

Ken's Comments

Election Day 2008 is just around the corner! November 4 will be here before we know it. In my opinion, we are confronted with one of the most important elections in U.S. history. Unfortunately, thus far this political campaign has created more heat than light and more anger than dialogue on important issues facing us as a nation. As citizens AND Christians, we have a personal and social stake in the outcome of this election. However, there is a real temptation to believe that religion is above politics, a real temptation to believe that an issue is less spiritual for being political. Jesus said that as citizens of the Kingdom of God we should "render unto Caesar the things that belong to Caesar, and render unto God the things that belong to God." What we need to remember is that the things that belong to Caesar concern God, too! As Christians, we cannot abdicate our political responsibility.

Perhaps this is the time to return again to the Social Principles of our denomination. In paragraph 164 of those principles we read the following:

"While our allegiance to God takes precedence over our allegiance to any state, we acknowledge the vital function of government as a principal vehicle for the ordering of society. Because we know ourselves to be responsible to God for social and political life. . . we hold governments responsible for the protection of the rights of the people to free and fair elections. . . The form and the leaders of all governments should be determined by exercise of the right to vote guaranteed to all adult citizens."

Furthermore, Resolution #270 in the Book of Resolutions urges churches to encourage their members to take advantage of the opportunities to vote and encourages voters to inform themselves concerning the qualifications of persons running for office and the merit(s) of items requiring decision(s) that appear on the ballot, and after thoughtful and prayerful consideration, to vote their choice(s) on election day.

Hopeful people are always critical of the present but only because they hold such a bright view of the future. To lay claim to a better future today, American Christians should live at loving odds with their country and world, much as the biblical prophets and Jesus himself lived at dangerous odds with the Israel and the world of their day. The political climate in our country can change for the better. In a real sense, that better and brighter future lies in the power of your vote and mine. So, after prayerful and thoughtful consideration of the nominees and the issues facing our country, get out to vote on November 4!

HOLSTON CONFERENCE CLERGY GATHERING

Using the theme "Healthy Pastors, Healthy Churches, Audacious Hope," the clergy of the Holston Conference will gather at First United Methodist Church, Morristown, Tennessee on Tuesday, October 21, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. Leaders for this annual gathering will be the staff of the Cokesbury Leadership Academy: Dr. G. Steven Sallee, the Reverend Stephen B. Defur, the Reverend Rebekah P. Fetzer and the Reverend Micah J. Nicolaus. The gathering will close at 2:30 p.m. with the celebration of Holy Communion with Bishop Swanson serving as celebrant. **All of the clergy of the conference are expected to participate in this event.**

<i>Birthdays & Anniversaries</i>	
October 2008	
1-Frances Cate (B)	12-Beverly Bastian (B)
1-Paul Johnston (B)	15-Betty Ball (B)
2-Gary Baker (B)	21-John Manning (B)
2-Frank Brooks (B)	22-Katye Fox (B)
6-Charles Dawn (B)	25-Kenneth Henderlight (B)
7-Kenneth Phifer (B)	29-Paulene Daugherty (B)
9-William Duncan (B)	20-Bert & Beverly Bastian (A)
9-Kelly Hampson (B)	30-Walter Smalley (B)

Reminder for Clergy and Lay Employees
 Remember to return your yellow "Group Insurance Plan Election Form" card to Kathy Parker, P. O. Box 2506, Johnson City, TN 37605-2506 before November 1, 2008. If you need a card contact Kathy Parker at (423) 928-2156, ext 232.

Oak Ridge District

Clergy Meeting Schedule

2008	
District Wide Clergy Meeting First UMC, Oak Ridge 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon	
October 9 (Thurs)	
November 6	December 11
2009	
January 9	February (No Meeting)
March 12	April 16
May 14	June (No Meeting)

Joys and Concerns

Our prayers are offered for:

- ◆ Rev. Jim Bailes, who was hospitalized.
- ◆ Robert Dreyer who was hospitalized.
- ◆ Rev. Tom Markwood who was hospitalized.

Offer Them Christ Weekend with Dr. Fred Craddock

Local Pastors and Lay Speakers
 Save Saturday November 8

For your time with
Dr. Craddock at
Middle Creek UMC
Pigeon Forge

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity!

For Beginning or Advanced Lay Speaker credit you will need to attend the additional session on Friday evening, November 7 (6:30 p.m.) and Saturday, November 8 (9:00 a.m.).

Please help us prepare for your presence by sending in your pre-registration.)

Worship with Dr. Fred Craddock
 Sunday, November 9, 2008
 Middle Creek UMC
 Pigeon Forge, TN
 11:00 a.m.

You're Invited . . .

Rockwood UMC: Revival, Oct. 5 - 8.

Asbury Chapel UMC: Homecoming 2008 Celebration, Oct. 12 (11:00 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.) with Evangelist Marvin Howard singing and preaching.

Moore's Gap UMC: Pancake and sausage breakfast, Oct. 11 (8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.), cost \$5.00.

New Century UMC: Fun Day in the Park, Oct. 11 (10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.) to be held at the park across from the church in Harriman.

Valley View UMC: Coming Home Celebration and Revival, Nov. 9-12 (7:00 p.m. each night). Includes: Family Night with Teen Challenge, Heritage Night; Veteran's or Patriotic Night; Neighbor to Neighbor Night. Evangelists: Rev. Bratton Tucker and Rev. Fay Tucker.

TRAINING FOR SOUTHERN HOLSTON CONFERENCE EARLY RESPONSE TEAM

The Southern Holston Conference Early Response Team now has thirty-six trained members. The team has been organized to provide early response to natural disasters in the Holston Conference, and serve outside the Conference through cooperative relationships with other United Methodist conferences. Another team has been organized in the six districts of the Northern Holston Conference. If you would like to be a member of the team, the next training date has been scheduled for November 15, 2008.

Early Response Team members are trained by UMCOR certified teachers and will respond to natural disasters on a short time basis to provide emergency assistance, and damage assessment. Early response teams will 1) provide a Christian presence, 2) debris removal, 3) assist to make the area safe and secure, 4) clean-up, 5) observe need and report to the Conference and UMCOR, and 6) be a part of the caring ministry of listeners.

Another Early Response Team training will be held on Saturday, November 15, 2008 from 10 – 4, at Cokesbury Center, 9915 Kingston Pike, Knoxville, TN. This training is mandatory for all persons who wish to become a member of an Early Response Team. For more information or to register for the training, contact Jim Hayes, Southern ERT Coordinator at 865-494-7502 or by email at jrhayes46@bellsouth.net.

-- *Jim Hayes*
Southern Holston Conference Early Response Coordinator

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The Louisiana Annual Conference is now ready to receive UMVIM teams in the Baton Rouge area.

Teams will be asked to help with the clean-up efforts from recent hurricane flooding. Specific training on safe removal of debris and flood procedures will be scheduled for all teams that register. Churches that are interested in sending a team should schedule through Melissa Smith, the Holston UMVIM coordinator. Melissa can be reached through email at msmith@fountaincityumc.org or at 865-660-0271. It is important that teams traveling to Louisiana work through Melissa Smith for training prior to departure (even if they have responded previously, the requirements have changed since Hurricane Katrina). Teams not receiving proper training may not be allowed into the affected areas.

Chili Cook-off



Oak Ridge District Chili Cook-off and Cake and Pie contest!

When: Saturday, November 15th

Where: Kern Memorial UMC

Time: 4:30-6:30 p.m.

To Enter a Team, contact
Camp Wesley Woods at 865-448-2246 or
go on-line at

Oak Ridge District Lay Speaker Training October 11 & 12, 2009 Beaver Ridge UMC

Call the District Office at (865)
482-3209 for brochure.

Divine Rhythm – Holston Conference Young Adult Retreat

Lift Him Up is the theme for the 2009 Young Adult Retreat to be held January 23-25 at the Country Tonite Theatre, Pigeon Forge, TN. Registration fee is \$35 per person if received by December 31. After the registration deadline, registration fee will be \$50. For more information about the event, go to www.divinerhythm.com or contact the district office for a brochure.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

OCTOBER 2008

NOVEMBER 2008

Thurs 9 **District Wide Clergy Meeting**
 (10:00 a.m., First, OR)
Program: "Keeping Our Churches Safe"
 Roane County Sheriff Jack Stockton
 Deputy Garvin Morris

Fri 10-Sat 11 **Lay Speaker Training**
 (Beaver Ridge UMC)

Wed 15 - **CABINET**
Thurs 16

Tues 21 **Conference Clergy Gathering**
 (First UMC, Morristown, 10:00 a.m.)

*All of the clergy of the Conference are
 expected to participate in this event!
 (More information inside newsletter . . .)*

Sun 2 **Festival of Gifts & Talents**
 (Concord UMC, 6:00 p.m.)

Thurs 6 **District Wide Clergy Meeting**
 (10:00 a.m., First, OR)
Program: "Beating Burnout"
 Rev. Jim Titcombe

Tues 11 **Veteran's Day**

Wed 12 - **CABINET**
Thurs 13

Thurs 27 **THANKSGIVING DAY**
 (Conference and District Office's Closed:
 Thurs (Nov 27) & Fri (Nov 28))

FESTIVAL OF GIFTS AND TALENTS

WHEN: November 2, 2008 **WHERE:** Concord UMC,
 6:00 p.m. 11020 Roane Dr., Knoxville, TN

It's time to offer back the gifts and talents we have been given in praise to our Father in Heaven.

Oak Ridge and Knoxville will combine this year at Concord UMC to select the Gift Offerings that will represent these two districts at Resurrection 2009: "Overflowing-Reveal Him, Receive Him"

For more information call Rev. Brad Stapleton (865) 986-7329 (brad_stapleton@centralmethodist.com)

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Return Service Requested

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The Oak Ridge District News

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