

The Messenger

First Presbyterian Church
Cookeville, TN 38501
www.firstprescookeville.org

May 2011

Watching Things Grow

Over the past couple of weeks I have been fascinated by the progress being made at Dogwood Park. During Holy Week, dozens of trees were planted. A hydraulic auger was used to drill holes for the trees. It took only a few minutes to dig a hole for each of the trees. Then, several workers grappled the heavy root ball into place. There are still many trees to plant but the park is really beginning to take shape and I look forward to enjoying the view for many years to come.

It has also been very interesting to realize that the park is, in many ways, symbolic of so much of life. Sometimes, it seems as though nothing is happening. I looked out from Fellowship Hall for weeks and wasn't able to tell any difference. Of course, many of the workers on the park project have other responsibilities as well and they are not always available to work in the park. Nevertheless, there are other times when I will recognize a flurry of activity, such as last week when so many trees were planted.

The life of the church follows similar patterns. Holy week is one of those times when the church is filled with busy people. There are many activities happening in the church and we seem to be bumping into each other. The period right after Easter is often a bit slower and gives everyone a chance to breathe and catch up on things we put aside during the Lenten run up to Holy Week and Easter.

Of course, things can happen to change the pattern, such as people going into the hospital unexpectedly, or, a special group of visitors, like the Monterey Chorus. We have to do our best to be prepared for the unexpected and try to turn whatever happens into good works for God. If we ever get to the point where we are not busy, then the church will be in trouble.

We are coming to a point in the life of this church when it is time to reevaluate our ministry and mission. I have said many times that we are a welcoming church but not an inviting church. Every church believes that it is a friendly church. We are always happy to see people come through the doors but what happens next is also critically important. There are times when I think that as a church we lack tolerance, we lack commitment and we lack courage. We are happy to meet people who are like us but less willing to get to know people who might be different from us. We are not unusual in this regard but we need to challenge ourselves to be more like Jesus, who went out of his way to welcome and invite people who did not appear to be the most respectable or desirable types of people.

Even the most casual of observers will be aware that our church has changed dramatically over the last five years and will change again over the next five year. We can simply sit back and wait to see what happens, or, we can work now to influence the way in which we will change. I will be traveling to see friends and family in Minnesota this week. I am interested in finding out how things have changed since seeing them last. Then I look forward to sharing some of my observations with you as we move into the future together. Trusting in God's Spirit for guidance and strengthened by the love of Christ, we can do wonderful things for God and for our neighbors.

Peace,
Pat H.

Monterey High School Chorus

On Sunday, May 1, the high school chorus from Monterey will be with us in worship. The chorus is preparing for a summer trip to Italy. It will be a fantastic experience for these young people, many of whom have never been out of the country or flown on an airplane. They will sing a number of songs for our worship service and we will provide lunch for them following worship. Anyone who would like to make a donation to assist the group is welcome to mark it for the Monterey Chorus and place it in the offering on Sunday, or bring it into the church office during the week. There will still be communion on Sunday, May 1.

C2G Discussion group

The leaders of Come 2Gather will hold two afternoon discussions on Rob Bell's latest book, "Love Wins." This book has sparked a lot of questions regarding the nature of heaven and hell. The discussion meetings will be held on Thursday, May 12 and Thursday, May 19, beginning at 3pm at Sweet Sallie's on the West Side. For more information, talk to Andy Smith or Pat Handlson. Everyone is welcome to have a cupcake and share their thoughts.

DINNER OUT GROUP - SATURDAY, MAY 21

Please join us at Mama Rosa's Italian Restaurant, 200 S. Lowe Avenue on Saturday, May 21, at 5:00 p.m. Mama Rosa's is Cookeville's oldest family run Italian Restaurant which serves New York style pizza and Sicilian dinners made to order. Sign up sheets and menus will be located at both doors of the sanctuary. Please call Annette Coorts (526-3301) if you have signed up and are unable to attend.

Peace in the Middle East?

Yael Dayan, the daughter of Israeli General Moshe Dayan, will be speaking in Nashville on Monday, May 9, beginning at 7pm. Her topic is the two state solution, which involves Israel returning land taken during previous fighting in order to create a separate Palestinian State. Security concerns make it necessary to register for this event in advance. Anyone interested in attending can contact Pat Handlson for information on how to register.

Holy Week Thanks

Thanks to everyone who helped make this year's Holy Week services and lunches a great success. All the planning and preparation make the event go smoothly. Once again our church was a showcase for ecumenical cooperation in the community. In addition to the worship and fellowship we enjoyed during the week, lunch-time donations totaled nearly \$2,700. That money will be split between the food shelf at Helping Hands and Meals on Wheel of Putnam County.

Special thanks to Raj Kumar, who worked extra hard to make sure that the services were on the church's web site later the same day. Several folks who couldn't be in attendance let us know they were excited to be able to listen in on their computers. The church's web site is www.firstprescookeville.org and you can still listen to Holy Week and Sunday services. Next year, Holy Week will be the first week of April.



Financial Update

At the end of March, the church's overall financial status is good. Giving for the first three months of 2011 was just under \$63,000. Expenses for the year so far have been just over \$62,000, including about \$14,000 for the new virtual organ components.

For the past several years, the church has started out the year with a strong core of regular giving. Now as we move into the spring and summer months, it will be important to remain committed to our support of the church's ministry and mission. Thanks to all for your generous support of the church.

WORKSHOP ON POTABLE WATER FOR UPPER CUMBERLAND HOMES

By Eliseo Ríos

Cookeville's First Presbyterian Church is hosting a free workshop on providing clean, potable water for the Upper Cumberland region. The workshop will be held on Saturday, May 7th from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM at the church, 20 North Dixie Avenue. Churches in the Upper Cumberland and surrounding areas as well as individuals interested in learning about the Clean Water Project in the Upper Cumberland are welcome. Please contact the church office, 921-526-4424 or email firstprescooke@frontiernet.net by May 1st to register.

The workshop will cover: Upper Cumberland water survey work, water testing and analysis, UV treatment system designs and installations, plus training on system operation and maintenance.

First Presbyterian Church, under the guidance of Living Waters for the World – Appalachian Network, Synod of the Living Waters, has joined other churches in a new mission activity – the Upper Cumberland Clean Water Project (UCCWP). This project will provide, at low or no cost to the homeowner, clean, safe water for homes with a problem water source. Homes which have wells or springs as their water source are prime candidates for water testing and possible treatment. First Presbyterian Church of Cookeville has recently installed two water treatment systems in Tazewell and one in Morgan County. The church is now focusing on water needs in our area, particularly homes located in areas flooded last May and August in Spring Creek Valley and along the Roaring River. Other areas surveyed recently include Poplar Springs, Rocky Spring Church Road, Mill Creek Road and the Calfkiller Valley.

Two Spring Creek Valley homes are scheduled to have treatment systems installed soon. Westminster Presbyterian Church of Nashville has joined the Cookeville church for this UCCWP mission. According to the program leader, engineer Bill Swim, this project is not limited to Presbyterian churches. “We would like to have other churches as well as individuals participate in this mission.”

Individuals interested in having their water tested are invited to contact Bill Swim at [931-644-1243](tel:931-644-1243), the church office at [931-526-4424](tel:931-526-4424), or email firstprescooke@frontiernet.net. Visit the Church's website at www.firstprescookeville.org for more information



Read Anything Good Lately?

By Thelma Johnson

The Fifth Witness, by Michael Connelly

For fans of crime novels, it doesn't get any better than Connelly. His latest is a Mickey Haller courtroom thriller about a woman activist who has made a name for herself in the L. A. media by threatening the companies that are foreclosing on homes. When one of the CEOs is killed, she is arrested on a small amount of forensic evidence. She has dreams of glory--a movie and book--but her attorney wants only to win his case. Haller learns that winning is not always winning, and losing is not always losing. This one is a page turner and the pace doesn't slow.

The Dressmaker of Khair Khana, by Gayle Tzemach Lemmon.

This is a true story of how one Arab woman became a businesswoman and rescuer of her family of sisters, and succeeded in spite of the rigid regulations of the Taliban. Kamilla's family, living in a section of Kabul known as Khair Khana, suddenly found themselves in an impossible situation. Their father became involved in fighting against the Taliban, leaving his wife and family without means of support in a society that forbade women from holding jobs, walking on the street without a male escort, and appearing outside their homes without the traditional garb that obscured every feature except the eyes. Kamilla learned to sew from her older married sister, and then rallied her younger sisters into forming a factory in their home, turning out dresses to be worn under the outer garment. She sold the dresses to local shopkeepers, and then started a school to teach other women to sew. Her courage in the face of possible imprisonment, torture, and even death is an inspiration and a lesson to those who feel helpless in an oppressive society. She found that there are ways to conform and at the same time succeed in being able to help herself and others to not only survive but to prevail.

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BIRTHDAYS

- 01—Marie Overstreet
 - 08—Rachel McCormick
 - 09—Pat Handlson
 - 09—Mary Ann Neil
 - 11—Emily Thurmond
 - 13—Emily Hansen
 - 15—Mike Pumar
 - 17—Bill Klug
 - 23—Ike Synnestuedt
 - 24—Gene Ann Hunter
 - 24—Jerry Overstreet
 - 27—Whit Whitaker
- ANNIVERSARIES**
- 01—Katie and Krishna Kumar
 - 15—Jennette and Angelo Volpe
 - 23—Ernest and Lucille Robertson

Church Office:
 Mon.-Fri. 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
 (931) 526-4424
 (firstprescooke@frontiernet.net)
 Pastor: The Rev. Pat Handlson
 home: 526-5486
 (phandlson@frontiernet.net)
 www.firstprescookeville.org

**Next newsletter deadline is
 May 23**
 Phone Debbie Handlson at 536-5486
 or e-mail (phandlson@aol.com) or
 Katie Kumar at 528-7968 or
 e-mail (KJKumar@tntech.edu)
 with any information
 you would like to have included.

In Our Prayers
***In Nursing Homes or Assisted Living
 Facilities:*** Helen Copeland; Edith Jared,
 Joanne Miller, Frances Snyder.
Keep in prayer also: Dick Armstrong;
 Mike Birdwell; Peggy Campbell; Charlie
 Craig; Don Medley; Hugh Piercey; Mar-
 tha Jane & Whit Whitaker; Mary Smith;
 Grace Anna Sine’s brother, Don Green;
 Linda Wilson’s sister, Diane Roby; Jean
 Metz; Linda Furtsch; and the people in
 the armed services, especially Giles Ev-
 ans.

Make a Note of These Changes:

Addresses
 Todd and Wendy Chapman
 1371 Frisbie Lane, 38501

Joanne Miller
 1250 Cedar Hills Drive, 38506

Ginny and King Morton
 189 City Lake Lane
 Livingston, TN 38570

Robert See
 2199 Bear Creek Circle, 38506
 Phone 854-0841

And Phone Number Changes
 Gene Anne and Gordon Hunter 526-9011
 Sue Rich—854-0279

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