

First United Methodist Church Messenger

drawing near to the heart of Christ

Newsletter - August 2011

THE CRUX OF CAMPMEETING



One Sunday in July, when we read Paul's words about "forgetting what lies behind and reaching out toward what lies ahead," I said that Paul wasn't just talking about forgetting and foregoing the bad things of the past. Sometimes it means we forget and forego some of the good things of our past because God is calling us to a new Way.

I suggested that one of those "good things" might be Campmeeting. Several folks were worried that I was going to call off campmeeting month in August. That is not the case. **We are having CAMPMEETING MONTH.**

My question is why? The history of campmeeting, in the "old days," was a time for evangelism and for faith renewal. People would come to the campground during the down time before or

after harvest and camp for a week, listen to traveling preachers, and sing familiar songs. In our congregation, the designation of August as Campmeeting Month doesn't go back terribly far -- less than 20 years. It has been a time to be less formal in worship and to sing out of the Cokesbury Hymnal. The choir music is more Southern Gospel style. But why do we continue to do it?

For some in our congregation it is a meaningful experience. It reminds them of their childhood. And that is a good thing. But if worship is to be a way of reaching out to new people, especially to younger people, the language of Campmeeting and the songs we tend to sing are not particularly attractive or invitational. Worship becomes less of a pathway to the heart of God and more of a stumbling block.

So, as we celebrate Campmeeting Month, let's ask ourselves about our purpose...in remembering the way it used to be. Our purpose for how God is calling us to be in the future. And how we might be more invitational and inspirational in how we worship, what we sing, and how we embody the Presence of God in the world.

The question is, **WHAT IS THE CRUX OF CAMPMEETING?** Each week we will frame our worship with that question. I hope you will pray with me and for me and for one another.

Serving Christ with you under the dome of God's watchfulness and care,

Our Christian Sympathy...

...to the family of Chet Goodyear who died July 4, 2011.

...to the family of Tom Hogan who died July 14, 2001.

...to Rebecca Kershaw-Brunell and family in the death of her sister, Jacqueline Ruffin.

...to Ethelyn Mozingo and family in the death of her husband, J.C. Mozingo.



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Worship - Formation - Service

under the Dome of God's watchfulness & care

Formation and Service - *Chris Ray*

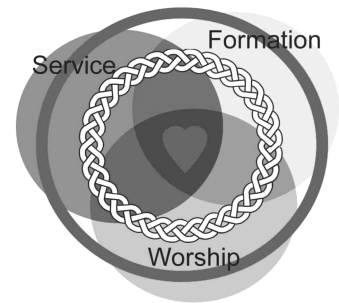
Formation:

The new free form discussion group started with huge success! Many people have already been part of this group and it is a great opportunity for those who are not connected with a Sunday Morning Journey Group, anyone visiting, and traveling members of our congregation. We will journey together as we continue to grow closer to the heart of Christ. This group meets in the Fellowship Hall during the Sunday Morning Journey Group time.

The new brochure and storyboard is out! This effort to make everyone aware of what formative opportunities are offered in our church is available for anyone.

Long-term Disciple Bible study: A 36-week in-depth Bible study that begins in September and goes through May. This exciting and dynamic approach to Bible study created by the United Methodist Church focuses on the disciple as a learner, believer, follower, one who proclaims and servant. For more information contact Andy Johnson (228) 863-0047 or email him andy@fumc-gulfport.org.

Short-term Journey Groups will be starting in the fall. More info will be coming soon!



Service:

August 17-21: Mission trip to Rayne, LA. We will leave on Wednesday the 17th, work Thursday through Saturday and attend church on Sunday the 21st before returning home. Cost is roughly \$15.00 per person a night. If you want to be part of the work team but cannot make the whole trip, you are more than welcome to be part of it when you can. If you are interested in being part of the work team or the support team or have any questions please see Chris Ray.

Homeless Day Shelter: There is a great need for those who are less fortunate to have a place to receive mail and take showers. We are looking into opening our church two days a week, as a place where people can come. We are still in the early stages of planning this; if you are interested in being part of the homeless day shelter, please see Chris Ray, Roger Brunell or Rebecca Kershaw-Brunell.

There is a lot going on in the life of our church right now, all are invited, and I encourage you to be part of the Formation and Service Pillars. If you have any questions please call Chris Ray 863-0047 or email him at chris@fumc-gulfport.org.

Sassy Seniors on the Road

The Sassy Seniors will go "On the Road" to The Chimneys Restaurant on Hwy 90, just west of the Marriott Courtyard Hotel, on Wednesday, August 17 at 1:00 p.m. Please make reservations by Monday, August 16 by calling Ada Reid, 864-4721 or email her at slntonsr@cablone.net. We look forward to seeing you there.

Seniors 2011

Seniors 2011 is scheduled for Thursday, August 25 at 2:00 p.m. at the Handsboro Community Center. Dr. George Leonard will share on "Dealing with Grief." Wayne Stephens will entertain us with his beautiful music. The program is free with door prizes, refreshments and handouts. Sponsored by Garden Park Medical Center and hosted by Ada Reid.



A Word from Your Music Ministry

Make plans to join your Chancel Choir and special guests on Sunday, August 28 for our Campmeeting Service of Music. There will be a Potluck Dinner at 5:30 followed by the Service at 6:30 in the Sanctuary.

This will be a great time of music and worship -- you don't want to miss it!

Also, if you have ever been interested in singing or seeing what it's like, visit a Chancel Choir rehearsal! We meet Wednesdays from 7:00-8:30 on the 3rd floor and would love to have you as our guest as we prepare for worship and special events.

More than Music, we are Family!
Blessings,
Jonathan

W.I. Smith Fund

The service pillar is in need of donations for the W.I. Smith Fund to help people with assistance.

Also: Servants wanted! When we have enough funds, we would like to have someone willing to come in and help with assistance on Tuesday's and Thursday's. If you have questions or would like to help, please contact Chris Ray, 863-0047.

Minister to Families with Children and Youth

- Ryan George

Once upon a time a family brought home a little bundle of joy. They laughed, cried, and kissed skinned knees as the sweet child grew up. Then one day, puberty hit and all joy was forever lost. The end.

If you're thinking something is askew with that story, I'm with you. Parenting teenagers certainly carries with it a new set of challenges; however that doesn't mean we mark it as hopeless. But to put you at ease, let me start by saying I think you're a great parent.

You might have a load of evidence that points to the contrary and even if all of that is true, I want to say you still are a great parent... just maybe not how you want to be.

One part of parenting a teen is the interactions, an example of interactions is fighting. Example:

You're going to (fill in the blank) because I'm the adult, you're the kid. You live under my roof and I make the rules, so you better get used to it! None of that is going to change because I SAID SO!

Sound familiar? If not, please know this is followed by a door slamming. Let's hold that for a minute and look elsewhere.

A relationship is like a bridge. You and the other person/teen hold it up, your foundation is trust, the road is your relationship, and information moves across the bridge. Got it? What happens if the bridge doesn't have a solid foundation? Saying the same thing more clearly: if the teen doesn't trust you, you can't send information to them.

Most relationships start with a shaky bridge. You talk about weather, give compliments, not sending more than what the bridge can bear. Some relationships can handle huge, important chunks of information. Rules, discipline, and hard truths fit here. These relationships are rare and powerful in our lives. Those bridges take work and aren't built in a day.

Back to the fight: are we fighting to be right or are we fighting for the relationship? If I'm right (however that is decided), what do I get? Does it produce love, joy, peace, compliance? Or may I get the opposite result.

If I fight for the relationship, I am given trust. This is huge, and is more important than me trusting them. Read that again: it's more important for them to trust me. Trust gives me room to talk.

To fight for the relationship, instead of fighting to be right, looks different and takes time. Especially when not fighting, because you're always securing your foundation. So find ways to show your teen they can trust you. Invest in the relationship and watch the bridge get stronger.



Please Pray for....

...David Bittle, nephew of David and Barbara Powell, who is in Afghanistan.

...Lee Farley, grandson of Sharon Olson, who is in the Marines.

...Tyler Schultz, grandson of Gene and Betty Schultz, who is in the U.S. Air Force.

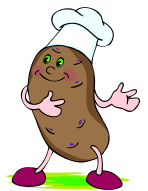
...Brister Bishop, son of Wade and Ruth Bishop, who is in the U.S. Navy.

5th Sunday Lunch Sunday, July 31

Everyone is invited to our 5th Sunday Lunch in the Fellowship Hall at 11:30. The luncheon is hosted by the Methodist Men. Don Warren will prepare: Hamburger Steak with Gravy and Onions, Cream Potatoes, Vegetable, Roll, Cornbread, Cake and Tea. Cost: By donation.

Baked Potato/Salad Luncheon

On Sunday, August 14, the Methodist Women's Group and Chancel Choir are combining to provide a Baked Potato / Salad Luncheon in the Fellowship Hall following Journey Classes. Donations will be taken for the meal. Proceeds will be used in our congregation for members who need assistance with rent and utility bills. Plan now to attend, and bring a friend! Take-out meals will also be available. If you are unable to be present that day, please consider making a contribution. Make your check payable to 1st UMC and note that it is for the potato/salad luncheon.



The Messenger
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Mission Trip to Rayne, LA:

On March 5th a tornado hit this small community. We are taking a group to help rebuild this community, August 17-21. We will leave on that Wednesday, work Thursday through Saturday

and then attend church on Sunday the 21st before returning home. Cost is \$15.00 per person a night. If you would like to join us or have any questions, please call Chris Ray, 863-0047. The team has a list of items needed for the mission: Snacks, Breakfast Food, Water and Gatorade. Monetary donations will be appreciated. Please make checks payable to 1st UMC and mark them for "Rayne Mission Trip."

Rev. Guss Shelly

Our former member, Bob Smith, is building a website for Guss Shelly. The website will feature Guss' "Ramblings." If you would like to visit the site it is www.gussramblings.com.

Guss has retired and he and Sarah now reside at 703 James St., Amory, MS 38821.



The next reading selection of the **Christian Book Club** is

Heaven is for Real by Todd Burpo. The discussion meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 25, at the home of Diane Miller, 620 Charleston Lane in Long Beach, phone 867-1244.

Gifts Given

In loving memory of Dot Thompson
Given by Margie Crosby

In loving memory of Euvie Denley
Given by Ellen and Larry Montoya

In loving memory of Chet Goodyear
Given by Vesta Wachs,
Kaye and Peter Bernheim,
Dr. and Mrs. G.B. Flagg

In loving memory of Tom Hogan
Given by Becky and Dennis Brooks,
Mary and George East, Ellen and Larry Montoya
Donna and Pete Snell

In honor of Joyce and George Leonard
Given by Barby White

Crux [kruks]

--n. , pl. cruxes, cruces

1. The basic, central, or critical point or feature a vital or decisive stage, point, etc [as in the phrase 'the crux of the matter']

2. a baffling problem or difficulty

3. *mountaineering*: the most difficult and often decisive part of a climb or pitch

4. [from Latin: *cross*]

A DECISION POINT. THE MOST DIFFICULT AND DECISIVE PART OF A JOURNEY

THE CROSS

CAMPMEETING 2011: THE CRUX OF THE MATTER

Aug 7: When I Survey the Wondrous Cross
1Corinthians 1.17-18 1Peter 2.24

Aug 14: Old Rugged Cross
Hebrews 12.2 Colossians 2.14-15

Aug 21: Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone

Aug 28:

Near the Cross/The Way of the Cross Leads Home
Ephesians 2.16 and Colossians 1.20



GOSPEL SING WORSHIP on August 28

Potluck at 530
Worship 630 - 730