

# Crossville First

## United Methodist Church

The Church With the Window on the Heart of Our Town

### Special Called General Conference

Drew Shelley, Senior Pastor

Louis Davis, Associate Pastor

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

As you have likely heard, representatives of our global United Methodist Church will be gathering for a called General Conference in St. Louis, Missouri, February 23rd – 26th, 2019. This session comes on the heels of the work of the Commission on the Way Forward. Their careful work focused on the issues of human sexuality as given in the UMC Discipline and the church's possible response to changing cultural views.

The stance of the UMC affirms the sacred worth of all human beings and our obligation to love and welcome all persons whom Jesus loves, which is everybody. Regarding homosexuality and the practice thereof, the church does not permit the rites of ordination or marriage of homosexual persons. The calling of the General Conference is to address the significant tension around these issues presently at work within our United Methodist Connection.

In October 2018, we held three listening sessions here at Crossville First UMC to discuss these prevailing issues: (1) the stated details of proposals, (2) the possibilities of what changes might happen, and (3) the most basic concern – *what happens to US if something changes?* Our time together was rich. We heard clarifying details, asked lots of questions, and spent time talking in small groups around tables about these important matters.

I was proud of you after these listening sessions. The consensus of our gatherings was: *"We will love our way through this, following Jesus, loving and respecting each other, and staying focused on the sacred worth of all persons whom Jesus loves, which is everybody."* You made these terms very clear despite widely varying opinions, thoughts, and ideas around the issues of human sexuality.

As the conference proceedings go forth, remember this: the only body that can speak on behalf of the United Methodist Church is the General Conference. You will hear claims of varying persuasions attempting to speak on behalf of the church, but you can help people remember that all the talk is subservient to the official word which will only come from the General Conference. Facebook will NOT likely be our friend, so be ready and be patient and remind others that we have nothing to report until the General Conference speak.

We will keep you posted. Please join us in prayer for the General Conference and for the United Methodist witness as we go forward.

Much love,  
Drew and Louis

**Open Hearts**

**Open Minds**

**Open Doors**

## What Trust Makes Possible

Louis Davis, Associate Pastor

*Luke 1: 37 "For with God nothing will be impossible." (NKJV)*

What is the first thing that comes to mind when you read these words? Does it give you comfort? Or, is this sentence just another good sounding set of words that are not put into action? Something I read really touched my heart: "If you want to be closer to God, spend more time with Him, study His Word, and open your heart to Him in prayer."

I think one of the reasons we find it hard for us to put into action words like we find in Luke 1:37 is because we need a deeper relationship with God. From my personal experience, let me put that statement into perspective for you. From the moment I met Mari to right now, I have wanted to really know her. I spent countless hours on the phone with her when we were dating, listening to her story. We wrote countless letters to each other, sharing our struggles and our joys. We searched out each other in a crowd just to be close together. In marriage, we make fewer phone calls except when we are away from each other. We don't write as often, but we still share our thoughts. I am always learning nuances about her, which are a blessing and a joy for me.

Please don't ask me about my relationship with God. Do you see where I am going with this analogy? Do

you understand why I said we all need a deeper relationship with the Lord? If I had treated my relationship with Mari like I treat my relationship with God, I may not have ever married. I believe that Mari trusts me because of the relationship we have built and continue to build. I trust Mari because of my relationship with her. Likewise, you may trust your family and friends because of the relationships you have established.

As members of the Body of Christ, we need to be honest in answering together and individually a direct question. Do we trust God? God already knows our answer to the question. If you have trust, you want to be closer to God, to spend more time with Him, to study His Word, and to open your heart to Him in Prayer.

In going forward in 2019, I call us not to focus on making ordinary resolutions for a new year, but instead to focus of developing relationships. Let us put our energies into focusing on our relationship with God, spending more time in prayer, study, and worship. When we truly open our hearts and search for Him daily, we will gain and deepen our trust as promised in Luke 1:37 **"For with God nothing will be impossible."**

### Childcare Program News

John Worley, Director

We welcome back Erica Kindrick to ASCP/SSCP! Erica worked in our 2018 summer camp program as a teacher and has decided that working for Jesus and sharing Him with the children is where she is called to be. We are blessed to have her back. Erica recently began a 30-hour orientation training course offered through Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA) and started classes through Roane State Community College this spring semester working towards a degree for Child Development Associate (CDA). She is one of the children's favorite teachers, and we look forward to Erica's role in a long relationship of sharing Jesus and making Disciples of Jesus Christ through our children's ministries at Crossville FUMC.

Registration for our Summer School Age Camp Program (SSCP) is now underway. If you



are interested in registering for your child's participation, please get packets, which are available in the church office and in the childcare lobby. Last year we filled to maximum capacity and had a waiting list of children wanting to attend. Do not get left out, register now! Ages 5-12 yrs and entering grades K-6 are welcome to our summer discoveries.

### Music Matters

Kimberly White, Director of Music

Opportunities exist for members and friends to participate in our musical expressions in worship and celebration. Preparations begin now for the Easter season, and the music offers messages of hope and glory for the new Christian year.

**Chancel Choir:** If you are interested in joining the chancel choir to sing Easter and Good Friday music, please begin attending rehearsals on Wednesday, February 27. We will begin to spend the last half hour of regular practice, 6:30-7:00 pm, preparing this special music.

If you would like to join the chancel choir and sing each Sunday, please come to full, regular rehearsal at 5:45-7:00 pm. Rehearsals are in the sanctuary.

**Children's Choir:** Rehearsals have resumed. Children ages K-6 are invited to come each Wednesday at 4:30 pm for children's choir which meets in the choir room. We welcome Dana Beal, who will work with the 4th-6th graders in the rehearsals for their parts. Dana is a retired music educator, and she looks forward to working with children again.

The Children's Choir will be participating in the Ash Wednesday service, March 6, at 6:00 p.m. Parents, please put this date on your calendar.

**Brass Ensemble:** I hope to begin a brass ensemble. If you play a brass instrument, or know someone who does, and are interested, please let me know. You can email [kimberly@crossvillefumc.com](mailto:kimberly@crossvillefumc.com), or call through the church office 931-484-3537.

## FUMC Youth Gain Joy, Give Praise

### Scott Looney, Next Generation Ministry

God blessed the youth group with an exciting weekend of fellowship and worship at Resurrection Youth Conference 2019 on January 25-27. He also blessed the praise band, known by their given name, The Cross and the Flame, with the opportunity to perform and lead worship. Resurrection is a weekend of singing and worship for thousands of youth. Teenagers from Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia participated in worship and strengthened their relationships with God. Approximately 10,000 young people attended.

They received blessings from the messages delivered by Jorge Acevedo, who is the lead pastor at Grace Church, a multi-site, United Methodist congregation in southwest Florida. He delivered powerful sermons based on the never-ending and indescribable grace of God. On Sunday morning, the collective youth took part in one of the largest communion services ever conducted. An extremely powerful witness was the

thousands of teenagers participating willingly and joyfully in the service of Holy Communion.

The famous worship band, I Am They, contributed to the enthusiasm of spiritual awakening throughout the conference. The musicians' high energy and up-beat celebration music had everyone dancing and singing and praising God. Their style and repertoire inspired other bands seeking means for leadership in spirit-filled performances.

The Resurrection staff treated the members of our youth band just like they were world-famous musicians. Starting with professional sound checks, the staff gave attention to each instrument and microphone until all sounded perfect. The checks and rechecks were done quickly with finesse because the staff wanted our praise band to sound its best. The excitement and the joy on the faces of our youth were unforgettable.

The Cross and the Flame, scheduled to perform on Saturday night Janu-

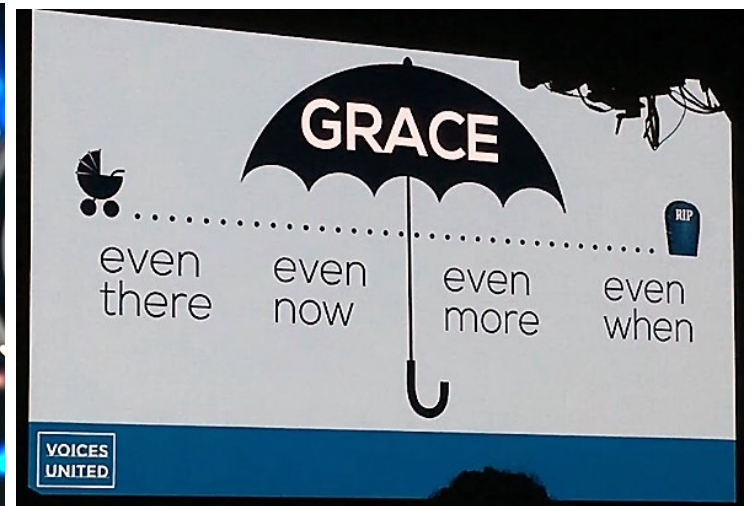
ary 26, waited backstage with the staff and other performers. They held a lot of nervousness and plenty of energy as they grouped to take the stage. When their turn came, they confidently walked out and faced 10,000 of their fellow teenagers. They played and sang their hearts out for our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It was truly amazing!

When they finished their set, our youth had a brief opportunity to meet the members of the featured worship band, I Am They. This renowned, iconic group told our youth how great their performance was.

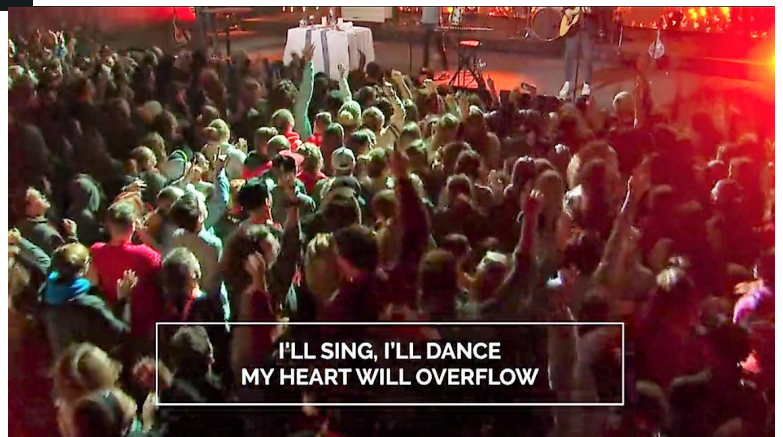
God's blessings are always amazing. The youth know this. They also know that none of this deeply affecting experience is even remotely possible without the prayers and support of their church family at Crossville FUMC. They are grateful and thankful for every opportunity created for their spiritual growth.



**How can I fully experience and respond to God's grace?**



### Worship



### Fellowship among friends during retreat in Gatlinburg



## Being Christian, Playing on the Team

Doug Hensley, Next Generation Ministry

I recall the children's message I gave the first Sunday in February, how being a Christian is like playing on a team. In choosing your side and game position, I propose five means for personal action about how and why you can be a serious player on the church's team.

**First:** Glorifying God by being in service to the church is a function leading to salvation. Sometimes we emphasize with evangelistic zeal that salvation is not by works alone, but we fail to fully appreciate that we have been saved by good works. In fact, God has placed you in church in order that you might be edified (built up) and known for how you work and serve Him. To remain sedentary is to neglect God's very purpose for our salvation. Through my own roles in serving, I strive to behave like Jesus and, thereby glorify him.

**Second:** You, all of you, have been uniquely gifted to serve. Several Bible passages help us to understand the concept of spiritual gifts. Among them are Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, and Ephesians 4. In these passages we learn how God graciously and

supernaturally favors each believer to own a distinct gift of ministry. What a privilege!

**Third:** The laborers are few, as often heard. The Gospels record one prayer request from Jesus, "Pray for laborers." If you are not already involved, somebody somewhere is praying for you to act in a service ministry because the need is so great. A respected business term is the 80/20 principle whereby 20% of the people do 80% of the work. The applications are many in the local church where 20% of members do 80% of the giving, and 20% do 80% of the outreach. While the 20/80 ratio is a generalization, the real percentage is calculable for individual churches. I know that I aim to be in the serving 20%.

**Fourth:** Children tend to emulate what they see, rather than what they hear. When Jesus selected his apostles, he chose them to be "with him." The image is significant. Ministry is more often "caught" than "taught." Perhaps the principle, "to do and to teach" is what motivated Luke to write many parables and references

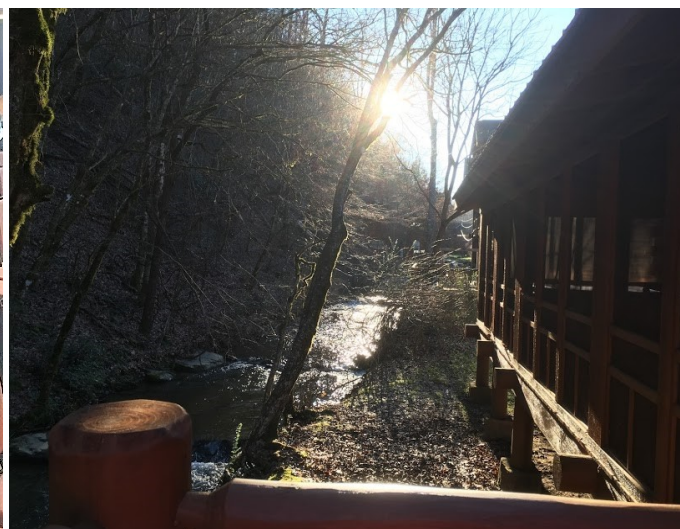
to Jesus' actions. Teaching is most effective when the teacher's doing precedes the telling, thereby giving the message in the lesson.

**Fifth:** Doing anonymous or little-noticed things for the Lord is like whispering, "I love You," in his ear. I'm not a big fan of spotlight-based Christianity. We don't perform in order to measure up. We love and serve because we measure up. Already we are accepted by God. He cannot love us any more than he already does.

Each one is his peculiar treasure, and his thoughts toward you are precious and innumerable. Let us accept how it is supposed to work. Focus on him; see the unconditionality of his favor; rest in his unwavering love. Allow God's grace to foster a revitalized energy to please him, serve him, and love him. Contextualize everything you do in terms of doing by, for, with, about, and unto God, whom you love.

Many great reasons call out to get you involved with the church. My prayer is that you pray and ask, "How can I get into the game?"

### Crossville First United Methodist Church Youth in Action in Worship, Play, and Group Fellowship During Winter Retreat in Gatlinburg, Tennessee for the Resurrection Youth Conference 2019



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Donna King, Next Generation Ministry

### Stephen Ministry Is Here

Lynn Hintz, Leader

Stephen Ministry is a group of well-trained caregivers who are equipped to give one-on-one Christian care to hurting people in our church and community. They offer support to persons experiencing life changing difficulties such as moving, empty nest, loneliness, grief, divorce, hospitalization, disability, and unemployment.

At Crossville First United Methodist Church, we have such a core of compassionate individuals who help others when they encounter relationship challenges, loss, and major forces that throw lives into tailspins. Stephen Ministers are not counselors, nor are they know-it-alls. They are not individuals who try to fix someone's troubles. They simply provide love, attention, and support in a time of great need. A Stephen Minister is a caring person who can help navigate a present situation. With a listening ear, the Stephen Minister is someone who brings understanding and encouragement, and in coming alongside, offers stability, hope, and biblical principles in confronting stop-gaps in life.

Church members who want to be in step with others and support them in an intentional way, can learn to become a Stephen Minister. Through 50 hours of training, you will receive practical, hands-on techniques and resources to provide Christ-centered care in meeting the emotional and spiritual needs of others.

You will be guided and supported in your service of ministry by seasoned Stephen Leaders, who will help you grow as you help others. In addition, you will learn to apply the skills and resources gained in your caring ministry to your own relationships with family, friends, and coworkers. Being a Stephen Minister may be one of the most rewarding opportunities you will ever embrace.

To learn how a Stephen Minister might care for you or someone you know, or to learn how to join this unique service, please contact the church office for connections to the Stephen Ministry Leaders, Rev. Louis Davis, Jackie McGrady, Bill Dorstewitz, or Lynn Hintz.



# July 15-19

HOPE

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