



Crossville First United Methodist Church

The Church With the Window on the Heart of Our Town

The Holiness of Lent and Holy Week Pastor Drew Shelley

Dear Friends,

As we draw near to Holy Week and Easter, I hope you are having a spiritual season of Lent. Our church is offering many opportunities to take time and grow in our faith. I'm grateful to be a part of such a journey.

Personally, I have found the disciplines of prayer and fasting to be deeply meaningful this Lenten season. I have been fasting with a few others each Friday throughout the season and have found it so enriching to my life. I suppose it's the first time I have practiced fasting consistently for a determined period. To be quite honest, I've never had the discipline to do this well! Despite falling off the schedule several times, I have felt a deeper closeness with God, not just on Friday, but each day.

This year, our 2018 noon-day Holy Week services will have a different feel. We will immerse ourselves in a service of prayer and Holy Communion each day. Special music will be rendered, and we will share in a time of reflection. The difference will be no preaching and no meal to follow, but we believe the simplicity of this service will be personally enriching to all who attend.

Our Maundy Thursday and Good Friday evening services of worship will be at 7:00 pm on these two sacred days of Holy Week. We look forward to this week of connected times.

As you read through the pages of this newsletter, know that God is very much at work in this place. You will read stories of lives changed, opportunities for growth and discipleship, and stories of Hope. It is my prayer that each of us might be well informed about all that God is doing in Crossville FUMC so that we can share it with others and invite them to join us on this journey.

Know that you are in my prayers as together we walk these final days of this very special season of the Christian Year.

I love you, Drew

MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE

Pastor Louis Davis and Scott Looney

On this night, called Maundy Thursday, March 29th, at 7:00 pm, we will commemorate two significant final actions remembered about Jesus and his disciples: (1) the incredibly humbling act of Jesus washing the disciples' feet and (2) the Last Supper which Jesus shared with his disciples before his crucifixion.

The Maundy Thursday Service will be a perfect marriage with our Good Friday Service that is to be held the following night. Together, they will bring us into a memorable in-depth experience and understanding about this journey to the cross. We do invite you to come with an open heart and open mind and to feel free to partake in the washing of either hands or feet during the service.

Thereupon, whether you accept the symbolic washing, you are encouraged to worship and observe as a witness.

Seek the Right Place

Associate Pastor, Louis Davis

A funny thing happened one time in the life of our family. Someone, not to mention any names, drove the family van and put the key in a safe spot, which just so happened not to be the regular place where it belonged. Whoever did this put the key on top of the freezer, so it would not get lost. Meanwhile, some needed medicine was in the van.

A couple of days later, the family desired to go somewhere, but the key could not be found because of its being in a safe spot. After much searching and calling and throwing a pile of clothes to a different spot on the floor, this person (okay, I'll tell you that Mari Davis is married to him) finally found the key in the spot that was deemed safe and where it wouldn't get lost.

I have thought about the incident and would like to share what I feel the Lord was teaching me through it. The medicine was right there in plain sight through the window, but it could not be retrieved because of a barrier. The Lord showed me that this kind of happening occurs frequently in our lives.

The Lord is the answer to our hurts, our destructive habits, our hang-ups, and our sin. By these behaviors, WE have put up barriers. Just like the situation without my usual knowing thought, what we needed then and what we need now is the key. For some reason, we do not turn to God, who is the answer. Being unmindful like I was, we put God somewhere in our lives that we think

is a good place. Unfortunately, when we realize we need Him, we cannot find Him.

This need for God is why it is SO very important to have an active prayer life, to be involved in a small group or Sunday school class, and to be in worship with our brothers and sisters as often as we can. Through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit, we need to be so close to God that, when different situations arise in our lives, we are not affected by obstacles. Rather, what we see is Jesus.

If you have a barrier in your life that keeps you from experiencing everything God wants you to know, then, through prayer, ask God to show it to you and ask Him to tear down the barrier in the name of Jesus. Some wonderful small groups are in place at FUMC, and if you are currently not in a small group or Sunday school class, please consider being part of an existing one. Likewise, if you want to talk about starting a new small group, please see Drew or me. This kind of association will help you when certain situations arise in your life. You will find people who are ready to help you in your time of need or to celebrate with you in the time of joy. In addition, you will be able to grow in your relationship with God.

May God bless you as you seek ways to grow closer to Him.

Letter to the Congregation

Dear Friends,

I hope you all are doing well! I want to thank you for your continued love and support as I finish seminary, got married, and made the move to Alabama. I do want to let you know that I have discontinued my candidacy within the Caney Fork River District. I am grateful for the role The United Methodist Church has played in my life and for the role it will continue to play as I answer the call to ministry. My discontinuation in this district was inevitable, as I would have needed to become a candidate in the conference in which I now live to continue the candidacy process. However, before I make the decision to commit to that, I am taking time to answer God's call to rest and reflect. It is important to me personally and to my calling that I take time to continue getting settled in Birmingham and use my time to continue learning about my new community. This does not mean that I will never seek recertification. It simply means that I am taking a season to continue prayerfully discerning what is next and focusing on my family and the new relationships I've built in my community.

You all have been so encouraging throughout this process, and I am incredibly grateful for that. I thank you for supporting me throughout this season of life, and I look forward to sharing with you how The Lord is working in the future.

Sincerely,
Anna Hill Dickson

Editor: Anna Mason Hill was approved as a candidate for ministry by the Charge Conference on October 5, 2015. She delivered her sermon in a service for the occasion. Subsequently, her inspired message, that revealed spiritual insights about her calling to the ministry, was posted in November 2017 on the FUMC Blog, "The People and the Stories of Crossville FUMC," found on the church website.

Lunch and Learn: Bridges Out of Poverty

Donna King, Next Generations Team

“Christ gave those gifts to prepare God’s holy people for the work of serving. He gave those gifts to make the body of Christ stronger.” (Ephesians 4:12 (International Children’s Bible))

Jesus spent the bulk of his ministry training a small group of disciples rather than an army of followers. He knew that the future of the church depended upon them, and he spent three years equipping them for ministry.

As we move forward in ministry to children, youth, and families, we are scheduling a series of get-togethers called Lunch and Learn. These small group gatherings will be opportunities for us to dig deeper into ministry on a variety of topics and to help us understand how we can more effectively participate than we are now in the cause of Christ. Some intents will be church-wide

opportunities while others will be ministry area specific.

Our first Lunch and Learn, called **Bridges Out of Poverty**, will be Sunday, April 29. Cindy Putman, Ready-to-Learn Project Manager for WCTE-TV, will be the facilitator. This church-wide training event focuses on the culture of poverty and how it affects children, youth, families, and our community. Our wonderful Missions Committee will take the lead on this program.

On April 29, lunch will be served immediately following the second service. The session will be from 1:00-3:00 pm. Registration information is coming soon!

Plans and Progress for Child Care Programs

John Worley, Director

Plans for our Summer School Camp Program are almost complete, and registration is now under way. If you have a child or know someone with children who are ages 5-12 and registered for K-6th grade, please know that we have a place for these youngsters in our summer camp program. We plan to have fun, food, field trips, swimming, games, crafts, community visitors and much more! Registration packets are ready for pick-up and should be claimed as soon as possible at the church’s main office.

Congratulations are due to our After-School Care Teachers and Directors who have taken training courses through Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance, also known as TECTA. Shannon Ketron, Debbie Whittle, Kirsten Cox, Summer Dyer, and Jeannine Schley completed this 30-hour training course, which was an essential component to increasing the quality of our programs to 3-Star Level. Through that achievement, our program and its teachers are being featured as a success story in the next TECTA quarterly report.

I am very proud of the hard work and dedication that these teachers and staff have given to the children in this church ministry at Crossville FUMC. They deserve our expressions of “Thank You” and “Congratulations” for jobs well done.

Music Matters

Kimberly White, Director of Music

Please plan to join us for the **Good Friday Service**, March 30, at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. This is a service of darkness which reflects how fellow Christians worshipped in ancient times. Our service will include musical selections that express the somberness of this Holy day. As believers, our Easter awakening is made complete when we journey through the darkness of Good Friday. This year our Easter service will begin where our Good Friday service ends, making it a perfect time to experience this service of music and darkness. Now is the time if you haven’t participated in the past.

Children’s Ministry Needs...

Individually wrapped candy

•Bins will be in the Narthex and by the Farris entrance.

•Donations will be accepted through Wednesday, March 28th.

Easter Egg Hunt Saturday, 3/31/18

1:00 p.m.

at the campground

Online Church Directory

Jill Kemmer, Media Ministries

Many folks have asked, "When will we be updating our online church directory?"

The answer is, "Very soon!"

Around November/December 2017, we updated our church database to a more secure and easier to use backup system. As with any new software, its application takes time to get all the pieces moved over and tested before introducing new components. Our testing has been about a 4-months process and is still ongoing. When our initiation process is complete, we will have an improved way to update our online church directory by giving the

control for personal input to you, the members of our congregation.

With this new system, you will have a functional way to update your personal information along with your individual and family photos. Your own input helps the office staff to make sure that the church's membership data are as correct as possible and in real time. The system is enhanced with a new smartphone app wherein calling, texting, or emailing a church family member is only a touch away.

We are very excited about this new online, database program, and we look forward to going live very

soon! In preparation for this opportunity, you may see some strange emails that come from me or from the company, Servant Keeper or Servant PC. Please note that these are legitimate emails to help make this next step happen. We will do our best to inform you before one of these emails is sent, and we will be available to answer any questions you may have.

We look forward to this next step and appreciate your patience as it is finetuned. The outcome will be very exciting!!!

"You Need This More Now Than When I Die"

Vera Foster

On a cold, gloomy day in January 1962, I returned to the mobile home which I was sharing with three college friends and found a package from my Dad. My heart was pounding from curiosity because Daddy never wrote letters OR mailed packages. That was Mother's job. I ripped the package open and found Daddy's favorite study Bible inside.

He had scribbled "Vera Lou, I think you need this more now than when I die," on a single sheet of paper and signed it "Love, Dad."

Wow! I always thought that he had eyes in the back of his head, but now I was wondering if he could know what was on my mind and in my heart.

With two quarters of college classes left before graduation, I was overwhelmed with studies, wedding plans, and financial concerns. Our family owned and operated a small dairy farm, but with a family of seven children, finances, and budgets were a challenge for my parents. Wanting to be independent and helpful, I worked at a secretarial job during the summer months. On campus, I worked part-time as secretary for the Director of Student Affairs.

During the recent Christmas break, Daddy sensed my anxiety, and I think he was also concerned about my spiritual well-being since I had somewhat strayed from the church while I was attending college. Our family attended church regularly, which meant Sunday mornings, Sunday evenings, and Wednesday nights. My siblings and I had all enjoyed Sunday School classes, youth groups, and church camps. We were taught that God and family should always be the center of our lives.

Sometime during the previous fall, when we were all together in 1961, Daddy told us about a family he knew who had lost their parents. Settling the estate had caused lots of friction, jealousy and anger among the siblings, severing their relationships. He shared this story, reinforcing the value of God and family over the value of material things. During that conversation, I told him I only wanted his Bible when he died. Nothing else was as valuable to me.

Because of my dad's great wisdom and insight, his Bible was an ever-present reminder to me of God's love and a father's love during the next 42 years until his death.

Editor's note: Vera Foster participates in the Wednesday Night Live class, Writing Your Faith Story. Class assignments lead to creative writings about faith related, life events and ways to express one's feelings. Her story is an example of the class objective to produce a good story with good writing craft.

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