

Smoky Mountain Methodist Church

January 2026 Newsletter

From Our Pastor Rev. Parker Benson

How Long Can We Live?

I recently read an article by that title written by Dr. Kenneth Cooper, M.D. He told about a lady named Maria Morera who died last year at the age of 117.

I just turned 70 on December 30, so I am 47 years behind her.

Maybe that is why I enjoyed this article.

Dr. Cooper described Maria's lifestyle this way: "She ate three plain yogurts a day and otherwise ate lightly, following a Mediterranean diet (she lived in Spain)

high in fruits and vegetables with a lot of fish and olive oil – plus she never smoked or drank." Dr. Cooper pointed out that "genes account for 20% of our health, but lifestyle accounts for the remaining 80%." Researchers who studied Maria in her final years believed her diet and lifestyle were key to her longevity.

Dr. Cooper then recounted a groundbreaking study in 1989 (and I will quote at length) "published in the Journal of the American Medical Association titled "Physical Fitness and All-Cause Mortality. A Prospective Study of Healthy Men and Women. This study "tracked 10,224 men and 3,120 women for slightly more than eight years. Treadmill stress testing was used to classify their fitness into five categories of "very poor," "poor," "fair," "good" and "excellent."

"During the eight-year follow up, if they moved from the very poor to the poor category, there was a 58% decrease in deaths from all causes and a six-year increase in longevity. But if they moved from very poor to excellent, there was only a 65% further decrease in all-cause mortality and an increase of nine years in longevity. Bottom line: this landmark study showed that simply avoiding inactivity is the best return on your fitness investment. Nothing can replicate the benefits of an active lifestyle."

I will quote Jesus here, “Go thou and do likewise.”

As a P.E. major in college, I have always enjoyed sports and physical fitness. I do see the benefits – not just longevity of life, but physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual benefits. If you are down in the dumps, go for a walk.

You will feel better. When you go to the store, park as far away as you can. Count it all exercise. When you have to retrace your steps because you have forgotten something, count it all exercise as you walk around in circles or go back up the stairs. I sometimes go to the mailbox twice and “count it all exercise.” God has created us to “keep moving,” and Dr. Cooper has shown the scientific evidence for an active lifestyle. I don’t know

if any of us will make it to 117

but we should die trying. This is the day the Lord hath made. Let us rejoice and (move and laugh and bend and stretch and walk...) and be glad in it!

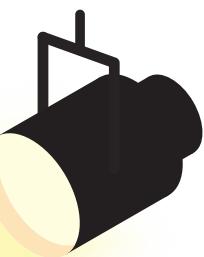
Parker



Smoky Mountain Methodist Church

Monthly Member's Spotlight

Glen Schmidt



Where were you born and raised?

I was born and raised in IL.

How long have you lived in TN?

I moved to TN in May of 2013 as soon as I sold our house in IL.

Name something unique about you that very few people know.

A friend who was a retired fighter pilot arranged to give me a ride in an open cockpit biplane doing aerobatics.

What is the hobby that you are most passionate about today?

Reading, spending time with family

What qualities do you admire most in others?

Honesty, following through on commitments made

Smoky Mountain Methodist Church

Monthly Member's Spotlight

Denise Schmidt



Where were you born and raised?

I was born and raised in IL

How long have you lived in TN?

I moved to TN in summer of 2012 when offered a job here.

Name something unique about you that very few people know.

I was one of 5 members of Cades Cove bike patrol who traveled to DC to accept the Hartzog award for GSMNP. Unbeknownst to me, the interview the park did with me was aired on TV. After the ceremony at the Dept of Interior, at 10 pm we rented bikes and rode to Arlington.

What is the hobby that you are most passionate about today?

I enjoy making quilts, hiking, biking and spending time with family

What qualities do you admire most in others?

Honesty, patience, generosity

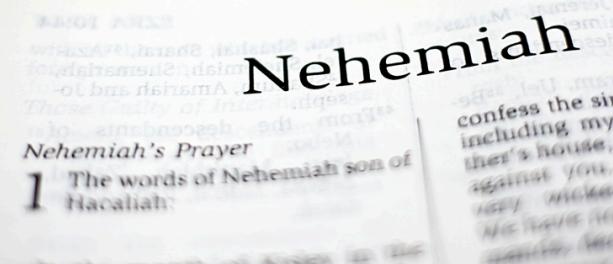
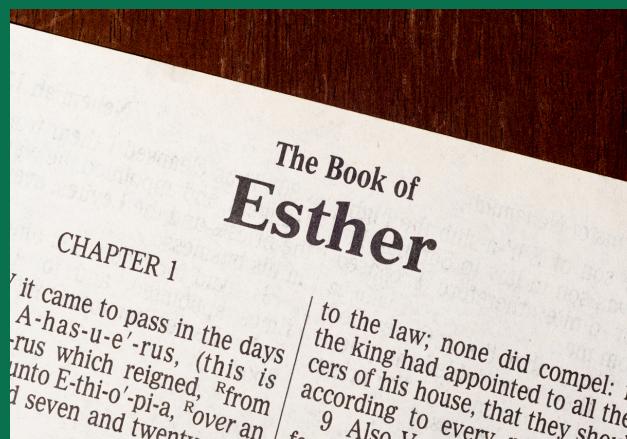
WELCOME

PLEASE GIVE A
WARM
WELCOME TO
OUR NEWEST
MEMBERS
LARRY & KAY
MEYERS



SUNDAY SCHOOL WINTER QUARTER PROGRAM

WE WILL USE THE
WESLEY ADULT BIBLE
STUDY AS A GUIDE. JOIN
US AT 9:30 ON SUNDAY
MORNINGS IN THE CHOIR
ROOM. PLEASE SEE
KRISTINE BROCK FOR
MORE DETAILS.



Men's Luncheon

Monday,

January 19th at
11:00 a.m.
Calhouns in
Maryville, TN



***All men are welcome to attend for great food
and Christian fellowship!***

Happy Birthday

4th Carol Benson

11th Mark Woelke

14th Bob Ivens

17th Myron Clarke

19th Greg Cooley

26th Larry Meyers

26th Dan McCoy Jr.

28th Theresa Slater

30th Henry Oliver

30th Gerald Smith