



GENESIS

DECEMBER 2009 ~ VOLUME 13 ~ ISSUE 10



Avoid A "ONE-OF-THE-CROWD" Christmas

It is so easy to feel overwhelmed this time of year, to become "one-of-the-crowd" in the celebration and noise that accompanies the Christmas season.

No matter how important we may feel individually, we can get lost in the hugeness of holiday expectations. We are easily fooled by the size of expected performances, surrendering to the tyranny of tradition and mind-numbing demands. We become bowled over and rolled up by the juggernaut of the Christmas hype. It's like thinking that the mass of metal we call an ocean liner is more "important" than the little needle that charts its course or the thought-process of the person who controls the liner's responses. To only judge the ship's power by its commanding appearance is to be fooled by equating power with size.

The Christian teaching about humanity and history help us get the equation right. The Christian faith makes it clear that "people matter" and that the individual is of infinite importance to God. In the world's assembly line, one trained worker is replaceable by another, but when a person knows God, he discovers that no one can take his place in God's love.

Christmas is a season when we can be overwhelmed—with shopping, gifts, parties, social obligations, and other have-to-do expectations. We begin to feel as if we have no choice; there are no options open to us—and the season takes control. If we allow that to happen, if we lose sight of our essential worth, our individual value in the eyes of God, then we will come to Christmas Day exhausted, disillusioned and disappointed that "It just doesn't feel like Christmas this year."

Advent is about getting ready for Christmas as we look for the coming of Christ—as a baby and as King. If we are to welcome his birth anew, we need to prepare ourselves, our minds, hearts and souls, to receive him during the worship inspired by Advent events. This welcoming attitude requires a willingness to open ourselves as we take the time needed to hear God speaking and to feel his presence.

As we move through Advent this year, take time to read your Bible, time to pray and time to explore what God is calling you to do and be. Remember the words of the Psalmist, "Be still and know that I am God....(Psalm 46:10a) Advent worship books are available to help you focus your thoughts and guide you in resisting the pressure to be just a "one-of-the-crowd" Christian.



Pastor Mark

Jesus Christ came that YOU might receive God's grace and love. This Christmas season, don't let the world take that away from you by making you just one of the crowd caught up in the holiday hustle.

Filled with anticipation and excitement, no matter our age, Christmas Eve comes with all its promise and beauty. It is an evening to celebrate and a time to share in the wonder of Emmanuel, God with us.



Christmas Eve

We will again be having three worship services on Christmas Eve: 5:00, 7:30 and 11:00.

All three will be beautiful and will add a final touch to the anticipation that has been building throughout Advent.

The 5:00 and 7:30 services will feature a Christmas Cantata by our choir concluding with the traditional lighting of the candles. The two services will be identical, the only difference being your choice of the time you want to attend. It will be an exciting time as the choir leads us in the wonder of worship, making Christmas Eve a memorable experience for everyone participating.

The 11:00 service will be one of candlelight and Communion. We will gather together for Word and Table and share in the solemn celebration of the gift of Jesus Christ - God's Son given to die for our sins. Communion will be a reminder of just how much God was willing to give to make salvation available to us.

I hope you will plan to be here at one or more of the services that we might be truly "ready" to celebrate the birthday of the King!

Serving Members and Friends of The First United Methodist Church of Homosassa
~ Open Hearts ~ Open Minds ~ Open Doors ~
We Are A Stephen Ministry Church

E.B.A.D.O.C

"Everyone Becoming a Disciple of Christ"

The purpose of an organization's mission statement is to give it direction, focus, and motivation.

It clearly states why an organization exists and what it intends to accomplish in the future.

This mission statement of the First United Methodist Church of Homosassa was adopted on January 27, 2005.

All of us need to memorize the mission statement and do all that we can to make it a reality in our lives.

Church Office

Phone: 352-628-4083

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Website

www.lumc.org

Senior Pastor

Rev. Mark Whittaker

Administrator

Theresa Weber

Bookkeeper

Sandy Dewart

Christian Education

Patience Nave

Music Department

Mary Kay Messenger

Joy Potts

Dayna Middlebrooks

Parish Nurse

Shirley Exley

Parish Visitor

Peggy Benson

Sunday School

Superintendent &

Nursery Supervisor

Sandra Tam

Youth Coordinator

Neretta Brobst

Sound Technician

Sharon Cooley

Night Security

Michael Rodgers

Custodian

Dale Evans



Shirley = SHARON

*Patience
Peggy*

*Theresa
Joy*

*Michael Rodgers
Mark Whittaker
Neretta Brobst
Dale*

**Jesus is the joy
of Christmas.**

**From Your Staff at
First United Methodist
Church of Homosassa ~
A wish that His Love, Peace and
Hope touch your world in a special
way this Christmas**

*Sandy
Mary Kay
Dayna*

Wise Discipleship

by Jan Wise



A Disciple Considers Christmas

Have you ever had someone who loved you, and supposedly knew you well, give you a gift that you did not desire and certainly never asked for? While you were thankful for the love of your friend and for the act of gift-giving, how did you feel in the situation? What did you do about the gift, especially if it had cost your friend a great deal of time and effort to be able to give it to you? How about your friend's words - "It took a lot of time and energy to do this for you, but I knew you would love it, so it was worth it."

Jesus said, "If you hold to my teachings, you are really my _____. Then you will know the _____ and the truth will set you _____."

(John 8:31)

Jesus spoke these words to the Jews who said they believed him. But they were so bound by their traditional thinking that they could not discern clearly who Jesus was or why he had come. They claimed, "The only Father we have is _____ himself."

(John 8:41)

Jesus answered with words that cut straight through their traditional thinking to the truth of the matter - "If God were your _____, you would love me, for I came from _____ and now am here. I have not come on my own, but _____ sent me."

(John 8:41b - 42)

Jesus told the disciples, "If you _____ me, you will _____ what I command," and "You are my _____, if you do what I command."

(John 14:15; 15:14)

So a disciple knows that finding out and fulfilling the desires of Jesus delights him and makes his heart glad.

Paul wrote what he received from the Lord: The Lord Jesus on the night he was betrayed, took _____ and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my _____, which is for you; do this in _____ of me." In the same way, after supper he took the _____, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my _____: do this whenever you drink it, in _____ of me." For _____ you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

(1 Cor. 11:23-26)

Nowhere does Jesus ever ask us to remember his birth, but only to remember his body broken for us, his blood shed for us - do *this* "in remembrance of me."

It is man's way to mark the birth of great men because of their achievements - men like George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King. But Jesus Christ was neither a "great man" nor an "achiever." He was God and he came to die, to make available to every person the divine exchange: God made him who had no _____ to be _____ for us, so that in him we might become the _____ of God.

(1 Corinthians 5:21)

As those desiring to become disciples of Jesus Christ, *what if we* -

- Honor the birth of our Lord by limiting the celebration to one day (or no more than a week), making communion the centerpiece of our day of remembrance.
- Give up our plans for the many parties, gift-givings, concerts, religious and secular gatherings - all done, of course, to honor the birthday of one who doesn't seek this kind of "remembrance." (Did you ever have someone give you a party when you didn't want one? How did it feel?)
- Forget about Christmas trees, the tinsel and the holly - all the extensive decorating for the holidays.
- Realize that wearing ourselves to a frazzle, giving a lot of time and energy to doing the "Christmas thing" for Jesus isn't what he desires; realize how our frantic fretting about all that must be done leads to sin.
- Turn away from the "Santa Claus" culture - no more lying to our kids, our grandkids, about the jolly, fat man who will bring them gifts if they behave... "if you're not good Santa won't come." Take Santa Claus completely out of our Christmas remembrance celebration - would it cease to be Christmas without him?
- Give up our *need* to have family around us at Christmas - no longer feeling, "Christmas just isn't Christmas without family." Recognize the only necessary ingredient - Christmas would not be Christmas without Jesus.
- Limit our Christmas music to that which tells the story of Jesus so unbelievers can understand it; making our music more about him and less about singing our holiday favorites. The angels sang only once at Christ's birth, to some shepherds in a field, but they were right on message.
- Become aware of how many of our traditional wrappings give the world and the devil opportunities to distort and exploit the simple but profound arrival of the Son of God - the Word become flesh.

Just imagine what it would be like if we changed all these things. We'd be left with one miraculous performance by an angelic choir, some unsuspecting shepherds, one plain stable, and one holy gift, wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger - God's Son, his gift to us. Would we still enjoy celebrating Christmas?

Give A Child A VERY SPECIAL GIFT This Christmas

Can you give a gift that will change a child's life? Whatever gift you choose to provide, a child living at The Florida United Methodist Children's Home will benefit from your generosity.

The children who come to this home simply don't have what you'd call healthy-family backgrounds. They've been orphaned, neglected, and/or abused. Many of them were headed the wrong directions, fast. But whatever the case, each and every one of them desperately needs a safe place where they can learn to love, and be loved.

With over 100 residents on campus and 277 children in foster and adoptive homes, there are a lot of birthdays to be celebrated.

You can also help launch a career for a teen, whether or not they attend a college. The children's home offers a construction and automotive training program as part of their training choices.

Another aspect of the home involves training prospective Foster Care parents every year. Many Christian parents feel this is how God has specially called them to show love for needy children.

The "gifts" listed above are just a few of many that can be given. Won't you please mark whatever gifts you can provide for on the form below and mail it for a very rewarding change of giving. These gifts can be given at any time of the year, but especially as an alternate Christmas gift in God's name.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

Optional information should we need to contact you:

PHONE: _____

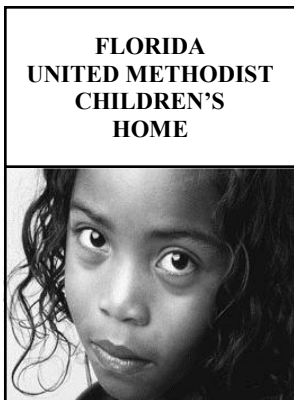
EMAIL: _____

OUR MISSION

IS:

To empower children and families to experience

God's love and care as revealed in the ministry of Jesus Christ.



DESCRIPTION	# OF ITEMS	COST	TOTAL COST
Welcome Basket	_____ X	\$ 25.00 =	\$ _____
Feed 1 Child, 1 Day	_____ X	\$ 12.75 =	\$ _____
Feed 1 Child, 1 Week	_____ X	\$ 89.25 =	\$ _____
Throw Birthday Party	_____ X	\$ 50.00 =	\$ _____
Tutor One Child	_____ X	\$ 75.00 =	\$ _____
Welcome An Infant	_____ X	\$ 100.00 =	\$ _____
Develop A Spiritual Life	_____ X	\$ 250.00 =	\$ _____
Sponsor A Field Trip	_____ X	\$ 500.00 =	\$ _____
Train A Foster Care Parent	_____ X	\$1,000.00 =	\$ _____
Launch A Teen Into A Career	_____ X	\$2,000.00 =	\$ _____

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$ _____

All gifts to the Florida United Methodist Children's Home are tax-deductible. Please make checks payable to The Florida United Methodist Children's Home and mail to: 51 Main Street, Enterprise, FL 32725-8186.

Visa MasterCard AMEX are accepted.

Card # _____ EXP. DATE: _____ PHONE: _____

Name on card _____ Signature _____

I would like to automatically give: (\$25 minimum) \$ _____ Monthly

Using the above card or EFT Checking Savings

Enclosed is a voided check for my EFT information as well as a donation check

SIGNATURE: _____ **PHONE:** _____

By signing this form, I hereby give the Florida United Methodist Children's Home (FUMCH) authorization to withdraw/charge the amount I have designated above on the fifteenth of every month. This authorization will remain in effect until I notify FUMCH of it's termination in a manner that will afford FUMCH and my financial institution a reasonable opportunity to act.

I wish to give this gift anonymously. I do not want my name to appear in any publication.

I'd like my church to receive "credit" for this gift. Church Name: _____

ORDER BY 12/10/09 TO GUARANTEE GIFT CARD ARRIVES BEFORE CHRISTMAS!

ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS GIFTS DECEMBER 6, 2009

Wouldn't you love to make a difference in someone's life in a positive way? We will have an opportunity on December 6th to do that very thing. By giving families in need a hand-up, not just a hand-out, we can empower them to turn a life of hunger, poverty, and homelessness into one of independence and self-reliance. Many of us have a list of people that we want to remember at Christmas but have no idea what to get them. Why not give a gift card letting them know that, in their names, you've given a gift that will keep on growing. The card explains the mission and how the gift will make a difference to the struggling family.

Habitat For Humanity:

...is a wonderful non-profit ecumenical Christian housing ministry. Habitat builds simple, decent, affordable houses that are sold to families in need. There is no profit added to the sale price, and no interest charged on the mortgage. Partner families invest hundreds of hours of their own labor – sweat equity – into building their homes and the homes of others, and their monthly house payments are returned to a revolving fund for Humanity that is used to build more houses. Wouldn't you like to buy a kitchen sink, a toilet, or a bag of nails?

Did you know there are over 36 million Americans threatened by hunger, yet there is more than enough wasted food to feed every hungry person in the U.S.?

The Society of St. Andrews:

...is a national hunger relief organization that feeds hungry Americans. This is done by salvaging nutritious produce that would otherwise go to waste. Each \$12.00 donation helps provide about 800 servings of nourishing food and also honors a family member or friend

Heifer International:

...provides food for the hungry, income to lift families out of poverty and hope where families have known despair. This is done with gifts of livestock and training. There are heifers that give milk, chickens that produce eggs, sheep that provide wool, llamas that produce wool, beehives that produce honey and beeswax, oxen to pull plows and carts. These animals are referred to as living loans because in exchange for receiving their animal and training in its care, each family agrees to give one of its animal's offspring to another family in need. They are also given vegetable seeds and fruit tree saplings.

Shirley Shrader

IMPORTANT ANGEL TREE INSTRUCTIONS



All gifts are due back to the church no later than Wednesday, December 16th. No gifts are to be wrapped. All gifts for each child should be placed together (if possible) in one bag (kitchen trash bags work great!). The angel picture with number (top half of ticket) should be taped on outside of this bag. If there are several bags for the same child, please write a tag to be taped to the second one.

HELP SWEETEN CHRISTMAS FOR INMATES AT LANCASTER AND CITRUS COUNTY



In what has become an annual event we have been asked to provide 1000 Snickers bars for the inmates Christmas packages at Lancaster Correctional Institutional and 700 Snickers bars for Citrus County Detention Center.

The Missions Committee is asking the congregation to bring standard size (2.07 oz.) Snickers Candy bars to the church services on November 29, December 6, and December 13.

Officials point out it is very important that all bars be of the same kind and size to insure that everyone knows they are being treated equally.

A box in which to place the candy bars will be located in the church narthex. Cash donations are welcomed. Businesses in the area will be asked to assist.

Each candy bar will be wrapped with an appropriate Christmas message written by our pastor. Prison chaplains have stated these modest gifts are very meaningful because it shows that people on the outside do care.

**The Missions Committee
would welcome volunteers to help
wrap the candy bars at 3 PM,
Thursday, December 17.**



Christian Education and Ministries

Patience Nave

Usually I tell you about things that are on-going or coming up. This month I want to talk about something that has already occurred.

Early in the fall, Kim Hamrick told me that she wanted to do a benefit dinner for the Haiti mission in Carrenage. She had gone with us on the Haiti mission trip last spring, but is unable to mission with us on the planned Spring 2010 trip.

I feared we were getting too late a start to pull this off, but she assured me that we were not. She's done this before; so I trusted her judgment.

Well, she was right. It was amazing. If you were not there, you missed a really special and unusual evening. The dining room was lovely and very festive. Twenty-seven tables, each decorated by its hostess, created an atmosphere of gaiety, and the people who came were immediately influenced by what they saw.

Some tables were beautiful, some were clever, and some inspired controversy between professional ball fans. One table setting was very austere and reminded us of the little school in Carrenage and the children for whom we were doing this.

I cannot remember attending a FUMCH function where I heard more laughter. It was a wonderful evening from beginning to end.

In your usual fashion, you gave and gave and gave. I had grumbled as the gifts for the silent auction began piling up in my office, leaving me with just a tiny foot-path from the door to my desk. I wondered if I was going to have to start climbing over items before the day of the dinner. We had over 140 items, and many people got some great buys.

There was a minor incident that occurred in the chaos of collecting and toting all the items from my office to the Fellowship Hall, which now we all can chuckle over.

Karen Kline had brought me a pair of shoes - expensive, imported shoes that she thought would help my plantar faciitis. This gift somehow got included in the 140 items that were handed over to a crew involved in the sorting, pricing, and Silent Auction placement.

You cannot imagine how distressed I was on Saturday when I came to my office to pick up my new pair of shoes and found them gone. Then it hit me...her shoes...we sold her shoes! With the help of those little sheets on which we bid for items, I found the purchaser, who was a great sport. We got the shoes back.

Many people baked cakes, decorated tables, sold tickets, waited tables, donated items, bought items. Many prayed for the dinner's success, knowing that the work we would do in Haiti would depend greatly on how well we did with the dinner. We did very well, and money is still coming in. I think we will be able to complete the work we have begun on the campus at Carrenage, as well as feed some hungry children.

She won't take the credit, but the team and I owe Kim Hamrick a huge vote of thanks for the many, many hours she spent in organizing the entire affair. We have a wonderfully cooperative church, but in order for something this big to succeed, someone who knows how must be in charge. Kim was the girl. Thank her when you see her.

P.S. Some of you have asked me when we can do this again. Not soon...but we'll try to use Kim's idea for another important project after we rest.



**2010 COUPLE'S RETREAT
MARCH 12 to 14, 2010
United Methodist Retreat Center Leesburg
"In Jesus Name"**

Leadership Team



John Riley



Sharon Austin



Ed Diaz



**Music Leaders
Gretchen & Reg
The Dunnemans**

As more information becomes available we will pass it on to you. Please call Jim Stoneman 352-422-0169 or Marilyn Watson with any questions you may have.

**MEN'S WEEKEND RETREAT
~ OCTOBER 9 to 11, 2009 ~
by Richard Stanard**

We were six strong at the annual conference men's weekend retreat this past October 9 - 11. This was at the conference's Life Enrichment Retreat Center just outside of Leesburg about 60 miles due east of our church. The Center is a fully self-contained campus on the banks of Lake Griffin. The facility may not be elaborate, but the time away it offers is very rewarding.



Those enjoying our leisurely commute (in two vehicles) and attending the retreat were Bob Bunting, Dean Moore, Jim Potts, Jim Stoneman, Jim Roth, and yours truly. All agreed this was a special event that we were glad we attended. We encourage all men of our congregation plus their friends to start planning now to attend next October for a fast-paced, obligation-free experience that promises to give each one special insights into his relationship with our heavenly father God (Yahweh to the Old Testament Hebrews), with his precious Son, our savior Jesus Christ, and with our heavenly paraclete, the Holy Spirit. Obviously this is a not-to-be-missed event. We found these all-powerful elements in the worship services filled with prayer, singing, personal testimony and witness, in the fellowship at meal times, and in the quieter times with our respective roommates.

The theme was "Walking with Jesus." This was appropriate because we walked wherever we went on the campus, and there was little doubt that Jesus walked with each of us while there. One of the objectives of the various speakers was to inspire us to continue walking with Jesus upon our departure. From what I have seen, this objective was met along with another objective, which was to increase our knowledge about God's kingdom. Our various worship speakers and seminar leaders made sure we attained this second objective. A third objective was to keep us well fed. The talented kitchen staff had no trouble meeting this objective. Next year we'd like to be at least 60 strong in number instead of only six. Please see any of these listed above for more information as you plan to be among next year's 60+ strong from our congregation.



**26th Annual Florida
Conference
Women's Retreat
"Be A Blessing"
February 19 - 21, 2010**



Enrichments

Keynote Speaker

Rev. Terri Hill

Bible Study Leader

Rev. Kim Uchimura

Music

99 for 1

- 99 for 1
- Florida Children's Home Choir
- Sue Sommer
- Connie Steel
- Judy Stevens

Come join us for Christian fellowship, spiritual growth, and a wonderful weekend on holy ground. Rooms are motel style (unless you choose to camp). You won't have to prepare meals. Registration begins at 3 PM Friday and closing worship begins at 10 AM Sunday. We'll travel together so you don't even have to drive if you don't want to. More details are available on the bulletin boards and in the bulletins. If you have any questions call Marilyn Watson. To sign up, call the church office. We need a retreat coordinator - any takers?

Marilyn Watson

**St. Lawrence River Cruise
September 19-27, 2010
By Richard Evans**

The St. Lawrence Seaway is one of the most ambitious engineering feats of the last century. The objectives were to increase the size of the shipping channel and generate hydro-electric power for Ontario, Quebec, and New York State.

Proposals for the seaway began in 1909 but were met with resistance from railway and port lobbyists in the United States. Construction was finally approved in 1954 after Canada declared it was ready to proceed unilaterally.

As construction began, entire villages were relocated to higher ground utilizing the largest earth-moving and construction equipment in the world. When the temporary "coffer dams" were blown on July 1, 1958, people watched with mixed emotions. Slowly rising water covered familiar land forever. It was sad for some to know they could never go home again, but others were excited to think of the new conveniences and services, modern schools, and new friends they would have.

Queen Elizabeth II and President Dwight D. Eisenhower formally opened the seaway in 1959. The total cost was \$470 million with about ¾ paid by Canada.

Our church is offering a St. Lawrence River Cruise on the MV Canadian Empress, in September, 2010, that will traverse sections of the St. Lawrence Seaway—including a series of locks providing an overall change in water level of 246 feet. See historic Quebec City and Montreal and enjoy shore excursions to interesting places along the Canadian side. The fall foliage should be spectacular, the food and lodging outstanding, and the company congenial (with over 30 church friends on board).

Included in the pp. price of \$3,575 (double occupancy & in US dollars) are the cruise, round trip airfare, all ground transportation, shore excursions, taxes, fees, and travel insurance.

Pick up a flyer at the church office. Call me at 563-5833 or Jess Mackey (J & L Travel) at 382-7708 if you have questions. Don't miss out. Register now!

TRAVEL WITH FRIENDS

Come with us to Mission Inn Resort and Club, located in the spectacular rolling countryside northwest of Orlando, Florida. We'll experience a true resort setting featuring the Mission Inn in an area touched by history and blessed with natural beauty. It is an enchanting place distinguished by enduring traditions of excellence and hospitality, distinctive Spanish architecture and award-winning recreation.

DATE: Thursday, January 14, 2010.

We will depart the church at 10:00 AM

Included in the cost will be a cold buffet lunch:
soup, salads, dessert, tea/coffee.

\$20.00 CHECK DUE BY 1/1/10, payable to FUMC.

Please mail to Ann Morrison,
7046 W. Lincolnshire Drive,
Homosassa, FL 34446.

WHO ME – ON A DIET?

This is the time of year when we all celebrate holidays. This is the time when our diets go askew and we are tempted to try all those delicious homemade goodies which seem to appear once a year. Don't be afraid to do this in moderation. You can make up for the feast the next day. Our exercise routine will probably go out the window along with our other regular routines, but enjoy it. You deserve it!

So even though you are busy:

1. Keep your regular doctor appointments.
2. Take your medications as prescribed.
3. Try to stay on your normal diet, as much as you can.
4. Walk, swim, or do some other form of exercise.
5. Get your normal sleep.
6. Enjoy fun activities.

Psalm 92, Verse 1: "It is good to give thanks to the Lord, and sing praises to thy name, O most high."

Happy Holidays from your church P.N., Shirley Exley

THANK YOU!

Sugarmill Manor now has a piano, and the residents love to sing. Thanks to all the people who made this possible with their generous donations, and to Dick's Moving Company, who gave us ½ off the regular price of delivery.

Our Thursday Bible Study at the Manor is doing well and if there are any of you who would like to teach, or just help out, please call me at 382-3774.

Thank you again!
Marilyn Siegel

~ STRONG HANDS NEEDED ~

Once a month a team of mail-handlers gets together to fold and prepare 525 copies of Genesis for mailing.

"Many hands make light work..."

Contact Josie Reel or Theresa Weber in the church office to join this work-ministry.



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

DECEMBER AGENDA

Saturday, December 12 - Christmas Pot Luck Luncheon at 11:30 AM.

We will have a Saturday Unit Meeting to accommodate our new SALTY Circle, as well as those that will be traveling for the Christmas holiday.

Program: Installation of Officers for 2010
by Martha Dorrell

Unit Meeting Leader: Executive Committee.

Hostesses: Dorcas Circle.

All Church Women Are Invited!

Please **bring your Christmas cookies** to the Unit Meeting and **we will have a "packing party"** to prepare for our Cookie Sale on Sunday, December 13th (at the request of Pastor Mark.) For any questions contact Chairpersons: Ruth Oblinger and Mim Currier.

Sunday, December 13 - Annual Cookie Sale

Cookies will be sold between services in the Hospitality Center. Get there early...they go quickly!

December 14 – UMW Executive Board Meeting

at 10 AM in Room 114. **"Changing Of The Guard."** All Circle Leaders are urged to attend to meet the new Board and to gather new information and materials to take back to their circles.

THRIFT SHOP TO CHANGE HOURS

9 AM to Noon, effective immediately.

At this time we would like to thank everybody for their continued support with donations and patronage. Because of this our unit of United Methodist Women has been able to maintain our 5 Star level of pledge commitment to Local, National and Global Missions. Wishing you a blessed Christmas...

Marge Davis & Claudette Kirby, Co-Chairs
And The Gals in the Thrift Shop



Uniformity With God's Will

by Judith Huffer

As we head into a new year let us resolve to not focus on what is wrong with ourselves or our circumstances..."I'm too fat"... "I need to stop smoking"... "I need to change my job to make more money," etc.. Resolve to make just one resolution. Focus on God, daily, this year.

Get up 30 minutes earlier every day, or plan to set aside a specific time in your day, and make that your daily fellowship time with God. Put God first. He likes that very much.

You do not have to make formal incantations, using words that were written by poets, priests, or ancient sages. "Just have a plain conversation about your life. Ask our Heavenly Father to help you clearly see His glory and blessings in your life every day."⁽¹⁾

Tell Him, "God, I want to reflect your glory in my life more in 2010 than in 2009. I want to live today in light of the end of my life. Speak to me and empower me to be conformed, gently but surely, more into the image of Christ this year."⁽²⁾

One of the blessings of this Third Millennium is the World Wide Web. It was through God's grace that I was led to a letter written by Saint Alphonsus de Ligouri to Sister Giannastasio in 1755. Upon the death of a very close friend, St Alphonsus expressed his sentiments, and these words became a published essay on God's will and was published as "Uniformity With God's Will."

"Who knows? Perhaps if God had given us greater talent, better health, a more personable appearance, we might have lost our souls!

"Great talent and knowledge have caused many to be puffed up with the idea of their own importance and, in their pride, they have despised others.

"How easily those who have these gifts fall into grave danger to their salvation!

"How many on account of physical beauty or robust health have plunged headlong into a life of debauchery!

"How many, on the contrary, who, by reason of poverty, infirmity or physical attractiveness had else lost their souls!

"Let us then be content with what God has given us.

"But, one thing is necessary, and it is not beauty, not health, not talent. It is the salvation of our immortal souls."

"Perfection is founded entirely on the love of God: 'Charity is the bond of perfection;' and perfect love of God means the complete union of our will with God's." ⁽³⁾

As United Methodist Women standing on the threshold of the Third Millennium, let us refresh our resolve to uphold "The Purpose," living a life fulfilled and purposeful and remembering, "God is unchanging in His love. He loves you. He has a plan for your life. Don't let the newspaper headlines frighten you. God is still sovereign. He's still on the throne."⁽⁴⁾

1 David Jeremiah: Turning Points, December 2009

2 David Jeremiah: Turning Points, December 2009

3 <http://ccl.org/a/alphonsus/uniformity>

4 Billy Graham

Walking on the Path

Patience Nave

"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

John 8:12

As I write for the December *Genesis*, I'm thinking about the fact that we are leaving tomorrow for the cruise to the Holy Land. I have been too busy to get excited, trying to get the things done here that need to be finished before I go. Last night I finally finished all that did not pertain to the trip, and I put my things into suitcases and got myself ready! That's when excitement began to course through my body! Soon I would be "walking where Jesus walked."

After thinking about that a bit, I chastised myself. First of all, the ground he walked on is way below any ground we'll walk on, except for a spot here and there on the Mount of Olives or at the home of Caiphas. Years of building and settlement have long since buried the actual paths He took. I know that! But I am still excited to have an opportunity to be in the country He loved, in the city where He was born, and in the places where Paul preached to the early churches.

But my thoughts took me in another direction—not to a new thought but to one I needed as a reminder. I walk every day where Jesus walks; you walk every day where Jesus walks! He said, "If you love me and keep my commandments, I will come and make my home in your heart." (John 14:23, Patience's paraphrase)

Where we walk is where Jesus walks. He lives in us and walks in us and greets others as He goes along our paths in us.

So, the question is this. When we walk away, do the people we have met know they have been greeted by the God of the Universe? Does our countenance and manner convey Him to others as we move about in Homosassa?

Prayer: *Father, thank you for walking in us, for talking through us, for touching others with our hands. Never let us forget this incredible miracle. Amen.*

"I AM NOT WHAT I MIGHT BE,
I AM NOT WHAT I OUGHT TO BE,
I AM NOT WHAT I WISH TO BE,
I AM NOT WHAT I HOPE TO BE.
BUT I THANK GOD I AM NOT WHAT I ONCE WAS,
AND I CAN SAY WITH THE GREAT APOSTLE, PAUL,
'BY THE GRACE OF GOD I AM WHAT I AM.'"
1 Corinthians 15:10

MY LIFE WITH TOM

by Nancy Pearo



It's been an amazing 21-year journey! Tom and I met at a birthday party, and we officially started dating 3/3/1988, while we were both living in Philadelphia, PA. Since it was Easter time and the flower was a lily, Tom didn't want a plain white one, so he got a tiger lily for Easter (the first flower he gave me). I was going to the Broad Street UMC and Tom to the Snyder Avenue UMC. The two churches eventually merged and became the Snyder Avenue Church and the combined choirs marched down Broad Street to Snyder Avenue in Philadelphia on Palm Sunday for the new church celebration.

We were married on 10/29/88 in Williamsport, PA, at the church where my father was the minister. Tom had been working on the Philadelphia police force for 23 years. He stayed on another 2 years while we lived in South Philly after we married. There we enjoyed our church, Mummers, and family.

In 1990, we wanted to get out of the city, so we moved to Winston-Salem, NC. We were active in church there, and when the pastor moved, Tom drove one of the trucks loaded with furniture. He was always ready to lend a hand.

A search for work took us to Kingsport, TN, from North Carolina. The church there was small so we became involved in many areas. The most fun was Bible School. Tom also enjoyed his role as Santa while there.

Tom always wanted to go to FL, so we then moved on down the road to Homosassa. Our first church event at 1st UMC was an indoor 4th of July picnic in 1998. The first person we met was Fran Graham who became my ride to the Faith Hope Circle. I became co-leader, then vice president of the unit. The week before we joined the church, Tom typed all the agendas and made programs for the Unit Mission Studies. When Share came along in October 2000, we took on leadership of that ministry, learning to enjoy the fellowship of other volunteers and those we met while serving the community. We appreciated all who stepped up to make Share run smoothly, and I am continuing to work with Vicki Williams, the new Share Coordinator.

The last 2 years have been challenging, but Tom hung in to make preparations for me. We took time to see the sunsets, and spent time just being together. The last few months have been phone calls and hospital visits. When the time came, he was ready, and his last words to me were "Remember me" and "I'll be waiting for you." His son Chris, made the 12 hour drive from Pennsylvania and arrived Monday to say goodbye to his dad. Tom passed away peacefully Saturday, October 30, at 1:25 p.m. in the Hospice Unit at Citrus Memorial Hospital.

As of this writing, his memorial service is planned for November 28, 2009, at 1st UMC, with family, church and community celebrating his life.

“A Final Gift of Love” A Workshop on End-of-Life Issues

On Saturday morning, Jan. 30, our church will sponsor a Workshop dealing with end-of-life issues that are important for every individual and family. Refreshments will be served beginning at 8:45 and the program will begin at 9:00 am. Each participant will receive a workbook with information and suggestions about issues such as funerals and memorial services, burial, cremation, Hospice services, veterans' benefits, Social Security benefits, estate planning, wills and trusts, stewardship of assets, living wills, health care surrogates, durable power of attorney, organ donation, and lots more.

A panel, consisting of a pastor, a financial planner, an attorney, and a funeral director will present helpful information and respond to questions participants may have. The workbook will include a section for your own personal information (also on CD so that it may easily be updated on a computer). Although the workshop is similar in format to a few of the previous ones we have offered, some of the panelists will be different and new information will be available. Even if you have attended a previous workshop, you will find this one especially helpful.

The workshop is sponsored by the Permanent Endowment Committee in cooperation with the Florida United Methodist Foundation and is offered free of charge to members and friends of the church. Using our new Fellowship Hall, we will have space enough for all who are interested. But we need to know how many to plan for, so it is important to register. Call the church office with your name and phone number, and we will be expecting you.

Planning for the end of your life on earth will be your “final gift of love” to your family members. And, of course, the end of our lives on earth will mark the beginning of our eternal life with the Lord.

CHURCH MOUSE MUSINGS

How much is a trillion? Do you know?

...A million (1,000,000) is a thousand thousands.

...A billion (1,000,000,000) is a thousand millions.

...A trillion (1,000,000,000,000) is a thousand billions.

Example: We are 93,000,000 (ninety-three million) miles away from the sun. At a dollar a mile, we could buy 10,752 (ten thousand seven hundred fifty-two) trips to the sun for a trillion dollars.

Example: 1 million seconds is 11 ½ days, 1 billion seconds is 32 years, and one trillion seconds is 32,000 years!

Giving at Year End

The end of the year is a time for remembering, taking stock, catching up, and giving. Consider these 8 suggestions, some of which may work for you:

1. Give a “Second Mile” Gift. The end of the year is a great time to go the extra mile in recognizing the good work of favorite charities—and especially your church.
2. Give a Memorial Gift. A memorial tribute can be a satisfying way to honor those whose memories continue to enrich our lives.
3. Give Appreciated Property. Gifts of stock, bonds, mutual funds, and real estate may qualify for an attractive tax benefit. You may take a full fair market value deduction on the day of the gift, and you need not declare any capital gains.
4. Give Idle Assets. A year-end inventory may discover underutilized or “idle assets” such as life insurance policies, savings bonds, boats, RVs, and many items that tend to clutter up our lives. Some can be given directly to the church; others are better sold first with the cash contributed.
5. Give Through a Life Income Gift. Through a Charitable Gift Annuity or a Charitable Remainder Trust you can continue to receive income from invested funds, often at even greater levels than you currently do. Upon your death, the remainder will go to the church and /or charities you have designated. Unlike a bequest, life income gifts offer significant tax advantages now.
6. Give Through Tax-Wise Planning. Making extra gifts in 2009 can enable an itemized income tax deduction or keep you in a lower federal tax bracket for the current year.
7. Give Through an IRA Rollover. The Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 restored the provision enabling IRA owners over age 70 ½ to make tax free charitable gifts from their accounts directly to churches and charities. The extension is effective through December 31, 2009. Talk to your IRA administrator.
8. Give a Christmas Present to Your Church. For many of us the church is “family.” A satisfying response to God's gift to us in Jesus Christ is our gift for God's work through the church at Christmas time.

But don't delay! To qualify for a 2009 charitable tax deduction, your gift must be made by December 31. Gifts to FUMCH should be received by Sunday, Dec. 27 to be “posted” in 2009.

For more information, please call the church office or Rev. Richard Evans.

(This article does not attempt to give legal or tax advice. Consult your attorney, tax advisor, or financial planner for advice about your particular situation).

Operation Wrap Up 2009

The generosity of this congregation never ceases to amaze me. This year, for the first time, we collected blankets for the Hunger & Homeless Coalition. The Serendipity Men's Bible Study hosted this community outreach on November 21st with a pancake breakfast. Many community agencies came together to help those in need.

What a great response. We received blankets, afghans and fleece throws. As of this writing, and still a week to go, we have collected 125 blankets.

Each blanket will be lovingly placed in a sturdy, handled bag and each blanket will be tagged with a love note stating "Wrap yourself in LOVE, From First United Methodist Church Homosassa."

Thank you to everyone who donated a blanket or blankets. I look forward to next year when we may be called upon again to donate to another need in our community.

Theresa Weber,
FUMCH Administrator

~ Holiday Reminder ~ Help Us Give A Special Christmas Gift To Our Missionaries

The Mission Committee is asking you to **bring one Christmas card that will serve as a greeting for ALL your friends.** In December we will have a board on which your card will be displayed in the Narthex. (Think of the time you'll save. Think of the money you'll save on cards and postage.)

A basket with envelopes will be provided for you. Please place your donation in the Sunday offering plate. Your donation will be used to give our missionary families a special Christmas gift.

Shirley Shrader

Christmas Baskets 2009

Can you hear the jingle bells? The scent of fresh pine is abundant as the holiday's approach which can only mean...Present wrapping!

This year we once again will be wrapping presents donated from the ladies golf leagues for our Christmas basket give-away.

As in the past, we are asking the congregation for donations of wrapping paper, and, as in the past, soon my office will be overflowing with it. You always give so generously to any church project that we nurture.

The official wrapping day will be

December 17th at 2:00 PM in Fellowship Hall.

Sign-up sheets will be available in the Narthex on Sunday November 29th, December 6th and December 13th.

Please bring your own scissors. Tape and wrapping paper will be provided. Feel free to bring some munchies as wrapping always goes faster with snacks! If you have any questions, please call me at the office, 628-4083.

See you December 17th!

~Theresa



THE FINE ARTS COMMITTEE OF FUMC
PROUDLY PRESENTS

**THE NATURE COAST
FESTIVAL SINGERS**

IN CONCERT
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2009
AT 3 P.M.
IN THE FUMC SANCTUARY.

**THIS HIGHLY ACCLAIMED
COMMUNITY CHORUS WILL
PERFORM SELECTIONS FROM
THE MESSIAH AND OTHER
SACRED AND SEASONAL
FAVORITES FOR YOUR
ENJOYMENT.**

**START YOUR HOLIDAY SEASON WITH
THIS WONDERFUL CONCERT. A FREE-
WILL OFFERING WILL BE COLLECTED.**



*Coffee and Fellowship
In the Hospitality Center
Between Sunday Services*



SPIRITUAL GIFTS

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As promised, this column is a follow up to last month's column on spiritual gifts. These gifts from God are meant to be used. Just knowing what gifts we have doesn't benefit the body of Christ unless we use them. In Scripture Jesus tells us no one would hide a lamp under a basket. Although He wasn't referring to spiritual gifts, it seems to me that's what we do when we don't use our spiritual gifts; we hide them. Whether they're hidden under a basket or within, no one is benefiting from the gift God has given us. Worst of all, the person who misses the blessing the most is the one who doesn't use his gifts. If you are using your spiritual gifts, tell others what a joy it is! If you are not currently using your spiritual gifts, please pray about doing the following:

- ♦ If you've done a spiritual gifts inventory and know where you would like to use your gifts, volunteer. If you don't know where your gifts fit, contact Pastor Mark, Patience, or me. We'd really like to help you find that place where you will be most fulfilled.
- ♦ If you haven't taken a spiritual gifts inventory, please call the church office and leave your name. We'll make sure you have an opportunity to find what your spiritual gifts are and places where you can put them to use.

Our Spiritual gifts rarely have anything to do with how you have earned your living. You may have been a banker and think we'll want you to be on the finance committee; if you dread that thought, chances are administration isn't even one of your spiritual gifts! Give yourself a chance to go on a wonderful adventure discovering and using your God-given gifts.

As we approach the beginning of another year, I hope you will consider starting something new. Of course, I have a few suggestions! If you are not in a Sunday school class, Bible study, or small group, *please* join one. There's more to our wonderful church than Sunday morning worship. If you're already in a group where you are growing as a disciple of Jesus, then please consider which spiritual discipline you might try. When it comes to any new spiritual practice, it is far better to start small and stick to it than to be overwhelmed and quit. So to begin just add one new practice; you can always add another later. Make yourself accountable to someone, perhaps your prayer partner or someone in your small group. They can encourage you on your journey.

Have a truly blessed Christmas ~

Marilyn Watson

The Academy For Spiritual Formation

by Marilyn Watson

At every session of *The Academy For Spiritual Formation*, much of what we learn is about prayer -- particularly formational prayer. Another major emphasis of The Academy is spiritual disciplines and you've already heard how important those are!

The understanding I have gleaned from the course on the History and Traditions of Christian Spirituality has given me a new understanding of why we worship the way we do, where our traditions came from, and their importance. Some of what I learned was so obvious it's embarrassing. It never occurred to me that the original reason people were told what Scripture said was that people couldn't read! Of particular importance to me was learning what was important to the Apostles and early church leaders -- those who walked with Jesus. It has shown me the necessity for us to know why we do various things in worship; otherwise they are a meaningless routine.

Some of what I am learning at The Academy for Spiritual Formation was used in last year's Leadership Retreat. For example, we used the Myers-Briggs information regarding how our MBTI preference types affect how we pray and how we work together specifically as spiritual leaders within the church. This was explored in depth during Session 1 and can be vital to our ministry together.

I'm honored to be among those attending the Academy and very excited about what I am learning and will be bringing back to share with all of you. Sharing the Academy teachings will enhance our yearning to grow as Disciples of Jesus Christ and encourage our quest for a more passionate spirituality.



When you see these folks in the halls, and around FUMCH campus, say "Hi", and add a "Thank You."

These are the hard workers of the new program,
"OUR FATHER'S TABLE"
 Once a month they use our new kitchen facilities to prepare a free meal that they offer at St. Anne's Episcopal Church in Crystal River. It's a fine ministry that serves a many.



THE COLUMBARIUM AT FUMCH

As of this November 9, 2009, 46 (42.6%) of the Columbarium's present 108 niches have been purchased.

With the passing of time, both pre-need and at-need Columbarium niche purchases have continued.

Columbarium packets and information are available from Theresa Weber in the church office.

The Columbarium's National Colors flag/stand is placed for the inurnment of a veteran, at the family's request. Military Honors can be rendered but rifle volleys are not fired on church grounds.

The Columbarium and surrounding Memory Garden are cleaned weekly, in the knowledge that family members do visit and rest there in prayer, reflection, and meditation.

I would be pleased to try to answer any questions you may have day or evening.

John Gibbs, Chairman
628-0688

PRAYER CORNER

Please pray for:

- Each one of us to seek and find ways to grow as disciples of Jesus.
- Our Sunday school and Bible study teachers, and facilitators of DBS and other groups where the Bible is studied (Bible study is a *spiritual discipline!*)
- All those who come to our church seeking. May they find more than a warm welcome; may they find the risen Christ.
- Stamina for our choir, musicians, and others who put forth so much extra effort this time of year.
- Wisdom for the Church Council esp. with end-of-the-year decisions including those in connection with the 2010 budget.
- Each person who is struggling financially and comes to our doors looking for help. May they find more than food for their bodies.
- All of us to be conscious throughout Advent and Christmas of the reason for our celebrations.

S.H.A.R.E.



Christmas is a holiday that nearly all of us take a special delight in. We enjoy it not just for the reason it is celebrated, but also for the festivities that are a part of it.

This year some of our friends, neighbors, relatives or acquaintances will have an especially difficult time making it through the holidays. Money will be hard to come by for even basic items.

Do them a favor and let them know the savings SHARE can offer on their food bill. Every dollar saved in the grocery store might help purchase a small gift for a child or a sick friend or perhaps put gas in the car to get them to church service on Christmas Eve.

The donations to area agencies will probably be less this holiday season, compelling them to cut back on assistance. So the gift of food to a family is always appreciated.

If you or your organization can purchase even a basic package for someone in need, it will be a gift that lifts the spirit while filling a basic need of life.

Pass the word on the savings of SHARE. We will have the December newsletter outside the office door and will provide a paper with the bags of food that are given away.

If anyone has a question on the savings, the food items, delivery dates or any other information, please have them call me at 628-5945.

I look forward to a new year as the coordinator. However, my thoughts at this holiday season will often be, I am sure, of Tom Pearo and how well he managed and loved this program. I wish you all a wonderful holiday season and a loved-filled new year.

Let's make it a year to SHARE.

A NOTE OF THANKS!

Thanks to all my church friends, circle members, and Reverend Whitaker for your prayers, cards, and support in the loss of my husband Bill.

Joyce Smith

When You Are Low on Hope

by Max Lucado

Water. All Noah can see is water. The evening sun sinks into it. The clouds are reflected in it. His boat is surrounded by it. Water. Water to the north. Water to the south. Water to the east. Water to the west. Water.

He sent a raven on a scouting mission; it never returned. He sent a dove. It came back shivering and spent, having found no place to roost. Then, just this morning, he tried again. With a prayer he let it go and watched until the bird was no bigger than a speck on a window.

All day he looked for the dove's return. Now the sun is setting, and the sky is darkening, and he has come to look one final time, but all he sees is water. Water to the north. Water to the south. Water to the east. Water to the ...

You know the feeling. You have stood where Noah stood. You've known your share of floods. Flooded by sorrow at the cemetery, stress at the office, anger at the disability in your body or the inability of your spouse. You've seen the floodwater rise, and you've likely seen the sun set on your hopes as well. You've been on Noah's boat.

And you've needed what Noah needed; you've needed some hope. You're not asking for a helicopter rescue, but the sound of one would be nice. Hope doesn't promise an instant solution but rather the possibility of an eventual one. Sometimes all we need is a little hope.

That's all Noah needed. And that's all Noah received.

Here is how the Bible describes the moment: "When the dove returned to him in the evening, there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf!" (Genesis 8:11 NIV).

An olive leaf. Noah would have been happy to have the bird but to have the leaf! This leaf was more than foliage; this was promise. The bird brought more than a piece of a tree; it brought hope. For isn't that what hope is? Hope is an olive leaf—evidence of dry land after a flood. Proof to the dreamer that dreaming is worth the risk.

Don't we love the olive leaves of life?

"It appears the cancer may be in remission."

"I can help you with those finances."

"We'll get through this together."

What's more, don't we love the doves that bring them?

Perhaps that's the reason so many loved Jesus.

To all the Noahs of the world, to all who search the horizon for a fleck of hope, he proclaims, "Yes!" And he comes. He comes as a dove. He comes bearing fruit from a distant land, from our future home. He comes with a leaf of hope.

Have you received yours? Don't think your ark is too isolated. Don't think your flood is too wide. Receive his hope, won't you? Receive it because you need it. Receive it so you can share it.

Love always hopes. "Love...bears all things, believes all things, *hopes* all things, endures all things" (1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NKJV, emphasis mine).

From A Love Worth Giving

Copyright (Thomas Nelson, 2002) Max Lucado



During the celebration of our beloved Jesus' birth at Christmas, it is sometimes difficult for those of us who are separated from family and friends by many miles. Even though our hearts are filled with joy because of the true meaning of this wondrous season, there are times when we may feel alone, estranged, forgotten.

This is especially true if we have suffered the death of a loved one, the loss of a job, the onset of serious illness or injury, the decline or severance of an important relationship. Where do we reach out for help, when everyone else seems to be engaged in wrapping gifts, singing carols, baking cookies, and basking in the sunlight of love from others?

As a member of this congregation, you have supported the Stephen Ministry at First UMC by your gifts, your prayers, and your public commissioning of trained lay visitors. These caring volunteers now stand ready to provide weekly visits and phone support, reaching across the aisle to help you through the holidays.

Won't you take a moment to call our Stephen Leaders: Kay Bast 382-4908, Karen Kline 382-7263, Carol MacKenzie 382-8926, or the church office to learn more about this unique resource? You will receive the gift of Christian love, while giving a Stephen Minister the gift of an opportunity to serve right here in Homosassa.

I wish to thank all for the many calls, cards and prayers for my recent neck surgery .

FUMC is a wonderful warm and friendly family.

Thanks for caring,
Jack Cooley



*Food Pantry
Sunday
December 20th*

*Shopping List
For Needy Families*

- ★ Soups
- ★ Beef Stews
- ★ Tuna
- ★ Peanut Butter
- ★ Jelly
- ★ Spaghetti Sauce
- ★ Saltine Crackers
- ★ Canned Fruit
- ★ Spaghetti
- ★ Noodles
- ★ Rice
- ★ Jell-o
- ★ Pudding Mixes
- ★ Vegetable Oil

Dear Praying Friends,

October was incredibly busy, with a family visit to a church 600 miles away, the end of the first-quarter grading period and lots of activities at school, and a challenging situation to handle at church, among other things. Thanks so much for partnering with us in prayerful support of God's work in and through us.

"They all joined together constantly in prayer..."

Acts 1:14a

Praises

✎ Praise God for our excellent three-day **visit to a small church** last month in *Sisaket*, a city of 135,000 people in northeast Thailand near the border with Cambodia. We had time to get to know the church leaders, the area and the heavy spiritual needs that exist there. The hospitality of our church friends was a tremendous blessing as we ate until we were stuffed and even got to visit the city zoo! The most important opportunities happened during the morning on Sunday when we worshiped at the main *Sisaket Siam Baptist Church* in town.



Sisaket-preaching



Sisaket-main church

Church elder *Wit* and his family hosted us. Then we visited Pastor *Brasit's* village birthplace at night, where he holds a meeting for the one Christian family there every week



Sisaket-village Church

The pastor and his wife are on the far left and the five members of the village's one Christian family on the far right. Pray for wisdom as we consider teaming with this small church, which serves in a province of almost 1.5 million people that has just 34 churches and 1,265 believers. (Yes, you read that correctly: close to 0% Christian population, which was a heavy burden on us as we considered the obvious need for missionary help there and how best to serve the Lord as a team in that setting.)

✎ Praise God for a **very generous response** to our request last month for financial assistance! We have received \$305 in additional monthly support and a little more

than half of what we need in one-time gifts. Please continue to pray for the additional \$1,070 in monthly support that is needed to get to 100% and the remaining \$6,500 one-time need that will erase our mission account debt and reimburse us for ministry expenses paid with personal funds. (If you would like to help financially, please send a tax-deductible check filled out to "Pioneers" to PIONEERS, 10123 William Carey Dr., Orlando, FL 32832 and attach a note saying it's for the Henrys, account #110798.)

✎ While God was leading us to visit *Sisaket Siam Baptist* last month, He was moving in other Thai leaders' hearts as well as we met with an evangelist from western Chiang Mai province and another couple nearby concerning possible HOME Team partnerships. That's **two official partnerships and two prospective partnerships** already lined up, with at least one other possibility brewing. Praise God for all these opportunities to serve His church in Thailand ...now to get teammates to go to these harvest fields!

Prayers

✎ As mentioned, **The HOME Team can really use team members!** We envision 2-3 missionary units serving with Pastor Moses in church, Bible school and orphanage work in *Mae Ai* near the northern border with Burma and 2 more units working with the leaders in the town and village settings of *Sisaket* near Cambodia. There also are several other promising opportunities already in the works that would require another 3-5 missionary units. Please pray for the Lord of the harvest to send humble workers – soon

✎ *Cool Shade of Life Church* had to deal with a **difficult confrontation with one of its members** last month. Issues of lying, gossip, immorality and marrying an unbeliever had to be addressed. Pastor *Ogaat* and *Dtum* did a good job confronting the problem (not an easy thing for Thais); however, the member has chosen to not accept the church's position and discipline. Please pray for wisdom for the church in continuing to handle this problem, and pray for this member to repent of sinful behavior and return to the Lord.

✎ Please pray for Elaine and Joe as they **renew their U.S. passports** this month. This is usually a simple process, but you never know what unusual complications might arise when living overseas. In addition, the situation is complicated a bit by the fact that we then have to turn around and use those new passports to renew our visas with the Thai government in December.

On Nov. 26, glorifying God with thanksgiving, not an extra turkey leg, should be the longing of all.

"I will praise God's name in song and glorify him with thanksgiving. This will please the Lord more than an ox, more than a bull with its horns and hoofs. The poor will see and be glad – you who seek God, may your hearts live!"

– Psalm 69:30-32

For His glory,

Joe, Elaine, Brittany, Justin, Caleb & Jamie

~ FROM SIBERIA ~

Greetings Dear Faithful Friends!



Men Coming Together:

Exciting update...As you may remember Kevin and a fellow co-worker began a men's "work" this past month. The first meeting was held in the city in conjunction with an existing fellowship. Kevin and the other leaders felt this would be a great introduction to the themes they intend to work through with the men. To say it was a success does not come close to the response from the men who attended! They are working through issues that are incredibly difficult...forgiveness, working through the hurts we have in our lives, how to be leaders in their homes, how to be Godly men. Kevin has come back from each meeting in the village so encouraged because of the participation and the openness to begin working through the issues. PLEASE keep these men in your prayers...these steps are HUGE and will take a LOT of time.



WOW (Windows of Warmth)

This project has definitely not been forgotten...the other projects *had* to be done in the warmer weather; windows can be taken out and put in, in a day... even in our "cooler" fall temperatures. We've been able to put in one new window and will put in another set by the reading of this newsletter. (There are other potential recipients; we pray *time* and weather will remain on our side.) One of the recipients is a woman from the fellowship. This woman's kitchen windows were taped together in pieces and only one layer instead of the needed two. (Can you imagine one pane of glass between you and minus-40 degree temperatures?) She's in her 60's and works three jobs to support her family. Her husband is an invalid (from drinking), her oldest son recently died from drinking, and she always has grandchildren who need some type of care! No matter how little she may have, if she hears of a need...she'll find a way to fill it!

She's a wonderful example of His love and caring for others. It's wonderful to see her on the receiving end of such a gift that will last a long time.

Workshop:

Just a quick update on the workshop. We had a gift come in this month which will help us purchase some wood to make workbenches and cabinets. We continue to pray for gifts for this project so we can begin our work with young men in this area by teaching them a useable skill.

What Happens When People Pray?

"The Prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective."
James 5:16

Over the last several weeks, there have been incredible examples of **giving** to others among those attending in the village. So often it has been ALL about THEIR needs first and about how poor they are. We see them giving out of what very little they have and doing it JOYFULLY!! This of course is a result of your faithful prayers!!! Thank you...it's these little victories that keep us going when: the weather turns cold again, the two-hour drive (100 mi) is long and bumpy, and things that should take a few hours take a day or more. We're so grateful to be a part of this for this "season."

"Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people." Luke 2:10

Thank you for partnering with us because you DO understand that the "Good News" is for all peoples of the world. We wish you a Blessed Christmas season!

Praise:

- Growth in the fellowship.
- Seeing JOY in action (Jesus, Others, You).
- Men's group.
- His provisions for our needs.

Requests:

- Keeping our focus on Him first!
- Wisdom.
- That more would "hear" and "come".
- For Joshua and Corey as they travel "home" to visit us for the Christmas season.

With His Love,

Kevin and Laura Wooster



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS	DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES
<p>1 Doris Kertesz Bill Strmiska</p>	<p>8 Michelle & Ryan Selby ~ 7 years ~</p>
<p>2 Martha Formender Rusty Harry Phillip Rittgers</p>	<p>12 Joan & James Eyster ~ 56 years ~ Jim & Joyce Winder ~ 50 years ~</p>
<p>4 Bess Hoess Dorothy Nobles Shirley Wardrip</p>	<p>17 Judith & William Busby ~ 26 years ~ Phyllis & Charles Dixon ~ 21 years ~ Isabelle & Ernie Verge ~ 66 years ~</p>
<p>5 Fred Casper Susan Dean Zane Megos</p>	<p>18 Martha & Ernie Dorrell ~ 49 years ~ Dolores & Homer Moore ~ 2_ years ~ Donna & Bud Ludwick ~ 50 years ~</p>
<p>6 Charles Dixon Elizabeth Gaines Betty Huffstutler Dorothy Jones Vicky Post</p>	<p>20 Carole Deyo-Fahl & Gunter Fahl ~ 23 years ~ Laurie & Larry Stainton ~ 50 years ~ Jeannine & Jim Love ~ 51 years ~</p>
<p>7 Marybelle Baker Ron Phillips Willy Pounderoy</p>	<p>21 Lee & George Knerr ~ 54 years ~ Marge & Harold Swinson ~ 64 years ~ Cheryl & Tom Smith ~ 44 years ~</p>
<p>8 Ruth Anderson Abbye Jean Richner Jeana Stansbury</p>	<p>22 Kay & Lee Bast ~ 53 years ~ Judy & Bob Bunting ~ 49 years ~ Dee & Jim Green ~ 14 years ~ Cee & Carl Merritt ~ 37 years ~</p>
<p>9 David Pirkle Marie Witham</p>	
<p>10 Mary McCrea Glenn Seiler</p>	
<p>12 Carolyn Bright Buddy Hansen</p>	
<p>13 Imogene Burnett</p>	
<p>14 Wanda Ashley William Little Richard Shaffer</p>	



IN MEMORIAM
Marjorie M. Falk
3/17/27
to
11/11/09



IN MEMORIAM
Elma Mallet
5/28/24
to
10/16/09



IN MEMORIAM
Paul Glenn
1/13/17
to
10/17/09



IN MEMORIAM
Thomas Pearro
11/6/42
to
10/30/09



IN MEMORIAM
Nan Lawrence
3/14/22
to
10/21/09



IN MEMORIAM
Mary Jo Belt
10/14/1933
to
9/19/2009

*In Our Thoughts
And Prayers*

PERSONS RESIDING IN
LONG-TERM CARE
(As of November 2, 2009)

- AVANTE
Annie Preston
- BRENTWOOD
Corrine Barrito
Evelyn Bash
- CR HEALTH & REHAB
Betty Farewell
Robert Smith
- DIAMOND RIDGE
Jean Buzby
Betty Duncan
Helen Hudson
- GREEN ACRES
Bud Jenks
- HUNT RESIDENCE
Bill Marquis
- LIFE CARE
Ginny Reese
Buck Snyder
- SUGARMILL MANOR
Shirley Hart
Grace Payne
- SUNFLOWER SPRINGS
Marguerite Betzer
Ruth Eaton
Ruth & Bill Willis

DECEMBER 2009



	TUESDAY 1	WEDNESDAY 2	THURSDAY 3	FRIDAY 4	SATURDAY 5	
	10:00 Staff Meeting 1:30 Stephen Ministries 3:00 Stephen Ministries 3:00 Serendipity Bible	7:00 Men's Prayer Group 9:00 Wonderful Wed. Prep. 10:00 Siegel Bible Study 10:00 La Mountain Bible 10:00 SHARE Sign-up 12:30 Lunch Time Bible 3:00 Prayer Discovery 5:15 Music 5:30 Wonderful Wednesday 5:45 Bells 6:30 Youth Group 7:00 Choir 7:00 Wed. Bible Study	1:00 Fibromyalgia 4:00 Video Rehearsal 7:00 Creative Worship 8:00 AA 8:00 Al-Anon	GENESIS DEADLINE Council Reports Due 9:30 Disciple III 10:00 Wise Bible Study	8:00 Red Cross CPR 8:00 Saturday Sisters 10:00 SHARE Sign-up 10:30 God's Cloths 10:30 Bereavement 11:00 BUS TRIP ~ TREES	
SUNDAY 6	MONDAY 7	TUESDAY 8	WEDNESDAY 9	THURSDAY 10	FRIDAY 11	SATURDAY 12
COMMUNION SUNDAY SNICKERS COLLECTION PRESENT WRAPPING SIGN-UP POINSETTA SIGN-UP ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS GIFTS 8:00 Traditional Worship 9:30 Traditional Worship 11:00 Traditional Worship 3:00 NATURE COAST CONCERT 6:00 Prayer Meeting 2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT	8:00 Work Crew 8:30 Tracking Comm. 9:30 Visitation Comm. 10:00 UMW Exec. Meeting 11:00 Exercise 6:00 Stephen Ministries	9:30 Faith Hope Circle 9:30 Helping Hand Circle 10:00 Staff Meeting 1:00 Dorcas Circle 3:00 Serendipity Bible 7:00 Salty Circle	7:00 Men's Prayer Group 10:00 Siegel Bible Study 10:00 La Mountain Bible 12:30 Lunchtime Bible 1:00 Shaw Ministry 2:00 New Member Class 3:00 Prayer Discovery 5:15 Music 5:45 Bells 6:30 Youth Group 7:00 Choir	9:00 FoldMail 9:15 Ruth Circle 4:00 Video Rehearsal 7:00 COUNCIL 8:00 AA 8:00 Al-Anon	9:30 Disciple III 10:00 Wise Bible Study	8:00 Saturday Sisters 10:30 Bereavement 11:00 UMW UNIT LUNCH
SUNDAY 13	MONDAY 14	TUESDAY 15	WEDNESDAY 16	THURSDAY 17	FRIDAY 18	SATURDAY 19
DISCRETIONARY SUNDAY SNICKERS COLLECTION PRESENT WRAPPING SIGN-UP UMW COOKIE SALE NEW MEMBER SUNDAY 8:00 Traditional Worship 9:30 Traditional Worship 11:00 Traditional Worship 6:00 Prayer Meeting	8:00 Work Crew 8:30 Tracking Comm. 9:30 Visitation Comm. 11:00 Exercise	10:00 Staff Meeting 1:30 Stephen Ministries 2:00 Finance 3:00 Stephen Ministries 3:00 Serendipity Bible	ANGEL TREE GIFTS DUE 7:00 Men's Prayer Group 10:00 Siegel Bible Study 11:00 Diabetes Support 12:30 Lunchtime Bible 2:30 Prayer Discovery 3:30 Staff/Parish Comm. 5:15 Music 5:45 Bells 6:30 Youth Group 7:00 Choir 7:00 Wed. Bible Study	9:00 FoldMail 1:00 Fibromyalgia 2:00 PRESENT WRAPPING 3:00 SNICKERS WRAPPING 3:00 Missions 3:30 Trustees 4:00 Video Rehearsal 7:00 Creative Worship 8:00 AA 8:00 Al-Anon	9:30 Disciple III 10:00 Wise Bible Study	7:00 PANCAKE BRKFST. 8:00 Red Cross CPR 8:00 Saturday Sisters 9:00 DECORATE SANCT. 9:00 CHRISTMAS BASKET 9:30 SHARE Delivery 10:30 Bereavement 11:00 PRESENT DELIVERY
3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT						
SUNDAY 20	MONDAY 21	TUESDAY 22	WEDNESDAY 23	THURSDAY 24	FRIDAY 25	SATURDAY 26
PANTRY SUNDAY 8:00 Traditional Worship 9:30 Traditional Worship 11:00 Traditional Worship 12:30 CHOIR CHRISTMAS PARTY 6:00 Prayer Meeting	8:00 Work Crew 8:30 Tracking Comm. 9:30 Visitation Comm. 11:00 Exercise 6:00 Stephen Ministries	10:00 Staff Meeting 3:00 Serendipity Bible	7:00 Men's Prayer Group 10:00 Siegel Bible Study 12:30 Lunchtime Bible 1:00 Shaw Ministry 3:00 Prayer Discovery 5:15 Music 5:45 Bells 6:30 Youth Group 7:00 Choir	CHRISTMAS EVE 5:00 CHRISTMAS SERVICE 7:00 CHRISTMAS SERVICE 8:00 AA 8:00 Al-Anon 11:00 CHRISTMAS SERVICE	CHRISTMAS DAY OFFICE CLOSED	8:00 Saturday Sisters 10:30 Bereavement
4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT						
SUNDAY 27	MONDAY 28	TUESDAY 29	WEDNESDAY 30	THURSDAY 31		
CHILDREN'S HOME SUNDAY 8:00 Traditional Worship 9:30 Traditional Worship 11:00 Traditional Worship 6:00 Prayer Meeting	8:00 Work Crew 8:30 Tracking Comm. 9:30 Visitation Comm. 11:00 Exercise	10:00 Staff Meeting 3:00 Serendipity Bible	7:00 Men's Prayer Group 10:00 Siegel Bible Study 12:30 Lunchtime Bible 3:00 Prayer Discovery	4:00 Video Rehearsal 8:00 AA 8:00 Al-Anon		
1st SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS						



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

First United Methodist Church of Homosassa
8831 W. Bradshaw Street
Homosassa, FL, 34448



Photo by Carole Crystal, Photo-journalist

We Are A Stephen Ministry Church

Visit our Web Site: www.1umc.org

Neil Kline, Webmaster

First United Methodist Church of Homosassa
"Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors"

Rev. Mark Whittaker
Pastor

Sunday Schedule
Morning Worship: 8, 9:30 and 11AM
Nursery at all services
EBADOC Academy &
Sunday School for all ages: 9:30AM

Office Hours: Weekdays
8:30AM to 4:30PM
Office Telephone: 352-628-4083

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Soli Deo Gloria



December 2009