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Coosa UMC.

"We're celebrating our history, but also making a decision of how we should move forward," Rev. Watkins said.

The day was a celebration of the founders, Charles Duncan, his wife Mary Ford Duncan and their 12 children who arrived in Union County in 1833 from Buncombe County, NC. The Duncan family had migrated to North Carolina from Buckingham County, VA in the early 1800s.

It is believed that the first church service at Coosa happened on the Duncan Family property near the present day location of Duncan Cemetery off Fairview Church Road.

Coosa UMC began when a group of faithful Christians saw a need and, following the lead of the Lord, rose to the occasion.

Many of them had little education and little money. The congregation worked the ground for a living and to stay alive. The Coosa family worked hard, but more importantly, they remained faithful.

While the early settlers of this congregation may seem far removed in time and culture, their spirit still guides the life of the congregation even today.

The early years featured some of the county's legendary Methodist circuit rider ministers, a group that included the Rev. William Cotter, Milford G. Hamby, and the Rev. Thomas Coke Hughes.

The latter, affectionately known as "Uncle Tom Coke," was considered to be the father of Methodism in Blairsville and Union County. Rev. Hughes was born in Union County in 1844 and died in 1932. He gave his life in service to the Mountains of North Georgia, not only as a dedicated Methodist minister, but also as a representative in the Georgia State House, Clerk of Court, and as a trustee of Young Harris College.

Though the celebration was a remembrance of the



The Rev. Roy Watkins honors Coosa UMC member Colleen Judy, center, for her selfless devotion to caring for others. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

founders, the Rev. Watkins said the event also was a guide to the future.

"I'm thinking about when the 200th anniversary of the church happens in 2034," Rev. Watkins said. "I'll be 79 years old if I make it and I hope I will. But, some of us will not be here, but in one respect you will be. The legacy you leave this church and its people and community will carry on far beyond the physical extent of our lives."

"That's the kind of thing that we have to keep in mind," he said.

Watkins said the celebration is important to remember.

"It's important to remember who we are and where we have come from," Rev. Watkins said. "We need to understand ourselves better. We need to be honest with ourselves and whether we have done well or whether we have made mistakes and own up to it."

"Everybody dies, we all will," he said. "The worship in the 1800s was largely centered around going home to be with the Father. That was the center of what worship was back in those days."

"It has moved forward and focused on being as positive an influence as we can in this world today," Rev. Watkins said. "It's about leaving behind something very positive and workable and usable for those that follow."

"If we live fully in the present and commit our lives and everything we do to following Christ, we don't have to worry about what happens next," he said. "If we take care of today, and the next day, and the next, we'll be ready for whatever, because we will have lived all those moments of our life in Faith."

"It's a lot like eating an elephant, one bite at a time," he said.

Coosa UMC recognized two individuals, who by the character of their lives, have made a difference, in the life of the church and community, and given of themselves in a very special way.

The Rev. Watkins refers to the honor as "the Overflowing Cup Celebration."

"Part of the journey of any church, no matter how young or how old, is made up of the events and the dedication and the lives of the individuals, who have given of

themselves, not just financially, but of their time and energy, of their intent and of their faith for that church to build and to grow," Watkins said.

The Church honored Evelyn Payne and Colleen Judy for going above and beyond the call of being a church member. Payne, for her devotion to her community, genealogy and preservation of Church history, and Judy, for her selfless devotion of comfort for others in their time of need.

The day of events concluded with a divine meal featuring covered dish surprises from throughout the congregation.

Payne said Homecoming always is a pleasant occasion.

"It represents our generations of people that have persevered before us," she said. "I'm from the ninth generation of the Gillespie and Duncan families and the 10th generation is represented here today."

"It's great to be here today, I continue to come to this church, I was saved in this church," she said. "It will always have special meaning to me because it represents the family from years ago. This church is still going strong."

Rev. Watkins said the tremendous turnout was special.

"When we were planning this event, the original thought was having food for 160 or so people," he said. "I thought to myself, that isn't going to be enough. So, we planned for well over 200 people. That was a good call."

Rev. Watkins said the Church is still strong and very viable today.

"This Church is very much involved, and continues to outreach into this community," he said. "It's like our Bake and Craft Sale on Oct. 4th, all the money raised from that will go into our local ministries. It doesn't go into the budget, the building or anything else, it goes back into the community."

Deal...from Page 1A

hoped to have the agreement signed soon.

Gov. Deal also proposes 100-percent paid tuition for anyone who will go to a state technical school and get certified in certain job skills. He cited a shortage of commercial drivers license hold-



Union County Sheriff Mack Mason, left, greets Gov. Deal at the Union County Arena on Saturday. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

ers, precision manufacturing workers, engineers and computer programmers.

The film industry also is growing in Georgia, and there

Queen ...

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real drama came at halftime as Union County High School senior Emma Smith stole the show.

Smith and her father were all smiles as she was crowned Union County High School's Homecoming Queen by last year's queen, Amry Theriot.

Smith, a talented musician, wasn't bothered at all being the center of attention. As flash bulbs lit up from all corners of the stadium, Smith's father, and escort, pulled out his cell phone and took what is likely the proudest selfie ever taken. While most teenagers would frown upon a selfie with dad, Smith didn't mind one bit on this occasion.

Before Smith's name was forever etched into the history of Union County High School, two of her fellow seniors were named first and Second Runner Up. Adelle Bauman finished as First Runner Up and Sidney Rowan as Second Runner Up.

The other senior representatives on the court were Maddy Morlock, Camryn Carter, and Charis Flake.

Junior class representatives were Anna Danek, Layne Colwell, Kat Capstick, and Kelli Poteete.

Representing the sophomores were Holly Stroman, Bradyn Robbins, and Cora Bauman.

The freshman class were represented by Baylee Young and Payton Cease.

The announcement of the Homecoming Queen is the culmination of the five-day extravaganza known as Spirit Week. The student council plans the parade and the theme and the cheerleaders plan Spirit Week. Once all the plans have been approved, they are posted for everyone to see.

is a skill set that can translate into a solid career for many," Gov. Deal said.

"The film industry is having a \$5.1 billion impact on our state already," he said. "And it's growing every day."

In his second term, the Governor promised to the Union County faithful to continue to keep taxes low, encourage job growth, and promote workforce development initiatives.

His opponent is Democrat Jason Carter, a two-term state senator, and the grandson of former President Jimmy Carter.