

The Sweet Spirit
Olive Branch United Methodist Church
September 2016



From The Pastor's Pen,

As the air cools and the colors of fall start to appear I hope you had an enjoyable, safe and Christ-filled summer.

Nancy and I continue to thank God for the privilege of serving Olive Branch UMC and being in ministry with you for over a year.

I hope you have sensed a tweak of positive change in the atmosphere and spirit at OBUMC and are curious about what lies ahead. Well, you'll just have to keep your eyes and ears open and join in where you can help to keep the energy and expectancy going! There will be some subtle changes in worship in addition to activities including and benefiting our great community of Gasburg and surrounding area.

Now that I have your curiosity up, I'll leave you with this thought: God is good, all the time and all the time, God is good!

In His service,

Pastor Randy

BTW.....has anybody seen CTCM?

Just a Thought

Things God enjoys most. Joe McKeever

"Well, I know there's a lot of big preachers that know a lot more than I do, but it could be that the good Lord likes a little pickin' too." –Tom T. Hall, "The Year That Clayton Delaney Died"

Yogi Berra watched as the batter approached the plate. The Yankee catcher had seen it all, and this guy was like so many: eager to get a hit, but needing all the help he could find. The batter stood at the plate and made the sign of the cross, then pointed toward the skies, both symbols of prayer as he summoned the Almighty to his aid.

“Hey buddy,” said Yogi from behind his mask, “Why don’t we just let the Lord enjoy the game?”

I’m with Yogi.

That begs the question of course. We wonder if the Lord enjoys a baseball game occasionally.

Does God smile at the antics of a small child? Revel at the cuteness of puppies? Does He ever sit back and enjoy the music of an orchestra or choir? Did God like that rainbow I saw yesterday?

Does the Lord ever summon an angel in and say, “Look at that waterfall! And take a gander at those butterflies. Didn’t we do good?”

I wouldn’t be surprised.

He has been known to enjoy His own work.

Natural scientists cut paths deep into jungles where no human has ever walked. They see wildlife in profusion, plants and animal life in varieties unknown before that moment, all of it carrying on through the ages without one thought to humans, the self-appointed kings of the planet.

Clearly, God made these things for His own pleasure.

In a trillion worlds across the heavens, our Heavenly Father is enjoying natural splendors and visual delights and celestial shows put on just for Him. No human eye has seen them, and yet they go forward, century by century, aeon by aeon.

God sits on His deck and enjoys the view - “And God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good” (Genesis 1:31).

“Even so, Father, for thus it was well-pleasing in Thy sight” (Matthew 11:26).

When asked why the Father does things the way He does, Jesus answered, “He wanted to.” Or, “it pleased Him.”

“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for Thou did create all things and for Your pleasure they are and were created” (Revelation 4:11).

Adrian Rogers was commenting on this. “Not only that, but He made it because He wanted to. He didn’t need anyone’s opinion or permission. As He said to Job, ‘Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?’ He did it because He wanted to. He is a sovereign God and everything was created for His pleasure.”

“Without faith, it is impossible to please God” (Hebrews 11:6).

Want to please God? Then live by faith.

Of those who did just that, we read, “Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them” (Hebrews 11:16).

About them, the writer of Hebrews wrote, “Of whom the world was not worthy!” (Hebrews 11:38).

One overriding trait of the faithful child of God (aka, “disciple of Jesus”) is this: He/she wants to please the Lord. Their constant prayer is “Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.”

As children we played a game called “pleased or displeased.” When one was asked that question and replied, “Displeased,” the asker would then say, “What would it take to please you?” and that’s when the fun started. Usually—as I recall, it’s been a lifetime ago—the answerer would want a certain boy and a certain girl to go for a private walk or do something embarrassing.

In Luke 18, Jesus asked the blind beggar of Jericho, “What would you like for me to do for you?” That is the question of a servant, one who wants to please.

And so, my prayer before the Lord is just that: “Father, show me how to make You happy today.”

We know part of the answer to that question. Go serve the least, the last, the lost. The “least of these My brethren,” to which He referred in Matthew 25.

“In Thy presence there is fullness of joy,” said David in Psalm 16:11. “At Thy right hand, there are pleasures forever more.”

Not exactly the picture the enemy wants to paint of the Heavenly Father, is it? And yet, we would ask, where in the world did we think humor originated? the laughter of small children? the antics of kittens? the music of waterfalls and the colors of butterflies and wildflowers?

He has done all things well. (Mark 7:37) Indeed.

A March of Unity in Christ

On Saturday August 28th three local churches joined in a walk for unity in Christ. Salem RZUA hosted the event and Olive Branch UMC and Pleasant Hill Christian Church joined in the walk. The route was the triangle between the churches. The event started with a time of prayer and singing. We left at 8:00AM and walked as far as we could until breakfast was ready to be served at Salem RZUA. We had a ball! The sheriff's department provided traffic control and Sherriff Roberts even joined in the walk. For the result of this adventure we came together in the name of Jesus Christ. The hope is for better communication between the churches and more community events in the future.

Our Library

At all ages we can benefit from the church library. Learning should never stop. We can learn about something we never were exposed to or learn more about a subject we are interested in. This month, in our library:

Our church boasts two libraries. Both are available to anyone interested in borrowing a book. One is a general library, containing many interesting and well read books. The other is the library of the United Methodist Women. This library is recommended reading from the Conference United Methodist Women. There are many books about various topics and issues that affect each of us and the world also.

If you are interested in any of these books, please drop by and borrow one. Read it, enjoy it, learn from it and then return it so someone else may find the same pleasure.

United Methodist Women

All women of the church are invited to take part in the meeting and missional activities of the UMW. The United Methodist Women recently had their Annual Candlelighting Service and it was a great success. We raised \$610 that will go to Conference Missions.

Coming up in September, the UM Women will hold a Salad Luncheon on Sunday, Sept. 11th immediately following services. This is a fundraiser for the Women and will take the place of the regular Second Sunday Luncheon. We will still have great fellowship and great food. So please plan on joining us.

Also coming up on September 20th the UM Women will sponsor a “Pie Party” and all the women of our church, Rock Church and Prospect UMC are invited. Please save this date and watch for further details.

Our next meeting will be on September 14th at 1:00 PM.

Message from the Council Chair – Jane DiStefano

The Church Administrative Council meets every other month on the second Monday at 7:00 PM. Anyone interested in the business of the church is invited to attend. It is always an open meeting, although voting is limited to committee members.

This month the Council will meet on September 12th at 7:00 PM. We will be finalizing details for our Charge Conference. It will be held on Sept. 28th at 7:00 to 8:30 at Brodnax United Methodist Church in Brodnax, VA. This is a time for members of our Churches to gather and share the happenings, joys and sorrows from each church. Please plan on joining us that evening. If you need a ride, please let any council member know and we will arrange something. It is always an enjoyable evening. If you have any items that need to be discussed at council, please feel free to come to a meeting or contact me or Pastor Randy. Remember that this is everyone’s church and what is important to you, is important to us.

Outreach

Lisa's Great Give Away

August 13 was a hot but pleasant day. The congregation had donated clothes, toys, appliances, furniture, food, school supplies and time to continue the Great Giveaway. The fellowship hall had been buried in all the donations. Now was the time to give it all away. That is what happened as Olive Branch UMC gladly gave to those in our community who could not afford the gifts. We saw young families with babies taking things that the baby needed and older families taking clothing and furniture and appliances so they may have a better life. In all it was an exciting and humbling day as we saw the need in our little community and tried to fill it in a small way. Thanks to the Outreach Committee for their extraordinary efforts to make Lisa's Great Give Away such a huge success once again. Just before we were ready to post we received word that an article or pictures of Lisa's Great Giveaway will be in the Advocate, the magazine of the Virginia Conference.

United Methodist Men

We applied to VDOT to take responsibility to clean up Ankum Road from Route 46 to Gasburg. The powers to be agreed to let us be responsible for 2 miles of the road starting at the intersection of Gasburg Road and Ankum Road and continuing 2 miles north on Ankum. The signs identifying the area and who is responsible for it have been posted. We will be scheduling a Saturday to take on this effort. We invite the church to join us twice a year as we try to help our community keep looking good. The State will be supplying all the equipment and apparel we need. If you would like to join the UMM a sign up sheet will be posted in the fellowship hall.

The weather will be getting cooler. On those cool fall evenings there is nothing like a hot bowl of UMM Brunswick Stew. Watch for dates it will be available and grab a quart or two, maybe three.

A note to all the men of the church: the UMM meets on the third Saturday of each month. This month we will meet on the 17th. We invite all men of the church to join us for a time of fellowship, breakfast, and devotion. We welcome our sister church, Rock, as we would gladly have them join us for breakfast. Our next meeting will be Sept 17th, at 8:00 AM. Breakfast will be provided.

Anniversaries

Steve & Alice Johnson – 8th

Robert & Carol Abernathy – 21st

Dick & Diane Clary – 29th

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Celebrating birthdays this month:

3 – Dick Clary 4 - Frances King, Amanda Writtenberry 5 – Marian Lea Clary

8 – Lloyd Wall 11 – Kelley Newcomb 16 – Polly Clary, Shirley Everest, Brenda White 20 –

Roger Kibler 21 – Marion Tatum 28 – Robert Moore 30 – Pat Carroll, Megan Clary

Choir Makes a Joyful Noise

And our choir does just that. We practice on Wednesday's at 7:00 PM. We are 12 strong at this time. If you feel that you would like to make a joyful noise, please come join us. It should be an exciting time for us and the church! Let us all come together to praise the Lord in song at our worship services. We are preparing for the holidays so join us in celebrating the Lord's birth.

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WE'RE PLAYING FOLLOW THE LEADER AND
YOU'RE THE PASTOR SO I GUESS YOU GOT
THE JOB

Upcoming Events:

Sun September 11th Second Sunday Luncheon - After Services
Sat September 17th – 8:00 am – UMM Breakfast and Meeting
Tues September 20th – Pie with the President, a UM Women's event
Sun October 2 11:00 am Rock UMC Homecoming

This is your newsletter. It is meant to be a way to communicate what your church is doing and what all the organizations are doing both in the congregation and the community. I am sending this electronically via email and copies will be made available for those who need a printed copy.

There are many organizations within our church and I hope they would like to have their achievements, plans, and meetings made known to the entire church. It is my hope that they will ask one of their members to drop a short note as to what they doing each month. The line of communication in the church needs to be open and full of what we are doing at Olive Branch to make disciples in our area. If you would like to send us something, please bring it to church or send me an email (revedumc@yahoo.com) and we will see that it gets published. We need all information by the 24th of each month for the following month. Please, let's keep our church informed on what we are doing. See you at church and all our activities!

God bless. Ed DiStefano