

God is love and love lives here!



600 North Houston Lake Blvd., Centerville 31028

(478) 953-3090

[www.thewellatcenterville.com](http://www.thewellatcenterville.com)

Office Hours: Mon-Thur 8:30a-12:30p

Rev. Tommy Odum

[pastortommy@thewellatcenterville.com](mailto:pastortommy@thewellatcenterville.com); 478/397-9491

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Sunday, April 14, 2024

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## Gratitude

Psalm 107:8-9

Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,  
for his wonderful works to humankind.

9 For he satisfies the thirsty,  
and the hungry he fills with good things.

Twelve years. That seems like such a long time, but the truth is it went by too fast. Over those

twelve years, we began life as a parsonage family, added three more children, moved four times, and watched God do wonderful works all along the way. Honestly, there were times when we wanted to quit but God would see us through in some miraculous way to keep us moving forward.

Ordination was a quiet goal over the years but the process in our former denomination was a challenge. Ministry was a second career for me. I'd worked in construction sales for several years and when we started part-time in Boston, I continued to work in various sales jobs. Unfortunately, one of our churches on that first charge closed after a year and a half. I met with my District Superintendent at the time, and we discussed the challenges I'd faced along with those in the future after overseeing a dying church. I don't remember much about the conversation, but I do remember telling Lowery, "I'm not sure this is how I should feel, but after closing this church, I want to do this full-time." I felt had I had the time to invest more, the church might not have closed. It was a naive approach, but it started our family on the path that's led us to where we are today and an exhaustive path towards ordination that always felt just out of reach.

Going full-time meant a lot of changes, including a 65% decrease in salary! I was informed that I needed to continue my education and complete an undergraduate degree and then seminary. I completed my undergrad over the next three years in Organizational Leadership. One move later we were in Middle Georgia. Away from all our family and friends, it was time to start seminary. I took a couple of years off as we went through the arduous process of Ameliah's adoption and then started looking at the most prominent schools to attend. Settling on one, I attended my first semester, but God had different plans. The last week of class I came down with appendicitis and almost passed from sepsis a few weeks later on Christmas. Thank God for my bride who fought for me and kept our family going during that time. I truly would not be here without her.

Seminary was not our primary concern at the time and the following years would be fraught with a difficult recovery in various ways. The denomination pressured education and ordination but the cost was expensive, and the timing was not right for our family. Then, move number 4 which led us to where we are today. Most of you know the challenges we faced here as a parsonage family. Between COVID and denominational challenges, school or ordination were the least of our concerns. I was licensed and that would have to be enough.

Finally, we landed with the Congregational Methodist Church. Keep in mind, most denominations are not as stringent as our former denomination and to be frank, that was one of the main issues I had. If our process was effective, why are we in the position we are in, but I digress. I fought the system and the injustices in our qualifications, at times to my detriment. In the CMC, most of their qualifications had been met through seminary completed, years of service, and courses taken through a license to preach school. After twelve years, I was finally told that I qualified and was worthy to be called Ordained Elder. Twelve years, four moves, four children, two denominations, pain, suffering, wins, losses, and God was in it all to bring us where we are today.

It's a long story with some details left out that are personal. So many things could have gone differently to change the trajectory of our paths but they didn't. God could see it all and for that I am grateful. I'm grateful for you as a church and your support in what is a chapter is coming to an end as a new one begins. Your love and generosity last Sunday were overwhelming, and I will be eternally grateful. I'm grateful for Katie and my family who have gone through so much from classes, moves, and sometimes weeks without Dad at home. I'm grateful for our new denomination and that as a church you followed the Lord in your decisions that have led us to where we are today. I'm grateful for the prayers, gifts, and patience as we have worked through this process. I've said it before and I will continue to, there is nowhere else I would have rather been than with you in this process.

Ordination, for me, is more than a piece of paper but a conclusion to twelve years of work, tears, and determination to keep moving forward. I praise God for it all, as well as His good works and mercies along the way. Finally, I pray you as a member of this church, The Well at Centerville, feel the love we have for you and know we are forever grateful for all you have done for our family. We pray we can so order our lives to express our love for you and show our continuing gratitude.

Keep The Faith,  
Pastor Tommy


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### Scripture and Sermon:

Joshua 2:8-21

"The Women Who Have  
Made Us Who We Are:  
Rahab: Our Past is not  
Our Future"

## Gifts Given to the Glory of God

 In honor of Tommy Odum by Keith & Susan Mobley

### Thank You

"I want to thank everyone for their friendship, concern and prayers for me. So many people have been so good to me and I just want to express my love to everyone. I love you all." ~ Mary Lee Carter ~

"Thank you everyone for your generosity for the Open Door Clothing Closet. We opened April 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Outreach Center and received many positive comments from visitors in our shop. As we continue to grow and serve those in our community, we are in need of men's and children's clothing and household items such as pots/pans, lines, pillows and towels. As you continue to do your spring cleaning, please keep us in mind. We are in the closet every Tuesday and Wednesday from 9a until 12 noon and will gladly accept your donations. We have extended our giving through Southern Santa, an organization in Houston County who provides assistance to those who have lost everything. Just last week we helped a family of 4 whose home burned in a fire. We continue to seek volunteers in this mission. Please see Brenda if you are able and willing to serve."

~ Brenda ~

### Young at Heart

Young at Heart will meet Friday, **April 19** at 12 noon for lunch and then Bingo 1p-3p. Anyone and Everyone is invited to join us for some food, fun and fellowship! Come on!



- ✓ 04-21-24 Church Conference 11:30a
- ✓ 05-13-24 Finance Meeting 6p
- ✓ 05-13-24 Admin Council Meeting 6:30p
- ✓ 05-27-24 Office Closed- Memorial Day
- ✓ 06/04-06/24 CMC General Conference, Laurel, MS
- ✓ 06-10-24 Finance Meeting 6p

### Family Promise

Our next rotation is April 14, 15 16. Times for meals with families- Sunday- 4:30-5:30; Monday and Tuesday- 6:30-7:30. If you can provide a meal for one of these days/times, please see J.O. or Lynn.

### Community Missions

- March totals for the Food Pantry: families served- 396; people served- 1406; weight of food distributed- 12,544 lbs.
- The Food Pantry is now open every Wednesday, 10a-1p with a new format and process for recipients... also, volunteering will be on rotation now, so get with Cheri and sign up... come on out and volunteer! You will be blessed. Our Food Pantry Team rocks!
- The Open Door Mission Closet (Clothes Closet) is now open every Wednesday from 9am until 12 noon. We would love for you to stop in for a brief visit when possible and/or become a volunteer. We work on a rotating basis so you would not be obligated to work every week. Please see Brenda if you are interested. Tuesdays will become our new Sorting/Processing day and volunteers are also needed on that day.
- April 17 volunteers- Marie Davis, Lynn Mayfield, Sabrina Williams

### Calling ALL Youth!

Current 5th grade - 12th grade.

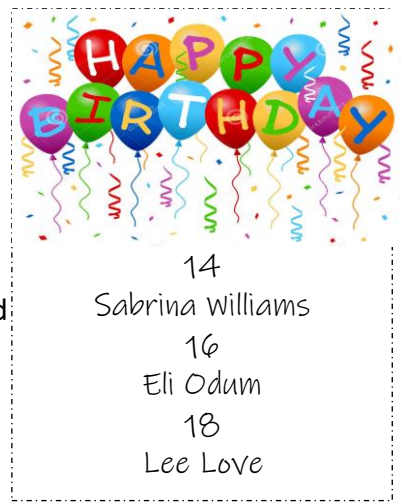
We are meeting every Wednesday night from 6-7:30pm.

Next week (April 10th) we start a new Series titled "And It Was Good". A four-week series about justice.

Come check it out! We will eat, play a game or 2, and then dive into our study!!

### Flowers on the Altar

The fresh flower arrangements on the altar Sunday mornings are only possible by your generosity. Please consider giving in honor or in memory or just to the glory of God. The 2024 chart is on main the bulletin board. Come take a look or call for a Sunday you would like to give. Each arrangement is \$65. When the service is over, you may take your arrangement home. If you choose to leave it, the flowers will be taken to an assisted living or nursing home.



### Bible Reading Plan

#### Week of April 14<sup>th</sup>:

Sunday.....	Psalm 1
Monday.....	Psalm 136
Tuesday.....	Psalm 22
Wednesday.....	Jeremiah 1
Thursday.....	Jeremiah 29
Friday.....	Jeremiah 31
Saturday.....	Jeremiah 33

### New Concerns

Joann Kile  
Dennis & Kathy Davis  
Mary Lee Carter  
Bob & Pat Parker  
Patsy Spinks  
Don Porter

### Continue Prayers for:

Family of Mike Hix  
John & Vivian Nadolny  
Leon

Christa Avret  
Michael & Jennie Walston  
Betty Byrd  
Leon Hudson  
Mary Prater  
Jim & Mary Leary  
Virginia Eadie  
Bill Reedy  
Sarah Mayer  
Cary Martin  
Mac McNeal  
James McNeal  
Our Country, Leaders, Military

### Finance Report for April 7

Operating Budget.....	\$9,185.00
Apportionments.....	100.00
Food Pantry.....	362.50
Total.....	\$9,647.50

### Worship Attendance

153

### Sunday School

47



# Are you Looking for a place to serve? To get involved? We have it!

## This Week's Schedule:

### Sunday- April 14

#### Ushers

10:30a J.O. Miller, Tony Rozier  
Mel Smeltz, Cheri' Cox, Roy Carter  
Keith Mobley, Stevie Bowen  
Joy Fleming, Sherrie Shell

9:15a Sunday School

10:30a Worship

#### Family Promise

#### Greeters

10:30a Sherrie Shell, TBD

#### Communion Servers

Kelly & Kelly Evans  
Jimmy & Mary Monk

#### Finance Stewards

Paula Williams, Sherrie Shell, Kelly Evans

#### Assisting with Children

#### Sunday- April 14

Nursery- Joy Fleming, Cinderella Sampson  
Children- Sherry Armour

#### Sunday- April 21

Nursery- Sherrie Shell, Laura, Cinderella  
Children- Dawn Wilkins

### Monday- April 15

#### Family Promise

7:30p Narcotics Anonymous

### Tuesday- April 16

#### Family Promise

9:15a Movin' n Groovin'  
10:00a Partners in Prayer  
10:00a Yoga

### Wednesday- April 17

8:00a Men's Fellowship Breakfast

9a-12p Clothes Closet

10a-1p Food Pantry

#### 11:30a Friendship Circle

1:00p Life Group I "Under Construction"

6:30p Choir Practice

7:30p Narcotics Anonymous

### Thursday- April 18

9:00a Life Group II "Work of Art"

9:15a Movin' n Groovin'

10:00a Yoga

7:30p Narcotics Anonymous

### Friday- April 19

12p-3p Young at Heart

7:30p Narcotics Anonymous

### Saturday- April 20

7:30p . Narcotics Anonymous



8:00a Men's Fellowship Breakfast

9a-12p Clothes Closet

10a-1p Food Pantry

#### 11:30a Friendship Circle

1:00p Life Group I "Under Construction"

6:30p Choir Practice

7:30p Narcotics Anonymous



9:00a Life Group II "Work of Art"

9:15a Movin' n Groovin'

10:00a Yoga

7:30p Narcotics Anonymous



### Friday- April 19

12p-3p Young at Heart

7:30p Narcotics Anonymous



## Sunday School at 9:15a

Are you looking to get involved in Sunday School? We have a great line up of classes to explore! Maybe you've been attending Sunday School regularly but see a topic you're interested in – it's okay to move around and try different classes – let's learn and grow together!

#### Sunday School Class

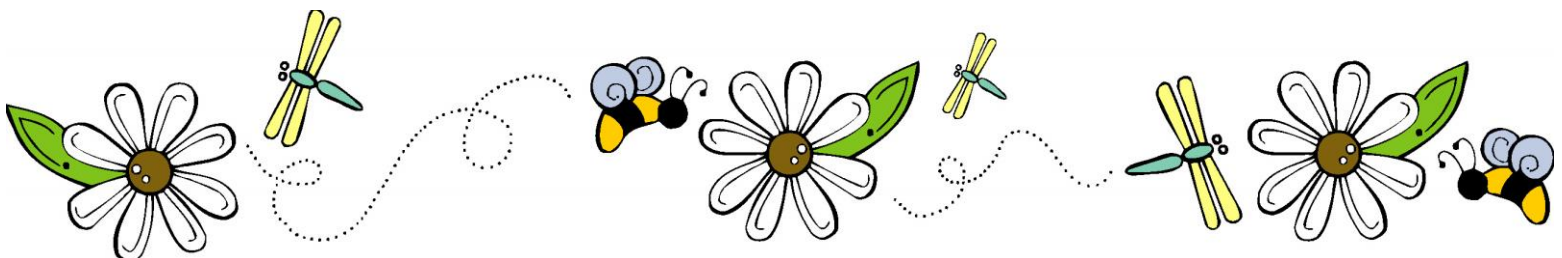
Seekers  
Issues & Answers  
New Beginnings  
Christian Fellowship  
Youth

#### Studies

Max Lucado  
Mark  
Revelation  
2 Corinthians  
Christian Response to Evil

#### Teacher

Kathy Rutke  
Katie Odum  
Nancy Hudson  
Don Schall  
Eric & Gloria Nelson







# A SCARLET CORD OF FAITH

JOSHUA 2