



Cokesbury United Methodist Church

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Our Mission

To be a transformed and transforming community in Christ.

Our Vision

Change lives, ours and others'.

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Through Cokesbury Windows

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A Favorite Hymn Revisited

Several years ago on a trip to the Holy Land, I had an interesting experience. It had to do with a favorite old hymn, and ... well, let's start at the beginning.

It was at the end of one of the most strenuous and awe-inspiring days, hiking into the ancient city of Petra, Jordan, one of the seven wonders of the world, as well as the end of the trip itself. Reflecting on our day as we approached our hotel in Amman, Jordan, our group began singing hymns. I took their requests and relied on my memory as we rolled through the night. "Peace like a River!" "I've got peace like a river..." No, when peace like a river..." "Oh, 'It is Well with My Soul!" And, so we sang that wonderful hymn. As we finished, I discovered that most of the group did not know the story behind the hymn's composition. I related it as best I could: the author's loss of his four children due to a shipwreck, his wife's telegraph message, his own sea voyage, and the penning of this powerful affirmation of faith. As sometimes happens during impromptu talks, I was unable to recall the author's name.

"Spafford", I remembered hours later as hot shower water washed over my head. Relieved to have that loose end tied up, I thought no more about it. The next evening we arrived in Jerusalem where we would spend a few hours at our old hotel and then head for the airport. Knowing that we would be sitting for over 12 hours on a cramped plane and that it would be an entire day before arriving home, my friend Linda and I, decided to get some exercise. We abandoned our original plan to return to the Old City, as the weather was becoming windier and cooler by the minute. (A front was moving in, one that would bring a rare snowfall to Jerusalem a few days later!) Looking around, we spotted The American Colony Hotel down the block on a corner. Some folks from our group had gone to the Colony lounge earlier in the trip and had reported it was very nice. As Linda and I made our way through the entrance and into a courtyard, we saw several buildings within the walled area and had no indication as to where we should go. In our wandering around, we found a small bookstore/gift shop and had a great conversation with the salesperson, a woman from France, now working in Israel, with two daughters, one at ASU and one at Davidson College! Small world!

Across the courtyard, down a few steps, into a small alcove, turning left, we found ourselves in a little room where workers were arranging a group of chairs. We moved into another small room which was empty, just some cozy furniture with a library feel. Over on a wall to the right, I glimpsed the word "Spafford". How odd – the name I was referencing yesterday! Upon closer inspection, there under glass, were news articles about the Chicago fire (the Spaffords had lost their property in that fire), the shipwreck in the Atlantic, and yes, Horatio Spafford's original manuscript of "It is Well with My Soul" handwritten on

a Chicago hotel letterhead! Cold chills time!

And now, as Paul Harvey used to say, “the rest of the story”. Horatio Spafford, upon receiving his wife’s message, booked a passage on a ship to Paris where his wife awaited. The ship’s captain pointed out the area where the shipwreck had occurred. Spafford, a man of strong religious faith, wrote on a piece of paper from the hotel he had stayed in the night before he set sail, the words which would form the hymn that has since given comfort to so many. Back in Chicago, the young couple tried to rebuild. They had a son and another daughter, but tragedy struck again when the son died in 1880 at the age of four of scarlet fever.

The church which Spafford had helped to build and of which he was an elder turned against them and asked them to leave. Their thinking was that the Spaffords had committed sins and were being punished by God. Seeking peace, the Spaffords and a dozen others came to the Holy Land in 1881 and lived in the Old City of Jerusalem, forming a well-regarded Christian community. In 1896, they were joined by 125 Swedish immigrants who were skilled artisans and farmers. This American-Swedish group rented a large house outside the Old City. Today, this house and the two neighboring ones they eventually bought, is known as The American Colony Hotel. This compound began housing visitors in 1902 and over the years has served as a soup kitchen and hospital in WWI, and a Red Cross station in 1947 during the Arab-Israeli conflict. Twenty years later during another conflict, its thick walls were again damaged by gunfire. Today, all damage repaired, the hotel is still owned by descendants of the original colonists. It has welcomed many famous people such as Sir Winston Churchill, Laurence of Arabia, Richard Gere, Robert De Niro, Bob Dylan, and Giorgio Armani, to name a few. I venture to say that no guest has ever been so moved, as were we, to find Spafford’s handwritten verses on a serendipitous visit to this special place. I know that we were somehow meant to find them and to learn the story before leaving the Holy City. I will never sing “It is Well with My Soul” without thinking about its author and his continuing legacy.

Jo Walters



- Bonnie Lee Basinger, James & Virginia Braswell, Jim & Sandy Caughman, Thomas Mark Cheek, Crowder & Barbara Falls, Joseph & Patsy Fittipaldi, Eric & Allison Hoffman, Tim & Carole Kottyan, Mr. & Mrs. Dick McCain, Doug & Kathy Saunders, David & Natalie Scott, Margaret Story, Doug & Kathy Saunders, Mark & Ann Triscott, and Kathy Williamson, gave gifts to the Memorial Fund in memory of **Nancy Angel**.
- Joyce Dear gave a gift to the Budget Fund in memory of **Norma Jean Spencer, Chuck Hailey, Gladys Grimes, and Nancy Angel**.
- Mitchell & Judy Hagler gave a gift to the Budget Fund in memory of **Nancy Angel, Gladys Grimes, and Chuck Hailey**.
- Jackie Howes gave a gift to the Memorial Fund in memory of **Norma Jean Spencer**.
- Alecia Johnson gave a gift to the Memorial Fund in memory of **Nancy Angel honoring Kandy Steiner**.
- Deanna Reed gave a gift to the Budget Fund in memory of **Nancy Angel, Gladys Grimes, and Chuck Hailey**.
- Ray & Karen Saito gave a gift to the Memorial Fund in memory of **Chuck Hailey and Nancy Angel**.



Mom and I would like to thank everyone for the cards, prayers, and calls and help at this difficult time. We are looking forward to getting back to seeing each of you on a regular basis.

LeAnne Craig and Dot Hailey



To Dottie Burns and her family as they mourn the death of her husband, Bob, who passed away June 4.



By Sara Joines

Marker Fun Factory Vacation Bible School is **June 12-16 from 5:30-8:30 p.m.** for ages Kindergarten through 5th grade. Come one come all, to the Maker Fun Factory.

We also need a few more people to help with Imagination Station (crafts/science) and in the kitchen. If you can help, please contact Sara Joines as soon as possible.



By Sara Joines

This Sunday, June 11, is Youth Sunday. We will have a rehearsal this Wednesday, June 7 at 6:00 p.m. If you have not been at youth in a few weeks, but still would like to participate, please be at rehearsal.

July 16-21 – Youth Mission trip to Hendersonville, NC. Below is the payment schedule. If you need a scholarship, please let Sara Joines know as soon as possible.

- June 11 – \$50 deposit, to secure spot
- June 25 – \$50
- July 9 – \$50
- July 16 – \$50

Children's Sunday School

by Sara Joines

We need a few volunteers to help teaching our children's Sunday School class this summer. If you would be willing to help a Sunday or two, please contact Sara Joines.

United Methodist Women

By Tammy Gilmore

The United Methodist Women would like to invite all Cokesbury members to our Health Kit Assembly event on **Saturday, June 24 from 2:00-4:00 p.m.** Our speaker will be from Bright Blessings, a local non-profit that provides birthday and care packages to homeless and impoverished children in our area. After the short program, we will assemble the Health Kits and enjoy some desserts. We are asking that you bring a package of baby wipes to donate to Bright Blessings.

Books for Urban Promise

By Etta Woodall

We look forward to being the east side site for Urban Promise in September. Children from kindergarten through fifth grade will attend the after school program from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday. The program is in need of books for these young children to read. Julia's Café and Bookstore as well as the public library have children's books for sale. Maybe there are some in your own library you would like to donate. We will be collecting these books through the summer.

Listening Session

By Etta Woodall

There will be a listening session on **Sunday, June 25 from 5:00 p.m. until 6:30 p.m.** in the Fellowship Hall. We are looking forward to this session where the police are the panelists.

Please mark your calendar for this session and join us, as we all are learning how better to listen to one another. Thank you!