

Bookwalter United Methodist Church

4218 Central Avenue Pike, Knoxville, Tennessee 37912

August 1, 2022

Reverend Stephen K. Doyal, Pastor

Bailey Hueser, Choir Director

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***"Sharing God,s love with our neighbors,
Inviting them to share in in the joy of Jesus Christ"***

ARTICLE

With the departure of Zach Smith as our youth minister this week, I have been reflecting on the feature of our denomination that has always been a favorite of mine. Methodism has what is called a connectional system. The United Methodist Church defines **connection** as the principle that *"all leaders and congregations are connected in a network of loyalties and commitments that support, yet supersede, local concerns."* One practical application of this system is that as pastor, I am not a member of any local church but rather the Holston Conference. I am subject to the supervision of District Superintendents and ultimately the bishop.

But I prefer to think of the connection in terms of relationships instead. For example, Zach and I met well before he came to Bookwalter when he was a counselor at Wesley Woods and I was in one of my many weeks as Minister-In-Residence (MIR) there. We further bonded because we were both PK's (preacher's kids) and he worked with both of my daughters at camp one time or another.

Zach recently took several youths to Senior High Assembly. This program has been active for decades and I went when I was a teenager myself. As I shared from the pulpit, I still have friends from that experience 40 years ago. Some of those friends also went into the ministry. That is how I see the connection through relationships over polity.

Alas, the connection feels like it is fracturing, and it is hard to recognize the United Methodist Church of my youth or even when I entered the ministry nearly 30 years ago. Just this past week, 106 UM churches in Florida have sued to disaffiliate from the denomination. Author Alexander Strauch has said, *"Behind most church fights and unresolved divisions is ugly human pride. And the worst kind of pride is religious pride, the Pharisaical pride of self-righteousness and superiority."* That is precisely the attitude I see and why common ground and compromise appear to have become untenable. Yet, the hope I still have for "my" church is again in relationships over polity. Regardless of General Conference decisions, or new denominations forming, I will

continue to foster and cherish my friendships across all arbitrary dividing lines.

Steve

PACK A BACKPACK

This will be held on Friday August 5 from 4:00 – 6:00 PM at Inskip Elementary. We have been tasked to collect glue sticks and crayons (Specifically Crayola 24 count).

SPIRITUAL GIFTS STUDY

Our first study when our Adult Class resumes on Wednesday evening, August 17th will be called “Each One a Minister: Using God’s Gifts for Ministry” and will be led by Pat Newman. It begins with a six-session study of Ephesians. Carter engages the reader in discovering the meaning of church, ministry and gifts - from the early church up to the present.

As a follow-up to the Bible study, readers will look at ways in which Gods gifts are practical as well as spiritual. Four ministry categories, closely connected to the congregational primary task (receive, relate, equip, send), are identified. It is designed to encourage individuals to discover Gods call to ministry in their own lives, Each One a Minister leads toward practical ways of using gifts in ministries in our congregations and in our communities.

YSAP

We will be hosting a special event for seniors on Thursday August 18 at 11:00 a.m. that is being organized by a group called Youth Seniors Alliance Program. Sam Saleem and Elizabeth Richter Tarver are organizing this effort. If response is positive, we hope to make this a regular program.

The first activity is a presentation by Sam's daughter, Nema Saleem-Green, who is a music and play therapist. She will focus on how to make the most of the Golden Years without having to deny yourself the joy of life. After she presents, we will do a bathroom break then mealtime. They will be serving spaghetti, meatballs, and garlic bread.

If you plan to attend, please RSVP by email to youthseniorsallianceprogram@gmail.com

WEBSITE

Mary Mahoney has been working with a colleague from UT named Kortney Jarman to update the church’s web page. Go to <http://www.bookwalter-umc.org/> to see the changes. It is still a work in progress, but it is looking good!

BABY SHOWER

Pat Newman and Edie Hall are hosting a baby shower for Sheena Johnson on August 13 from 2:00 – 4:00 PM. Sheena is a long time friend of Pat's and she and her husband have attended worship several times and her kids have participated in Camp in the Community. Call or text Pat at 865-394-3295 to RSVP. She is registered at Babylist.com.