

**Camp Lookout golf tourney**

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. – Camp Lookout is holding its First Annual Golf Tournament on Monday, May 24, 1 p.m. at Chattanooga Golf and Country Club. Both sponsors and golfers are needed to raise \$40,000. Contact Walter Wright at (423) 887-5257 or (423) 506-0248.

**Webb & McCracken concert**

JOHNSON CITY, Tenn. – Derek Webb and Sandra McCracken will perform at Munsey Memorial UMC in Johnson City on Friday, April 23, at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$8 for students, \$10 for persons in groups, \$12 at the door. To reserve tickets, call (423) 929-2121. Sponsored by the ETSU Wesley Foundation and Munsey Memorial, the concert is a fund raiser for an upcoming event for college students. ■



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The Call uses the following symbols to identify articles about small, medium or large churches:

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**Bishop's Perspective**

By Ray W. Chamberlain Jr.

To tell the truth:  
**Mom said it was OK**

I recently visited with my 96-year-old mother. She feels she has earned the right to simply tell it as she sees it. Forthrightly. Clearly. Honestly – and without worry of being politically correct.

Well, I asked my mother when would I be old enough to do the same. She told me I am now old enough, too. So here goes.

● I do not understand why the **lottery** is now lawful in Tennessee. The majority of voters in this state are church members who believe gambling is harmful and has serious moral consequences for society. The pagans didn't vote this in. The Christians did. Is there a distinction between what we say we believe and what we practice?

● Now there is enormous conversation taking place over "**The Passion of the Christ**" film. That's good. But we need to remember: There were a lot of people at the crucifixion who personally witnessed Jesus' horrific death. Yet only one person was converted that day.

We so easily forget what brings people to faith. Remember the rich man who ignored the beggar at his gate? In hell he begged Abraham to send the beggar to warn his family about what might happen to them. But God (through Abraham) refused, saying the beggar's warning would not convince the unbelieving. The death of Jesus Christ brings believers to their knees in humility and gratitude. But what most powerfully draws persons to faith in Jesus Christ is the incarnation of his spirit and deeds in our living. It is the Holy Spirit, working in us and through us, that draws people to faith. It was on Pentecost Day following Resurrection Day that revival broke out, not Crucifixion Day. The greatest witness to the Gospel will not come from Hollywood but from the daily living out of faith by ordinary Christians.

● I am grateful that we are suddenly so interested in the **sanctity of marriage**. But I wonder why we think that prohibiting gay persons from being married will enhance the sanctity of marriage. Gay marriage is a separate issue that desperately needs to be addressed, but ought not to be confused with what we already affirm and approve: the marriage of heterosexual persons.

As far as I can determine there have been fewer than 10,000 gay "marriages" in the entire history of this



Photo by Annette Bender, The Call

Bishop Chamberlain preaches at the Maryville District's recent missions fair.

country. Last year we had over 1 million divorces in this country! Studies indicate that two out of three couples married today have lived together prior to marriage. The vast majority of Americans practice premarital sex. The number of persons over 60 years old who are living together outside of marriage has soared. If we are really concerned about marriage, then we had better deal with the greater problems in the heterosexual community. Jesus talked about ignoring the log in our own eye while focusing on the splinter in another's eye.

● I personally like a lot of what Sarah Jessica Parker says about her own life. But I am still baffled by the acclaim given to the TV series "**Sex and the City**." Yes, I understand the value of giving voice to the issues of single women in our society. But what alarms me is that this popular TV program seemed so devoid of any moral compass. Yet many Christians applaud this series. At best it was amoral.

Maybe I'm just an old-fashioned preacher man who is out of touch with society. But I pray I will stay in touch with Jesus the Christ who challenges me to honest thinking and living – and hopefully, to keep the main thing the main thing.

So be it. ■

**Reading List**

We asked these participants in March Forth for Children, "What book is lying on your nightstand?"

● **Wylene Fauscett**  
Sunday school teacher  
Trenton UMC, Chattanooga District  
*Sink Reflections*, by Marla Cilley

● **Kathy Galyon**  
Director of family & children's ministries  
Hixson UMC, Chattanooga District  
*Disciple II: Into the Word, Into the World*, by Abingdon Press

● **Bill Hill**  
Pastor, New Market Circuit,  
Morristown District  
*A Gentle Thunder: Hearing God Through the Storm*, by Max Lucado

● **Betty Jo Reagan**  
Chair, Education Committee  
Wears Valley UMC, Maryville District  
*The Da Vinci Code*, by Dan Brown ■



**In Memoriam**

**Ernest Cushman**

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. – Ernest deSabra Cushman, 75, died March 3. He was a retired Holston clergy member who had served Glen Alpine, Munsey Memorial, and Lookout Mountain UMC, among other churches. He is survived by his wife, Julia Taylor Cushman; two sons, David Cushman of Needham, Mass., and Mark Cushman of Dalton, Ga.; two daughters, Kathy Crye of Pine Mountain Valley, Ga., and Liza Bisbee of Bedford, Va.; one brother, Bill Cushman; and 10 grandchildren. A memorial service was held March 6 at Hixson UMC with the Rev. Randy Martin officiating. Memorial contributions may be made to Hixson UMC, 5301 Old Hixson Pike, Hixson TN 37343. ■