

NEWSLINE

Great Smoky Mountains Church of Christ

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He Calls us "Friends"

"Friend." An endearing word. An emotional word. With deep meaning. That's what Jesus calls us. "I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you" (John 15:15). He has taken us into the inner circle. Like John, and Peter, and James. We are His "friends." Yet, He reminds us, "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last" (John 15:16). He chose us; we did not choose Him. Our friendship is based on His initiative, not ours. We let Him down or break our promises, but He still loves us.

Some people like to name-drop. They want others to know that they hobnob with the "big guys." Pictures with celebrities. Letters from world leaders. Can you imagine being introduced by a world leader as "my friend"? As exciting as that might be, we have a greater honor...the honor of being called "My friend" by the One before Whom kings will bow and presidents will kneel.

What does it mean to be called "friends" by Jesus? Is it more a statement about Him than about us? Is it a reflection of His heart? He has selected us, chosen us...we were His choice! To be called "friend" implies that we hold a special place in the heart of God. Of all God's wonderful creation, only man can attain that honor. We alone enjoy the companionship of our Creator. To be His friends means that we are concerned about the things that are important to Him. We love the people He loves, value the things He values, and hate the things He hates. We view the world through His eyes, know the pain in His heart, and experience the joy of His presence.

Friendship with Jesus means that we must reject friendship with the world. We must stand solidly against the evil forces of darkness which threaten to destroy us. Our allegiance to Him cuts us off from many associations which would hurt us. Friendship with Jesus creates trust and loyalty. He never lets us down. He is completely honest with us, and we can count on His every word. And we offer the same loyalty to Him. We follow wherever He leads, listen closely to His voice, and know His inner thoughts and desires. Unlike mere servants, we have been privileged to know what He does and why He does it. He lets us in...we're on the inside. He holds no secrets. He "tells it like it is."

He has called us "friends" because that is His perception of us, that is the relationship He wants with us. We love because He first loved us. We follow because we know He will lead us where we need to go and will never leave us to struggle alone. He is always there, standing before the Father on our behalf.

Al Behel

Other News and Prayer Requests

-Heartfelt sympathy to **Sadie Bostick** on the passing of her husband **Joe** last week. Sadie and Joe attended here in the past. Funeral services at a future date. Sadie's address posted on bulletin board in main foyer.

-Welcome to **Steven and Lisa Hodgins** and daughter **Kelsey**, who placed membership with us last week. Address: 408 Woodland Dr., Sevierville 37862.

-**Patty Adair** will have wrist surgery Oct. 7 to remove three bones. She will not be able to sign for at least two months.

-**Carrie Harp**, daughter of **Marc Hayes**, is scheduled Oct. 3 for doctor visit to diagnose jaw tumor followed by possible surgery.

-**Breanna Ward**, age 32, stage 4 cancer—has three children. Prayers and cards requested—address posted in foyer. This family visits here with us.

-**Al and Linda** are in a meeting at the West Hobbs Street church in Athens, AL today. Mark Haynes is speaking this morning, and the young men tonight.

Food Contact For Month: Leah Turner, Back Up Ginny Cliett

Elder Contact for Month: Marc Hayes (1-731-608-4148)

Sermon Topics:

A.M.- "At the Feet of Jesus" John 1: 43-51; Luke 10: 38-42—Mark Haynes

P.M.- The young men of the congregation will be leading our worship service

Interpreter for deaf and hearing impaired recovering from surgery after Oct. 7

Prayers for Our Known Sick

- Dez Anderson**—suffering many health issues—hospitalized last week.
- Madison Barnett**—recovering from gall bladder surgery.
- Geordie Haynes** will have ear surgery at a later date.
- Jan Messick** cataract surgery on right eye Sept. 19
- Sheryle Elkins**—continuing chemotherapy. PET Scan was good.
- Bill Valentine** recovering from esophageal cancer.
- Larry Valentine**—results of scan last week were GOOD!
- Joyce Keyser**—completed chemo and radiation here—appointment at MD Anderson in Houston Oct. 4. Joyce suffers from peritoneal cancer.
- Patsy Bevis**—feeling a little better.
- Bill Green**—suffering from several health issues.
- Jean Compton**—is recovering at home.
- Kathy May** battling ongoing health issues.
- Joey Barnett**—diagnosed with mono.
- Pauline Swallow** is dealing with cancer.
- Jerry and Jeanette Dyer**—facing several challenges.
- Larry Barnett**—has begun cardiac rehab.
- Charles & Frances Copeland**—newborn great granddaughter, Madeline Grace Kirby, is very ill, but showing some improvement.

Friends and Family News/Prayer Requests

- Shelly Stewart**, daughter-in-law of **Skip and Esther**, had a TIA on Aug. 26 and will see a vascular doctor in Sept. Shelly is **Tera's** mother.
- Leah's and Patty's friend, Amanda Rucker**, partial knee replacement after years as an amputee.
- Linda Blass, Vicki's** mom, in rehab facility recovering hip surgery.
- Leah's friend, Denise Molinsky** lost her husband recently.
- Jackie Stearsman**, friend of **Al**, has leukemia.
- Nita Watern, Brenda Scott's** niece, chemo for liver cancer.
- Lida Cliett, Rick's** aunt, ill with heart failure and cancer.
- Maegan White, Joyce's** cousin, pain post brain surgeries.
- Sue Hayes' sister-in-law, Jane Hufford**, suffering from leukemia, received a long awaited bone marrow transplant Aug. 23.
- Jim & Judy Watkins**—Rick's sister and husband, health issues.
- Catherine Rose, Leah's** neighbor, receiving PT to regain strength.
- Dee Lewis**, friend of the **Clietts**, 6th occurrence stage 4 cancer.

Eastern European Missions—Million Dollar Sunday—Sept. 25
There will be a special collection to purchase Bibles for Ukraine and Russian Schools today. Baskets passed twice—second for EEM.

Grief Support Group—See Patty Adair for information and updates.
Ladies Bible Study—Tuesday, Oct. 4 with Polly Cline leading a study on "Hunger in My Soul" at 10 a.m. in the fellowship hall.

Special Events

Men's Prayer Session
Monday mornings at 8:30

Wednesday Night

Danny Cline "Five Factors in Failing Faith" Matthew 6:30; 8:26; 14:31; 16:8; 17:20

Sunday Adult Class

Rick Cliett "Our Heart & Faith" Ephesians 3

Times of Services

Sunday A.M.
Bible Study 9:30 AM
Worship 10:30 AM
Sunday P.M. 6:00 PM
Wednesday 7:00 PM

Building Fund

The Latest Loan Balance is **\$1,005,383.88**. Extra contributions to reduce the loan debt are needed and appreciated. Envelopes are available in the pews.

Nursery

Located across main foyer. Closed circuit TV allows viewing and participation in worship.

CDs and DVDs of Sermons are available free at sound booth. Also available on the website at: www.greatsmokymountainschurchhofchrist.com.