eggs, the Retired Teachers lunch and now the Mothers and Daughters Banquet. Information concerning the Circle Meetings and banquet are listed below:

MARY CIRCLE

Wednesday, May 19 at 9:00 a.m.
BREAKFAST served by members
in the Fellowship Hall
Everyone is invited
Lesson: Bernice Obrecht

MARTHA CIRCLE

Monday, May 17 at 7:00 p.m.
In the Home of Cathy Nichols , Hostess
Co-Hostess: Linda Grose
Devotions: Lois Shuman
Lesson: Joan Highland



Mothers & Daughters Banquet

Saturday, May 1 at 6pm

Friendship & Fellowship Halls

Remembering Nellie Lehman

Celebrate Life Music Group—Director: Polly Anderson


Audience of One Dance Group—Director: Cheryl Lehman

Meal is prepared and served by the men of the Methodist Church

Adults & Children 9 & up: \$7

Children 4—9: \$4

Under 4: free



Mothers-Daughters Banquet



Craft classes for the Christmas in July Bazaar have started and will continue until the sale in July. The classes meet in the church basement on Thursdays at 9:30am.



Library Update



The following books have been recently purchased for our library:

I Wish I Knew What to Do?! Edited by Beth Caris and Amy Looper (Teens tell it like it is...On what to say to get bullies to leave you alone!)
(United Methodist Women's Reading Program - Social Action)

Caring for Mother by Virginia Stem Owens (United Methodist Women's Reading Program - Nurturing for Community)

Growing Friendships by Tracy Klehn (United Methodist Women's Reading Program - Nurturing for Community)

Great Joy by Kate DiCamillo (United Methodist Women's Reading Program - Spiritual Growth)

I have some money left in the library fund, so if you have a suggestions for any books that you recommend that I purchase for our library, please let me know.

Keep on reading!

Lois Shuman



To the Methodist Church:

On behalf of the Sullivan School district and Project H.E.L.P., I would like to thank you for offering your facility for the preschool screening. Darla, Mike, and Pastor Renner were so helpful to see that all our needs were met. Thank you for offering you beautiful building to our community. Your hospitality is sincerely appreciated!

Ann Sanner, Sullivan School District

The church will recognize their graduates on May 23.
Please notify the church office of any church member who will graduate from college this spring.



**Welcome
Our New
Members**

We give thanks for all that God has already given you and we welcome you in Christian love” (The United Methodist Hymnal)

We give thanks to the Lord for those who recently have been received as a member of our First United Methodist Church. May their new Church home be a blessing to them as they continue to follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

Marvene Leach



Church Mixed Softball League

Contact: Wes Frederick at 454-9517 or
coachwf3@techemail.com

When: Sunday afternoons

For a full list of rules, purpose, & requirements check out www.ball4God.com

Please note: "regularly attend church" is understood as 2 out of 4 Sundays.



*If you have read this please call the church
office at 728-4436 or*

email jesusfirst33@hotmail.com.

We are evaluating how successful this media is.

Habitat in Need of Volunteers

Habitat for Humanity of Moultrie County is looking for volunteers for the Family Selection and Family Support Committees. Both committees work together to aid families in qualifying for houses and coaching the families as they prepare for homeownership.

One volunteer position needed is Application Reviewer, who is responsible for making sure homeowner applications are out in the community and are returned and processed in a timely manner. The person works with applicant families to review credit reports to help them improve budgeting and contact creditors; therefore, an understanding of confidentiality concerns is necessary. The Reviewer also coordinates with the Home Visitors when reviewing need for housing and recommending families to the Family Selection Committee.

Also needed is a Home Visitor, who conducts confidential home visits and evaluating the need for adequate housing with a partner. Often, this stage is the last in the homeowner approval process and serves as the primary account of the family's need for a house with the Family Selection Committee. This volunteer aids on an as-needed basis, usually making two to three home visits per year for approximately two hours each visit.

The third volunteer position needed is the Family Sponsor/Advocate/Friend (SAF), who aids the family for approximately six months—from the time when the family is selected through when the family moves into the new house. The SAF helps the family make design selections, conducts homeowner workshops, monitors sweat equity and other requirements, and serves as the liaison between Construction Committee and the family.

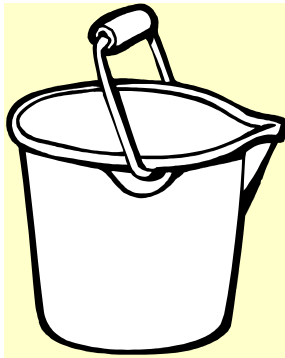
Finally, a Maintenance Advisor is needed to aid the family with home maintenance issues. This volunteer helps during the construction process but also helps the family the first year after house closing in the case an issue arises. This person helps the family understand the home maintenance basics, too, as a part of homeowner workshops and works in conjunction with the SAF.

Each position is a volunteer position and requires training regarding Habitat's principles. Volunteers must plan to attend monthly or as-needed meetings to help the committee select or aid a family through construction. Construction, Community Support, and other areas of Habitat also need volunteers, so those who are interested should contact the Habitat Office at 217-728-7386, leaving a name, phone number, and volunteer interest.

More information can be located at

<http://habitatmoultrieco.org>.





The Yellow Bucket offering for May will go to support DOVE.

The Yellow Bucket offering for April was \$245.66. and went to the Vacation Bible School.

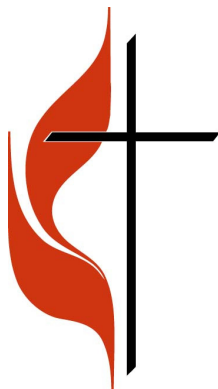
On Sunday, May 9 & Sunday, May 16 the Jr. High and Sr. High youth will be serving coffee and refreshments in the Fellowship Hall between the 8am and 10:30 services. They will be taking donations and all money raised will be used to purchase supplies needed to make "newcomer kits" for Cunningham Children's Home.



Birthday Party

Delores Weishaupt's children will be having a birthday party for her on June 5th at noon at the Wyman Park Pavilion. All are invited to celebrate with her. No gifts please, a side dish to pass is welcome. If there is rain the party will move to the Methodist Church Fellowship Hall.

The deadline for the June Newsletter is Monday, May 17.



First United Methodist Church

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Office Hours
Monday - Friday 8:00 am - 1:00 pm

**Visit us on the web:
www.sullivanfirstumc.org**