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The Flame

of Burns Memorial United Methodist Church

July 2023

On Fire for Christ

Issue Number 210

From The Pastor

“God hates division and therefore God is against any division in the UMC.” I heard someone say that the other day.

It reminded me of a conversation I had 25 years ago. I was working with a United Church of Christ pastor and a Christian Reformed Church pastor on some ecumenical meetings in the town we all served. The UCC pastor lamented that there were over 200 different Christian denominations in the USA, saying that God would rather we were all one church. It was just a side comment for him, but I pondered on it. Does God really not like the diversity in denominations? Would God be pleased more if there were one church, and services were all in one language, say Latin? On what basis is this claim?

In the DNA code of all living things God wrote the ability and propensity to diversify. You see this all throughout nature. For example, all flowers are not roses – there are in fact over 400,000 varieties of flowering plants. All birds are not cardinals – there are over 10,000 species of birds. All dogs are not beagles – there are over 400 purebred dog breeds. So why should all Christians be United Methodists, or Roman Catholics, or anything else? Some churches are more liturgical, some churches sing more praise songs. And worship services go on in all, or nearly all, the languages of the world. Maybe, like enjoying a bouquet of flowers, God enjoys the diversity in his church?

And maybe, deep down, there is still only “one” church. Just like chihuahuas and mastiffs, while clearly looking different on the outside, are still both dogs. Regardless of our denominational label, God still knows who his people are. In God’s wonderful bouquet of Christians, he has some Catholics, some Lutherans, some Baptists, some United Methodists, some Global Methodists, some Independent Methodists, and so on. In fact, when there was only one church in Europe, it was an aberration. It wasn’t voluntary. During this period, rightly called “the dark ages,” the one church destroyed all opposition and anyone who dared think differently.

So, I rejoice that the United Methodist General Conference of 2019 had the wisdom and grace to allow churches to disaffiliate. As was said by one of the delegates on the floor of the North GA Annual Conference, the church is meant to be a connection not an incarceration. Let those who want to be together, be together. And those who want to move on, move on. And may God be glorified in the continued growth and diversity of his church.

Blessings, Pastor John



Once again it is time for our summer outings with the United Methodist Men. Continuing this summer, we will be going to Sconyers on July 27 and Old McDonald Fish Camp on August 24. We will meet at the restaurants at 6:30 PM. If you need transportation please call Carl Adams at 706-798-5254. Mark your calendar and make plans to have dinner out with everyone on these dates!

The Flame Deadline: July 21st



CalLED Church Conference

The District Superintendent’s Office informed Burns Memorial that the date for our CalLED Church Conference will be Tuesday, July 11, and will start at **6 PM**. Please be here by **5:45 PM**. The meeting will be held in the sanctuary at Burns Memorial. Only Professing Members of the Church may vote, and to move forward with the disaffiliation **2/3** of the Professing Members present must vote accordingly. If the 2/3 threshold is met, our church will be added to the list of those to be voted on for disaffiliation at a special Annual Conference to be held on Saturday, November 18 in Athens, GA.

Fellowship Sunday School Class

Come into church at 9:30 AM on Sunday morning to enjoy some great fellowship, refreshments, and a time to study and talk together. Everyone is welcome! Russell Sanders is the class president, and Bill Williams is our teacher. We follow the standard Adult Bible Series material from Cokesbury, and class books are available. Here is the lesson schedule for July, so you can read ahead for class.

- July 2 / James 1:2-8
- July 9 / James 3:1-12
- July 16 / James 3:13-18
- July 23 / 1 Corinthians 1:10-25
- July 30 / Ecclesiastes 3:1-8



Camp Meeting Days



Burns has a long history of supporting the **Indian Springs Holiness Camp Meeting**. This year the dates are from July 13 to July 23. It is a great place to stop over for a few days, or longer. Every day

there are morning, noon, and evening sessions with great singing, preaching, and teaching. Call Carol Echols for more information, and possible lodging, or go to their web site at indianspringscampmeeting.org

Fellowship Lunch

Plan ahead to stay after church on Sunday, July 30, for an enjoyable Fellowship Lunch. The grilled chicken will be provided by the church. Sides are up to y’all! Ladies, bring plenty of vegetables and desserts!



INDEPENDENCE DAY

W W R E B M E M E R U E C
C D A T D D A Y Y C C H I
E P E P Y Y D R E N E W T
L F N C H L T E E V Y I O
E R U X L N U D T S E M I
B E D G U A N J E I U N R
R E W O A E R T R U N K T
A D C E P L A A E T V U A
T O D E A T F S T Q Z I P
E M D M S B E O T I Z H V
D N A M E R I C A B O B D
I S G H I S T O R Y J N E



AMERICA
CELEBRATE
COUNTRY
DAY
DECLARATION
EVENT

FLAG
FREEDOM
HISTORY
INDEPENDENCE
JULY
PATRIOTIC

REMEMBER
STATES
UNITED

