



OPEN HEARTS OPEN MINDS OPEN DOORS

May 7, 2008



From the Pastor's Pen

Pentecost is recognized as the birth of the Christian church. On that day, forty days after the resurrection of Jesus, the promised Spirit of God literally transformed those disciples who had been following Jesus! The Holy Spirit was not new to them. They had witnessed the Spirit descending on Jesus at his baptism. Peter, James and John had seen the Spirit power on the Mount of transfiguration, when Moses, the lawgiver, and Elijah, the promise of prophecy, joined with Jesus. There God confirmed what we hold as the first tenet of the church, that Jesus is indeed the Son of God, given to fulfill the law and the prophetic voices of history.

This same Holy Spirit continues to guide the church and its members. Sometimes it is felt as a still and confident voice, like the murmur of the breeze Elijah experienced on the cleft of the mountain. That still small voice confirmed for Elijah that he could confront evil Jezebel, and charged him to return to face her.

Other times, that Spirit hits us like a bolt of lightning, much as Saul experienced on the Damascus road. For Saul, later to be named his Christian name, Paul, the Spirit came in dramatic fashion, transforming his entire being and outlook on life, love, servanthood and discipleship.

However change comes to us, either as a quiet whisper or a dramatic bolt, it is transforming! It is our choice to recognize that power for transformation, returning to face our fears or being sent with new vision and vitality. In the power of the Holy Spirit, we can choose life.

There is another choice we can make. We can act as if nothing happened. We can deny the small voice and choose to continue in our fear of the Jezebels of life. We can ignore the light that seeks to transform us, and go on living out of the habits of our past. The choice is ours to make. God gives us many opportunities to receive Pentecost Power, and how we respond determines whether we become faithful and effective disciples of Jesus.

I pray that during this Pentecost we experience the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. I pray that we will be listening to recognize its power as it interrupts our life offering a new experience of Grace and love.

Shalom,

Pastor Paul

Celebration for Pastor Paul and Melanie Gardner

Sunday, June 1st,
11:45 am in Fellowship Hall

**Bring a covered dish –
salad, vegetable, or dessert**
Meat will be provided.

Command performance
by the Blakemore Boys.

Hope to see you there!

More Blessings from Mac

Mac Stringfellow continues to be a blessing to Blakemore UMC! Her love for and faithfulness to this church through a substantial bequest has allowed for two tremendous payments. One, the remaining amount of \$70,428.33 of indebtedness was paid on April 21, 2008, allowing us to be debt free for the first time in decades.

Two, a check for \$64,294.77 was sent on April 24, 2008 to the Nashville Area UM Foundation for the BUMC General Endowment Fund. This brings the total for that fund to \$205,709.48, a definite milestone. Counting our other two endowment funds, we now have \$243,867.18 on deposit. Monies deposited with the Foundation have earned an average of 8% over a period of years. Therefore, Mac will continue to donate about \$5100 a year to Blakemore. Her foresight in naming Blakemore in her Will can benefit our church and this community forever.

With that in mind, the Endowment Committee is discussing the possibility of a Wills Workshop in the summer. You will be able to receive information about Wills and estate planning and even have a simple Will drawn up. If you need a more detailed or complex Will, references can be obtained.

