



Sycamore News



The Newsletter of Sycamore United Methodist Church | August 2011

Sycamore United Methodist Church
9710 Old Stage Road
Prince George, VA 23875
Website - sycamoreumc.com

Office Phone: (804) 541-1181

Worship Services:

Sunday 8:45 AM---Traditional Service

Sunday 11:15 AM---New Leaf Contemporary Service

Sunday School:

10:15 AM



From the Pastor

It is for Your Life.

By Pastor Bert (notesalongtheway.com,
pastrobert@sycamoreumc.com)

Recently, I picked up a copy of a new book from the Upper Room (the same Upper Room that publishes our devotional guide) called a Pocket Guide to Prayer. This is a small book that would literally fit into your pocket, but the words about prayer within are quite large. Offering practical advice about prayer, it also offers a workable pattern of placing meaningful prayer in the different times of our day. A pattern of prayer is different than throwing up a prayer now and then.

Regrettably, many folks find themselves struggling with prayer, feeling guilty about it or forgetting about it during the hustle of the day. Pastors are not immune to this, and are quite honestly some of the worst. In a recent commentary by Memphis conference district superintendent, Rev. Sky McCracken observed, "In all of the consultations that I did this year, not one church asked me to send them a good pulpit preacher. But I did hear, "Send us a praying pastor," and more than once."

This is true. I am at my most frazzled, off-center, and distracted when I have neglected my connection with God through prayer. It is like trying to go to

work when you have a really bad cold; if you're lucky, you just make it through the day. However, I think that I am at my best, spiritually and pastorally, when I have taken the time to connect and commune with the loving God. A pastoral mentor once told me that "Prayer is at the top of our job description." God is, after all, the one that called me into serving as a pastor, God is the only one I need to please, and I am foolishly weakened if I neglect my relationship with him. This not only true for me but for us all.

John Wesley advised Methodist Christians to "read and pray daily. It is for your life. There is no other way: Else you will be a trifler all your days." It is interesting that a contemporary dictionary describes triflers as "soulless creatures, and should not be trusted." Ouch. Prayer for followers and friends of Jesus is not optional and it is not some secondary thing to do when there is time and energy.

For the sake of my life and our life together, I am looking forward to spending more time in prayer. And I want you to join me. We are working on plans for our programs and ministries for the fall, and I am excited about some of the ways we will explore our prayer life together.

But I also just want to encourage you to just simply take the plunge into a daily practice of prayer. We'll offer some workshops and other opportunities to learn about prayer, but one of the best ways is to just do it.

Just do it, and we'll go on this journey together. It is for your life.

Grace and peace,
Bert

Upgrades to our email prayer group coming in September.

We all know how helpful it is to stay in touch by email, and Sycamore has found this to be a good way to reach out to a lot of folks. So, in September, we will launch an improved system that will email to subscribers ministry news and

information, prayers concerns, and helps for your life with God.

So, say you have a prayer concern or announcement, you would simply email it to sycamore-community@googlegroups.com (we'll also have a link to this on our webpage) and it will go to our trusty moderator (a.k.a Janice) and 'boom', it will be off and running. This is the same procedure we have now.

All posts are moderated for content. Messages should not include support or endorsement for a particular political candidate or party, solicitations for sales or business unless directly related to church ministries, or inflammatory remarks about people or other inappropriate content. We have been moderating content for some time.

Why are we doing this? We have had problems with spam and offensive messages that we have been able to prevent up to now. Additionally, there are privacy and theft concerns by revealing email addresses in a list as we have been doing.

Do you want to receive more great Sycamore goodness by email? Just sign up by sending an email to secretary@sycamoreumc.com or use one of the sign up forms at church. We'll send you an invitation email and you will need to follow the instructions included to complete your subscription. We will be making the transition during August, and will 'go live' September 1st.

Grace and peace,
Bert



August is 'Hawaiian shirt month' at Sycamore. Maybe you could read that as 'dress comfortably for the heat' month, or you could read it as "lets go a little crazy with the designs and patterns" month. Either way, we invite you to come on out for a good time in worship.

Choir News



We are looking to expand our Music Ministry, which currently includes the Traditional Service Choir for our first service and the New Leaf Worship Team

for our contemporary service. Our goal is to form a new Kids Choir that would enable our young people to have the opportunity to express themselves through song while building new friendships and having fun. For more information, please complete the form in the narthex stand and give to Pastor Bert or any usher. You may also e-mail Quinton Parker, Music Director, at quinton@sycamoreumc.com.

All are welcome each Tuesday evening at 5:30 p.m. (New Leaf praise team) and 6:30 p.m. (first service sanctuary choir) to help the choir praise God through song!

Evangelism

It's hard to believe the summer is almost gone! Fall is right around the corner.

Thanks to everyone that helped with the yard sale. We may consider having another one in the fall.



T-shirts are here!! There are two different shades of green to choose from and we are now taking orders. See a member of the Evangelism Committee if you are interested in purchasing one or several. Prices are:

Youth: \$10, Adult: \$12, 1XL & up: \$14

I hope everyone is enjoying the 5th Sunday Brunch. We plan to make this a Sycamore tradition!



We are working on a fall revival and festival. More details to follow.

We are always interested in new or different ways to spread the good news of Jesus and our church to the community. Please share any ideas that you may have.

May God Bless You!
Susan Bishop
Lisa Williams

Make A Difference:



Redbird mission week is August 21 -27, and our team of intrepid missionaries from

Sycamore, Bethlehem, and Newville will be traveling to eastern Kentucky to meet God and work to make two homes warmer, safer, and drier. We'll also be bringing along the dental supplies you have offered for the center's clinic. We'll depart early that Sunday morning, so missionaries will be commissioned on August 14th. Please pray for our team, home owners Tiffany and Henry, and for the people God is calling us all to serve.

Courtney Harris, Grumpy's granddaughter, leaves for her year of missionary service in Honduras. She will serve as a preschool teacher at Lake Yojoa Bilingual School and goes knowing that we have supported her financially and prayerfully. Let's keep this up.



We need your help with decorating ideas/tips for sprucing up some of the church rooms/areas. If you are interested, please sign up to be on an Interior Design team. See Karen Perry for more info.

Also, proposals for ways to seat and feed 118 people in the fellowship hall are due to Pastor Bert ASAP.

CHURCH HISTORY BOOKS are still available at a cost of \$5.00 each. Quantities are limited but this is an ideal way to see the growth not only of our church but other churches in Prince George. Complete with pictures, this is a real bargain. Please see Nancy Fine (541-3562) or Nancy Chesser (church secretary) to get your copy.

Bykota Women in Mission

July was a busy and exciting month for us. On July 13, we had the pleasure of preparing and serving at the graduation reception for Pathways YouthBuilders. We were also able to donate 5 boxes of food and health & beauty items to their organization. These items were free or extremely cheap using the coupons that you have been donating. Speaking of coupons - we met one night to clip and sort those wonderful coupons. Thanks to

those additional folks that came out to help us. An envelope containing hundreds of newly expired coupons was mailed to the military. On July 23, we hosted Dinner & a Movie. What a great time! Proceeds were split between mission work and the building fund.

I also want to thank the kids who brought toys during Bible school for the Children's Hospital. Two and a half boxes were delivered to the hospital and they were very appreciative.

Our next meeting will be August 17th at 6:30. We will be discussing new projects and opportunities. Come on out and join us - we would love to have you!

Peace & Grace,

Sherry Taylor

United Methodist Women (UMW)



COOKBOOKS -- we need your recipes to compile a new cookbook. You can print them either on regular paper or use the "Recipe Collection Sheet" found on the table in the Narthex. If you use one of the recipes already in one of the other two books, please specify book 1 or 2. We will be revamping these two books also. Tell you friends, family, co-workers to contribute their favorite recipes --- ask them to include their name and a phone # in case of a question about their entry. Please put your completed recipe in the envelope found on the UMW board in hallway. We are shooting for Christmas. The Deadline is Aug 31. Half of the profits will be given for the Expansion Fund. Thanks and God Bless.

District News

*The James River District
Cordially invites you to a
District Welcoming Celebration
To Celebrate
The Formation of the New James River District
and
To Welcome our New District Superintendent
Rev. Dr. John N. Vest
Sunday, August 7, 2011
Three O'clock in the afternoon
Hosted by
Courtland United Methodist Church
22416 Main Street
Courtland, Virginia*

A **one day trip** to the Gloucester area to assist in repair to homes has been scheduled for **August 27th**. Are you interested in assisting your fellow Virginians in restoring normalcy to their lives after the tornadoes this past spring? Houses are ready for repair and are in need of skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled helpers. Lunches and water will be provided by the host site(s). If interested contact Dan Armstrong at armstrongdn@yahoo.com or 434-774-7394. **Final numbers need to be in place by August 19th.**

Acolytes Serving in August



August 7th – Trae Cloud
August 14th – Danielle Cloud
August 21st – Angelica Martinez
August 28th – Amanda Newman

August Birthdays

1st Gwyn Williams
2nd Lisa Crowder
3rd Laura Denny
5th Jack Williams

6th Donnie Oliver & Mary Jo Rey
7th Tyree Nichols
8th Debbie Baker
11th Robb Horne
12th Tim Rusnak
13th Fred Simmons
14th Martha Horne & Debra Parker
16th Veta Cregar
17th Willard Wooten
21st Judy Brockwell & Sierra Kanak
22nd Lisa Williams
24th Will Bonnell
30th LaWanda Johnson

August Anniversaries

1st Derrell & Brenda Brockwell
3rd Aaron & Zacha Vogt
5th Homer & Sandra Garr
6th Bill & Linda Newman
13th Bridger & Kyndra Hayes
25th J.R. & LaWanda Johnson & Jackie & Mary Ann White

Remember to e-mail items for the next newsletter to Nancy Chesser at secretary@sycamoreumc.com by August 30th.

August Calendar

8/7 – 3:00 pm James River District chartering serv.
8/9 – 7:30 pm Red Bird team meeting
8/10 – 6:30 pm SPRC mtg.
8/11 – 6:00 pm PG Ruritans
8/14 – Both worship services-Red Bird commissioning
4:30 pm Healing & Wholeness service
8/20 – 6:30 pm Load van for Red Bird trip
8/21 – 5:30 am Gather & leave for Red Bird
8/27 – Return from Red Bird
8/30 – *Newsletter deadline*

