

The NEW SOUTH FOCUS



**NEWSLETTER OF
THE NEW SOUTH CONFERENCE
OF THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH;
FOCUS 19; November 21, 2019**

A Call to Intercessory Prayer

In my morning devotions I was reading in Jeremiah 27. Jeremiah is telling the soon to be exiles not to listen to the false prophets, who keep insisting that exile will not happen. He warns that so-called prophets are filling the air with false hopes and promises. But what struck me was this in verse 18: "If they are prophets, and the word of the Lord is with them, then let them intercede with the Lord of hosts. . ." Bam! There it is. In a nation full of would be prophets, Jeremiah gave the true test. A true prophet, with whom the word of the Lord rests, intercedes for those to whom he/she preaches. Here is how the Spirit put it to me; "Don't preach to them until you pray for them."

Jesus put it this way, as he was talking to Peter: "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked permission to sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers." (Luke 22:31-22) Jesus authority to preach flowed from his willingness to intercede.

The same is true for us. Your power as a preacher is directly connected to your faithfulness as an

intercessor. My old religion professor in college often quoted P.T. Forsyth, "The preacher that does not know that prayer is his chief business does not know his business and is in danger of becoming a quack." Let's not quack up our ministry. Let's intercede first, preach second. God bless.

Pastor Mark Driskill
Oakdale FMC

Calendar

November 21-22	Daryl in Nashville Area
November 22:	MEG South Meeting - Bowling Green
December 11-14:	Daryl at Superintendents' Retreat
February __:	Strategy Day
February 7:	FM History and Polity class begins
March 20:	Leaders – Wilmore, 2:00 – 5:00 p.m.
March 20:	BOA – Wilmore, 6:00 – 10:00 p.m.
March 21:	MEG/MAC – Wilmore, 8:00 a.m. - noon
May 29-30:	New South Annual Conference, Oakdale Christian Academy
June 15-20:	Teen Camp
June 11-14:	Family Camp
June 22-26:	NSC Kids' Camp
September 23-25	New Room Conference, Nashville, TN

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Pastoral Appreciation and Blessing

The fall is commonly a time to celebrate our pastors. The following prayer might be useful in celebrating the contribution of our pastors to our lives.

We share it in the hope that it may be a means of grace and encouragement in your church.

A CELEBRATORY PRAYER

Father, we are grateful for the opportunity to recognize the many years of faithful, dedicated service of our pastor, _____. First, we want to thank you for sending this, your servant, to shepherd our congregation. Indeed, we are blessed to have him/her as our leader. We value and appreciate him, not only as our pastor, but also as a person among us who bears the indelible mark of Jesus in his life. As a measure of our warm affection and appreciation for him, we pray for your blessings on him, his family and ministry.

Father, we know that our pastor is human and sometimes carrying the weight of leadership can be discouraging. So we pray for a blessing of spiritual encouragement. When the load of leadership seems too heavy for him, come alongside and support him. Lift his spirit, light his path, and put a spring in his step.

Father, we also pray for a blessing of wisdom for our pastor. Help him know the way to go even when the path may not be clear. Give him discernment to know good from evil, even when evil is dressed as good. Give him understanding to apply your truth, even when the situation is confusing.

Father, as our pastor preaches and teaches your word, we pray for a blessing of the ability to faithfully declare your whole word. Give him courage and stamina to boldly present truth as the Holy Spirit directs him, even when his message may be close and searching to those of us who hear.

Father, we know that as our spiritual leader, our pastor has limited strength and his body sometimes may not be able to keep up with the demands of his schedule. So, we pray for a blessing of physical strength and wellness that will enable him to carry out the responsibilities that his leadership entails. To that end, help him find periods of rest and recovery. Guide him to green pastures and still waters that restores his soul.

Father, we thank you that many times, when you send us one leader, we often get two persons. Thank you for _____ who is an extension of our

leadership team. We pray for a blessing of a strong marriage and family ties that enhance our pastor's ministry. We pray for wisdom to maintain the appropriate balance in his relationship with you, his family and his pastoral responsibilities. As his children grow toward adulthood, may they come to know you and follow your path for their lives.

Father, we know that positions of leadership can sometimes be lonely. So we pray for a blessing of meaningful friendships with fellow believers that can uphold him when he is weary. Send him true friends with whom he can share his burdens and concerns.

And Father, we know that Satan will attack him as a person and spiritual leader. So we pray a blessing of spiritual protection from the attacks of the enemy. Give him strength to endure temptation and stand firm against the accusations Satan will whisper in his ear. Help him stand firm in your service, always contending for the faith and the sheep in his care. Keep his conscience tender and fresh. May he stay close to you and close to your word.

Father, as a congregation, we are blessed. Blessed that we know you. Blessed that the Holy Spirit directs our lives. And richly blessed by this your faithful servant, _____, that you have sent to lead us. May your Kingdom indeed come to our community, as together we seek to be followers of Jesus, in whose strong name we pray. Amen.

(Adapted from: 8 Prayers You Should Desperately Pray for Your Pastor - theblazingcenter.com)

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WAYNE HUNTER, NEW SOUTH CONFERENCE
ELDER SINCE 1985, PASSED AWAY

Bowling Green - Harold Wayne Hunter, 63, passed peacefully into eternal rest Monday at the Hospice House of Southern Kentucky. Born to the late Harold and Louise Hunter of Fultondale, Alabama, Wayne was the Greenwood Campus Pastor at Broadway United Methodist Church in Bowling Green, Kentucky. He was a graduate of Asbury College and Asbury Theological Seminary. An avid

Alabama fan, he tolerated Big Blue Country with the humility of a true winner. He was a teller of bad jokes, but not a bad joke teller. Wayne was many things, from tree surgeon to funeral director, from uncle to friend. Above all he was a man in possession of a distinctive combination of humility, humor, strength, and peace. Wayne was preceded in death by two nieces, Dr. Jalaine Cosby Brzytwa and Hannah Hunter, and great nephew Gavin Johnson. He is survived by his wife of 40 years, Melinda; their three sons, Justus, John-Seth, and Jordan; daughter-in-law Ellen; four grandchildren, Justus II, Miles, Lucy, and Rose; four sisters and one brother, Elaine, Aileen, Ann, Kathy, and Don; nieces, nephews, and myriad friends whom he loved as family. Wayne's Celebration of Life will be held on Saturday, November 23 at the Melrose Campus of Broadway United Methodist Church at 5:00 PM. Visitation will be before the service from 1-4 PM. Arrangements have been entrusted to J.C. Kirby & Son Lovers Lane Chapel. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to Hospice of Southern Kentucky.

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Year-End Processing

Hello:

As you begin to enter the season where we celebrate the birth of our savior, we thought it would also be helpful to provide a reminder about how to treat giving from individuals and churches as it relates to the tax impact and 2019 missions and EPP.

The cutoff dates for receiving donations for 2019 are described below. Since you may be asked, you need to have this year's donation processing schedule.

For Individual donors, to be included as a 2019 gift the check must be dated in 2019 and postmarked no later than December 31, 2019. Online gifts must be made no later than December 31st, 2019.

Church checks for giving that qualifies as a deduction from income for the EPP calculation must be dated in 2019 and postmarked no later

than January 3rd, 2020 to be counted as 2019 gifts. Online gifts must be made no later than December 31st, 2019.

Conference EPP postmarked by January 6th, 2020 and clearly marked as 2019 EPP will be counted toward the prior year assessed amount. Electronic transfers must be initiated by January 6, 2020. Please contact Debra Hancock, 800-342-5531 ext. 232 to make arrangements to send funds electronically.

Thank you for all you do throughout the year for the Free Methodist Church.

May you have a blessed Christmas Season!

Mark A. Dowley, Chief Operating Officer
Free Methodist Church – USA
770 N. High School Road, Indianapolis, IN 46214
(800) 342-5531 : Mark.Dowley@fmcusa.org

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Dr. Timothy L. Thomas
Conference Administrator (859-858-3846)

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