



# Bookwalter United Methodist Church

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[www.bookwalter-umc.org](http://www.bookwalter-umc.org)

September 2023

Reverend Stephen K. Doyal, Pastor

Bailey Hueser, Choir Director  
Todd Spangler, Pianist

Edie Jo Hall, Children's Director  
Taylor Stephens, Youth Director

*Sharing God's love with our neighbors,  
inviting them to share in the joy of Jesus Christ.*

## ARTICLE

I want to thank everyone who had a part in planning and implementing my 30<sup>th</sup> year in ministry celebration. I was very touched, but I have to say that such an event made me think of Tom Sawyer listening to his own funeral service.

Growing up a preacher's kid, I had absolutely no interest in ministry at all. I kind of fell into the position as Director of Program at Pigeon Forge Methodist after I asked my father if he knew of any work back in Tennessee. I was in Colorado at the time. I took it just as a job. I was barely older than a youth and had no real training, but the Lord looks out for fools and children.

A favorite thing to do was making videos with the kids and I thought multimedia could be my ministry. I saw preaching as a means to an end by serving churches while in seminary. The plan was to make Christian movies and such after graduating. I never realized preaching would BE the end.

I have never jockeyed for appointments or positions like some of my colleagues do. I have adopted what I think of as an "Esther" philosophy in that God has placed me here "for a time such as this."

This far into my career, I cannot help but think about what my legacy might be. I have had some successful programs through the years, but I pray more than anything that God has used me to make a real difference in people's lives. The assurance this may be the case is knowing how so many of you have blessed mine.

**Steve**



## **OUTREACH MEETING**

We will have an Outreach meeting on Wednesday September 6 at 6:30 PM in the church library.

## **CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING**

We will meet Monday, September 11 at 7:00 PM both in person in the Chapel as well as via Zoom. Contact Mary Mahoney if you would like the link to join online.

## **NEW SUICIDE SURVIVORS SUPPORT GROUP**

We plan to meet each Thursday night from 7 pm until 8:30 pm beginning on September 7, 2023.

This is a support group for those who have lost someone to death by suicide. We will follow guidelines from the American Association of Suicidology and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

This November, Contact Care Line will be celebrating 50 years of supporting those who are grieving, living with depression, or facing suicide crisis. I have 4 years' experience facilitating suicide loss groups and 17 years working in crisis services.

Scott Payne ([scott@contactlistens.org](mailto:scott@contactlistens.org))

## **RESURRECTION**

For the first time in several years, the youth are planning on going to Resurrection. They will be scheduling some fundraisers soon.

This event will be held at the LeConte Center in Pigeon Forge January 19-21, 2024.

## **BIBLE STUDY**

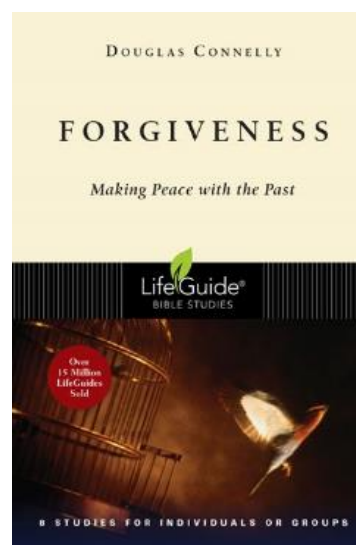
Our Wednesday evening adult Bible study group will be starting a new series on September 20th on "Forgiveness." It will run for eight weeks.

Here is the description:

"Forgiveness is a door. It's the way to peace and joy. But it's a small door, and it can't be entered without stooping - or kneeling. And sometimes it is very hard to find. When we hurt the people we love, how do we go about restoring the relationship? When we suffer the pain of betrayal or injury or rejection from someone else, how do we deal with the anger and resentment we feel?"

In eight studies, Douglas K. Connelly leads the way to help you discover, understand and practice what the Bible says about forgiveness. This LifeGuide Bible Study features questions for starting group discussions and for meeting God in personal reflection, together with leader's notes and a "Now or Later" section in each study."

If you are interested in being a part either in person or online, please let Rev. Doyal know before September 6, which is when we will be ordering books. They are \$10 each.



Looking ahead: After this study we will be doing a four week Advent study called "An Unlikely Event" led by Pat Newman.