



# The VINE

*The monthly newsletter of Soddy United Methodist Church*  
**June 2017**



We are all aware that we are an aging congregation. Our regular worship attendance and Sunday school attendance has declined, mostly due to uncontrollable health and illness-related factors. Not only that, but it becomes more difficult to find volunteers for the activities that we do such as VBS, holiday events and the Wednesday fellowship dinner.

While we are like a lot of churches in some ways — age demographics, a changing community around us, fewer active volunteers — we are also unlike a great many of those churches as well. We are in excellent financial shape. We have no internal conflict or dissention. We are a genuinely welcoming, generous and warm faith community. Many churches today are lacking in one or more of these things, *in addition* to the other social and spiritual concerns I mentioned.

As pastor, I believe this puts us at the opportune time to begin looking at and planning for the future of Soddy UMC. One axiom of leadership when things are going well in an organization is to begin asking questions and preparing for what comes next. People have a tendency to sit back and rest when things are going well, and understandably so. However, the best time to think about fresh ideas and new perspectives is not when things have turned bad, but while they are still going well.

*continued*

## ***From Pastor Todd, continued***

However, it's not always easy to have these conversations. They touch on our deepest emotions and connections with the church. They challenge our comforts. They force us to look at things we might otherwise choose to bypass. Like preparing a will or pre-planning a funeral, we'd prefer not to have to do these things because of the reality they represent. Yet we also know deep down that we need to have a will. We should pre-plan our funeral in order to make things easier on our families. Conversations about the future of a church are no different.

Therefore, on Sunday, April 12th, the Administrative Board voted to approve a Friday evening - Saturday morning event designed to help us begin these conversations. The event is called "A Hope And A Future" weekend and will feature author, church consultant, coach and seminar speaker Eddie Hammett of Transforming Solutions ([www.transformingsolutions.org/](http://www.transformingsolutions.org/)) . Eddie has years of experience working with churches across many different denominations, including established, aging congregations such as ours.

**The event will begin on Friday evening, September 15th, and will conclude on Saturday, September 16th, by noon.**

*We have a planning team in place to work on setting up the weekend, so you'll likely be contacted by someone to help out in some way, from registration or the kitchen to child care or clean up (and several others!) The more help we have, the less any one person has to do and everyone can enjoy the weekend.*

Eddie will be speaking to us (and hopefully other area churches we invite) about such things as:

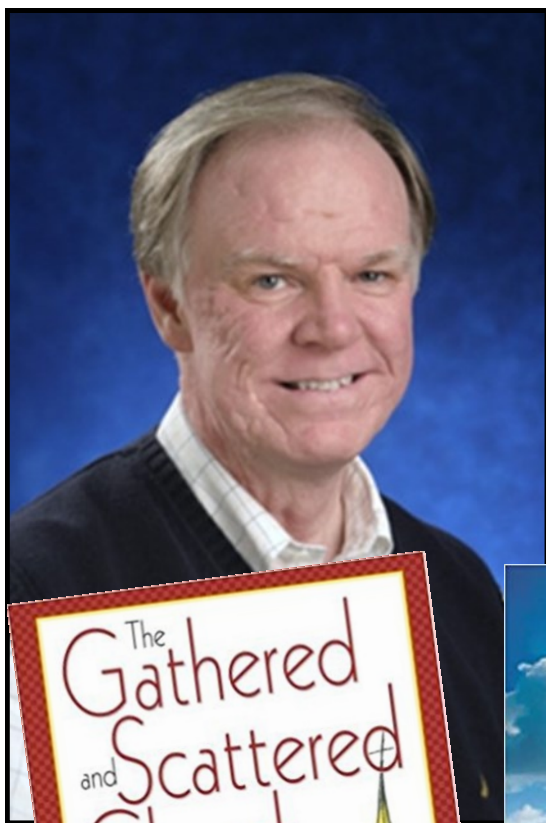
- How do we reach young people in an ever-changing culture?
- How are churches similar to Soddy UMC finding new members?
- Partnering with other churches to share resources, host events, etc.
- Volunteer deficit and volunteer fatigue – and more!

I invite you to begin praying for "A Hope And A Future" weekend, for Eddie Hammett, and for our church. God is directing us to new frontiers and new steps of faith to continue the ministry that was started way back in 1860. *You'll be hearing more about the weekend event in the next few months, and I hope you'll set aside September 15th–16th to take part.*



*"If we cannot envision anything different from what we have always known, we cannot change our circumstances."*

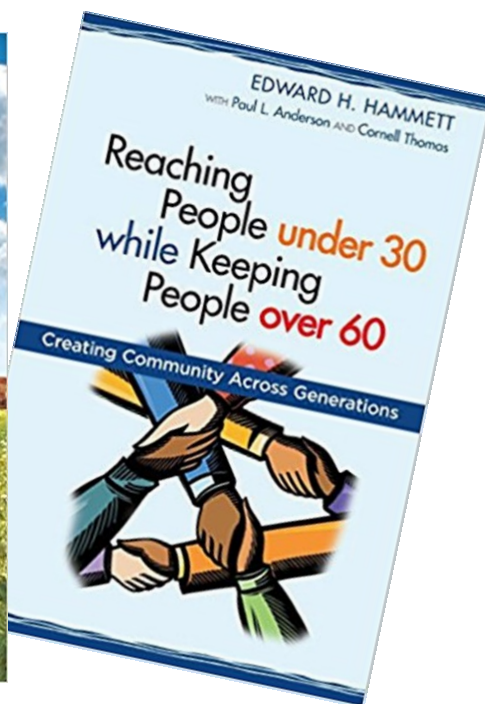
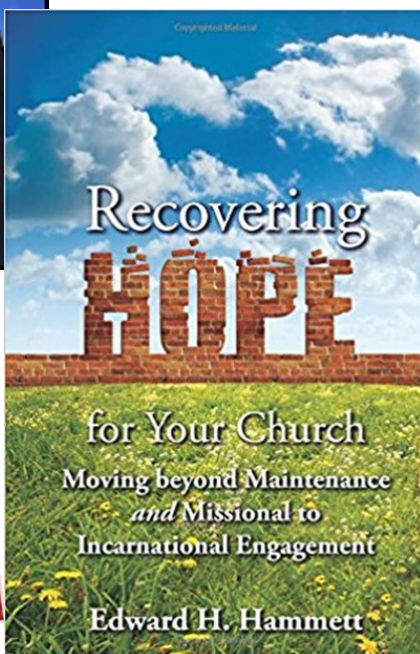
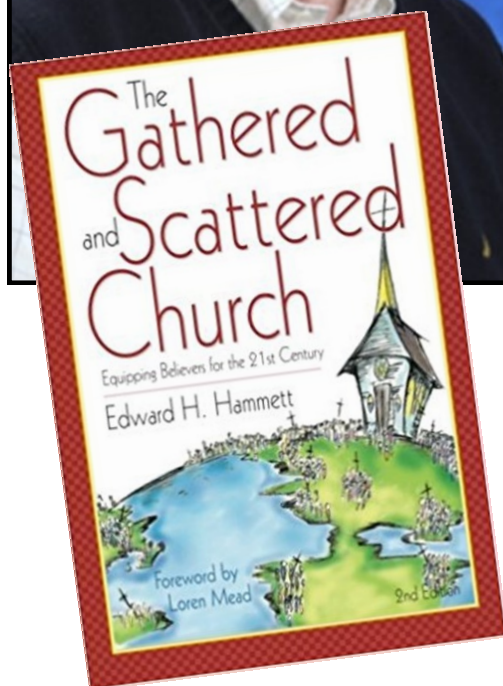
~ Lovett Weems, *Take the Next Step: Leading Lasting Change In the Church*, p. 107



EDDIE HAMMETT is the author of  
★ *Reaching People Under 30 While Keeping People Over 60*

★ *Recovering Hope for Your Church:  
Moving Beyond Maintenance  
and Missional to Incarnational Engagement*

★ *The Gathered and Scattered Church:  
Equipping Believers for the 21st Century*



# A Hope & A FUTURE <sup>week</sup>end

VOLUNTEERS WILL BE NEEDED FOR:

Friday,  
September 15th

- REGISTRATION
- PUBLICITY
- SET UP and CLEAN UP
- CHILD CARE
- KITCHEN and SNACKS
- EDDIE'S BOOK TABLE
- AND MORE!

Saturday,  
September 16th

## June Birthdays

- 9 Sid Parrott
- 11 Becky Stulce  
Kathy Vinyard
- 12 Marti Dotson
- 15 Daisy Mulkey
- 17 Carl McLaughlin
- 24 Matthew Kingrea
- 28 Matt Lyon



## June Anniversaries

- 4 Charles & Gena Bain
- 6 Arnie & Becky Stulce  
Doug & Karen Yeatts
- 10 Larry & Belinda Garner
- 11 Tim & Leann Seale
- 12 Andy & Jamie Nelson
- 17 Jeff & Karen Ward
- 20 Buck & Jean Johnson
- 24 Vic & Sharon Rogers



# Coming September 15th - 16th...

## A Hope & A FUTURE week end

featuring special guest Eddie Hammett of Transforming Solutions

*Author of Reaching People Under 30 While Keeping People Over 60  
and Recovering Hope for Your Church: Moving Beyond Maintenance  
and Missional to Incarnational Engagement*

Eddie will be joining us for a Friday evening and Saturday morning teaching event to help us envision a hope-filled future for our church!



"I read the Gospels over and over. Nothing I was doing on Sunday was what I thought Jesus would be doing if he were here." ~Joe Boyd

# UMW to host Burks UMC guest speaker



**You are invited to join our United Methodist Women on Thursday, June 15th. We are welcoming Robert Wilson of Burks United Methodist Church who will share with us the work of UMCOR Sager Brown Depot in**

**Baldwin, Louisiana.** Robert and members of his church have served there several times on short-term mission trips.

The UMCOR Sager Brown Depot is the hub of UMCOR's relief-supply operations. Each year, more than 2,000 volunteers prepare about \$6 million in supplies for shipment from the Baldwin facility. Locally, UMCOR Sager Brown reaches out to Baldwin neighbors through food distribution and housing rehabilitation projects, engaging volunteers in these activities to help families and the elderly. At a shelter for survivors of domestic abuse, and at a women's Teen Challenge center for drug and alcohol addiction, volunteers provide assistance by painting rooms and sorting items in their thrift shop and food pantries. To help meet the nutritional needs of local children, volunteers distribute food items to parents from the Preschool Food Pantry at a local Head Start school. Also, Sager Brown volunteers have the opportunity to read to children at local Head Start centers.

We look forward to hearing about the Burks mission trips to Sager Brown on Thursday evening, June 15th, at 7:00 PM in the fellowship hall.

## **The following is taken from "Response Magazine" (a United Methodist Publication), Spring 2017:**

*The UMC family puts its faith in UMCOR, and likewise, UMCOR clearly puts its faith in the UMC family. There is no other way for this relatively small agency of Global Ministries to have such impact around the world. Today, every U.S. conference has a disaster response office, along with clergy and laity trained and ready to help the church respond in times of emergency. That was a long-term strategic vision, carried out by UMCOR-training people, depending on them to find and train more people, year after year—until every conference was equipped.*



# SUMMER SCHEDULE

- Wednesday evening meals will resume in September.
- First Sunday breakfasts WILL CONTINUE through the summer.
- Martha's & Mary's Bible study will not meet during the summer but will resume in September.
- Pastor Todd's Bible study will not meet during the summer. He will begin a new study in the fall.



**HERO CENTRAL**  
Discover Your Strength in God!

**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**  
**JUNE 6TH - 9TH**  
**6:30 - 8:30 PM**

The central graphic features a large, stylized starburst logo with a city skyline silhouette in the background. The words "HERO CENTRAL" are prominently displayed in a bold, yellow and red font, with "Discover Your Strength in God!" written below in a smaller, blue font. Surrounding the logo are four superhero characters: Iron Man on the top left, Spider-Man on the top right, Batman on the bottom left, and Wonder Woman on the bottom right. The entire graphic is set against a white background.



<b>Sunday, June 4th</b>	<b>PENTECOST</b>	<i>"Greater Works Than THESE?!"</i> The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper <b>ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD</b> meeting
<b>Tuesday, June 6th</b>		<b><i>VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL</i></b>
<b>Wednesday, June 7th</b>		<b><i>VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL</i></b>
<b>Thursday, June 8th</b>		<b><i>VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL</i></b>
<b>Friday, June 9th</b>		<b><i>VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL</i></b>
<b>Sunday, June 11th</b>		<i>KATHY JONES SPEAKING AND LEADING WORSHIP</i>
<b>JUNE 11th—14th</b>		<b>HOLSTON ANNUAL CONFERENCE</b>
<b>Monday, June 12th</b>		Prayer shawl ministry
<b>Thursday, June 15th</b>		United Methodist Women <i>with special guest Robert Wilson of Burks UMC</i>
<b>Sunday, June 18th</b>	<b>FATHER'S DAY</b>	<i>"Man Cave Lessons"</i>
<b>Monday, June 19th</b>		<i>A Hope And A Future Planning Team meeting</i>
<b>Tuesday, June 20th</b>		AARP meeting
<b>Sunday, June 25th</b>		<b>NEW SERMON SERIES BEGINS!</b> <i>Dinner With Jesus</i> <i>"An Appetizer Of Compassion"</i>
<b>Monday, June 26th</b>		Prayer shawl ministry