

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

February 14, 2011

I enjoy John Wayne's western movies. I've watched most of them several times, and then I watch them again when they are on TV. Someone has said that John Wayne plays John Wayne, and that may be true. At least in his western movies he usually plays this rugged, tough individual who stands up for what he determines to be right, not backing away from it.

Now while John Wayne's last movie, "The Shootist" is not one of my favorites of his movies, the unfolding story does hit us with a kind of irony (irony I suppose is the correct word). In the movie John Wayne plays a notorious gunman named J. B. Books, and J. B. Books is dying. He has cancer, and he doesn't have much time. So he rents a room in a boarding house to live out the remainder of his days, which are most likely few in number.

In his room in the boarding house he is visited by one after another who want to capitalize on his previous notoriety and his current condition. First, the sheriff of the town comes to visit him to persuade him to leave. "They don't want his kind in town," the sheriff tells him. The sheriff has obviously already judged J. B. Books to be of unsavory character, and after the visit from the sheriff you find yourself feeling sorry for J. B. Books. He can't even be left alone to die without being judged.

Then comes this writer who wants to purchase J. B. Books' life story. He wonders if Mr. Books will be so kind as to spend his remaining days telling his life's story, especially the more colorful parts of that story, to him so that he can write a book about his life. Well J. B. Books sees right through that. All this writer wants is an opportunity to make a fair amount of money on his (Books) notoriety.

And then comes an old girlfriend wanting J. B. Books to marry her. And at first J. B. Books thinks this is a good thing. Maybe if they get married, he will have someone to love him and care for him in his last days, but alas he soon learns that all this old girlfriend wants is to profit from his death. She's made a deal with the writer who wanted to write his life's story. She'll tell his story, and it will be published posthumously. Even those who supposedly love him try to profit from his death.

And one by one people come to J. B. Books in his dying days, all of them wanting to profit from him or use him in some way for their own ends. They don't care one whit that the man is dying. They simply want to be able to use him to their own ends in his dying. And ever so gradually you find out as the story unfolds that this notorious gunman, J. B. Books, may just have more character than all the supposed "good people" who want to profit by using him in his dying days. At the end of the movie you realize that only about three people in town, Gilliam, Gilliam's mother, and the doctor, realize the depth of character this man has who is being judged by most as unsavory.

The Apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans (2:12-16) says that "it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous in God's sight, but rather the doers of the law." Paul says that those who "have sinned under the law will be judged by the law, and those who have sinned apart from the law will perish apart from the law." But then Paul says, that those "who don't have

the law but who are constrained by conscience to do what is right” basically have a revelation from God just as those (the Jews) who received the law from God (Mt. Sinai). And those who have not received the law (the Gentiles) but have it revealed through conscience can be just as righteous as those who have received the law (the Jews), or maybe even more so.

All of this says that we need to be careful in the way we judge people. Sometimes the people we judge as unrighteous may be more righteous than we think. There may be more character in their hearts than we expect. Their outward actions may not tell the whole story, or it may be that we don't know the whole story about these persons and thus we judge them incorrectly. And sometimes people who seem to be righteous are not as righteous as we think. Again, we don't have the whole story. We may not have seen their true inner character, a character, or lack thereof, almost always revealed when the going gets tough in life.

Every time I watch John Wayne's movie "The Shootist" I think about the way we judge. Sometimes those we judge as unworthy are more worthy than we think. They have more good in their heart, more character in their person, than we realize, and sometimes those we judge to be good, or pillars of the community, may not have such a pure heart or such good character after all. Sometimes we need to learn more about a person before we make a judgment about him or her. They may have more of God in them than we thought just as the Apostle Paul came to realize that the Gentiles had more of God in them than he had first thought. Just something to think about.

**Until next time,
Bro. Jim**

NEWS FROM THE CHANCEL CHOIR

O sing unto the Lord a new song (Psalm 96:1) is the mantra of the First United Methodist Church Chancel Choir. Week in and week out, this group of faithful Christians does just that - sing unto the Lord a new song. The members of the Chancel Choir are very dedicated with the years of choir service ranging from brand new choir members to members with over forty-five years of service.

The Chancel Choir sings a wide variety of musical styles from classical to contemporary Christian to southern gospel to even a little bit of country. By doing so, the choir hopes that its music speaks to the hearts of the congregation and makes worship more meaningful.

I have a deep sense of gratitude to this wonderful group of singers, and very often following rehearsal I thank them for their hard work and dedication. This Choir is not one of those choirs that shows up on Sundays, but skips practices on Wednesdays. Our members are amazingly faithful.

On Wednesday evening at 6:30 p.m. - rain, shine, sleet or hail (and even during the World Series) the choir rehearses and the attendance is always excellent. Our Chancel Choir works hard learning fresh new music, but every rehearsal is fun and challenging. It can truly be said that the Choir loves our God, loves our Church, loves our music and loves each other. I appreciate them. They put a song in my heart.

LIBRARY NEWS

The new UMW reading lists for 2011 are now on the library shelf containing the UMW reading books. We still need everyone who might have books checked out to return them if they have finished them. Several of the books from the UMW reading section are missing and need to be accounted for. Thank you.

HAPPY ELDERS TRIP - MARCH 12

The Happy Elders have 14 reservations to see the play "Annie", which includes a boxed

lunch, at the Bethlehem United Methodist church in Franklin, TN on March 12. The price for lunch, play, driver and gas for the van is \$27 each. Lunch begins at 12:30 and the play starts at 2:00 p.m. We will leave the west end of the CLC at 10:00 a.m. Sign up and pay at the church office by **February 28, 2011** or call Jean Robertson at

SAVE THE DATE

On Saturday, April 2nd, 2011, there will be a Spring yard sale sponsored by the Outreach Committee. Start rounding up all the extra things you have stored in your houses and bring it to the church. We can store some things upstairs in the Education building, if you want to start bringing things in.

WITNESS/HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE NEWS

The Witness/Hospitality team met last on January 25th. Those of you who attended Charge Conference this past November may remember a list of names being read to be removed from our Membership Roll by Charge Conference Action. Those persons on that list are for the most part persons who have moved away from Lawrenceburg and with whom we may have little or no contact. The Witness team is currently working on collecting as much information about these persons as possible before we send out a letter inquiring about their membership status in our church. You may see persons with a document in their hand seeking information from you about the persons on this list. They're from the Witness team. We're just trying to be as thorough as we can be in gleaning information that will help us know who should be on our membership roll and who may have transferred membership.

The Witness team is also currently involved in revising the way we seek information from First-Time Worshipers. We don't always get the information we need to accomplish a proper follow-up with them, and so we are seeking to make sure we get at a minimum name and address. The team will also be looking at developing a Plan of Evangelism, and in the near future you will be hearing about what we are calling a "Lenten Challenge." While this idea was not developed by the Witness/Hospitality team or by the Nurture and Membership Care team, but rather in one of our staff meetings, it does fit with both in that it will emphasize greater consistency in worship attendance.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

The Worship Committee meets on Tuesday, **February 22, at 5:30 p.m.** Members of the Worship committee are: Jim Gardner-Chairperson, David Allen, Jerry Tipper, Carol Beasley, Alecia Fischer, Mark Brewer, John Benson, Cliff Philpot and Sid James. Members of the early service worship team are: Mary Ann Clayton, Joan Cochran and Jerry Moore.

The Nurture Committee meets on **Tuesday, February 22, at 6:30 p.m.** Members of the Nurture committee are Carol Beasley-Chairperson, Cissy Holt, Layde Ezell, Linda Sowell, Leslie Hunt, Tony Clayton, Teresa Carey, Jean Grimsley and Mary Ann Clayton.

The Age Level Committee meets on **Tuesday, February 22, at 7:30 p.m.** Members of the Age Level committee are: Joyce Holmes-Chairperson, Cissy Holt, T. J. Moore, Beth Benson, Kim McKnight, Ann Cornelius, Bruce & Barbara Edwards, Anita Johnston and Jean Robertson.

WITH ONE ANOTHER

David Robertson

Freddie Mae Jackson

Scottie McMackin

Jean Cone

George Clark

Kelsey Egly

Justin Mitchell

Selene Crews

Buddy Gibbs
Kenneth Williams
Bea Thigpen
Byron Shelton
Peggy Cooke
Agnes McCarter
Ray McCarter
Kaye Price
Don Grimsley
Peggy Morris
Helen Dorsey
Carolyn Pack
Joey Howell
Jeff Shaffer
Carlos Pierce
Ruth Johnstone
Eileen Paley
Jim White

NOTES OF THANKS

Thank you all for the flowers, calls, food and especially the prayers during my surgery and recovering.
Susan Fisher

**MARTIN METHODIST COLLEGE
NEEDS YOUR HELP!**

The College needs help searching for some missing yearbooks. They are trying to locate yearbooks from the following years:

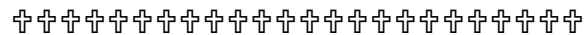
1913

1918 thru 1923

If you have any of these years, please contact the Warden Memorial Library.

Contact info.:

Christina VanDoran
(931) 363-9844 Ext. 3796 or,
cvandoran@marthinmethodist.edu



**I Will Be Loyal
To The United Methodist Church And
Support It With: My Presence:
Sunday, Feb. 13, 2011**

8:15 a.m. Worship Attendance.....	35
Sunday school Attendance.....	94
10:30 a.m. Worship Attendance.....	105

My Service: Sunday, Feb. 20, 2011

Acolytes: Addison Potts and Katie Rochelle

Nursery Volunteer: Beverly Duke

Children's Church: Dee and Steve Saliba

Loaves and Fishes

Tues. Feb. 22: Loulie Brown, Jean Grimsley, Martha Jo & Jerry Gibbs

Thur. Feb. 24 Joan Cochran, Susan Fisher, Bruce & Barbara Edwards

WEDNESDAY NIGHT SUPPER
(Menu for February 23)

Beef Stew
Grilled cheese sandwich
Salad
Banana pudding
Workers: **Friends & Fellowship class**

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSING

The Church office will be closed on Monday, February 21, in observance of President's Day.

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