

GENESIS

DECEMBER

2008
VOLUME 12
ISSUE 10

*May the joys of this holiday season
Be yours now and throughout the year.*

We
pray
for the
Savior's
blessings.
That His
guiding hands
might touch the lives this season of all people of
this land, so they will know that Christmas is
more than just a day; it is focused of love
and caring in a special way. We pray
that our Savior's presence might live
through things we share, so that
speaks might start from
others as His people show
they care, so Christmas love
will linger on long past the
day of birth, until others
know of His meaning to us
all over this great
earth. Peace to
you & love
for all

Joy

*With all good wishes for
Christmas
And the coming year.*

Mark

Your Church Staff

Pandy

Sherron

Deborah

Annmarie

Sandra

Mary Kay

Sharon C.

Noretta

Sharon

Michael

Dale

Dayna

One of the Christmas traditions we have at the Whittaker house is the reading of the Christmas story from the Book of Luke.

Before we open any presents, before we see what "Santa" left us in our stocking, we read the story of Mary and Joseph and the baby Jesus. We read about the couple's trip to Bethlehem and the birth of Jesus; we marvel again at the shepherds, "watching over their flocks by night" and being frightened by the sudden appearance of the angels. Then we have a time of prayer to thank God for all he has given us in his Son, Jesus Christ.

Over the years, Iris and I may forget who did the reading the year before, but Kimberly and Marshall - and now Kimberly's husband, Lloyd - don't. They know when it is their turn, and they want to be the one who does the reading. Putting Christ first is an important part of who we are as a family.

Christmas is about more than opening presents, watching basketball or playing with new toys the rest of the day. It's more than a big meal and a nap to sleep off that turkey from the turkey that makes us drowsy.

Christmas is a celebration of the gift of Jesus Christ. It is a time to share our thanks to God for his gift of salvation, forgiveness, assurance and peace, for his presence among us to share in the pains and sorrows, joys and pleasures of what it means to be human. Christmas is a reminder that as God gave us his gift in the person of his Son, so we are called to share that gift with the world.

The world has taken hold of Christmas and turned it into a holiday for economic advantage; we do 50% of our business during the last six weeks of the year. The Christmas season has become, for many, a time of gift comparing - you can tell if the giver loves you more than someone else. Unhappily, it may be a time of family fighting because it's the first time everyone has been together in a year and unresolved issues surface. So Christmas can become a time of tension and greed.

As Christians, we can't do much about the way the world sees and celebrates Christmas. Because they don't know the Christ of Christmas, they also don't know what it means to belong to the family of God and so they abuse and misuse our "family celebration."

But we can focus our own lives, our own traditions, our own celebration on Christ and the gift that keeps on giving every day for all eternity. "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be upon his shoulders." (Isaiah 9:6)



May the joy and peace of this Christmas season fill your days - now and for all eternity.

Mark

A Stephen Ministry Church

~ OPEN HEARTS ~ OPEN MINDS ~ OPEN DOORS ~

Serving Members and Friends of The First United Methodist Church of Homosassa

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
 Fax: 352-628-9086
Website
 www.1umc.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 & Visitation
 Sharon E. Smith

Parish Visitor
 Peggy Benson

Sunday School Superintendent & Nurserv Supervisor
 Sandra Tam

Youth Coordinator
 Neretta Brobst

Sound Technician
 Sharon Cooley

Night Security
 Michael Rodgers

Custodian
 Dale Evans

Within The Church

Worship Services
 Music Ministries:
 Choir
 Men & Ladies Ensembles
 Children's Choir
 Handbells & Chimes

Christian Education
 Adult Sunday School (5 classes)
 Children's Sunday School
 Youth Ministry
 Lenten Soup Supers
 Fine Arts Program
 Prayer Ministry
 UMW Circles
 Tape Ministry
 Blood Bank
 Visitation Care Group
 Parish Nurse Ministry
 Wednesday Night Dinners
 Disaster Relief Programs
 Funeral Receptions
 United Methodist Men
 United Methodist Women
 Stewardship
 Biblical Travel Ministry
 Counters
 Folding & Mailing
 Attendance Tracking

Outreach Ministries

Parish Nurse
 Nursing Home Ministries
 Shut-in Visitation
 God's Clods (Clown Ministry)
 "Tuned To Revival" Quartet
 Disaster Relief & Response Team
 Thrift Shop
 Linda's Loaves
 Volunteers in Missions
 Prison Ministry
 Stephen Ministry
 Prayer Blanket Ministry

Prayer Shawl Ministry
 Knit For Kids Ministry
 Health Related Workshops: (Diabetes, High Blood Pressure)
 Annual Seminar for Elder Needs
 Men's Monday Morning "Work Detail"
 Men's Wednesday Morning Prayer Breakfast
 Hugs for Soldiers
 Vacation Bible School
 World Travel Group
 State Travel Group
 Bus Ministry
 Missionaries to Siberia
 Missionaries to Thailand
 Missionaries to Haiti

Small Groups

Cancer Survivor
 Current Affairs
 Individual Bible Study
 Groups (Men, Women, and Couples)
 Fibromyalgia Support Group
 Saturday Sisters
 Contemporary Issues
 Bereavement Group
 P.A.W.S.

Discipleship Classes

Disciple I
 Disciple IV
 Companions in Christ

Benevolences

Habitat for Humanity
 St. Andrews Mission (Feeding the hungry)
 The Heifer Project
 S.H.A.R.E. (Economical food for the church and community)

Food Pantry with weekly baskets to needy
 Holiday Food Baskets
 Toys for Children (at Christmas)
 Salvation Army
 The Path (Help for local homeless)
 Methodist Children's Home
 C.R.O.P. Walk
 Equipment for Handicapped (Wheel chairs, walkers, etc.)

Community Outreach
 (Use of our facilities)

AA
 Al-Anon
 After-school Tutoring
 Girl Scouts
 Hospice
 GED Tutoring
 Kiwanis Breakfast
 Isaiah's Place
 FCAT Tutoring

The Purpose of Genesis is to:

† **NOTIFY** its readers of what has happened, what is happening, and what is scheduled to happen.

† **EDIFY** believers by printing material that encourages and strengthens their Christian walk.

† **GLORIFY** God by being one of His instruments of communication at FUMCH and wherever else He may choose to spread the Word through this publication.

Wise Discipleship

By Jan Wise

Living Life As A Disciple, Searching for Truth

A disciple searches for truth, with the intent to live out discovered truth in daily life. *Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."* (John 8:31-32)

In this December study, we will look at Bible truths concerning the birth of Jesus. What can we discover about what occurred? Where have we failed to "hold" to the truth in our desire to enhance the story?

The place of Christ's birth:

•Micah prophesies the place of Jesus' birth - "Out of *Bethlehem* will come one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from old, from ancient times."

(Micah 5:2)

•Matthew begins his account of the Magi with the words, "After Jesus was born in *Bethlehem*..."

(Matt. 2:1)

•Luke writes of Joseph going up to *Bethlehem*, the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. While they were there Mary gave birth to her first-born son.

(Luke 2:4-7)

Mary and Joseph went to Bethlehem because the _____ government ordered a _____ to be taken, each person having to return to his hometown to register. The resulting journey to Bethlehem (a 3-day trip from Nazareth) came because of an order from a pagan Roman emperor. God used a Gentile ruler to bring the family to the town of _____ where Micah prophesied the Christ would be born.

The virgin-born child:

•Isaiah prophesied, "The *virgin* will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him _____."

(Isaiah 7:14b)

•Matthew tells how Mary, who was pledged to Joseph, "was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit."

(Matthew 1:18)

•Luke writes of the angel telling Mary how she would bear a son to be named Jesus. Mary asks, "How will this be...since I am a virgin?" She is told that the Holy Spirit will come upon her and the power of the Most High will overshadow her. The holy one to be born will be called the _____.

(Luke 1:31-35)

In order to be the perfect sacrifice for man's sin, Jesus had to begin his life in the flesh free from the sinful contamination of Adam's seed. So Jesus, born of the Holy Spirit and of Mary's flesh, was both Son of Man and Son of God.

Why is the virgin birth an essential part of Jesus' heritage?

Other details of the birth: (from Luke 2)

•Only Luke, who writes after "careful investigation," describes the birth as occurring in a stable. He makes no reference to other family members or even the animals.

•Luke describes how the baby was wrapped in cloths, placed in a manger, "because there was no _____ for them in the _____."

•Luke tells of the angels' visit to the shepherds, the personal invitation to be a part of the wonder: "...a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord." How would they recognize him? Luke makes no mention of a star, but only that they would "find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a _____."

•In Luke's account, the shepherds found the baby and went out to tell others what they had been told about this child. Luke doesn't mention any other visitors to the stable or any gifts. He concludes with, "But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her _____." (Luke 2)

God, through Luke's telling, seems to have purposely kept the scene of his Son's birth simple, unadorned and meaningful only to those he chose to participate. It's not about gifts, family, celebrations—it's about Jesus as *the gift*; God's love wrapped in the flesh of a baby's skin, God's heart offered in a manger.

The Magi: As Matthew tells it, about *two years later* the Magi (Gentile wise men or astrologers) followed a *star* to the house where they found the *child Jesus* and his mother. Matthew records how Herod ordered the killing of all boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old or under, "in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi." An angel warned Joseph in a dream and the family fled to Egypt. The gifts of the Magi may have provided the financial aid they needed for such a flight.

(Matthew 2:1-18)

THINK ABOUT IT: Ann, who would have preferred a small, intimate celebration, found herself surrounded by the many guests her friends had invited to celebrate her birthday. An acquaintance greeted her happily, "I'm glad you're having a birthday. It gives us an excuse for a party." *Has Christmas become our "excuse" for multiple celebrations? Have we, in our enthusiasm, given the "church acquaintances" of the world an excuse to party?*

Jesus never commanded (or asked) us to remember his birth. Instead he spoke of the intimate breaking of the bread and sharing of the cup - "do this in remembrance of me." "For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

(1 Cor. 11:23-26)

Could it be that our Christmas communion service is the most meaningful celebration of Jesus, the truest expression of remembering?

**WHY DO YOU DO WHAT YOU DO
AT CHRISTMAS TIME?**

Walking On The Path

By Patience Nave

"I will go before you and make the crooked places straight."

Isaiah 45:2

Sometimes I feel intimidated. I try to prepare for whatever task is before me, but as the time draws near - especially if I am about to tread on unfamiliar ground - I feel like Moses. Remember when God asked him to go back to Egypt and lead the children of Israel out of bondage? Moses replies, "Surely there is someone else, Lord. I don't speak very well." But the Lord told him to go, and he reluctantly said, "Okay." (my paraphrase)

Right now the job I have before me is not nearly as great as that to which God called Moses, but I am wondering if there isn't someone else who would be more comfortable in this job, who could do it more efficiently. I leave tomorrow bright and early for Haiti to make all the arrangements for the team going in February. There are a lot of details to work out, and I must be wise and thorough and persuasive and, most of all, sensitive to God's leading. I really do not want to "mess up."

As I prayed about this and confessed to our great God my inadequacy, He reminded me of the words of Isaiah 45:3. *"I will give you the treasures of darkness, riches stored in secret places, so that you may know that I am the LORD, the God of Israel, who summons you by name."* He has already been there and has ironed out the wrinkles. How like God to not only make such a promise, but to remind me of it.

This is one of those times I thank Him for having hidden his word in my heart so that He can bring it to my mind when I need it. He is already in Petit Goave, working in the hearts of the Haitians, working out the rough places in our planning, preparing the minds of those in need to tell us clearly what we can do to help them. He knows how we can work together to accomplish good for the Haitians and for His glory. Now all we - I - have to do is listen and agree on who does what.

I thank Him for what He has done and is doing, even though I haven't seen it yet with my own eyes. Maybe that is good. It's easy to say thank you for something I have already received. Faith grows when I can thank God for what I haven't yet received but believe I will!

Prayer: Father, thank you for always being out in front, removing impediments and hindrances in life. Thank you for giving us things to do and for helping us do them well. Amen.

Travel with Us

Dear Friends,

Twenty five years ago I had the opportunity to travel to Athens, Greece, and to experience firsthand the mystery that is Israel. It was a awe-inspiring trip that continues to inspire me, and, in the years since, I have looked forward to returning. I'm going to do that next November, and I want to invite you to join me.

Iris and I are registered for a "Lands of the Bible Cruise" through the eastern Mediterranean, departing November 11, 2009, and returning on November 22 - just in time for Thanksgiving. Our home-away-from-home for most of the time will be the mv Cristal - a 1,200 passenger cruise ship chartered by Educational Opportunities Tour of Lakeland FL.

We will leave from the church on a motor coach to Tampa International Airport and then fly to NYC. Our overseas flight will take us to Athens where we will see the highlights of that ancient city. After walking through the ruins of ancient Corinth, we will board our ship and sail to Port Said, Egypt. A visit to the Pyramids, the Sphinx, and the Egypt Museum in Cairo will remind us of where the Israelites lived before the great Exodus led by Moses.

After sailing to Israel, we will visit Bethlehem and the old city of Jerusalem where Jesus came on Palm Sunday, was crucified and then rose again. Jerusalem is full of many sacred sites for both Christians and Jews. In Galilee we will visit several places along the lake where Jesus lived, taught, and healed.

Then we'll sail to the beautiful Greek island of Rhodes. Paul brought Christianity there in the first century. Rhodes also is rich in medieval history. The Knights of Rhodes occupied the island for several centuries.

Our final port will be Kusadasi, Turkey. There we will visit the magnificent city of Ephesus, where Paul lived for three years. Finally we will return to the port of Pireaus at Athens and fly back to the USA.

Our tour will include times of prayer and reflection at some of the most significant Christian sites. On board ship there will be opportunities for Bible study and for a lecture series on *St. Paul's Life and Teaching*. Christian entertainment will add to our enjoyment in addition to all the usual shipboard amenities.

You will meet new Christian friends from all over the USA. However, our own travel group from FUMCH will be together at meals and on the shore excursions. Take a look at the display board in the narthex of the Worship Center or in the hallway of the Administrative Center. Pick up a brochure at the church office. If you have questions, call me or Dick Evans. Iris and I look forward to traveling with some of you on this journey of faith, as we watch many of the places named in the Bible come alive right before our eyes.

I am your pastor in Christ's service,

Mark Whittaker

PS. I want our members and church friends (along with their relatives and friends) to have first chance to join our travel group. Some have already registered. Shortly after the first of the year, I plan to open the tour to members of other churches in Citrus County.

DID YOU KNOW?

FUMCH has:

- ◆ A Diabetes Support Group which meets on the third Wednesday of the month at 11 a.m.
- ◆ A Fibromyalgia Support Group meeting on the first and third Thursday of the month at 1 p.m.
- ◆ An Exercise Class meeting every Monday at 11 a.m. (Arthritis Foundation DVD used)
- ◆ A Hot Tub Exercise gathering in Sugarmill Woods on some Fridays at 11 a.m. (Replaces the pseudo-triathlon exercise for the winter)
- ◆ Counseling for Caregivers of persons with dementia
- ◆ Medical Equipment and Supplies available on loan (instead of billing Medicare every time some one needs a piece of equipment and having excess used equipment stock-piled)

For additional information you are welcome to contact the church office or Sharon Smith, Parish Nurse.

Experience the joy! If you have not yet registered for the 2009 Women's Retreat, Feb. 20 - 22 in Leesburg, now is the time. Take some time for yourself and set your feet on holy ground. Experience many of the spiritual disciplines along with other women from our church and throughout the state. Spaces are limited and the cost of \$145 per person includes lodging and meals.

Register Now!

Contact Betty Blockus, Retreat Coordinator, at bblockus@tampabay.rr.com or 621-1667, Marilyn Watson, or the church office.

Native American Studies Begins

By Nancy Pearo

The United Methodist Women of Homosassa hosted a Native American Mission Study, featuring Pansey Cleaveland, (Grey Eagle).



She arrived in full Regalia. This is a dancer's clothing, not a costume-and is a prized possession. Some Regalia have been handed down from generation to generation and is priceless.

Pansey showed us a knife given to her as a gift. She also explained the other parts of her clothing and its tradition. NEVER TOUCH ANY PART OF HER REGALIA WITHOUT PERMISSION. The Regalia is an expression of spirit that has been prayed over and blessed. Honor it, the person wearing it and the living history it represents.

There was a long question and answer time that was very informative.

For more information and pictures, check out their web site at www.redeaglelodge.org Red Eagle Lodge is located at the address below.

RED EAGLE LODGE
8154 W. Pine Bluff St.
Crystal River, Fl. 34428-6930

New prayer groups will be forming in January.

If you would like to be included or would like more information contact:

Jim Roth
jroth@tfs.net
or

Marilyn Watson.
marilynww@netscape.com

You may leave your name with the receptionist at the church office and we will contact you.

Remember you need not pray aloud to be part of a prayer group!

DRIVERS SAFETY CLASS

There will be an AARP Drivers Safety Class on Dec. 10th & 11th
9AM-1:00 PM
in Room # 114.

This is the nation's first and largest refresher course for drivers 50 and over. It has helped millions of drivers remain safe on today's roads.

The course is designed to help you:

- * Tune up your driving skills and update your knowledge of the rules of the road.
- * Learn more about normal age-related physical changes, and how to adjust your driving to allow for these changes.
- * Reduce your traffic violations, crashes, and chances for injuries.
- * Drive more safely.
- * Get an insurance discounts - in most states.

Upon completion of class, you will receive a Drivers Safety Program Certificate.

Course fee is \$10, and you do not need to be a member of AARP to attend. For registration and other information call Frank Tobin at 628-3229.

**THANK YOU,
THANK YOU,
THANK YOU!!!**

What a wonderful response we had from the generous people of 1st United Methodist Church of Homosassa in helping make our returning soldiers of the 101st Airborne, 2nd Brigade to Fort Campbell, Kentucky feel so welcomed home.

We received over \$775.00 in donations to purchase the needed items plus more than 40 bath towels, washcloths and bars of soap. It never fails to amaze me how great everyone is when it comes to giving to our brave troops, especially in these hard economic times. The total number of single soldiers we reached was over 1,500 and Hugs for Our Soldiers could not have reached this goal without the generosity of each of you. Again, thank you from the bottom of our hearts and from all the soldiers you helped.

The Hugs for Our Soldiers Team

Giving at Year-End

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

- † **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.
- † **Give a Memorial Gift.** A memorial tribute can be a satisfying way to honor those whose memories continue to enrich our lives.
- † **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 the capital gain.
- † **Give Idle Assets.** A year-end inventory may discover under-utilized 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 or charity; others are better sold first with the cash contributed.
- † **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.
- † **Give as Tax-Wise Planning.** Making extra gifts in 2008 can enable an itemized income tax deduction or keep you in a lower federal tax bracket for the current year. Consult your tax advisor or accountant.
- † **Give Through an IRA Rollover.** The Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 (signed into law on Oct. 3) restored the provision enabling IRA owners over age 70 1/2 to make tax free charitable gifts from their accounts directly to churches and charities. The extension is effective through Dec. 31, 2009 and is retroactive to the beginning of 2008. Talk to your IRA administrator.
- † **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 2008 charitable tax deduction, your gift must be made by December 31.

Gifts to FUMCH should be received by Sunday, Dec. 28 to be "posted" in 2008. If you plan a year-end gift to your church, consider our Building for Tomorrow Fund or our Permanent Endowment Fund. For more information, call the church office or Rev. 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.)

YOUTH NEWS



As we move into the Advent Season and prepare for the arrival of the Christ child, the Youth Sunday School class will be joining with the EBADOC Discipleship Academy to study the true meaning of this time.

The Advent Wreath and the rituals associated with it will be the focus of this study. As a service project the students will also create greeting cards to be included in the Christmas food baskets.

We are looking forward to this timely and spiritual exploration of an important aspect of Christianity.

To kick off this festive season, a few of the youth participated in the "Hanging Of The Greens" to prepare the sanctuary for Advent. Being younger and more flexible, they can climb and stretch to reach spots the rest of us can't. Ah, Youth...

Congratulations to Sammy McCallister, who recently completed her swim-team career at Lecanto High School. At the district meet in Tampa she beat her personal best time and finished in second place in the 500 meter freestyle event. During her years of participation on the swim team, Sammy has learned a great deal about teamwork, preparation, perseverance, and personal rewards; these lessons will surely serve her well throughout her life.

Plans for a new Middle-School Youth Group continues, with the opening of the Youth Center in our new building being the target date for getting into full swing. With the numbers of elementary school-aged children in the EBADOC Discipleship Academy, we are looking to grow and flourish in the coming years. What an exciting prospect! Keep us in your prayers, please.

If you know of any children in grades 6, 7 or 8 (ages 11 - 14) who would enjoy a youth group program contact "Mrs. B" at 621-3736.

All of us associated with the youth program wish you and your loved ones a blessed Christmas Season filled with peace, love, and joy.

"Mrs. B"

Neretta Brobst

FUMCH: 628-4083

Home: 621-3736



There will be a presentation on the next unit (the first one in 2009) for EBADOC Discipleship Academy.

Sunday, December 7th

3:00 p.m.

Room 111

This new and exciting unit titled "Deal With It!" tackles ten BIG issues and problems that kids face every single day.

Each week, we take one of these issues and learn how to "Deal With It!" - not just in our own way, but the BIBLE WAY.

For my regular faithful teachers, I look forward to seeing you there. If you are currently not involved, but think you might be interested in helping with our elementary/middle school children, please call Patience Nave at the church office or contact me at 382-3941.

Kim Bennett



Calling Santa's Helpers

Christmas Present Wrapping Days December 18 & December 19

(If needed)

Watch for sign-up sheets. Donations of wrapping papers and accessories are needed.

Please contact Theresa Weber, Church Administrator, to sign up...

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Did you know that the more friends you have, the less likely you are to catch a cold? Conversely, social isolation is devastating to good health. FRIENDS increase your capacity for pleasure and enhance ability to HEAL. Dr. David Spiegel reported his findings in "Lancet Medical Journal" that women with breast cancer who participated in psychosocial support groups lived significantly longer than those who did not participate. These findings parallel those reported at UCLA, where it was discovered that structured group interventions reduced both mortality and recurrence.

Here is an example of staying healthy through social interaction:

A small town, Rasetta, PA., was found to be one of the healthiest communities in the country. Government investigations made some interesting discoveries.

The people were very close knit. The community gave help to anyone having a problem. They knew one another. They frequently had dinners together. Their mutual support was above the norm.

"And this commandment we have from Him, That he who loveth God love his brother also." (I John 4:21 KJV)

The power of love has greater impact on our quality of life, incidence of illness, and premature death than other risk factors, such as diet, smoking, lack of exercise, stress, genetics, drugs, or surgery.

Dr. Dean Ornish also states that loneliness and isolation increase the likelihood of engaging in harmful behaviors, such as smoking and overeating.

Relationships must be nurtured with time. The quality of our life may be determined by the quality of our relationships. A sense of belonging makes people feel cared for, loved, and valued.

"As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love." (John 15:9 KJV)

When family and friends PULL TOGETHER for the ones they love, something remarkable occurs. GRACE and HEALING takes place. It may not always be physical healing, but may be emotional or spiritual. We find healing and nurturing when we INVEST OURSELVES, our TIME, and ENERGY in other people.

Healthy relationships are gifts that keep on giving, producing healing and wholeness for years to come. Be a "giver of HUGS" daily.

"These things I command you, that ye love one another." (John 15:17 KJV)

From The Health Ministry by Ann Victor
By way of your Parish Nurse

The Nature Coast Festival Singers December 7 at 3 PM



Nature Coast Festival Singers Prepare for Annual Christmas Concerts

Four Sugarmill Woods residents, members of the 100-member Nature Coast Festival Singers, gather before rehearsal with director James Urbanski (pictured on far left.) Joanne Nesler, Priscilla Frederick, Janet Watson and Dean Moore have been members of this chorus for a number of years and usually car-pool together to rehearsals in Spring Hill.

Mark your calendar now for the annual Christmas concert of the 100-member Nature Coast Festival Singers. The concert will be presented at 3 PM on December 7 at our church. The concert has always been well attended, and church members are urged to arrive early for parking and seating.

Featured music will include the beautiful Christmas Choruses from Handel's *The Messiah* and other joyous pieces of the season. Christmas favorites will include "Sweet Little Jesus Boy," "The Little Drummer Boy," "Gesu Bambino" and many others. Also featured will be music by composers Poulenc and Rutter.

There are no tickets or charges for the concert; however, a free will offering will be taken at intermission to help defray expenses.

Shelby Weingarten

The Baptismal Covenant...

God's word to us, proclaiming our adoption by grace, and our word to God promising our response of faith and love.



November 2, 2008
Christine Annear



Presented by her parents, John & Marie Annear

United Methodist Women Christmas Pot Luck Luncheon

December 16, 2008
11:30 AM

Program: Installation of Officers for 2009
Leader: Executive Committee
Hostesses: Dorcas Circle

CHRISTMAS FOR INMATES AT LANCASTER AND CITRUS COUNTY

In what has become an annual event we have been asked to provide 1000 candy bars for the inmates' Christmas packages at Lancaster Correctional Institutional and 400 for Citrus County Detention Center.

The Missions Committee is asking the congregation to bring standard size (2.07 oz.) Snickers Candy bars to church services on:

December 7 and December 14.

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 p.m., Thursday, December 18.



REMINDER!

Florida Children's Home
Fifth Sunday Offering
November 30, 2008

Goal for 2008 \$9,720.00
Earned To Date \$7,021.34

THANKS !!!

United Methodist Women of FUMCH

At a UMW Executive Business Meeting, well over a year ago, we discussed the “how,” “what,” and “where” of the annual bazaar occurring during the Phase III construction. Without the Fellowship Hall where were we going to stage it? Would we rent a tent? Would we hold this at another location? Will we set everything up outside?

Planning was an act of faith, like when Jesus told Peter *"Come." Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?" (Matt 14: 29-31)* The FUMCH women were going to walk on holiday-bazaar water.

Were you there on Saturday, November 1, 2008? The Education Building was like a buzzing, busy bee-hive of activity.

Strolling through the “Trash and Treasure” items located outside the Education Building, collected and assembled by the Helping Hand Circle, in my head I heard Pat Blake stating at one of those long-ago committee meetings, in her do-or-die, no-nonsense Yankee manner, “We will hold it outdoors on the sidewalks!” As shown in the photo to the right, these “Trash and Treasure” items were an overflow from Room 106.

Inside, the first station I came to was manned by Ann Morrison, chairperson of the Prayer Shawl Ministry. She sat at a table selling note cards with the FUMCH picture. She also acted as traffic control, directing people to the right locations. In the photo to the right she was chatting with Connie Barton.

The northern hallway was shoulder-to-shoulder people, so I went down the southern hallway to check out Room 102 which was the Christmas Room. Peggy Benson, with the assistance of Kim Bennett and Carol Mackenzie, had a dazzling display of Christmas items. The mirrors on the walls of the room gave the illusion of being totally immersed in a winter wonderland. Part of the magic of the room came from Carol dressed up with garland, bells, and Christmas tree balls hanging off her ears, and Kim giving everyone a sisterly hug. In the photo to the right is Peggy Benson chatting with Jeannine Love who was tending the money box.

Tom Wise had a computer set up in the Computer Lab, running an audio/video presentation and offering re-conditioned second-hand computers for sale. His ministry provides computers to people, especially young students, who otherwise would not be able to afford the pricey equipment that is a necessity in this technologically-advanced time.

It took a couple attempts to get into Room 111. Everybody was buying fresh baked goods made by the members of the Faith Hope Circle. In this day of easy-purchase at the market, it is hardly worthwhile to crank up the oven and assemble from scratch anymore. What better cause to go off of one’s diet and eat “real” (not low-fat, low-cal, artificially-flavored) goodies than for a church fund-raiser? Those calories are heaven-approved of course.

In Room 112 the Dorcus Circle had hand-sewn and hand-knitted items for both dolls and humans, along with a collection of vintage dolls. What a blessing to see all these garments that were lovingly crafted, tangible pieces of Christian creativity. You could see the love that had been invested in each piece.

The smell of “something cooking” wafted through the halls. What an amazing job the women of the Ruth Circle did in hosting a Sloppy-Joe luncheon. They served lunch to about a hundred people, at three seatings, from that tiny kitchenette in Room 114, using crock pots and other ingenious and creative resources.

To all the “worker bees” who toted boxes and bags, lugged bulky items, priced and handled sticky price tags until their fingers tips were numb, broke down Sunday School classrooms, set up bazaar venues, then turned around and broke down and packed away everything before Sunday services...thank you, thank you, thank you!

The bazaar was the usual production happening under Pat Blake’s chairmanship. After five years of being President of FUMCH’s United Methodist Women, and being a United Methodist woman for 56 years, Pat will be stepping down as UMW President. But Pat still has plans chairing next year’s bazaar. So, ladies, look for the notices of Bazaar Workshops starting in January 2009.

Our thank you to the community and the church family for supporting this event. It was heart-warming to overhear comments like, “This church has the best bazaar !” being exchanged.

This holiday bazaar is important to the meeting of UMW pledges, missions and ministries. The final totals are not in as of this reporting, but we will be able to meet this year’s commitments. We were concerned about not having the income from the Thrift Shop during the construction. Nor the availability of the fellowship hall and full kitchen at bazaar time. But we prayed, planned, trusted...and found we could “walk on water” as God provided our every need. God bless you all.

Judith Huffer
UMW Director of Publicity

UMW ANNUAL HOLIDAY BAZAAR



11:30 MEAL



12:00 MEAL



12:30 MEAL

**ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS GIFTS
Sunday, December 7, 2008**

This has been a financially worrisome year, but perhaps these gifts would be able to help someone else, and help our members to say "Merry Christmas" in a very special way.

Dec.7th, we will have tables outside the church where you will be offered an opportunity to purchase gift greeting cards for your loved ones.

There will be gift greeting cards for: Habitat of Citrus County, The Heifer Project and/ or The Society of St. Andrews.

Instead of giving a meaningless gift or something that the recipient probably doesn't need, we can give a gift of love and help that will keep on giving and helping.

With Heifer International we can honor people with the gifts of Heifer livestock and training. For more than 60 years, Heifer International and friends like you have been proving that there's no better way to help a family escape poverty and hunger than by providing them with sustainable means of supporting themselves.

The Society of St. Andrews is a national hunger relief organization that feeds hungry Americans by salvaging nutritious produce that would otherwise go to waste. Each \$12 gift donation to the Society of St. Andrews - announced with our exclusive Christmas card - helps provide about 800 servings of nourishing food, while honoring a family member or friend.

You may have seen the work in our own community done by Habitat of Citrus. They have many gifts to choose from and you can help by donating these items to help build a home for someone without a home of their own. There are various items to pick from.

By now I hope you have seen the special ordering blank in the Sunday bulletin that lists the items and prices for you to use in making your decisions.

This year you may bring your order blank and write a check to our Church (FUMCH) along with your order blank, and we will mail the order to the specified Organization.

The money given will not be shown on your Church "Offering List" as the money doesn't go to our Church, but directly to the Charity.

So remember Dec.7th, bring your list and a check or cash and get all of your (adult) shopping done with one check to one of these ministries. You will be proud of the Christmas certificates that you can send to someone for Christmas, or perhaps put in their stocking. And I'm sure they will love the gift and the thought that goes with it.

Marsha Bader

**Passionate Spirituality
~ Spiritual Disciplines ~**

Rather than writing about another spiritual discipline I'll expand a little more on the spiritual discipline of prayer. This time we'll take a look at some "prayer tools." Many people don't see the need for a prayer tool and may think this a strange idea. Actually this is not some "new" concept; most of these tools have been used since early Christianity.

Since prayer is a two-way communication, those of us who aren't used to being still, need some help getting quiet enough to listen to what God is communicating to us.

A prayer tool is any thing which helps us focus our attention on God. For many music or singing may be what quiets us and seems to usher us into the very presence of God. Personally I find it is praise music which does this best. God's Word says He inhabits the praises of His people.

"He restoreth my soul; He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake." (Psalm 22:3 KJV)

A prayer labyrinth can be a powerful tool if you walk prayerfully, silently, and expectantly. As you walk the labyrinth, your whole body is involved through constant motion. One minute you seem to be close to the center then suddenly you seem to be far away - a lot like our Christian journey. On the way toward the center of the labyrinth, we seem to pray about what is heavy on our hearts and to let go of things. After spending some time at the center, we wind our way back out and into the world.

Another prayer tool might be something visual like a stained glass window. There is one which has a significant meaning to me. Looking at the expression on Jesus' face, I can be quickly lost in thought about his love for me, or begin to "hear" whatever I need to hear. Truthfully I can merely "see" that window in my memory and it's as though I am with Him. The Chrismons on the tree in the Sanctuary or the nativities on a Christmas tree might be another visual prayer tool. And, of course, the Word of God. Reading and meditating on His Word is the best way I know to hear His still small voice.

If you have any questions about prayer tools, please get in touch. I would truly love to talk with you about them. Let's practice His presence often, especially during the Christmas season.

Have a blessed Christmas,
Marilyn Watson

**United Methodist Women
Christmas Cookie Sale**

Our Christmas Cookie activity was very successful last year and we would like to repeat it for this year.

If you would please make a batch of your very favorite Christmas cookies we would appreciate it very much.

Maybe looking for a new holiday cookie to please family and friends? Go to:

MRS. CLAUS' COOKBOOK at
<http://www.northpole.com/Kitchen/>

Deliver cookies to Room 114
Friday, Dec. 19th, 1:00 - 4:00 PM

OR
Saturday, Dec. 20th, before 10 AM

The sale will take place Sunday, Dec. 21st between first and second service and between second and third service or until all cookies are sold.

If you would like to help pack the cookies please come to Room 114 on Saturday, Dec. 20th at 9:00 AM.

Thanks and God Bless you all.



"Send" Christmas Greetings to Church Friends in a meaningful and practical manner while also taking one activity off of your long "to do" Christmas list...hours and hours of writing out Christmas cards. This way will please the recipients and help our missionaries, during this financially worrisome year.

Pin one of your Christmas cards on the bulletin board in the Narthex for all to see.

Then take an envelope and make a contribution to the church (FUMCH) equal to what you would have spent for cards and stamps for all your church friends.

Be sure to look at all the cards to see the greetings others are sending to you!

Donations will support the Henry Family, our missionaries in Thailand.

Stephen Ministry



Reach Across the Miles,
Reach Across the Aisle

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 Diane (382-7242), Kay (382-4908), other Stephen Ministers, 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.

Education and Ministries

Patience Nave

Education

- The Sunday classes in our EBADOC Discipleship Academy are growing, both in the children's and adults' areas! Instead of the children's game of "moving chairs," we are playing moving classrooms, moving from one room to another as we wait for the new building to be completed. It's a great problem to have, and we are not complaining, but we will be glad to have the new building with its wonderful space.
If you are not in a Sunday morning class, I urge you to check them out.
We have a spot for you, no matter what your age!
- We are beginning a class for middle-school students, since several of our elementary students have now moved into that category. They will follow a modified rotation program that we are using with the younger children, and we hope they will learn as much and have as much fun.
- Small groups that took a break for the summer have begun again, and new ones have formed. They are helping us realize our mission statement, "Everyone becoming a disciple of Christ," by learning more and more about discipleship from the Lord's textbook. People in the groups are developing new friendships as they study together.
- A small group of young women met for lunch in November, had fun, and enthusiastically decided to "do this again." If you missed that luncheon, we'll call you for the next one. The mail tricked us, and invitations that were mailed a week in advance weren't delivered for days.

Ministries

- The HUGS group continues to remember our service men and women with gifts as our troops return to the U.S from war zones. Call Pam DuBose if you want to help.
- The Haiti exploratory team went to Carrenage in October, and the report was good. The people there were excited to have us back, and they pledged to work hard with us to make a difference in the school. We may also have the time and money to do a few things at Olivier, a United Methodist Church that sustained some damage to its protective wall during the storms. The hurricanes did huge damage to roads, but the team going in February should still be able to do the work there. The team is getting shots, collecting supplies, and meeting every month to get to know each other well and decide who will be the most effective in what job.
- We would like to have several volunteers to join Linda's Loaves. The teams work hard to get bread to the first-time visitors at the church, but sometimes we have a lot of visitors. We have bread machines to lend to those who bake, and I encourage you to join this group. The work is divided well so that no one has to bake every week, and the ministry is very rewarding.
- Financial Peace University has been a real success. We have had fourteen people involved in this thirteen-week class, and all say the same thing: "Why didn't someone teach me this when I was 20?" We are considering offering another class in the spring. It meets once a week for 13 weeks, in two-hour classes. Even the facilitators say that the class has changed their approach as to how they use their money! Age makes no difference. Financial status makes no difference. Dave Ramsey says that this is a class to learn to control your money rather than to allowing your money to control you. Call me if you are interested in the spring class. The cost for the materials is \$100, and you'll find that you can save more than that as you apply what you learn.

Give a
REALLY SPECIAL
Christmas present to a
young child this year...



Big Brothers Big Sisters

"Be a friend. Be a mentor. Just be there."

Call 352-344-0400
Or visit
www.bbbpspc.org



Openings available for mentors
at
Homosassa Elementary

Construction Update on New Fellowship Center

Work inside the new Fellowship Center has continued during October and early November, although at a reduced rate. Inadequate space for several large air conditioning ducts in the truss area made it necessary to re-design duct and fire wall locations and alter the upper level storage room, all of which required a supplemental building permit. Work on air conditioning rough-ins and sheet rock installation was delayed for nearly a month waiting for permit approval.

Not all inside work was affected. Electrical and plumbing installations have continued, local AC duct work has been nearly completed, preparations for installing audio visual equipment have been made, and some inside finishing work has continued. The supplemental building permit was received during the first week of November, and all inside work is now moving ahead rapidly.

Much outside work has been underway during the lull inside. Paving has been cut and removed around the sides of the new building and its covered entrance to provide landscaping beds to beautify the structure. Concrete curbing now surrounds these beds, and the lime rock base under the asphalt is being removed and replaced with topsoil. Two other large areas of asphalt were removed at the extreme west end of the west parking lot. This was necessary to bring the ratio of pervious/impervious surface into conformance with county codes. Sod has now replaced the asphalt for those parking spaces. Landscaping plans have been completed, and efforts to install irrigation and prepare shrub beds for planting are in progress.

Several sections of new driveway plus several areas disturbed by construction have been re-paved with asphalt. Concrete walkways and entrance pads have been completed at a half dozen locations. Roof gutters and down spouts are in place, and a large drain pipe and sump have been installed to carry rain water away from the narrow area between the new building and the administration building.

Sewer lines have been installed to connect the new facilities to the county forced main sewer line on the north side of Yulee Drive. This required directional drilling to bring the sewer under Yulee Drive, under the east entrance to the church, and under the parking lot. Sewer lines from the sanctuary, education and administrative buildings have been re-routed and connected to the new sewer line as well. Within a few weeks, our old septic field will be retired and all of our facilities will be converted to the county sewer system.

Although the delay waiting for the supplemental permit to be approved has been frustrating for all concerned, and although the changes will result in some increase in cost, the project remains in good shape. We still expect construction to be completed ahead of schedule, and below cost.

Dave Marquis, Chairman
Building For Tomorrow Committee

On October 26th the Building Committee lead guided tours for everyone who wanted to see the new facilities. We were even shown samples of color schemes, tile, etc.

A poster highlighting anticipated ministries was in each room. We also had the opportunity to write God's promises on the floor in any room. Some of the promises were written in rooms which have special meaning to the promise writer. Since the promises are written on the floor, we will be standing on the promises of God whenever we use the new facilities.

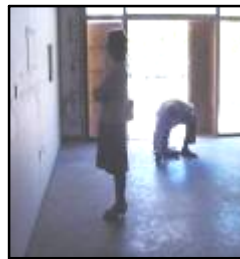
Of course they will be covered with flooring, but we will know they are there. This is one tangible way of acknowledging both Whose building this is and Who has enabled it to be built.

One day when a carpet square is replaced or work is done on the floor, those who benefit from what the Lord has built will see the promises they have been standing on!

So even if you did not write a promise on the floor yourself, remember whenever you are in the new facilities you are *standing on the promises of God!*

Marilyn Watson

"Standing On The Promises" Tour



DIRECTIONAL DRILLING FOR THE NEW SEWER LINES



Both the new construction and all existing buildings will be connected to the County sewer line on the north side of Yulee Dr. This required new sewer pipe will be pushed under the north parking lot, under the east driveway on Yulee Dr., and under Yulee Dr. itself. This was accomplished by directional drilling.

The drill rig (top left) had been positioned in the ditch along Yulee to drill under the parking lot. A GPS device is used to determine the location of the drill bit below ground, and direct it to the proper spot on the other side (top right). Once the drill bit and sleeve pipe is under the road, sewer pipe is pulled through the sleeve (above).



PAVING



Paving of driveways began during the first week of Nov.. In the two photos above, hot asphalt is being dumped into the paving machine, and laid

down in the driveway approach to the fellowship hall.



At the Bradshaw entrance to the west parking lot, asphalt is laid down by the paving machine, edges touched up by several workers, and then rolled to compress it to the same level as the surrounding pavement.

LANDSCAPE BEDS



Landscape beds have been cut out of the asphalt of the west parking lot near the covered entrance to the fellowship hall. Concrete curbs were then laid to outline each bed.



Lime rock that was the foundation for the former blacktop is being removed to make way for topsoil (above left). A small bed that will be planted with shrubs has been neatly outlined by the concrete curbing (above right).

To bring our impervious area down to code, several sections of asphalt parking have been removed and replaced with sod (right).



RAIN WATER SUMP AND BUBBLER



Rain water from the roofs of both the new Youth Center and the Administration Bld. funnel into the narrow space between these two buildings. The volume of water there could be very high during heavy rains, so all of the down spouts are being connected to a large drain pipe that will move the water away from the buildings and avoid problems of the water seeping inside. The three photos above show the ditch for the drain pipe, and the various down spout connections to it.

In the two photos below, a concrete box that will serve as the sump is being placed in a hole in the parking lot, and it will be connected to the drain pipe. Any water that cannot drain out the bottom of the sump will bubble up out of a grate into the parking lot and off into the drainage along Bradshaw.



Bloodmobile January 11, 2009

U R G E N T R E Q U E S T !

**PLEASE
MARK YOUR
CALENDAR**

The bloodmobile will be parked in FUMCH's parking lot from 7:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.. Donations will be collected during that time.

There is an **EXTREME SHORTAGE** of blood and your donation is very important and appreciated. You will be helping yourself and others.

Please don't minimize the importance of donating blood - it does save lives.

"Papa's Pizza For One," compliments of Papa John's, will be furnished for every donation.

Barbara Jackson

PRAYER CORNER

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- ◆ Our pastor and staff -- daily.
- ◆ Our church bookkeeper and the volunteers involved with the finances of our church. (This is an extremely busy time of year for them.)
- ◆ The women the Lord would have participate in the Women's Retreat to get their reservations in while there is space available.
- ◆ Health, strong voices, and stamina for all involved in the upcoming Christmas presentations and activities.
- ◆ All committee members as they seek the leading of the Holy Spirit and unity in all their decisions.
- ◆ The building committee and all those who work with them as they persevere and see the project through to completion for safety for the workers and everyone else in and around our new facilities.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

In October, eleven ladies of the Prayer Shawl Ministry took a field trip to the Sun Spiced Alpaca Farm located on South Farm Point in Homosassa.

How enjoyable it was getting to know these clean, quiet and gentle animals. Alpacas are a cousin of the camel and llama and their coat makes for beautiful wool.

The owners, Mike and Sheila Temple, let us pet them, feed a few and kindly answered many questions. After spending time with the alpacas, we were invited in to the Temples' home to see some of the weaving projects that Sheila is working on.

A couple of the women bought some beautiful alpaca yarn, spun from the Temples' own animals.

While alpacas are expensive to buy, they make a good investment - better than the stock market these days, according to a recent article in the Wall Street Journal. Any interested investors may board their animal at Sun Spiced Alpaca Farm.

Their web site is:
www.sunspicedalpacas.com

Ann Morrison



Photos by: Althea Stuckey

The Prayer Shawl Ministry meets at 1 PM on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month. Grab your yarn and needles and come join us in the Conference Room!

Council of Bishops Letter

November 5, 2008

Dear President-Elect Obama:

The Council of Bishops of The United Methodist Church is pleased to join with the chorus of United States citizens and international partners in congratulating you on your election as the forty-fourth President of the United States of America. The Council is currently convened in its semi-annual session at Epworth by the Sea, St. Simons Island, Georgia. The Council includes bishops from the United States, Europe, Africa and the Philippines.

We applaud your willingness to articulate a vision of change for the United States that is based on hope for all the people, especially those who are disinherited and disenfranchised. We are also encouraged by your desire to construct a landscape for the United States that is inclusive of all people. We affirm your desire for a more peaceful and just world.

The United Methodist Church has a long history of publicly-expressed concern for social justice based on Christian principles. Our desire for justice extends to the natural world, the nurturing community, the social community, the economic community, the political community and the world community.

We are praying that God will grant you wisdom, courage and protection in your presidential leadership. We are also praying for all the leaders of the world's nations, who will collaborate with you in the arena of common concerns that impact the global community.

In the months following the inauguration, we would like to present you and Mrs. Obama with Bibles signed by the members of the Council of Bishops. A visit with the President by representatives of the Council of Bishops is a tradition which dates back to our first bishop, Francis Asbury, who visited with President George Washington. The Council of Bishops of The United Methodist Church will convene in Washington, DC, during the week of May 3-8, 2009. It is our desire to meet with you at this time or another.

We pray that God's abundant grace and abiding peace will be with you as you shoulder the mantle of presidential leadership as the first African American.

As you lead the United States of America, the bishops of The United Methodist Church will be upholding you in our prayers.

With our gratitude and hope,
Bishops Gregory Vaughn Palmer,
President, The Council of Bishops
The United Methodist Church

S.H.A.R.E.

Don't waste your money...\$36.00 of food for \$18.00
If you get it here, it will be half the price of getting it at the grocery store.

Sign-up, this morning, for November's orders was overwhelming. Last year we sold a little over \$2,500. That included the fifty holiday food parcels that FUMCH gave out. Right now, we have orders for about \$2,600.

Saturday's sign-up is usually busier and we expect to receive over \$700. That will bring us up to at least \$3,000. Top this with FUMC of Crystal River ordering another fifty-two holiday food parcels to give away. That's another \$1,500. (Crystal River closed their SHARE program some time ago.) That puts us in the high \$4,000s.

Seems there are a lot of people needing help in these hard times. Almost every day, someone will call us to ask about the SHARE program. We have a lot of new people every month.

December's menu is not available yet but if you come by the office after November 22nd, we will have SHARE newspapers. Last year's Christmas package was well received. If you're planning a Christmas dinner at home, you can't go wrong with ordering one. We won't tell your family you only paid about half price for everything.

SHARE is an outreach of our church. It serves the community well, and is a big help to many families trying to put food on the table every day. The volunteers work hard to count, set up and distribute the food every month. We do this because Christ instructed us to care for each other. On D-Day, watching everyone do what is needed, I can't help but feel the love and fellowship shared by everyone. There is nothing else I can say to them but "Thank You" for being there.

December: Sign-up Wednesday 3rd Sign-up Saturday 6th Delivery Day, Saturday 20th

By: Thomas and Nancy Pearo

January 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

February 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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March 2009

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29	30	31				

April 2009

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D-Days are BLOCKS >>>>>>>

Sign-Up Days are CIRCLES >>>>>>>

May 2009

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31						

June 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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July 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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August 2009

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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

September 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

October 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

November 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

December 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Dear Praying Friends,

“Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.” – Hebrews 12:1

PRAISES:

✚ Several new people have attended Cool Shade of Life Church (CSLC) recently. It’s encouraging to see members asking their co-workers and friends to come. While many Thais are afraid, some have visited and enjoyed the fellowship and worship. Please pray for many Thais to come to Christ through these relational efforts. In particular, pray for Pastor *Ogaat’s* older sister, who has moved to Chiang Mai recently but is too afraid to attend church.

✚ Brittany and Caleb did a good job wrapping up the school swim team season as they had back-to-back meets in early October. Brittany won a second-place relay medal.



✚ Caleb powered his way to three individual medals, including first in the 25-meter breaststroke.



P.S. Caleb always enjoys getting asked suspiciously by every person at the meet how old he is (since he couldn’t possibly be 10 and so tall!)



✚ We are thankful for Jamie, as he turned 8 years old on Sept. 30 and celebrated with friends last month. We are grateful to God for his quick wit and intellect.

He’s convinced that when he grows up, he’ll be either an aerospace engineer or a draftsman/visual artist (seriously!). Hopefully, he didn’t get the Joe/Elaine math-resistant genes.



This month’s cultural photos are “Umbrella” and “Pyre.” Last month, the king and queen of Thailand presided over a Brahmin ritual to raise a seven-tiered white umbrella over the newly completed funeral pyre of the late Princess Galyani, the king’s sister, who died in January. The umbrella signifies her position in the monarchy, with the only larger umbrella being a nine-tiered one for kings.

The ceremony was part of a Hindu ritual meant to help the princess on her way to heaven.

The royal funeral pyre itself is a many layered creation that is said to represent different levels of heaven. The cremation ceremony will be held Nov. 14-19 in Bangkok and will include six processions of royal chariots



to carry the royal urn and decorations. There will also be three stages hosting dramas, music and puppet shows dating back to the 1800s as well as many Buddhist and Hindu religious rituals.

PRAYERS:

✚ Please continue to pray for us as we work on numerous important initial tasks in setting up a new PIONEERS church-planting team. In particular, please pray for wisdom in formulating an on-field missionary preparation process that includes sociological, linguistic, interpersonal, and musicological themes. This preparation, we pray, will allow new teammates to be fully equipped as they are sent out with Thai partners to open new churches.

✚ While moving forward in team ministry, we continue to enjoy serving at CSLC in our various roles. Joe taught adult Sunday School twice last month, focusing on the roles within a Christian family. Elaine has been getting rave reviews from the women and children for her work on chronological Bible stories. Brittany and Justin continue to serve on the music team, while even Caleb and Jamie got in on the act by helping mom with responsibilities involving children’s Sunday School.

✚ We will be attending a PIONEERS leadership gathering from Nov. 6-9. Please pray for wisdom for those leading the meeting times and for those of us in attendance to be prepared spiritually to hear what the Lord has for us.

✚ If you could please continue to pray for our financial support, we would appreciate it. The dollar’s 10% comeback against the baht since hitting a low in April has been a welcome relief; however, we have lost several supporters and/or had some others cut back their support recently, leaving us about \$1,000 short of our monthly financial goal again. Please pray for additional support and for wisdom in how to wisely handle our family and ministry budgets.

As the world frets about money and elections and all sorts of other concerns, let us remember this Thanksgiving Day that, 387 years later, by the goodness of God, we are far from want.

*For His glory,
Joe, Elaine, Brittany, Justin, Caleb & Jamie*

News from the Wooster's



Greetings from frozen Siberia!

“Shout to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs!”

Psalm 100:1-2

We are quite joyful and filled with gladness; not only because we know Him as our Lord but also because He has allowed us to be here another year among the people we love.

The holiday season is quickly approaching and everyone will soon be busy with the preparations for their New Year's celebration. (Christmas is not celebrated with gifts and a huge meal; the Russians do this for the New Year. Christmas is recognized by the Orthodox Church as a religious holiday but is celebrated on the 7th of January, not December 25th.) Although the commercialism that goes with the holiday is very evident, the 'real reason for the season' has been lost for now.

As we sit and write this update, there is very little snow on the ground. It's very windy and cold and we know it's only a matter of days, maybe weeks, before everything will be frozen solid for the next four or more months.

We wish we could write and say the hearts of the people in the village have "melted" just a little, but it's not the case; the hearts remain "frozen." Those we've met in the stores and on the street are friendly; however, they all believe us to be part of a sect and not to be trusted.

We ask for open hearts and doors so we can build true friendships and relationships. Fellowship is discouraged, but there is our refusal to give up, and we have seen incredible personal growth because of the "trials" in which we are learning to "persevere." We are living out James 1 and learning how to do so in JOY.

A few quick updates on the building and window project in the village:

✠ After a few attempts at building a brick furnace and chimney for the heating system; we now have a wood or coal burning furnace to heat the two buildings for the winter months. There are still a few small glitches we're working out, but believe it will keep us quite warm when those -30 and -40 C. temperatures arrive.



The picture isn't very good, but there's a small metal furnace in front, which is designed to carry the heat to pipes with water, (the same as old homes heated with radiators in the US) and behind is a brick chimney which helps heat the workshop area and carry the smoke out through the roof.

✠ The window project moves forward slowly, but forward. We thought for sure we'd have photos for you before this newsletter but sadly do not. Kevin has found the place to order the windows and will have installed the windows in the first apartment by the time you are reading this update. His next step will be meeting the local officials and asking them who is in greatest need of windows. Although the weather is colder, we can still install them in the same day and not cause a family to have to leave their apartment for any amount of time. We ask for wisdom and favor in the eyes of the local government.

✠ The ladies of the fellowship have begun a study/course on "Wisdom for Mothers" by Denise Glenn. We have many young Moms and most are without husbands. They're eager to learn new skills from His Word and change old habits that just aren't working. Again, we ask for wisdom and clarity in language as Laura is leading this study entirely in Russian.

In October, the fellowship in the city celebrated their 10-year anniversary. We can't believe it's been ten years already. It was incredible to be a part of their celebration and to see so many new families and young people.



Those who were once in the youth group are now the leaders of the fellowship or are leading other smaller study groups. Many other local fellowships stopped by to give words of encouragement, adding something special to the day. It was a wonderful picture of how the "body" gathers for one reason only...to worship the Creator of the heavens and earth.



We are still in awe that we are able to be back in Russia. We're humbled as we look back at all that has taken place and all of the lives that have been touched....changed for eternity. We are excited about starting in a new area and working alongside old friends as well as with some new folks.

Thank you for your continued support in Siberia. Our prayer is that this Christmas will be Christ-filled and blessed. When so many are reading the story in Luke of the wonderful gift of His birth, we find that John 3:16 says it best for this Christmas season!

Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year to All!

Kevin & Laura Wooster
(also Joshua & Corey)



*Columbarium
and
Memorial
Garden...*

Located next to our beautiful Worship Center, and visible through the north window in the right rear section of the Worship Center, the columbarium and garden create a peaceful setting for some of God's faithful who "dwell in the house of the Lord forever." The fenced area has two benches available to anyone for times of prayer and meditation.

Columbarium niches are available for pre-need purchase, to insure current costs.

Please see Church Administrator, Theresa Weber, in the church office for information, details, and an available packet.

John Gibbs

NEW MEMBERS OCTOBER 2008



Pam & Lyn Dubose
171 N Conrad Ave
Lecanto, 34461
527-4388

Pam from Van Dyke UMC, Lutz, FL
Lyn from White Bluff UMC,
Savannah, GA



Barbara Sayers
70 Douglas St
Homosassa, 34446
508-237-0387

From Pilgrim Congregational Church
Harwich Port, MA

Someone said that when God measures a person, He puts the measuring tape around the heart instead of the head.

It's our desire to have large, loving hearts open toward all who worship and have fellowship with us.

Please let this be the manner in which we reach out and welcome the new members of our church community.



FILL THE FOOD PANTRY SHOPPING LIST

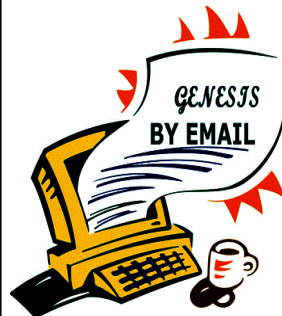
- Canned Vegetables
- Soups
- Canned Meats or Stews
- Canned Tuna Fish
- Peanut Butter & Jelly
- Boxed Noodles
- Jello or Pudding Mix
- Stuffing Mixes
- Dry Milk
- Rice
- Canned Fruit
- Spaghetti Sauce
- Mac & Cheese
- Saltine Crackers
- Ramen Noodles
- Boxed Mashed Potatoes
- Pasta
- Cereal or Oatmeal
- Evaporated Milk

The third Sunday of every month is PANTRY SUNDAY. The demand for food has been quite sizable this past year.

There is great need in this ministry.

Please help us help those in need.

All contributions are highly appreciated at any time of the



In an effort to minimize the production & postage costs associated with our monthly newsletter we will be making "Genesis" available via email.

If you wish to volunteer to receive the Genesis Newsletter via email and help save the church these expenditures, please email the church office at: theresa@lumc.org and put "Sign-Me Up" in the subject line.

We will send the Newsletter to you in PDF. file format.

A URL to download a free Adobe Reader, to process a PDF. file, will be provided if needed.

If you do not wish to receive the Genesis by email, you will still receive your hard copy through the mail as usual. Plans to begin delivery via email are expected to begin in January 2009.

December Birthdays

December Anniversaries

1
Doris Kertesz
Bill Strmiska

2
Martha Formender
Phillip Rittgers
Rusty Harry

4
Shirley Wardrip
Dorothy Nobles
Bess Hoes

5
Zane Megos
Fred Casper
Susan Dean

6
Elizabeth Gaines
Betty Huffstutler
Dorothy Jones
Charles Dixon
Vickey Post

7
Marybelle Baker
Ron Phillips
Howard Watson Sr.
Willy Pouderoyne

8
Ruth Anderson
Abbye Jean Richner
Jeana Stansbury

9
David Pirkle
Marie Witham

10
Glen Seiler
Mary McCrea

12
Buddy Hansen
Carolyn Bright

13
Imogene Burnett

14
Richard Shaffer
William Little
Wanda Ashley

16
Charlie Walker
Armin Marvin
Maureen Guthrie
Kenneth Will

17
Betty Davis
Sandra Dewart

18
Edith Keilt Parker

19
Phyllis Dixon

20
Marilyn Wells

21
Malcolm Whetstone
Lois Young
Don Hand
Mildred Mott
Jessica Cocking

22
Jim Potts
Sue Cloyd
David Kegley

23
Mary Ellen Wais

24
Ted Archambault

25
Carolyn Huggins

27
Bill Gilbert
Sasha Shuart
Natasha Dawson
Theresa Weber

28
Judith Huffer

30
Charlotte Gable

31
Dorothy Graham
Sally Moore
Lisa Bently

8
Michelle & Ryan Selby
~ 6 years ~

12
Joan & James Eyster
~ 55 years ~
Joyce & Jim Winder
~ 49 years ~

17
Isabelle & Ernie Verge
~ 65 years ~
Judith & William Busby
~ 25 years ~
Phyllis & Charles Dixon
~ 20 years ~

18
Martha & Ernie Dorrell
~ 48 years ~

19
Donna & Bud Ludwick
~ 49 years ~

20
Laurie & Larry Stainton
~ 49 years ~
Wilma & Walter Stroud
~ 23 years ~
Carole Deyo- & Gunter Fahl
~ 22 years ~

21
Jeannine & Jim Love
~ 50 years ~

22
Kathy & Stephen Betsko
~ 18 years ~
Marge & Harold Swinson
~ 63 years ~
Lee & George Knerr
~ 53 years ~

27
Cheryl & Tom Smith
~ 43 years ~

28
Kay & Lee Bast
~ 52 years ~
Judy & Bob Bunting
~ 48 years ~
Dee & Jim Green
~ 13 years ~

29
Cranie & Kenneth Koellhoffer
~ 41 years ~

**PERSONS RESIDING
IN LONG-TERM CARE
(As of November 7, 2008)**

NURSING CENTERS

AVANTE

Annie Preston

BARRINGTON

Ken McGuire

BRENTWOOD

Evelyn Bash

Teresa Davis

Herman Kruhm

CEDAR CREEK

Bud Jenks

Bill Willis

Ruth Willis

CRYSTAL RIVER

HEALTH & REHAB

Betty Farewell

Robert Smith

CYPRESS COVE

Elta Whilden

DIAMOND RIDGE

Jean Buzby

Marjorie Cook

(Mary) Betty Duncan

Helen Hudson

SUGARMILL MANOR

Shirley Hart

Grace Payne

Eleanor Smith

Charlie Walker

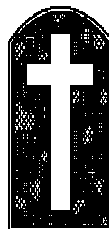
WILLISTON

Bill Marquis

My apologies to the folks that were omitted from the October Birthday list after the date of the twenty-first. And, for the oversight of Helen and George Lafave's November Anniversary, I am sorry.

Judith Huffer, Editor

The deadline for the January 2009 issue of Genesis is 10 AM, Friday, December 5, 2008.



December 2008						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

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Photo by Carole Crystal

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Neil Kline, Webmaster

Visit our Web Site ~ www.lumc.org

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

Sunday School for all ages: 9:30AM

Methodist Youth Fellowship: 12-2PM

Office Hours: Weekdays

8:30AM to 4:30PM

Office Telephone: 352-628-4083

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Soli Deo Gloria

The Reason For The Season!



December 2008