



Smoky Mountain Methodist Church



April 2025 Newsletter

From Our Pastor

Reverend Parker Benson

Spring is a wonderful time when we celebrate new life and the resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord. It is Easter and the time when we remember his empty tomb and marvel at his appearance to Mary and the others on that first Easter morn. Christ is our risen Savior, the “first fruits” of those who die and rise again.

To many people Easter is an unbelievable event: “How can one rise from the dead?” But I would respond, “How can one be alive in the first place?” All of life is a miracle.

Do you realize that you were once the size of a period on this piece of paper? That’s right, you used to be this size ·. If you were twins you looked like this ::. Embryologists tell us that a fertilized egg, is the size of a · on a sheet of paper. That is how your life began, and nine months later you came out of your mother’s body a bouncing little baby with 10 little fingers, 10 little toes.

You had arms and legs and eyes and ears and a brain. And those eyes, oh, what marvelous creations. They could see things and track movements and sense emotions and help you understand things. And in those 9 months of going from a · to a bouncing little baby, all your internal organs developed as well: heart, lungs, liver, pancreas, kidneys, stomach, large and small intestines, circulatory system, pulmonary system, digestive system, immune system... and they all worked perfectly and performed their own specific function. For example, your little heart was pumping blood at around an amazing 100 beats a minute - what a fine little motor you had. Some motors are good for three years or 36,000 miles, but yours is good for 60, 70 or even 80, 90, or 100 years. And just think in 9 months this little · became you, and today that little · is reading this newsletter!

Oh, that's crazy, "some might say. "I don't believe it."

There are more amazing things. How is it that I can put a kernel of corn in the ground and in a few days a little green sprout will appear above the ground. And in a few weeks a small plant and soon a large plant with its own ears of corn consisting of 100 kernels or more and if I plant them, they will grow too! How in the world does that happen? The Bible says we can plant and water, but God makes things grow. Why doesn't the corn grow while lying on my work bench or sitting in the seed packet? How does the corn know it's time to start growing? How does the corn even know it's in the ground???

Easter celebrates new life; the new life of our risen Savior Jesus Christ and the new life we have in Him as Christians. We are going to live forever! It is an amazing truth but no more amazing than the ones we experience every day.

Happy Easter!

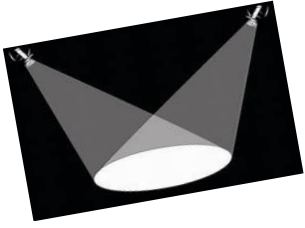
Love in Christ,

Parker

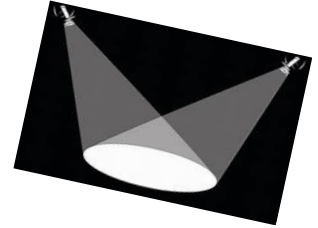


Smoky Mountain Methodist Church

MONTHLY MEMBERS SPOTLIGHT



Meet Cathy Kresica

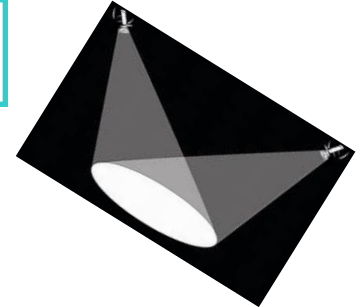


1. Where were you born and raised? **Nashville, TN**
 - 1a. How long have you lived in Tennessee? **All of my life.**
2. Name something unique about you that very few people know. **I have twin toes which I inherited from my Father's side of the family.**
3. What is the hobby that you are most passionate about today? **I love decorating my home for all the holidays and seasons. In the spring, I love planting flowers.**
4. What qualities do you admire most in others? **I admire people who are giving to others yet never want to be acknowledged for what they do. Authenticity and humility. A true love for our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.**

Smoky Mountain Global Methodist Church

MONTHLY MEMBERS SPOTLIGHT

Meet Tim Kresica



1. Where were you born and raised? **Chicago, IL**
 - 1a. How long have you lived in Tennessee? **10 years**
2. Name something unique about you that very few people know.
I can fix almost anything.
3. What is the hobby that you are most passionate about today?
I operate (as a serious hobby) a 3 unit / cabin, overnight rental business in Pigeon Forge known as Havens on the Ridge.
4. What qualities do you admire most in others?
I admire: Integrity, Courage, Empathy, Kindness, Loyalty, Gratitude.

Smoky Mountain Methodist Church

Council Meeting March 6, 2025

HIGHLIGHTS



Pastor's Report

Rev Benson addressed a possible concern about low attendance this year and speculates much of it is due to illness, weather, and vacations. SMMC has 2 prospective members and Parker has been in touch with them.

Finance Report

Debbie Cummings reported the following as of February 2025:

- Tithes and donations \$41,926 (\$2.1K less than target)
- Operating expenses \$14,128 (\$22,900 below planned expenses)
- Available cash for the building fund \$696,045 (increase of \$25K since February)
- SMMC has no debt as of 3/6/2025

Trustee Report

Steve McGee said a window leak near the fireplace is repaired, but the chimney awaits a permanent fix. The road signs will be erected as soon as the SMMC project design plans are completed.

SPPR

Bonnie VanPelt circulated the financial package for the pending Associate Pastor position; and indicated the new job description has been posted to the websites of Asbury and Truett seminaries; awaiting the OK from Wesley and United seminaries to post on their websites. although nothing has been posted yet. An applicant who initially was not interested in the position recently contacted Rev Benson and an interview is pending.

Outreach Committee

Larry Campbell will temporarily take over managing the website since Paulette Bailey stepped down. SMMC is now looking for an individual to take over the responsibilities permanently. Paulette created a "how to" document before she left.

Council Meeting Highlights from March 6, 2025 continued

Items from the Chair

George Lybrand distributed a document which outlines the procedure to follow when requesting help from Audry Pettis, particularly when needing printing and copying.

Sandy Lybrand and other members of the SMMC Project Committee met with Don Shell, Architect, to go over his latest site and floor plans. Don is still waiting for Bill Wilson to indicate where the septic field will be located so the design can be finalized (SMMC has permission for the septic).

Last month members of SMMC Council offered their ideas on "growing the church" by filling out a survey; G Lybrand thanked everyone for their input and briefly touched on some of the results he compiled. Since there is so



Take up your cross
and follow HIM

Matthew 16:24

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FAITH & FAMILY COALITION
INITIATIVE PRESENTS

MARK TOOLEY

April 4, 2025

6:30 pm

Alcoa First Methodist Church
617 Gilbert Street
Alcoa, TN 37701



Mark Tooley is president of *The Institute on Religion & Democracy* and editor of IRD's foreign policy and national security journal, *Providence*. Prior to joining the IRD in 1994, Mark worked eight years for the Central Intelligence Agency.

Mark Tooley's articles about the political witness of America's churches have appeared in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The American Spectator*, *First Things*, *Patheos*, *World*, *Christianity Today*, *The Weekly Standard*, *National Review Online*, *Washington Examiner*, *Human Events*, *The Washington Times*, *The Review of Faith and International Affairs*, *Touchstone*, *The Chicago Tribune*, and *The New York Post*.

Mark Tooley is the author of *The Peace That Almost Was: The Forgotten Story of the 1861 Washington Peace Conference and the Final Attempt to Avert the Civil War*, *Methodism and Politics in the 20th Century* and *Taking Back The United Methodist Church*.

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The crown Jesus bore signifies
Christ's Ultimate humility
in trading His heavenly crown
for a lowly crown of suffering and shame.

Joel Ryan—Christianity.com

***In the morning, Lord,
you hear my voice;
in the morning I lay my requests before you
and wait expectantly.***

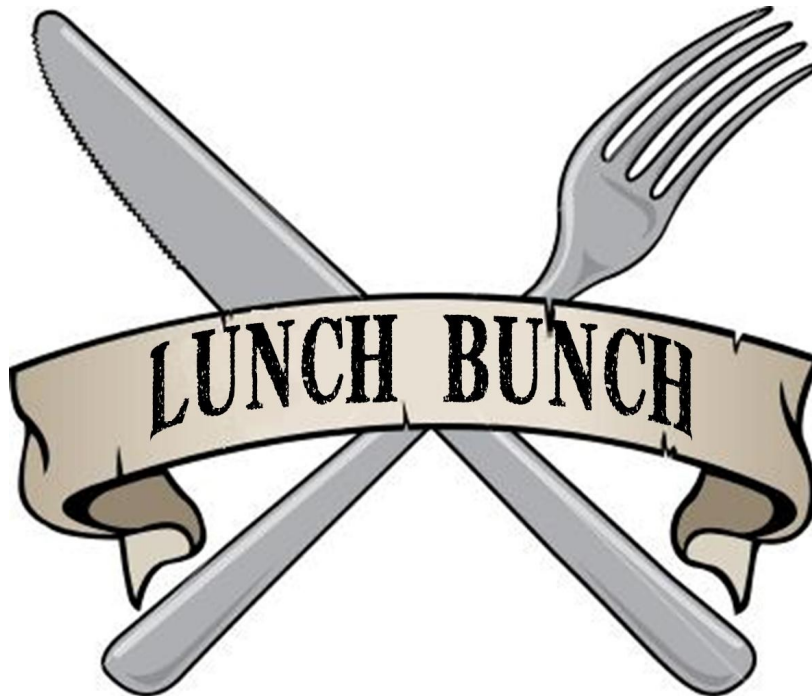
Psalm 5:3

Boye's Eye

Men's Luncheon

Monday April 21st @ 11 am

Calhouns



JOIN US FOR ADULT BIBLE STUDY

9:30 IN THE CHOIR ROOM





Jesus said,
"Father, forgive them,
for they do not know what they are doing."

Four Qualities God Blesses

(Based on the book of Daniel, who knew that eating the royals food was not God's best for him).

1. **Integrity:** He never forgot who he was. You have a choice to conform to this world or to be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to know the Will of God. Romans 12:2
2. **Discipline:** He controlled his ego and his appetite. Just because Daniel could do something, doesn't mean he should do it.
3. **Courage:** He was willing to stand alone. Daniel stood apart from other Hebrew boys who chose to follow the king's plan.
4. **Humility:** He was tactful with authority. Daniel "asked for permission" not to follow the king's diet. He humbled himself.

In the face of enormous pressure, Daniel lived with those four qualities and God blessed him. God wants you, too, to live like that, regardless of what the people around you are doing.

Rick Warren



1st Don Talley

3rd Suzanne Rhoden

5th Louise Talley



19th Barbara Goddard

28th Betty Smith

28th Ronnie Lee, Sr.

30th Ke Kai Ruckstuhl



Free Freezer Chest

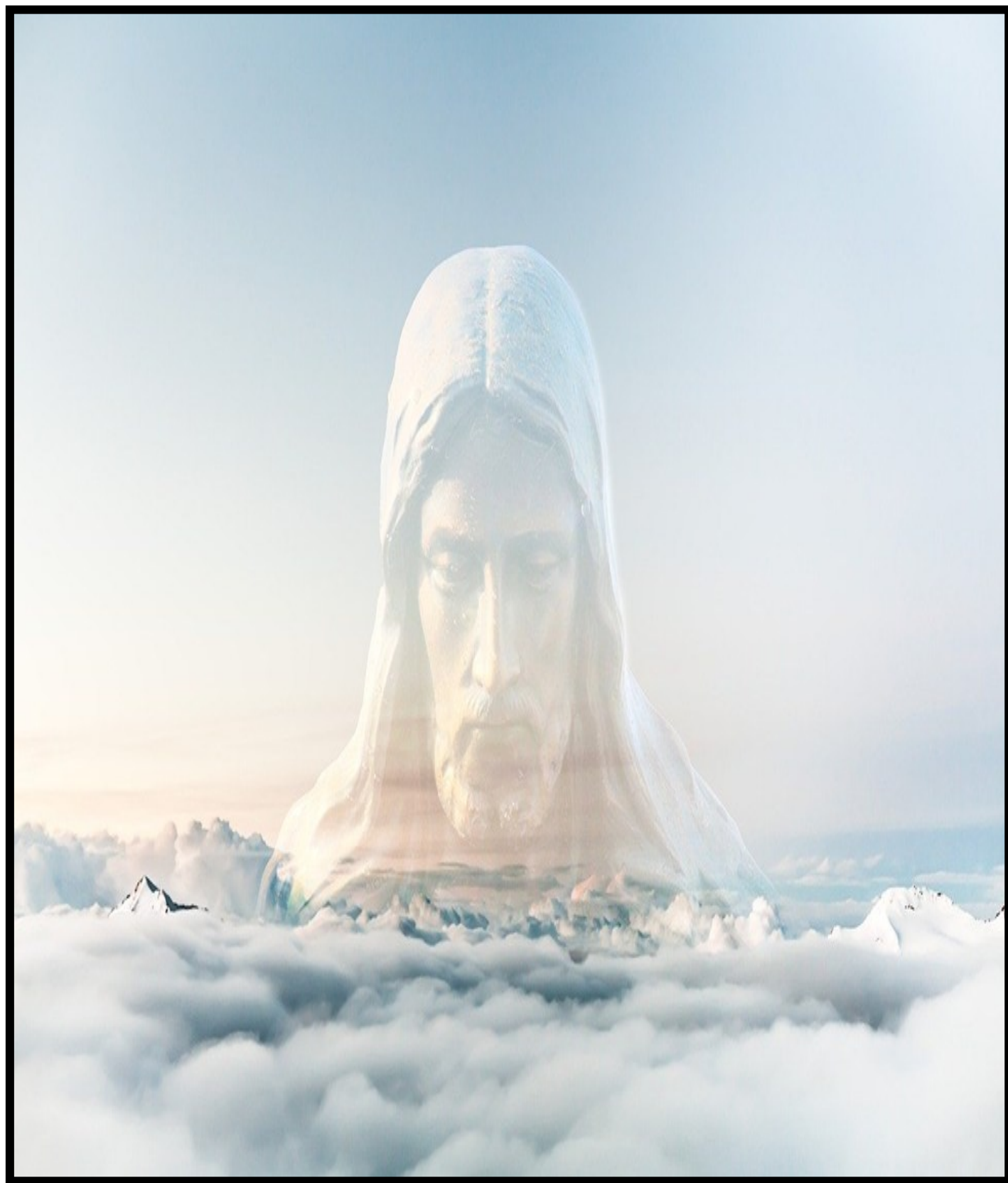
24' x 36"

Works Fine! Come and Get it!

Please call Ronnie & Cathy Lee at

865-673-3709





Peace be with you