



Bookwalter United Methodist Church

4218 Central Avenue Pike, Knoxville, Tennessee 37912

(865) 689-3349

www.bookwalter-umc.org

May 2025

Bailey Hueser, Choir Director
Todd Spangler, Pianist

Reverend Stephen K. Doyal, Pastor
Betsy Payne, Secretary

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

If you were not in worship on April 27 or able to watch online, you may have missed this announcement. Starting with the first Sunday in July, I will have an additional church that I will serve. Bookwalter will begin sharing a pastor with Heiskell UMC which is about a 20-minute drive down Central Avenue Pike into Powell.

While there are details to be hashed out and you may have some questions, I will share what I know at this point and give you some of my thoughts as well.

Heiskell's worship service currently begins at 9:30 a.m. Thus, I will preach there before coming to Bookwalter to lead the service at 11. This is not unlike how I began my ministry first with a "four-point" and then a "two-point" circuit. I was accustomed to preaching twice a Sunday before I came to Bookwalter. I was either at (at least) two different churches or leading two different services any given Sunday.

It is no secret that our church as well as most within our denomination have seen a significant decline in attendance and membership following the one-two punch of the pandemic and church disaffiliations.

We have also lost a great number of our congregation to death and other reasons over the last decade. Yet, we have weathered these storms and continue to persevere.

However, there are practical concerns as we continue to meet salary demands and the seemingly constant stream of maintenance issues. The hope is that this arrangement will help all parties involved. Heiskell will contribute to the pastor's salary which will ease the financial burden of Bookwalter somewhat. The District Superintendent is suggesting it is done in such a way that I also get an increased housing allowance and Heiskell gets a pastor who is a Full Time Elder.

While this is not how I envisioned the "twilight years" of my ministry (*I turn 60 in July*), I embrace the need to be creative with how we approach ministry in today's world. Methodist circuit riders are a proud part of our history as preachers went from church to church on horseback. That was the system needed at the time. So as history continues, we strive to share the gospel and be in ministry most effectively by all means necessary.

Steve

FOOD BUCKETS

Our Hands-On Mission Project for 2025 is once again Food Buckets for Zimbabwe. We have ten 5-gallon buckets to fill (for starters) and below are the items needed. We will collect for this project through May.

- 1 bag of SUGAR (4-5 lb)
- 1 bag of SELF-RISING FLOUR (4-5 lb)
- 1 bag of RICE (2 lb)
- 1 bag of DRIED BEANS (2lb)
- 1 powdered milk (no larger than 64 oz)
- 1 bottle of cooking oil (48 oz or less)
- 2 One-pound cans of meat: Ham, Spam or Chicken.

Please do not get a single 2 pound can of meat. Get two 1-pound cans for packing ease.

The Shipping cost has increased this year to \$8.00 per bucket but this has already been covered. Any further money given will be used to purchase food items to fill buckets or perhaps even get more than the 10 buckets we already have on hand.

THANK YOU'S

All the donations of facial tissues for Inskip Elementary were much needed and even more appreciated.

Thank you also to everyone who contributed to the collection of snacks and activity books for our local fire hall.

SMALL GROUPS

We have several new small groups in the works. Stay tuned for more details if you are interested in one of these:

1. Scrapbooking
2. Chair Yoga
3. Wesleyan Service
4. Peace Seekers

NEW BIBLE STUDY

Our Wednesday evening group has finished watching the first season of The Chosen together. We will resume our regular Bible study sessions in a few weeks. The topic this go round will be "Good and Evil" and here is how it is described:

"Though we are often hurt, shocked and angered by the evil in our world, it doesn't catch God off-guard. He cares about our suffering, he's with us in the midst of our tragedies and sin, and he can even bring good out of the worst circumstances. God doesn't give us all the answers about why we suffer, but this eight session LifeGuide® Bible Study by Douglas Connelly will help us trust him and his power more even in the midst of our pain."



Photo of W.M. Bull, Steve's great-grandfather and an actual "Circuit Rider" preacher. Circa approximately 1915