



MEADVILLE MESSENGER

RAMBLING REX

*Psalm 34:18... The LORD is close to the brokenhearted;
he saves those whose spirits are crushed. (CEB)*

The last couple of years have been brutal. At All Saints Day in 2018, we saw eighteen family members and friends celebrated. The number of hospital visits and those with long-term convalescence continues to be greater than we would consider normal. Combine these with the death and grief we have experienced in our community, region and state coupled with the natural disasters and continued flooding in the Delta region is enough to drive us mad with grief and anxiety. Each of these deaths, illnesses, tragedies and weather episodes brought anxiety, grief, pain and sorrow not only to family members but to whole communities. The pain that was experienced by these families and communities reminds us of painful times in our own lives. This reminder often leads us to be more anxious as these former times of grief and pain impacted us in often unpleasant and unhealthy ways.

Revisiting the idea of pain reminded me of a work I had read while in seminary by C. S. Lewis entitled, The Problem of Pain. In it, Lewis explores faith, good and evil, pain, sin and God's role in each of these. As an atheist, Lewis had observed that if there is pain in the world then there is no hope of a benevolent God existing in the world. All he could see was the pain caused by crime, war, disease and terror. But what Lewis eventually found was that "we were made that God may love us." (48) But if God loves us, why do we have to endure pain and why do these tragic things have to happen?

For the first part, God created us as creatures of free will and there are times our pain derives from bad decisions made in our free will and there are times that simple errors in judgment are made as we live out each day. Sometimes, it seems that things just happen. Lewis suggests that "the possibility of pain is inherent in the very existence of a world where souls can meet". (89)

Pain is a part of life that finds its way into our midst with neither rhyme nor reason. Lewis insists that "what is good in any painful experience is for the sufferer (to submit) to the will of God. Well that sounds so simple but what does that look like. A few years ago, there was a horrific report of the death of Lily Kate. About a week after the tragic car wreck in which Lily Kate was killed, an article appeared in the Gwinnett, GA newspaper that gave the details of the aftermath of the tragic wreck that took Lily's life.

The goodness came when Lily Kate's Mom noted the devastation in the body language of the man who had crashed into their van. He was charged with vehicular homicide. The article captured the incredible work of God and his goodness in this horrid pain as in these earliest moments of their grief, Lily Kate's family was moved to express to the man that crashed into their vehicle that he was forgiven by them. They felt it was exactly what Lily Kate would have wanted. It is my suspicion that it was what Lily Kate would have wanted because she was trained well in serving a loving God who made us in order that He may love us.

Before I submit this article for printing, it is possible more pain may enter our church family as it did with the news on Friday, June 14, 2019 that just kept coming from our pastor's wife, Pam, having surgery, to Grady Fleming heading to Texas to be with his Dad and the Shelton family making decisions on how best to treat the fractured pelvis of Mrs. Lucille. Lewis indicates that the "very settled happiness and security" we seek, "God withheld from us by the very nature of the world...we are never safe." (112) What Lewis means is as we are going about living a happy life, the shattering sound of a late-night phone call or the eerie knock on our door or the appearance of that person who should not be at our workplace will eventually happen. And our world again is shattered by pain and loss.

The amazing thing is that though God made his great creation with this seemingly incomprehensible flaw, it is in this very time that God is often working his greatest blessing. Lewis understood that in experiencing the devastation of a tragic event, there was waiting "joy, pleasure, and merriment" right in the middle of the grief and pain. Lewis concludes, "Pain has no tendency, in its own right, to proliferate. When it is over, it is over, and the natural sequence (that follows) is joy." (116) God allows our pain that he may give us joy. He loves us so much that "he saves those whose spirits are crushed". Praise be to God for his presence in our pain!

Peace and Joy and Love,

Rex Wilburn, pastor
Meadville UMC

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

Revelation 21:3-5

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Your response for OCC shoebox items has exceeded expectations and we give thanks for your kindness and generosity in promoting the spread of the Good News to those in a far country ... in this unique way!!

The month of July will be focused on items of crafts and activities. Suggested items:

PUZZLES	SEWING KIT
BINOCULARS	TOOL KIT
COMPASS	OLD MAID/GOFISH
SKIP ROPE	MAGNETS
KALEIDSCOPE	MARBLES

Remember there are three age groups:
2-4, 5-9, 10-12.

Basket will be provided under the cross in the sanctuary.

Thank you in advance.
Doc and Joe Bowlin

MEADVILLE UMC IN MISSIONS

Please remember Doc Gabbert in prayers he serves in Romania from July 1-11 and Stephanie McCormick as she serves in the Bronx with Graffiti 2 Community Ministries from July 21-27.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL!!

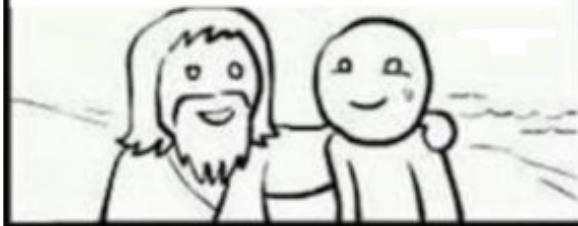
**CALLING ALL KIDS! VACATION
BIBLE SCHOOL WILL BE JULY 22-24
FROM 5:30-8:30 NIGHTLY! WE
LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU
THERE!**



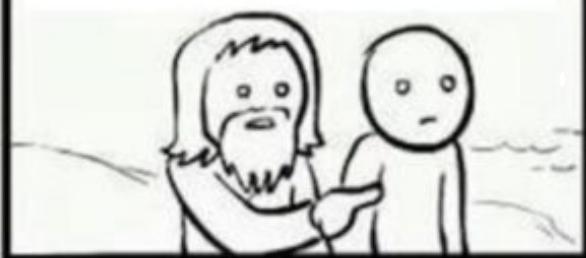
Colemanism:

In order to receive the direction from God you must be able to receive the correction from God.

where you see one
set of footprints is
where I carried you...



that long groove is
where I dragged you
kicking and screaming



**Sundays at MUMC:**

9:45 A.M. Sunday School
11:00 A.M. Morning Worship
4:00 P.M. Intercessors
5:15 P.M. Bible Study

JULY 2019

Weekly at MUMC:

Thursday - 4:00 P.M. - Prison Ministry
Friday - 10:00 A.M. - Sewing & Quilting Group

**He has made everything beautiful
in his time.**

ECCLESIASTES 3:11

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 10 A.M. Jolly Elders	10	11	12	13
14	15	16 6 P.M. Emmaus Group	17	18	19	20
12:00 P.M. Admin Council Luncheon	21 --- Vacation Bible School --- 5:30-8:00 P.M.	22	23	24	25	26
28	29	30	31			

FREE CALENDAR AVAILABLE AT WWW.SHININGMOM.COM

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

July 01	Mary Lou Webb
July 03	Gary Hurst
July 09	Blaine Freeman
July 09	Bobbie Smith
July 14	Tammy Torrey
July 19	Cindy Whatley
July 22	John Guice
July 24	John Grayson Priest
July 25	Randy Youngblood
July 28	Cookie Stroud
July 29	Scotty Smith
July 30	Jessye McBride
July 31	Mary Kathryn Williamson

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

July 9	Jimmy & Charlotte Jones
July 11	Bubba & Judy Oglesby
July 14	Bubba & Leslie Flowers
July 19	Harold & Joddie Spring



PLEASE JOIN US FOR BABY SHOWER
HONORING

*Carly Fleming
& baby Renlee Jane*

SATURDAY, JULY 13, 2019
ELEVEN O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING

at the home of Cindy Jones

190 VICTOR DRIVE
MEADVILLE, MISSISSIPPI

Carly is Registered at:

TARGET AND WALMART

REGRETS ONLY TO STEPHENIE | 479-715-1994

**MUMC Staff**

Pastor,
Rev. Rex Wilburn



Director of Music,
Pat Jones



Office Manager,
Samantha Sivils



MUMC
P.O. Box 548
101 First St. S
Meadville, MS 39653
601.384.2936
office@meadvilleumc.com
www.meadvilleumc.com

Find us online:
Facebook - MeadvilleUMC
Twitter - @meadville_umc
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Chosen by God to Proclaim Christ through Worship, Study, and Service

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