

Dear Church Family and Friends,

On my desk there is a spiral stand of photos called "Baby Mood Swings." Each page displays a baby with an expressive look on her or his face with captions underneath saying things like "I'm feeling amazed," "I'm feeling ashamed," "I'm feeling content," "I'm feeling cranky," "I'm feeling dazed," "I'm feeling dumbfounded," "I'm feeling fed up," "I'm feeling gassy," "I'm feeling gloomy," "I'm feeling great," "I'm feeling grossed out," "I'm feeling grumpy," "I'm feeling guilty," "I'm feeling hopeful," "I'm feeling horrified," "I'm feeling hysterical," "I'm feeling naughty," "I'm feeling outstanding," "I'm feeling pacified," "I'm feeling pretty cool," "I'm feeling puky," "I'm feeling puzzled," "I'm feeling shy," "I'm feeling skeptical," "I'm feeling sleepy," "I'm feeling smug," "I'm feeling suspicious," "I'm feeling thoughtful," "I'm feeling unappreciated," "I'm feeling verklempt," "I'm feeling behind." The children love to come into my office and read these and change them out. Over the past year or so I have displayed each one of these baby mood swing pictures at one time or another. There have been weeks when I have felt content and outstanding, others when I have felt dazed or puzzled, and others when I have felt grumpy or even unappreciated. This morning when I came into my office and looked through them again to see which one most accurately depicted my present mood, I left open the page that says "I'M FEELING HOPEFUL."

You may wonder why I would display this. How can I feel hopeful when there are wars waging around the world, when a freighter has just run into and destroyed the bridge leading from Murray to Cadiz and isolating us even further from the world, when Congress is divided and nasty political campaigning is going on? How can I feel hopeful when there is sickness and poverty? How can I feel hopeful when our nation's economy is in such decline? And how can I feel hopeful when the giving to our church is significantly lower than it was a year ago? I feel hopeful because I see the signs of God's love and God's spiritual presence everywhere around me at First Christian Church:

- In the recent baptism of Kaitlyn White
- In the faithful trust and love of Jesus Christ evident in the four children who are taking my baptism class
- In the eagerness of the children during our Wednesday Night Live "Week of Compassion" meal as they sat on the floor and ate a meal similar to one that would have been had by a child in the Third World, following which they prepared hot chocolate mixes for the homeless who would sleep on cold, winter nights at the Warming Shelter
- In the looks of joy and delight on the faces of the youth who spent last weekend skiing with other youth from around the region

- In the many displays of outreach by members of our congregation as they put their faith into action by bringing items for the Back Pack program or volunteer to staff the Warming Center
- In the loving interaction of people in the hallways of the church on Sunday mornings as they fellowship with each other, laughing and carrying on
- In the many reports from people who share with me how much love they have felt from this congregation as members have brought them food when they were ill, sent cards to cheer and encourage them on, and have prayed with them
- In the faithfulness of our elders and deacons who preside at the Lord's Table, always bringing to us an important message from our Lord, and who go out to bring communion to our homebound and those who are ill
- In the optimism about our congregation shared during last Sunday's "Dream Team" meeting when we set dates for an upcoming Spring Spiritual Retreat and Fall Fellowship Camp at Kum-Ba-Ya, a Worship and Wonder Training, ideas for a mission trip for the youth this summer, and so much more
- In the growth I see in Christian discipleship as people learn more about their Christian faith as they are involved in Worship and Wonder, Sunday School Classes, Home Bible Study, Christian Women's Fellowship, Disciples Men's Fellowship, the Charter for Compassion Reading groups and so much more
- In the many gifts of music present in this congregation
- In those who continue to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ outside the doors of this church and into the streets of Murray
- In the knowledge that we can stand on the promise given by St. Paul in his letter to the Romans (8:35, 37-39) that: *"Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness or peril, or sword? ... No, in all the things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

Am I hopeful? You better believe I am!

In Christian Love and Service,

Pastor Ruth

CAMP KUM-BA-YA 2012 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

<u>Kum-Ba-Ya</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Fee by May 1</u>	<u>After May 1</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Sailing CYF (limited to 15)	9-12	June 4-8	250	265
<input type="checkbox"/> CYF	9-12	June 10-16	210	225
<input type="checkbox"/> Trec (off site)	9-12	June 17-23	250	265
<input type="checkbox"/> Chi Rho	6-8	June 18-23	210	225
<input type="checkbox"/> Sailing Chi-Rho (limited to 10)	6-8	June 25-28	250	265
<input type="checkbox"/> Mini	3	June 29-July 1	105	120
<input type="checkbox"/> Junior	4-5	July 2-6	175	190
<input type="checkbox"/> Discovery*	1-2	July 6-8	50	65
<input type="checkbox"/> Sport	6-12	July 9-13	250	265
<input type="checkbox"/> All Ya'll Family **		Sept. 21-23	65	

*fee is per person / **fee is per family

The "Wednesday Night Live" kids enjoyed having their silhouettes drawn during Groundhog Day/Candlemas celebration.

