

## Ken's Comments

If the main issue in Christian faith is a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ, and if the main dynamic of a personal relationship is communication, then the main purpose of prayer in the Christian life is that of experiencing and maintaining a personal relationship with God.

That means the purpose of prayer for the Christian is not getting God to do something for us. Although this might become necessary at times, it should be the exception rather than the rule. The purpose of prayer is almost always the opposite of seeking to persuade God to give us what we want. For the Christian, prayer is a progressive conversation for the purpose of gaining and enhancing a closer relationship with God and becoming more and more cooperative with God's wisdom, love and will in our lives.

Prayer is very often misunderstood. Prayer is not a way to "lobby the halls of heaven." Prayer is not a "let-God-do-it" means of evading responsibilities which rightfully belong to us. Prayer is not a magical lever to bend God's will to our own will. Prayer is not a means by which we can persuade God to do what God does not very much wish to do. Prayer is not a bulletin by which we must inform God of current events or circumstances, and without which God is unformed.

What is prayer, then? Well, prayer is a means by which we allow God to persuade us to do what we might not want to do. Prayer is a bending of our own will to the will of God. Prayer is a way to sensitize our souls to the needs of others. Prayer is strength for the shouldering of our responsibilities. Prayer is the gift of God's presence. We come to God in prayer not to dictate but to receive. What we seek in prayer is the friendship of God. What we seek in prayer is conversation with God. Prayer is not "Lord, give me something," rather it is "Lord, give me to something!"

The key to understanding what Jesus taught about prayer is the phrase "in my name." "Whatever you ask in my name I will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the Son; if you ask anything in my name, I will do it" (John 14:13-14). To pray to God in the name of Jesus is not a way to end the prayer to give it more weight and authority. To pray in Jesus' name is to pray with the mind of Christ - his character, his will, his attitude. It is as much as saying, "I am asking that this prayer be answered in keeping with the way Jesus sees it and wants it to be." If we pray "in the name of Jesus," according to St. Paul, all the promises of God find their "Yes" in him (2 Cor. 1:20).

## Oak Ridge District Conference

Sunday, September 14, 2008, 3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

First UMC, Oak Ridge

### District At-Large Nominations

Delegates for 2009 Annual Conference will be elected on Sunday, Sept. 14th at our District Conference at First UMC, OR. Nominations are to be sent to the District Office no later than August 25th. Please include the nominee's name, address, phone, email, and a paragraph explaining why this person should represent the Oak Ridge District at the 2008 Annual Conference.

### District Conference Voting Members

- Pastors - Local Church Lay Leaders - UMW President - Local Church Treasurer - UMM President - Administrative Council/Board Chairpersons - UMYF President - Lay Members to Annual Conference, Local Church - Oak Ridge District At-Large Members to 2008 Holston Annual Conference

## Birthdays & Anniversaries

### September

1-Henry & Betty Lenoir (A)	16-Betty & Jim Furches (A)
2-Larry Trotter (B)	16-Kay Liles (B)
3-Larry & Brenda Poole (A)	16-Ray Penn (B)
4-Jack Sills (B)	17-Ginny Rowlett (B)
6-Michael Charles (B)	18-Joyce Mullens (B)
7-Bill Mooney (B)	19-Angela Akers (B)
12-Gregg & Missy Bostick (A)	19-Laurie Birt (B)
12-Annette Dunn (B)	19-Joe Davis (B)
13-John & Linda Justice (A)	20-Robert Dreyer (B)
13-John Mays (B)	21-Lisa Stone (B)
14-Gary Fox (B)	23-Larry & Lynn Trotter (A)
14-Henry Lenoir (B)	25-James & Suzanne Titcombe (A)
14-Jim Marshall (B)	27-William Kilday (B)
15-Jake Beeler (B)	30-Charles & Kay Liles (A)
15-Charles & Rachel Dawn (A)	

## Joys and Concerns

Our prayers are offered for:

- ✦ Rev. Louis Hill, who recently underwent medical testing.

### 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.**

## Oak Ridge District Clergy Meeting Schedule

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

Bring Your Family and Join the Fun!!!

St. Mark United Methodist Church's

### FUN FEST FOR MISSIONS

Saturday, September 27

8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Downtown Clinton - Corner of Main and Church Streets

Games - Music - Food

RUMMAGE SALE

Antique Cars - Pet Parade - Cake Walks - Bicycle Parade

LIVE AUCTION beginning at Noon

**ALL PROCEEDS HELP WOMEN AND CHILDREN  
MINISTRIES**

## **FLOOD BUCKETS SENT TO UMCOR**

Churches from the Oak Ridge District sent 46 Flood Buckets in August to the UMCOR Sager-Brown Center in Baldwin, Louisiana. Our buckets joined with hundreds of buckets from throughout the Holston Conference being sent to Louisiana.

As I type this report Hurricane Gustav is predicted to hit the coast of Texas or Louisiana this weekend. Following on the heels of Gustav is new hurricane Hanna. During the 2008 season five hurricanes are being predicted to hit the United States. Hurricane Faye has already hit Florida four times with drenching rain and the flooding is widespread.

More Flood Buckets will be needed by UMCOR during the 2008 hurricane season. Through the United Methodist Committee on Relief, God is calling us to help those affected by hurricanes; how will you respond? I encourage your church to continue to collect Flood Bucket supplies and stockpile them for the next appeal. Our help will be needed! For more information about Flood Buckets, contact Jim Hayes at 865-494-7502

*-- Jim Hayes*

*Southern Holston Conference Early Response Coordinator*

### **East Anderson County Camp Meeting A Call to Renewed Faith**

The Methodist Churches of East Anderson County would like to invite all the churches of Holston Conference to our first annual camp meeting. The meeting will be held on **September 21- 23 at 6:30 PM** each night. The camp meeting will be located in the Underwood Pavilion of the Anderson County Fairgrounds in Clinton. Twelve churches mostly from the eastern end of the county are sponsoring this renewal event. There will be great preaching, live music and hospitality along with an opportunity for fellowship and fun. On Sunday there will be a youth orientation with Evangelist Rev. Jason Roe bringing our message and Contemporary Christian Music with a live band. On Monday and Tuesday our own Bishop James E. Swanson Sr. will inspire us by bringing a message of hope and power and a Southern Gospel group will help us to focus on Christ. This is a great opportunity for God's people to gather and we hope to see you there.

For further information, please call Saint Mark United Methodist Church at 865- 457-1520.

### **Gathering Holston Conference Native American Ministries Team Presents their 10th Annual GATHERING**

September 20-21 at Coker Creek Village near Tellico Plains, TN.

Hosted by the Native American Ministries (NAM) Committee, the weekend event features a variety of workshops on Native culture, a pow wow, and spiritual enrichment sessions and concert by Grammy Award winner, Bill Miller ([www.billmiller.net](http://www.billmiller.net)).

“Join us for our tenth gathering as we explore Native American culture and spirituality. At this unique weekend event, people of all ethnic and religious backgrounds come together to honor Native American traditions. People of Native descent affirm and reconnect with their heritage while non-Natives gain understanding and respect for Native traditions.”

Brochures/registration forms are available at the District Office.

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## SEPTEMBER 2008

## OCTOBER 2008

Mon 8 - Tues 9	<b>CABINET RETREAT</b>
Thurs 11	<b>District Wide Clergy Meeting</b> (10:00 a.m., First, OR) Program: "Preaching Through the Gospels" Rev. Grady Winegar
Sun 14	<b>DISTRICT CONFERENCE</b> (First UMC, OR; 3:00 p.m.)
Wed 17 - Fri 19	Holston Conference Secretaries Assoc. <b>ANNUAL CONFERENCE</b> (Pigeon Forge, TN)
Sun 21 - Tues 23	East Anderson County Camp Meeting (Underwood Pavilion, Anderson County Fairgrounds, Clinton)
Mon 29 - Tues 30	<b>CABINET MEETING</b>

Thurs 9	<b>District Wide Clergy Meeting</b> (10:00 a.m., First, OR) Program: <i>TBA</i>
Fri 10-Sat 11	<b>Lay Speaker Training</b> ( <i>Beaver Ridge UMC</i> )
Wed 15 - Thurs 16	<b>CABINET</b>
Tues 21	<b>Conference Clergy Gathering</b> (First UMC, Morristown, 10:00 a.m.)  <i>All of the clergy of the Conference are                  expected to participate in this event!                  (More information inside newsletter . . .)</i>

### FESTIVAL OF GIFTS AND TALENTS

**WHEN:** November 2, 2008  
6:00 p.m.

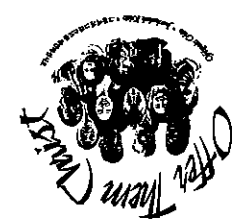
**WHERE:** Concord UMC,  
11020 Roane Dr., Knoxville, TN

*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](mailto:brad_stapleton@centralmethodist.com))

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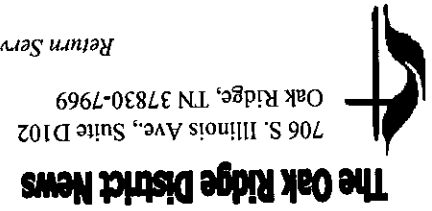


**September 2008**

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**The Oak Ridge District News**