



# The Olive Branch

Olive Branch United Methodist Church  
4141 Gasburg Road, Gasburg, VA 23857

Summer, 2011

Sunday School: 10:00

Worship Service: 11:15

Pastor: Liz Buxton

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email:

mizliz00725@hotmail.com

## Calendar Notes

- **First Sundays:**  
**Communion**
- **Second Sundays:**  
**Lunch**
- **Second Tuesdays:**  
**6:00 PM - Out Reach Committee**
- **7:00 PM - Administrative Council Meeting**
- **Second Thursdays:** **2:00 PM - UMW Meeting**
- **Third Saturdays:** **8:00AM - UMM Breakfast**
- **July 1:** **5:00 to 7:00 PM - Ice Cream Party**
- **July 20—22:** **5:30 to 8:00 PM - VBS**
- **August 13:** **9:00 to 12:00 Noon - clothing give away**

## “Shake It Up!” VBS

I hope you've noticed the banner and accessories announcing our VBS theme: Shake It Up! With a cooking theme, we will spend three days exploring with children from our community various celebrations of God's people - and we know if we celebrate, we're eatin'!

VBS runs three evenings, July 20-22, and each night begins with a half-hour time of registering and eating dinner. Then, from 6-8 p.m., we'll be Shakin' It Up with music, story, crafts, and good eats! One of the highlights for this year is the Friday night Cake Challenge. The little ones among us will decorate cupcakes for prizes - and consuming. For those of us old enough to know who Julia Childs, James Beard, and Graham Kerr are, there will also be a cake decorating contest. The rules are that you should bake your one or two layers of cake at home, bring said layer(s) of cake and frostings, fondant, sprinkles, etc., with you Friday evening, and while we're doing VBS, contestants will decorate their cakes on-site (yes, you'll have less than two hours) to be judged by an all-star panel of judges, including our incoming D.S., Rev. Bob Parks, and his lovely wife. Prizes will be awarded!! [They will not include a ginormous check for \$50,000.] So, start channeling your inner Paula Deen, Duff Goldman, or Gallagher if that's more your style, and we hope to see everybody come “Shake It Up! with us July 20-22!!

*Pastor Liz*

## Out Reach

Hi Everyone,

Man has it been a busy three months for Out Reach!

In April, we did Easter dinners and baskets that were very much a welcomed surprise to those we fed. They really enjoyed them.



In May, we fed about 26 people at our Cinco de Mayo fundraising dinner here at the church making about \$213 for local missions.



Now for some new stuff coming our way:

On July 1, we will be having a fundraising Ice Cream Party here at the church from 5 to 7 PM. It's "All you can eat" for \$3. So please come and



enjoy. If you want to help, please let someone in Out Reach know - we can always use more hands.



VBS planning is going strong. The dates are Wednesday, July 20 - Friday, July 22, 5:30-8:00 PM. Get those children here to have some fun. Our theme is "Shake It Up Café."

We are planning a "Clothing

by *Lisa DiSteffano*

Give Away" on August 13 from 9:00 to 12:00 AM and serving lunch from 12:00 to 1:00 PM. We need all sizes of clothing and shoes so all donations will be appreciated. If this goes well, we hope to continue doing it.



Well, Summer is here so go enjoy all those warm sunny days on the lake but remember there is always someone in need all the year round.



Happy Summer,  
*Lisa*

## Choir Appreciation

THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

On behalf of the members and friends of Olive Branch, we want to take this opportunity to offer our heartfelt appreciation to those among us who give of themselves Sunday after Sunday - with summers off for very good behavior! - in our worship by leading our hymn singing and sharing our weekly anthems. They learn and practice new music. They sit apart from family members and friends. They support the worship ministry of this church with their gifts, their time, their presence, and their enthusiasm, and we are all the better for it.

So, choir members, "Thank You!" for your service, enjoy your well-deserved summer break, and we look forward to hearing from you in September!

NOTE: If you would like to join the choir, toward the end of the summer look/listen for an announcement about a "Choir Picnic" that kicks off a new choir year. Everyone is invited and welcome to join!



## Czech Corner



### **In July, Michelle McKinnon Young, pastor from Holston UMC Annual Conference, is moving to Prague. Michelle, could you introduce yourself to our readers?**

My name is Michelle McKinnon-Young. Having been taken to church since the time I was 6-weeks old, I have been in church my entire life. What an absolute joy it is to have grown up in such a loving, Christian environment and to have had the exposure to begin a personal relationship with Jesus as a small child. I was baptized at age 13 in the lake in which I learned to swim. Even then, I began to feel God's call on my life.

I have been working in the United Methodist Church since 1983 after graduating from Emory and Henry College, a United Methodist College in Virginia. I received my first ordination in 1989, my second level of ordination in 1992 in the North Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church. I graduated from seminary at Candler School of Theology at Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia and began my ministry in the Atlanta area.

After 14 years of service in large membership churches (1500-3,000 members) as an Associate Pastor, I transferred to the Holston Conference of the UMC to be closer to my family and to begin my vocation as a Sr. Pastor. For the past 4 years, I have been serving as the Pastor at Cherokee UMC in Johnson City, Tennessee. We have an active attendance of 240 persons and a staff of 10 persons.

Cherokee is a unique church, having moved from its old location (which it had outgrown) and having purchased a 77,000 square foot warehouse in 2001 in the more economically-deprived part of the city. We totally renovated and equipped this warehouse for use as a church in service to both our members and our surrounding community.

In addition to ample worship and classroom space, our building houses a licensed Christian Learning Center, a Cokesbury United Methodist bookstore, the office space for Dr. Randy Frye, our District Superintendent and a personally owned and operated Sports Fitness Center as a lessee. Other lease space is available and is being marketed in the community.

Cherokee has been an educational and inspirational appointment as serving in this unique setting has allowed me to sharpen my skills in business administration, staff development, church visioning, restructuring and revitalization and in overall financial and property management. While serving at Cherokee, I have also enjoyed a vital ministry in individual and couple counseling, hospital and home visitation, preaching and teaching. I hope to use and sharpen these skills as necessary and to best acclimate to our new church setting in Prague.

I am a mother to one child, a daughter, AnnieLaurie Lydia. She is 18-years old and is graduating from High School at the end of May. She will begin College this fall at a local Tennessee University where she intends to major in Business with a concentration in Fashion Marketing and Design. In

March of this year, I brought Annie over with me for a visit to Prague. She loved the people and city so very much that she is praying about an opportunity to study in Prague or elsewhere in Europe after 2 years of study in the States.

I am married to Gary Wayne Young, a classically-trained pianist with 38 years of professional experience as a musician and 18 years as a United Methodist music director and associate on various church staffs. He also has 20 years of experience as a manager in a Fortune 50 company, including world travel and business start-ups.

Gary and I are very excited about the combined leadership skills, passion and drive we feel we can bring to ESUMC Prague and its mission. While I am the appointed pastor, Gary's valuable experience both in the church and business world will make him a true PARTNER in ministry as my pastoral assistant. I feel very thankful that the Czech District recognizes the unique contribution that Gary will bring to this church launch as well as he intends to work just as hard as I do for its establishment. I am convinced that this mission requires more than one person for success. That is why Gary and I are also blessed to partner with our friends in the Czech and Covenant Churches in the Johnson City District and other parts of the U.S in the establishment of the church. In America, we have a saying that best describes it: "*It takes a village...*" It will take a lot of people and a lot of prayer power on both continents to establish and sustain ESUMC Prague.

For as long as I can remember, I have dreamed and prayed about the opportunity to serve as a missionary. Even though I have enjoyed immensely serving as a pastor in a location church setting, I have always kept my heart open to serving in an appointment beyond the local church.

I took my first trip to the Czech Republic in March of 2008 when I served as part of the teaching team in the Spring School for the Czech United Methodist pastors. It was in the picturesque setting at the Vranov Monastery just outside of Brno that I felt God begin to 'tug at my heart.' I fell in love with the Czech people, the pastors, the countryside and the seemingly more hospitable rhythm of pastoral life and service the Czech United Methodist Church. With each successive visit to the Czech whether it was helping in Bible School, teaching pastors, preaching or simply visiting, I felt such an indescribable peace in my heart. In many ways, it felt '*like home.*' Perhaps this was God preparing me for what he knew was to come?

The more I read about the country and its subjection to Communism, the squelching of religion and the effects this had on an entire generation, I began to pray about a way to serve in the Czech or a similar setting where God might be able to best use me. I met and counseled with others about my heart yearning. Eventually, I gained the courage to talk to my District Superintendent, Dr. Randy Frye about my desire for mission service wherever and in whatever capacity the Conference deemed I could best be used.

The very day I shared my prayerful desire with Randy, he shared with me the Rev. Petr Prochazka's desire to begin an English-Speaking UMC in Prague. He shared how he and Petr had been talking and praying about this venture for several months hence. As Randy described it, this church would be the next step in our Mission Together Partnership through the General Board of Global Ministries as we '*planted a church*' and actual missionaries on site from the Johnson City District. My heart was racing as I heard him describe their joint vision for this church! I then began to pray specifically about this opportunity.

After extensive conversations with Dr. Frye, The Reverend Petr Prochazka (District Superintendent Czech Republic), Bishop Patrick Streiff (Central Conference), Bishop James Swanson (Holston) and several summer visits to Prague, all the pieces have fallen into place for this appointment to be

made. Considering all the things that had to transpire in both Conferences for the appointment to be officially made: the required financial and people support, the Cabinet approvals and all the special considerations for cross cultural appointment; it has felt to us, from the beginning, that God's hand as been guiding this entire process. It is that place of assurance that we come to serve.

Dr. Frye officially announced my appointment to the English-Speaking UMC (ESUMC, Prague) in December 2011. Since that time, I have continued serving as pastor of the Cherokee Congregation while working on initiatives and receiving training for service in ESUMC, Prague. With this 'dual appointment, I feel like I have *'feet in both worlds.'*

The agreed upon mission between the Czech and Johnson City District's for ESUMC Prague is as follows:

*To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. As part of that mission, we will seek to locate, understand, and reach English-speaking internationals living in Prague, and citizens to whom the ESUMC Prague might appeal.*

In addition to both our personal and vocational experience, we recently attended a New Church Start Institute in Arkansas to build upon those skill sets. In this 4-day workshop, we received step-by-step training on the do's and don'ts of starting a new church. While we will be able to draw upon our previous professional and pastoral experience, planting a new church is an entirely unique experience and will require a different attitude and approach than simply moving to a already established church for a new appointment. But it is this *'doing church a new way'* idea that excites and challenges Gary and I about this appointment and why we are so willing to take the leap of faith to leave the U.S for a time to launch and serve ESUMC, Prague. One of the things we learned is that we don't launch the church UNTIL we have adequately PLANNED for its beginning. That is a formula for failure. Among the start-up steps (*and there are too many steps to name here*) for our projected 3-5 years of service at ESUMC Prague are:

- 1) *Assembling a team of 'prayer warriors*
- 2) *Assembling a team of start-up workers*
- 3) *Seeking out and utilizing all available resources in the community to locate, meet and build relationships with English-Speaking internationals and Czech nationals to whom our church may appeal.*
- 4) *Determining what unique 'flavor' of ministry would best serve the internationals in Prague even while we introduce them to the United Methodist theology, tradition and practice of ministry.*

Bishop Streiff has asked us to make 2 things top priority as we start:

- 1) *Visit other English-Speaking congregations in Prague to learn about their ministries and the unique needs they are serving,*
- 2) *Study the Czech language so that we might become conversant and respectful of the culture in which we are living and working.*

Both tasks will occupy much of our time initially, though learning and practicing the language will be an ongoing process our entire ministry in the Czech Republic.

In the meantime, we will *'start church'* through offering Bible Studies, coffee and conversation gathering. We envision assorted musical, arts and other venues as our research deems appealing to the

international community. Because of an international appreciation and appeal for music, we are praying about the formation of a Gospel Choir as a point of entry into the church. For these reasons and because the café provides a more intimate space for worship and study initially, the café will be our first needed renovation project for service/construction teams. This will require the persons with skills in renovation/design, construction and a willingness to be supervised by those who possess the skills. Financial support will also be required to make it all happen. Finally, all of this will be done with a spiritual emphasis and with the purposes of building a congregation and launching the first church service.

We will take both our learning from the New Church Start Institute and in consultation with Petr Prochazka and Bishop Streiff to **PROJECT** a first worship service, likely within 6-9 months (late winter or early spring months 2012). Bishop Streiff has encouraged us to do lots of daily research/ work and not to 'launch too soon.' We will adjust the start-up time if needed as the Holy Spirit works in and through prayer, our leadership team and in keeping with how the smaller church café gatherings are attracting individuals.

Each day, we intend to ask lots of questions and be attentive to the things we are hearing: from the Holy Spirit, our District Superintendents, Bishop Streiff and the international community. We fully expect the Holy Spirit to work in and through all these voices to help us design and establish ESUMC Prague in its unique approach of making disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Please begin to pray with us about the wisdom to discern 'when' to launch the first worship service.

*Linda Carty*

## Prayer List

Makayla Clary  
 Kathleen Marles  
 Phil Glover  
 Herman & Mary Garbee  
 Gary Otten  
 Eleanor McCracken  
 Molly Barnhart  
 Josephine Rollins  
 Jackie Hogge  
 Tammy & Mike Thaggard  
 Maria Kay  
 Barbara Floyd  
 Pam Jones  
 N.T. Lewis  
 Uneeda Bisho[  
 Staci Ordaz  
 Vernon Loher  
 Rick Willis

Ellen Anderson  
 Matthew Warden  
 Jane Shell  
 Frank Abernathy  
 Ralph Burger  
 Louise & Thurston Clary  
 Eugene Condrey  
 John Rinaldi  
 Diane Rankin  
 Ann Angela  
 Suzanne—Stamps Dyer  
 Lisa Horoszewski  
 Cecil Liner  
 Willie Lee King  
 Claudia Goodwin  
 Sally Arnold  
 Shirley Wright  
 Wanda Abbott  
 Irene Sadler  
 Taylor Dennison

Bobby Bigger  
 Elizabeth Atkinson  
 Nancy Ryan  
 Arlene Tatum  
 Patty Harman  
 Gary Black  
 David Via  
 Mike Facer  
 Bishop Kammerer  
 Nove Mesto & Majak  
 Pastor Liz and the continuing ministries of Olive Branch and Rock UMC's as well as the body of Christ throughout the world.



If you would like to add someone to our prayer list, please send all information to Mattie Bersch at mbersch@embarqmail.com or 252-535-2283





## United Methodist Women

On July 1, Olive Branch UMC will be leaving the Petersburg District to join the Farmville District and it was a great honor to host the last UMW Zone Meeting for the Petersburg District. The event took place on May 22 and was attended by 40 + ladies.

We enjoyed a lovely program with special music from “The Barefoot Girls” and Huyen Bui and of course it was all followed by delicious and abundant food.

Bev Noland had beautifully decorated the fellowship hall to reflect the program theme of “Nature.” As a small church, we accomplished much, and the ladies of the Olive Branch UMW were more than pleased with the many compliments they enjoyed at the conclusion of the event.



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## United Methodist Men

The United Methodist Men meet every third Saturday of the month at 8:00 AM for breakfast and fellowship. We have some great cooks in the group and even some of the not so good cooks are learning from their peers and doing a pretty good job.

We do not have any planned activities on the calendar for the summer months but will continue to have our breakfast each month as planned and invite all men to join us.

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## Finance

The church went through some rough times last year and nearly depleted its reserves. Income had come down while spending had remained the same. This year we are trying to be more in tune with our finances and have been holding our own and even adding (albeit slowly) to our reserves. A Treasurer’s Report is posted monthly on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall. Please take time to review it if you are interested and note that the monthly transactions are on the back of each report. I will caution you that when you read our report and see the balance, you should be aware that almost all of our big bills such as salaries and utilities are paid near the first of the month. Therefore we need a fairly large balance at the end of each month to meet those needs at the beginning of the month. The church needs approximately \$6,000 per month to meet its obligations.

You can help. Just remember to turn off the lights and turn down the air conditioner if you have used it. Keep the doors closed between the church and fellowship hall when not in use. Turn off the copier when you’re finished and don’t waste anything that can be saved.

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TO: