

THE CHIMES

Dates to remember:

- Pray for our South Carolina Team
June 2-June 12
- Strawberry Festival Worship Service on Sunday June 12th at 10:30am
- VBS June 19-June 23, 6:00—8:30 pm

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June & July 2016

PRAYING FOR SERVANT LEADERS by Pastor Gary

“One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles: Simon (whom he named Peter), his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot, Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.”

This passage got me thinking about how to pray for servant leaders. When it comes to ministry, prayer is the most essential ingredient. In this passage, Jesus clearly gives all of himself in prayer. He does not gloss it over, or signs up for a half-hour at the village prayer vigil. When Jesus relates to people, they get his total attention. So also when Jesus relates to God, total attention. Let us take Jesus not only as the example for our living, but also for our praying.

Jesus prays before he chooses which of his crowd of students he will send out with special authority to speak and act for him. He prays to discern what God wants; to identify God’s leading. He listens. He asks God, “What do I do now? Whom do I choose?” The leadership in Christ’s church begins with Jesus’ praying all night, and the choices Jesus makes always surprises us.

As much as Christians want to make Jesus’ original students look like heroes, the stories they tell about themselves portray them as pretty poor material. When the chips are down, Judas betrays Jesus, Peter denies him three times, and the rest of the guys run away. Jesus’ official messengers never fully under-

stand him, and with Judas mentioned last of Jesus’ twelve, we realize that the shadow of the cross stretches over Jesus’ ministry from the beginning. I doubt that if Jesus had hired a consultant to help him choose the most qualified to serve as disciples, he would have chosen these men to be his official messengers.

This is a surprisingly explosive bunch of people to remain close, but they form their lives around him. He’s the reason they are with one another, and thus they will stay together. They symbolize what the church ought to be: working together in spite of their weaknesses because of Jesus Christ.

Does Jesus make some kind of mistake in prayer, choosing Judas and the rest? Knowing what we do about them, we ask: “These? These are the people around whom the kingdom of God will form? A new world circling around these men?” But Jesus chooses them after a long night of prayer. Instead of choosing superior, capable, proven people to represent him, Jesus surprises us by choosing a group whose members later tell with painful accuracy how thickheaded they were. But Jesus prays for them, and he is the one who is important here.

If you have considered stepping up in your Christian service but have hesitated because you know your imperfections, take heart from Jesus’ first group. He only chooses those who are imperfect. His first official messengers were attached to *him*, and that made the difference. Because they are attached to him, he’ll have to die for them. He prays for us and chooses us, too.

*Our new
Mission
Statement:

To make
Disciples
of Jesus
Christ for
the trans-
formation
of the
world*

**Food for the
FISH Pantry**

Current Needs:

Cereal
Peanut Butter & Jelly
Boxed meals
Canned meats
Canned fruit

**Donations can
be left at any of
the FISH Food
containers or
grocery carts
throughout the
church.**

**Thank you for
your generosity!**

PRAYER MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

Please remember to pray:

- For all persons connected to our church family who are confined to their home or nursing homes
- For our TV Audience (9 am Worship)
- For veterans, public servants, police/fire/medical personnel
- For the Rainbows & Rhymes Preschool families
- For our nation, Christ's Church universal, the United Methodist Church, the Sugar Creek Cluster, our congregation, our pastor and staff

Prayer concerns: Ola Mae Mikesell, Joanne Schlosser, Steve Truax, Brandan Hindman, Maxine Dreyer, Blake Ratcliff (overseas), Cheryl Young, Jane Titus, Gary Meek, Melba Rivenbark, Fred Foxworthy, Don Carpenter, Ernie Smith, Janet March, Our **missionaries:** Chris & Anna Pratt, Cru (formerly Campus Crusade for Christ) in Orlando, FL

STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL WORSHIP SERVICE

Join us on Sunday, June 12th at 10:30 am at the Strawberry Festival for Worship! Our choir will be singing along with two soloists from the community. Rev. Kelly Nelson, pastor of Christ Lutheran Church, will be preaching. Please bring lawn chairs to sit outside under the canopy of the tress at the Lane House. There will be NO worship services (9 am or The Gathering) or Sunday School at the church that day. Hope you can plan on joining the community in worship!

SOUTH CAROLINA TEAM HEADS OFF...

Your 2016 South Carolina Missions Team thanks you for your support for our 29th trip to the sea islands. Will you continue to pray for travel mercies, work site safety, and the message we share with the families for whom we work? Our advance team leaves June 2nd and we return home June 12th. We will share with you about this year's trip this summer at church.

Please pray for our team: Bruce Whitehead, Laurie Vellner, Monte Thompson, Byron Thada, Karen Thada, Peg Rose, Deb Peter, Vic Neideffer, Cynda Mellish, Tom McComb, Cindi McComb, Thomas McComb, Dianne Lowe, Brandon Long, Jenny Lewis, Andy Hayward, Scott Feller, Brandon Beck and Bev Bannon.

The cubbies are empty, the classroom put away and quiet has settled in the hallways...because summer has officially begun for Rainbows & Rhymes! We ended this year with a BANG and were so proud of all the accomplishments this year. We had so much fun the last week of school with our Spirit Days. Each day was something different, which allowed all the children to be unique in their own way (and teachers, too). We dressed like pirates and superheroes, wore our clothes backwards, went to the “beach” and concluded with everyone wearing their Rainbows & Rhymes t-shirts. Be sure to check our Facebook page for pictures from each special day!

We graduated 23 children from preschool and held a special ceremony for them in the sanctuary. Nearly all the pews were filled with family, friends, laughter and a few tears. The children did an amazing job while each of our teachers praised their individual achievements and gave them a send-off. Thank you to Maxine’s On Green for the delicious cookies, cupcakes and brownies for the graduation reception. It was all delicious!

Although we are not hosting any summer programs this year, you will still see me in and out of the church all summer. There’s plenty of planning and organizing to do for the upcoming school year. We are also still enrolling children for the fall so please send them my way if they need any information.

Thank you for all the support, especially during the graduation ceremony (sound & video). We love sharing these moments with you!

Blessings,
Leslie



STANDING STRONG FOR UNITY IN THE BODY OF CHRIST by Pastor Patty

“Conduct yourselves with all humility gentleness, and patience. Accept each other with love”. Ephesians 4: 2 (CEB)

God has chosen us to be Christ’s representatives on earth. Paul challenges us to live worthy of the calling we have received. This includes being humble, gentle, patient, understanding and peaceful. People are watching you as you move along in your daily life. How well are you doing as Christ representative?

Phyllis Diller wrote these words, “You know what keeps me humble? Mirrors!” None of us are ever going to be perfect here on earth. Being humble is a good thing. It helps us to accept and love other Christians in spite of their faults. It helps other Christians to accept and love us in spite of our faults.

Jeffrey Stewart told the story of a first grader who went on her first day to a newly integrated school at the time that segregation was such a big thing in our schools in the big cities. An anxious mother met her daughter at the door when she reached home asking how her day went in her new school. “Oh, Mother! You now what? A little black girl sat next to me!” The mother asked calmly: “And what happened?” “Well, we were both so scared that we held hands all day.” Standing together in unity will keep us strong. Reaching out to each other keeps us strong for unity in the body of Christ.

2016

**REGISTRATION
HAS BEGUN**

**CONTACT LESLIE
FOR MORE IN-
FORMATION**

PRESCHOOL

3 - 5 YEAR OLDS

MONDAY - FRIDAY

8:30 – 11:30 AM &
12:30 – 3:30 PM

**RETHINK
CHURCH**

WHEN:

*Saturday, June 25
10 am - 12:30 pm*

Outdoor and Indoor
projects will be
available.

TO HELP:

Contact the church
office at 362-4817

NEED HELP?

If you have a project
you need help with,
call the church of-
fice at 362-4817

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY NEWS...

Cave Quest VBS

It's almost here! Don't forget to register your children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews and their friends. All children, pre-school (*must be potty trained) through 5th grade are welcome. Go to www.groupvbspro.com/ez/cvfumc for more information and to register on line!

Dates: Sunday, June 19th through Thursday, June 23rd

Times: 6:00 – 8:30 PM

Location: Fellowship Hall in First United Methodist Church,
212 E Wabash Ave, Crawfordsville
Phone: (765)362-4817



Contact Paige Livesay for any questions or for more information. We look forward to this event, every year, here at First United Methodist Church! It's a great way to have fun and learn about Jesus with old friends and new friends. Our church's volunteers love these kids and enjoy seeing them learn all about our God and all of the wonderful things He has done for us and how much He loves each and every one of us. This is a great opportunity to reach out to our community and show God's love. If you haven't signed up to volunteer or help in some way but would still like to, call Paige. There is plenty of work to do!

Summer Sunday School



Summer Sunday School

First of all, I just want to thank Mrs. Marilyn Myers and Mrs. Julie Neideffer for all of their hard work and dedication they put in to teaching our kiddos about Jesus. They have taught Sunday School for several years and now Julie (our 3rd-5th grade teacher) is moving on to serve in other areas of our church. Please be sure to thank our Sunday School teachers. We have been seeking new volunteers to help with our children's ministry team and if you love kids,

God could use you to touch their lives in one way or another. There are always things that can be done to help. Contact Paige Livesay to find out about opportunities to serve at (765)362-4817 or plivesay@cvfumc.org.

Our Sunday school classes will continue to meet at the same time (10-11) through the summer and I look forward to spending time with the kids and doing lots of fun things. The children who have finished kindergarten through 4th grade will meet in room 211 and pre-school and younger will be in room 105. We sure hope to see you this summer!

Children who have just finished 5th grade will be moving up to the middle school class room (sniff, sniff) with Andy Hayward, our Youth Director. He is a lot of fun and has a way of teaching God's word to our youth that really resonates with them. They are going to love it!

CHANGING COACHES, CHANGING PASTORS, CHANGING PRESIDENTS by Bishop Mike

I don't know Frank Vogel, the now former coach of the Indiana Pacers, nor do I know as much about basketball as Larry Bird who has announced that Frank will no longer be the coach of the Pacers. But I see a common fallacy in the decision to seek a new coach for the Pacers, the same fallacy that plagues many persons in congregations who want a new pastor, and even the fallacy that plagues our political system in the U.S. as we decide on a new President. The fallacy is simply this: having a new leader is not the panacea that many people believe and expect. Simply getting a new coach, new pastor, or new president may not be the ultimate answer.

Sometimes when I hear from congregation members who want a new pastor, I am reminded of the wisdom spoken to me by my first District Superintendent who said, "When a car has four flat tires and no gas in the tank, changing drivers is not the answer." There are often much deeper reasons why a church is not thriving, and laying all of the blame upon the pastor is a fallacy. Likewise we have seen many sports teams who get rid of a winning coach in order to find that "new coach" to take them to the next level, only to discover that there are limited options and what they had as a coach was not all bad. If the team does not have a lot of good players (speaking now of the Pacers who still lack a good point guard and a good power forward), what good is it to change coaches? If a church does not have committed lay leadership and a healthy organization for ministry, what good is it to get a new pastor?

We have a huge belief in America that leadership makes all the difference. That is a fallacy. Leadership makes a great deal of difference, and having the right coach, pastor, or president is important. But when we lay all of the responsibility upon a new leader, that is a recipe for failure that often leads to a demand for another new leader in a few years. Leaders can lead. Leadership matters. But when we shift all of our responsibility onto a new leader, which is a form of idolatry that must be avoided.

The ancient Israelites wanted a king so that they could be like other nations. The Lord warned them, through Samuel, that their desire for a king could lead them into deeper troubles, that a king would draft their sons and send them off to war, that a king would tax them and misspend the money, that a king would focus upon his own ego and not the national good, and that a human king was no replacement for following the Lord as their King of Kings. But the Israelites insisted, God granted them their desire, and all that Samuel warned came true. The desire for a king to solve all of our problems is an idolatrous desire.

So we as the United States citizens need to be careful. Donald or Hillary or Bernie are not the answer. We should look for the best person to serve as our new president, but we also must be careful not to fall into the fallacy and idolatry of expecting a new leader to take upon themselves all of the responsibility that rightly belongs to us. We are responsible for the future of our country, and God alone is the One who can show us the way to a future with justice, mercy, and love.

2016 MISSIONS GIVING

Our church has given \$27,394.14 to support mission efforts so far in 2016. This giving comes from our Missions Endowment, Special offerings and individual donations. Below is a breakdown of those disbursements:

Montgomery County Free Clinic - \$750

Trinity Life Ministry - \$2,500

South Carolina Mission Team - \$5,675

Rural Mission South Carolina - \$1,750

Imagine No Malaria - \$250

Africa University - \$1000

Half Way Home - \$2,505.66

FISH Food Pantry - \$750

UMYF Mission Trips - \$961.66

FISH Financial - \$750

Discretionary Fund - \$2,530

Heifer International - \$250

Food Backpack Ministry - \$500

Cru - \$1,250

New Day Charities (Abby Twarek) - \$500

Fletcher Place - \$300

Table of Grace - \$3,360

Coins for Camp - \$308.82

Brightwood Community - \$568

Back to School Backpacks - \$500

Rainbows & Rhymes Sch - \$135

HIGHLIGHTS FROM GENERAL CONFERENCE 2016

EDITOR'S NOTE: *General Conference meets every four years and is the official decision-making body for The United Methodist Church. The conference approves changes to the denomination's rulebook, The Book of Discipline, when the elected delegates deem it necessary. The General Conference met May 10-20 in Portland, Oregon. A friend and colleague, Bob Raschka, who is the pastor at Rossville United Methodist Church, wrote the summary that follows. – Pastor Gary Lewis*

As Bishop Mike points out elsewhere in the newsletter, General Conference accomplished more than discussion about human sexuality. General Conference is about diversity – diversity in worship and prayer. The conference was filled with prayer sessions and worship services throughout. Among business matters, the General Conference:

- Voted 445 to 310 to end support for legal abortion in the United States.
- Voted 425 to 268 to withdraw from the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, an interfaith organization which supports late-term abortions among other practices.
- Celebrated the thousands of lives that have been saved from the denomination's "Imagine No Malaria" campaign.
- Voted to withdraw from the U.S. Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation, which critics saw as more anti-Israel than pro-peace.
- Rejected proposals to divest from companies that profit from Israeli military activities.
- Approved the addition of five new Bishops for the Church in Africa beginning in 2020.
- Continued to pursue important justice and mercy issues including ending human trafficking, stamping out killer diseases like malaria and AIDS, supporting environmental stewardship, and the sanctity of human life.
- Maintained all current language in the Book of Discipline prohibiting homosexual practice and supporting marriage between a man and a woman. The language remained because instead of voting on each petition that was presented to the Conference on issues of human sexuality, the Conference instead voted to agree with a proposal submitted by the Council of Bishops to form a commission which will study all the varying paragraphs in the Book of Discipline that deal with the issue and bring proposals to a special called session of General Conference in 2018 or 2019.
- The Church announced a health initiative to reach 1 million children by 2020 with resources to ensure safe births and prevent illnesses like pneumonia, diarrhea and malaria; promoting breastfeeding; and eliminating barriers to medical services.
- The United Methodist church grew by a total of 1.2 million members in the last four years to a total worldwide membership of 12.2 million. The Africa Central Conference grew by 329%, while in the United States, the denomination declined by 11%.

UNITED METHODISTS DISCUSS SCHISM

Adam Hamilton, pastor of the Church of the Resurrection, said church leaders discussed a possible schism in the United Methodist Church because of the issues of homosexuality. A new commission would come up with a plan “for re-ordering the life of people called Methodists.” Out of one United Methodist Church, three new United Methodist churches would be created. He described them as “conservative,” the other “progressive” and the third would be for those in the middle. While he opposes a split, Hamilton said “I don’t see any other way we can get past the gridlock.” A special general conference would decide these issues in 2018 or 2019.

THE RISE OF THE “METHODIST MIDDLE” by James A Harnish

EDITOR’S NOTE: *James A. Harnish is a retired United Methodist pastor who most recently served Hyde Park United Methodist Church in Tampa, Florida. He has authored numerous books, Bible studies and articles.*

According to the New Testament book of Acts, surprising the church is the Holy Spirit’s idea of a good time. When the leaders of the early church thought they had figured everything out or when they were at loggerheads and didn’t know where to turn, the Spirit would suddenly surprise them with a new way forward that they never expected.

My consistent prayer for our General Conference has been that the Spirit would once again surprise the church by opening a new or unexpected way through the conflicting convictions about same-sex relations that have divided our denomination for four decades.

The irony is that Methodists have historically been people of the “middle way.” Not a mushy middle, but what Bishop Scott Jones calls “the extreme center.” It’s a clearly defined core of faith that allows space around the circumference for a variety of convictions as to how the faith is lived out.

In Portland, I experienced the Holy Spirit surprising the church in what one friend described as “the rise of the Methodist middle.” Magry deVega described it as the parents in the front seat telling the squabbling children in the back seat to calm down.

I was surprised ...

- When the General Conference voted to ask the Council of Bishops to lead us in finding a way to unity through our division
- When the Bishops offered a wise option for a Commission that would not simply kick the can down the road, but would offer a specific plan for a way through our division into a new way of being together
- When I observed that the current and successive Presidents of the Council of Bishops are very wise people with exceptional gifts for leading with a non-anxious, moderating presence;
- When the GC finally adopted the Bishops’ proposal and held to it in spite of attempts by the folks on the extreme ends of the continuum to scuttle it.

My hope and prayer is that the Spirit will continue to surprise us by drawing together a Commission that will clearly define the center of our life together that will include grace-filled ways for those who find that center to be either too conservative or too progressive to find their way into other ways of ministry.

GENERAL CONFERENCE WAS NOT JUST ABOUT SEX by Bishop Mike

Despite what you may have heard or read or seen in the media, the 2016 General Conference was not all about sex, or human sexuality, or homosexuality. Those kinds of topics attract lots of media attention, some demonstrations, and an explosion of social media – but the recently-completed General Conference was about much, much more than that.

Among the important things that happened at General Conference:

1. Worship – lots of worship, with global diversity, but also a strong Christ-centered focus.
2. Prayer – lots of prayer before, during, and after General Conference. We prayed at the beginning of each session, many times during each session, and at the end. The prayer room was busy. I think even a casual observer would have to admit that prayer was a constant reality at General Conference.
3. Global growth – we celebrated how our UMC is growing globally, including the presence of an increasing number of delegates from outside of the U.S. That made for challenges of language and culture, but it is a wonderful sign of the movement of the Spirit in our UMC.
4. Still too much U.S.-centric legislation – we have not yet learned how to structure or discipline ourselves to keep our U.S. issues from dominating General Conference, but we are making progress.
5. Technology helped and hindered – some of the newer technology allowed us to communicate better, but at other times it seemed that technology got in the way. The new electronic system for seeking to speak on the floor of General Conference helped in some ways (easier to identify persons wanting to speak), but it hurt in other ways. People who entered the electronic "Queue" to speak seemed to assume that they had the right to speak – with some of the same people constantly seeking the floor. In the "old days" of waving a card to speak, the presiding bishop could never call upon everyone, and everyone seemed to understand that fact, but our new technology gave some people a sense of "entitlement" to speak. And some abused that.
6. Good conversations around tables, over lunch, and in the halls – but it is difficult for a group of 850 people to be a "committee of the whole." Some people didn't seem to understand that we delegate to smaller legislative groups and sub-groups, so we need to trust them.
7. A reasonable budget – the General Conference adopted a budget for the next four years of \$604 million – less than the current four-year period, a little more than was originally presented, but a reasonable budget. It also includes a "global apportionment" so that Conferences outside of the U.S. all participate in giving to support the budget.
8. Many "glory sightings" of God at work – celebrations of new missionaries, new communities of faith, new efforts at ministry and justice – every day we heard multiple celebrations of our UMC at work around the world.
9. Mostly courteous and caring delegates – even though we had a few difficult people, most of the delegates present seemed to be committed to working long hours, seeking God's will, and conferencing

GENERAL CONFERENCE WAS NOT JUST ABOUT SEX cont'd by Bishop Mike

with one another.

10. On-going work – the work of our UMC continues, and the things adopted by the General Conference will take months and years to continue. General Conference is never the end of our work, it is a step along the way.

So, why was there so much attention on human sexuality? Because we have new challenges here in the U.S. where same-gender marriages are now legal. Because we have a variety of contexts for ministry around the world, and that makes it hard to adopt rules that apply everywhere. Because our Wesley Quadrilateral of Scripture, Tradition, Reason, and Experience is providing us with mixed results. Many of the passages of Scripture we relied upon in the past are facing new interpretations by sincere Christians. Tradition has been nearly unanimous in condemning same-gender sexual activity (that is what our Social Principles mean when we state that it is "incompatible with Christian teaching" – it is a statement of historical fact), but many today are reminding us that the Church has changed other long-held traditions like prohibitions against women in ministry. Likewise, Reason reveals that there are new scientific studies of sexuality which inform the Church, and more and more people have had Experience with genuine Christians who happen to be gay or lesbian. Rather than having a simple answer from Scripture as interpreted in the light of Tradition, Reason, and Experience, we are struggling as a UMC to find God's will for our global realities and a changing culture.

So, what did General Conference do with all of these challenges? It maintained our current language and rules about sexuality, but it also took the unusual step of asking the Council of Bishops for help. We bishops responded by proposing that we name a commission to study, pray, and seek solutions to bring back to General Conference. Hopefully what a group of 850 people cannot do in 10 days, a smaller group can do in a series of meetings over the next several months. Will that work? I don't know, but it seems like a good way to move forward.

It must also be said that even when the General Conference talked about sexuality, that was not always the real issue. Other issues entered into the discussions – like power, and authority, and political competition. We are going through the growing pains of becoming a more global church where our U.S. issues cannot be our only agenda. Those on the "left" and the "right" are vying for control of our church. "Accountability" is a word often used, and it seems to mean that we want OTHER PEOPLE to be accountable, but not ourselves. In the midst of these struggles (which are only partially about sexuality), sinful impulses can easily enter into our midst. We saw some of that at General Conference, and it was sad to see.

So I came home tired, discouraged in some ways, but reassured in others. Christ is still the head of our UMC, and we saw lots of evidence of that truth. Thanks be to God.

Now what? My advice to United Methodists here in Indiana is a poster I saw and shared which says: "Keep Calm and Disciple On."

**First United Methodist
Church**

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Cindy McCormick, Organist
Randy Neideffer, Maint
Sunny Lollar, Custodian

Service Times

9:00 a.m.

**Traditional Worship
in the Sanctuary**

&

11:10 a.m.

**The Gathering in the
Fellowship Hall**

10:00 a.m.

**Sunday School with
classes for all ages!**

9:30-11:00 a.m.

**Take-Up-A-Cup in the
Library & Narthex**

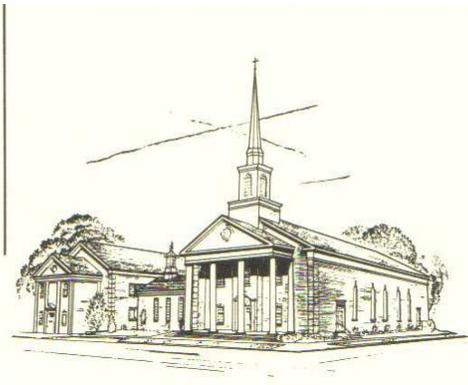
The Chimes

June & July 2016

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
CRAWFORDSVILLE, IN

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

DATED MATERIAL



YOUTH NEWS

Helllllloooooo Summer!! We're looking forward to a great summer season of youth ministry! This summer, we'll be meeting on most Wednesday nights at the church and then we'll be heading out to a youth sponsor's house for games, a lesson, and of course, FOOD! This year we beefing up our teaching time with learning about apologetics, how to defend our faith. 1 Peter 3:15a, "But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect..." We'll be watching a DVD series on *The Reason for God* where the author of the book sits down with skeptics of the faith and has a dialogue about what makes Christianity a viable worldview. In the age of relativism, it's important for us to be able to speak of the hope we have through the truth of Jesus Christ. Each lesson will address a couple of questions from the group of skeptics. After watching the DVD, our students will have an opportunity to dialogue with each other about how they understand the topic.

We'll be kicking off the school year, next year, with our Back to School Bash on Saturday, August 6th, and a Unite Cville event on August 7th. Please be in prayer for our students during these summer months that they would continue to seek Jesus in authentic ways through prayer, Bible reading, and service.