

July 1, 2012

The Oaks



Riverton First United Methodist Church, (217) 629-9721

Choosing and Being Chosen

“You may already have won a million dollars!” Many of us have received mailings proclaiming such a message in the past. They came from the Publishers’ Clearing House and similar companies. The goal was to sell magazine subscriptions. The technique to get you to buy the subscriptions was to stage a drawing with prizes, up to millions of dollars. Usually you had to open the envelope and search through the contents to find a special seal to put on the reply form. In the process you were exposed to all the products they were selling. You could enter the contest without ordering anything, but many of us were suspicious as to whether the non-order entries were treated the same as the ones with orders enclosed. Theoretically, every order had an equal chance of winning, but we couldn’t help but wonder how the winners were really chosen.

(I haven’t received any of those mailings for several years. Maybe it is all being done online now instead of through the mail. Or maybe they just dropped me for not buying anything all those years.)

Here is a related story that came out of Florida back in the 1990s. The Assembly of God Church in Bushnell, Florida, received a notice which announced that God, of Bushnell, Florida, had been chosen as a finalist for the \$11 million top prize that year. The letter read, in the standard form, “God, we’ve been searching for you! What an incredible fortune this would be for you, God! Imagine the looks you’ll get from your neighbors! Don’t just sit there, God”

It was obviously a computer error. But there is a deeper error than just a computer typing God’s name into a form letter. Biblically, the story of human history is not the story of our search for God, but of God’s search for us. Scriptures tell us that God has chosen us from before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4). God has chosen to reveal himself to us, love us, provide for our salvation and give us eternal life with him in heaven. But just like those publishers’ contests, you have to enter to win. To enter is also a choice, our choice. To paraphrase the publishers, “You have already won the greatest of prizes.” Just open the gift God has sent you by entering into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and your entry is sealed.

When I was almost ten years old, my family moved from rural Kansas to the metropolitan area of Denver, Colorado. I learned something new there about choosing. If one boy was angry with another boy on the playground, he would sometimes say, “I choose you.” That meant he wanted to fight him. We weren’t allowed to fight on the school grounds, so the two would then meet in the park after school for a fistfight. It was not a good thing to be “chosen” in that context. You had to fight. Or be ridiculed as “chicken.” Fortunately, I managed to avoid being so chosen, and didn’t get into any fights. I usually managed to talk my way out of confrontations. God had chosen to give me the gift of talking, even making jokes, which is still with me. I choose to use it for his glory in preaching and talking about the Bible. My work will be effective as I help others to choose to follow God in Jesus Christ as well.

Pastor Jonathan Dixon

RFUMC Calendar – July 2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 9:30 AM Worship; 10:30 AM Sunday School	2 7:00 PM Board of Trustees	3	4 Independence Day	5	6	7
8 9:30 AM Worship; 10:30 AM Sunday School; 6:30: PM Finance Committee; 7:15 PM Administrative Council	9	10 United Methodist Women Indoor Pic- nic	11	12	13	14 7:30 AM United Methodist Men
15 9:30 AM Wor- ship; 10:30 AM Coffee Fellow- ship; 10:35 AM Sunday School	16	17	18	19	20	21
22 9:30 AM Worship; 10:30 AM Sunday School	23	24	25	26	27	28
29 9:30 AM Worship; 10:30 AM Sunday School	30	31				

Looking Ahead...

August 25	Fried Chicken Dinner
September 9	United Methodist Women Sunday
September 15-16	Camp-Out on Church Grounds
October 13	Chili Supper
October 31	Trunk-er Treat
November 11	United Methodist Men Sunday
November 18, 6:00 PM	Community Thanksgiving Service
December 1	Hanging of the Greens
December 2	Advent Begins
December 24	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

RFUMC MISSION STATEMENT:

Our mission is to draw people into relationship with Christ and the church and to lovingly challenge them to spiritual growth.

OUR VISION: A warm fellowship of Christians in the Riverton area, growing in numbers and spiritual nurture, with facilities and programs to do ministry in the name of Jesus Christ for generations to come.

July Bible Readings

Below is the reading schedule to complete our project of reading through the Bible in one year. Since we began, at our bishop's encouragement, in August, 2011, July is the final month. Congratulations to all who have completed the project. I will continue to use passages from the readings from the previous or coming week in our worship together through Sunday, July 29. (Notice that there is no July 30 or 31 on the schedule. We actually finish in two days less than one full calendar year under this plan.) May we all know God's blessing as we read and worship together using these passages.

JULY	<i>Law</i>	<i>History</i>	<i>Psalms</i>	<i>Poetry</i>	<i>Prophets</i>	<i>Gospels</i>	<i>Epistles</i>
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
June 25 – July 1	Deut. 20- 22	Neh. 1-4	Psalms 137- 139	Eccles. 11-12	Malachi	Acts 19- 20	1 John 1-3
July 2-8	Deut. 23- 25	Neh. 5-9	Psalms 140- 142	Song/Sol. 1-2	Rev. 1-6	Acts 21- 22	1 John 4-5
July 9- 15	Deut. 26- 28	Neh. 10- 13	Psalms 143- 145	Song/Sol. 3-4	Rev. 7-11	Acts 23- 24	2 John
July 16- 22	Deut. 29- 31	Esther 1- 5	Psalms 146- 148	Song/Sol. 5-6	Rev. 12-17	Acts 25- 26	3 John
July 23- 29	Deut. 32- 34	Esther 6- 10	Psalms 149- 150	Song/Sol. 7-8	Rev. 18-22	Acts 27- 28	Jude

July Birthdays

Karen Brown	July 2
Cheryl Beckner	July 6
Kathy Jones	July 6, 1952
Barb Lucas	July 6, 1954
Dorothy Hendricks	July 7, 1936
Doris Lamkey	July 10
Madalyn Sloman	July 10, 2006
Shawn Binion	July 12, 1980
Casey Tester	July 12, 1984
Don Sutton	July 13, 1951
Ron Atkins	July 16, 1942
Lyndsey Beattie	July 20
Earlene Freeman	July 21, 1924
Shelby Dial	July 24, 1992
Mary Sims	July 27, 1998
David Sutherland	July 27, 1988
Pat Upton	July 28, 1946

July Anniversaries

Jeff and Karen Koger	July 2, 1983
Bill and Virginia Kleban	July 3, 1948
J T and Anne Armbruster	July 16, 2000
Michael and Hope McKenzie	July 31, 2008





The United Methodist Women

will meet: Tuesday, July 10th at 6:00 P.M.

Program: Picnic, meat furnished
Bring a dish to share

Short business meeting

Hostesses: Rose Hughes and Marj Todd

We welcome all the ladies of the Church.
Come see us in the fellowship hall.

Trustee News

The past few months you have read that the trustees have been working on the parsonage drainage, trying to keep the parsonage basement dry, working on cleaning up the sticks in the yard, trying to eradicate the large population of poison ivy on the church grounds, and, of course, completing the enormous project of remodeling the church's kitchen. The trustees have done the majority of all this work themselves. They realize that it is their responsibility to keep the property in very good shape and appealing.

So with that thought in mind, it is time to let you know that the church building is in dire need of tuck pointing. . . .completely! This will be an expensive project. Along with that job, the trustees feel we need to remodel the parsonage kitchen and refresh the downstairs bath, utility and electric in the parsonage. Much time has been given to acquire bids for some of this work; then time to review and analyze these bids. The tuck pointing needs to be complete before the winter months begin. So that bid will soon be let to the contractor who will be able to complete the job as we desire.

The trustees get their funds through a few dividends they receive, weekly donations on Sundays designated for the trustees, and from the hard-working groups in the church like the United Methodist Women, Quilters and the United Methodist Men. We thank you for all the donations you have earmarked in the past and hopefully in the future.

RFUMC PHONE: (217) 629-9721
E-MAIL: rvtnumc@sbcglobal.net
WEBSITE: www.rivertonfirstumc.com

Next Newsletter Deadline:
July 15, 2012
carlyshank@yahoo.com