

Covenant United Methodist Church
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Home...Where the Heart Is

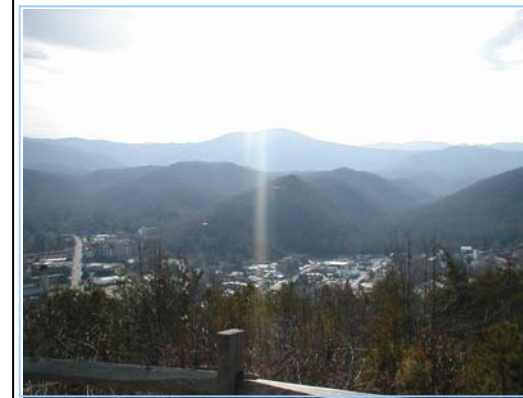


I've truly enjoyed being "back in the saddle." After being gone for three months there were the inevitable readjustments that I had to make.

December also dictated that I should "hit the ground running." While I was gone I discovered that there was nothing about being "senior pastor" that intrigues or attracts me, per se'..



In late July we had taken a National Church Development Survey. A cross-section of 60 people from Covenant (active in both worship and ministry areas) were invited to participate in answering questions that were designed to see how "healthy" we were as a congregation. After all, healthy churches are growing organisms and we wanted to see "just how healthy" we were. We had a wide range of people male and female, young and old, traditional and contemporary, from "all across the spectrum."



But, what really attracts me to Covenant is the fact that I really did miss ALL of you...YES, it's true!!

After all, we're a family; a wonderful and delightfully "dysfunctional" family where there's room for people like me...and you. Thank God that JESUS makes room for ALL of us !!

Even though I jokingly refer to "us" as a "delightfully dysfunctional family" you need to KNOW for certain that we're pretty "dog-gone" healthy for such a "rag-tag" bunch of people that Jesus has put together. Right before I left in September the leaders of our church received "good news" about our church profile.

The inventory results show scores in eight specific areas that include: Small Groups, Inspiring Worship, Gift-oriented Ministry, Empowering Leadership, Passionate Spirituality, Functional Structures, Loving Relationships, and Need-Oriented Evangelism. If a church scores higher than 65 in any area they are described as "healthy" and poised to be a growing, thriving congregation. We scored 65 or higher in several of the eight categories and the District declared that "we're doing well" and that they're really pleased with what's happening at Covenant!!" *cont. pg. 3*

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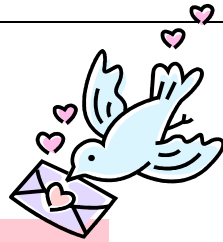
E-MAIL:
 umc@jesusatcovenant.org

OFFICE PHONE:
 (386) 767-8544

FAX: (386) 322-9150

And the greatest of these is

 LOVE



December 2007

Dear Covenant Family,

How do I begin to thank you for the wonderful retirement party, your cards and gifts, your generous and gracious sharing of memories, compliments, and laughs, and, most of all, for doing what you all do best – the precious time of prayer for our daughter and her husband and their babies. (The boys are now at 30 weeks and holding on!) I am still completely overwhelmed by your love and generosity.

It has been such a blessing to be allowed to share your lives and to have you share mine for the past 4-1/2 years. Thank you for the joy! Although I may not be seeing you on a day-to-day basis, you are in my heart and in my prayers.... and I'm not saying goodbye.

In His love,
Barbara

SPOTLIGHT ON...

ELAINE KINION

MEET OUR NEW ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT



By Sue Macchiarella

Elaine Kinion, our new Administrative Assistant, is taking over for retired Barbara Willis.

Born in Chicago, Illinois to a seminary student and his wife, Elaine left there while still a baby. Her young life found her moving to Indiana then on to Iowa where her dad preached at a Mennonite church.

The family moved to Alabama when she was 8 years old. Alabama is where she met her husband, Kevin. They were high school sweethearts and married in her senior year.

They have 3 children: Chris, who is married and living in San Antonio, Texas; Kenneth, a senior at Georgia Tech, majoring in Electrical Engineering, has accepted a job with Microsoft, and Kathleen, a junior at Florida State is majoring in Music Education.

Their son Chris, and his wife, are expecting their first child in June making Elaine and Kevin grandparents for the first time.

Her favorite food is chocolate. Her favorite colors: green and blue. She loves backpacking, walking, learning about health and fitness, reading, working Sudoku puzzles, gardening, and baking.

Elaine and Kevin both enjoy Science Fiction and Romance/ Comedy movies and shows (should help her adapt to life in the office). She mentions that her favorite Bible verse is any verse that fits whatever she is going through at any particular time.

Places she would like to go backpacking again are the Grand Canyon and the Smoky Mountains. Something interesting about Elaine (not that it isn't all interesting) is that she has been a registered Boy Scout for 20 years.

Elaine has been a member of Covenant UMC for the last 4 ½ years. With her bright smile and hearty laugh, Elaine is a wonderful addition to the Covenant staff.

Please stop by the office and welcome her or wait until Sunday when you may run into her at the 8:30 am service.

WELCOME ELAINE. We are glad you are here.

“Growing in Christ...Reaching out with Love!”