

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

135 W. Simpson Street
Mechanicsburg, PA
17055

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Phone: 717-766-4611
E-mail: office@fumchurch.com
Web Site: www.fumchurch.com

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GIVING WINGS TO THE GOSPEL

WELCOME ~ INVITE ~ NURTURE ~ GROW ~ SEND



Sunday, January 17, at 7 pm

*"He put a new song in my mouth,
a hymn of praise to our God."
Psalm 40:3*

Join us as we celebrate the New Year with our worship in music and personal testimony.

Team Rehearsal at 5:30pm.
You are welcome to join us.

*Babysitting provided
during rehearsal
and service.*



January 31

Special Guests for Sunday School
& Morning Worship Services

**4th Annual
Father-Son Tailgate
Party**

**JANUARY 9
LATE AFTERNOON
PLAYOFF GAME**

**Bring a chair,
dress in your fave
football gear,
and get ready for fun!!!**

Tickets still available at
the Information Desk —
January 3.



JANUARY 2010

**FIRST UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH**



Volume 10, Issue 1

From the Pastor:

Pastor's Report to the Church Conference — November 30, 2009

THIS IS MY SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT to the Church Conference at First Church. In it I would like to address three matters: First Church's strengths, the challenges we face, and how we find the way forward.

STRENGTHS

What a privilege it is to be in ministry in First Church. It is a vibrant place to be and to work. Though we have a grand facility, the focus is on ministry rather than buildings. Though we face financial challenges, the focus is on ministry rather than dollars. Though we work hard day by day to maintain the functions of an institution, the focus is on ministry rather than on the status quo.

Let me enumerate a few of those strengths as I see them:

- First Church demonstrates compassion without boundaries through its care for those in crisis at home and concern for those far off who need to know Christ and experience Christ's compassion. This is evidenced by First Church's commitment to, involvement in and provision of leadership for Mission Central; by the support given to Ben Ober, a young adult who is a full time missionary in Senegal; by the significant commitment of and for the youth of First Church in their summer mission trip to Red Lake, Minnesota; and by the recurring collections of such things as Bibles, coats, food, Christmas gifts, etc. which always receive remarkable support.

- First Church maintains a constant and consistent focus on ministry. The staff of First Church functions as a significant

engine which powers many aspects of the congregation's ministry and program. This staff is carefully balanced to provide not only support for all age groups (children, youth and adults) within the congregation, but to provide support for infrastructure (facilities and finances), program (office manager) and ministry itself (congregational care). This focus on ministry has been underscored this year by the significant investment in a Youth Ministry Consultation to evaluate and reconfigure this vitally important aspect of First Church's ministry. Among the most significant ministries in which we engage annually is the Bible School program which this year served over 350 children.

- First Church provides for the congregation and the community facilities that are both useful and usable. It is a costly and energy intensive ministry in itself to provide these facilities for congregation and community, but First Church does so with the expectation that these facilities will be used rather than preserved in pristine condition. Such an inviting and hospitable environment is of inestimable value in all that is done here.

- First Church has a core of gifted and committed laity who are willing to serve and lead. I dare not mention names here for fear of missing important ones, but the willingness and availability of folks to serve, to respond to crises, to lead the innumerable programs and endeavors we undertake, to assist in some of the mundane day-to-day tasks which must be accomplished, and to be creative and entrepreneurial in

(Continued on page 2)

Dates to Remember

- January 8-10 . Men's Retreat
- January 9 Father-Son Tailgate Party
- January 10 Healthy Habits Health Lecture & "Get My People Going" Registration
- January 10 Holy Communion (pew service)
- January 13 Wonderful Wednesday resumes
- January 16 Lay Leadership Training
- January 17 Healthy Habits Health Lecture & "Get My People Going" Registration
- January 30 Ladies Prayer Breakfast
- January 30 Family Roller Skating
- January 31 Disability Awareness Sunday

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Church Staff

PASTOR: Michael Minnix
 ASSISTANT PASTOR: Lucretia Browning
 PARISH VISITOR: Don Ciampa
 LAY LEADER: Tom Helm
 CONGREGATIONAL CARE
 COORDINATOR: Tina Eaton
 DIRECTOR OF ADULT EDUCATION:
 Juanita Guise
 CHILDREN'S DIRECTOR: Kim Vensel
 YOUTH PASTOR: Vacant
 MUSIC DIRECTOR &
 SENIOR CHOIR DIRECTOR: Jody Brinley
 ORGANIST: Bill Ingraham, Tom Mullikin
 ASSISTANT ORGANIST: Gail Leinhos
 BELL CHOIRS: Kathie Bittenbender
 SOUNDS OF WORSHIP &
 CHILDREN'S CHOIRS: Flossie Ryder
 YOUTH CHOIR: Nadine Ogden
 JUNIOR CHOIR & INVOCATION: Allison Ometz
 FACILITIES COORDINATOR: Charlie Ryder
 FINANCE DIRECTOR: Nancy Robinson
 OFFICE MANAGER: Michelle Strawser
 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: April Prather
 CUSTODIAL TEAM: Don Karns

FIRST NEWS FIRST

EDITORS:

April Prather
 Michelle Strawser

The deadline for the
 February newsletter is

FRIDAY, JANUARY 15 .

All submissions should be received in the church office on or before this date.

Early submissions are always welcome!

office@fumchurch.com.

From the Pastor (continued)

(Continued from page 1)

ministry are among any congregation's greatest strengths, and we certainly experience such vitality here because of the people of the congregation who are generous with their time, talents and energies.

CHALLENGES

The challenges we face contribute to First Church's vitality because we are never able to take the future or progress or growth for granted. I am more and more convinced that the challenges we face are not unusual or unique; the most difficult issues we face are shared by other congregations all around us and across our nation. Though our struggles are real and we take them seriously and attempt to address them day by day, they are bigger than we are—cultural issues which challenge Christian community and Christian values.

Here are a few things that I see and struggle with day by day:

- Folks communicate more than ever, but we don't know how to talk to each other. This is a particularly devastating handicap when our business is community and building community. We see it going on everywhere and all the time (even in worship)—texting, twitter, IM, email, etc.—and yet we find folks less and less willing to sit down with one another in face-to-face settings where we spend time getting to know one another, build trusting relationships and learn of the opportunities and perils of the Christian faith journey. It is becoming a greater challenge each year to work together to de-escalate conflicts and talk about difficult issues.

- The World War II generation is departing by the thousands each day across our nation. This is the generation that has built and populated the churches across the country, and First Church in particular. The generation of their children is beginning to approach retirement. Because of these generations our church is and remains strong. The generations that follow them, however, do not possess the same institutional loyalty, are not willing to live and work and worship by the same rules and expectations, and do not possess the same

level of community building interest and skills. We live in a time where individual comfort and satisfaction are the assumed values as opposed to seeking the common good.

- How is it possible to build community at a time and place where individualism and autonomy are most highly valued? We know in some part of our being that we are “better together,” and that we are designed to be together, to live in community, to complement one another, to function as “members of one body” (1 Corinthians 12), but in day-to-day life we function independently and find ourselves increasingly unable to devote small amounts of time to the work of community building.

- We live in a culture of fear that divides and separates people. From the airways to casual conversation the fear that we live with emerges: the economy and job security, trustworthiness of government and government officials, terrorism and threats to our children and teens (drugs, etc.). Seemingly every voice that is heard seeks to intensify those fears, while the voice of Jesus which speaks “fear not, for I am with you” enjoys little credibility. We learned in the recent youth ministries consultation that the greatest fear that children faced fifty years ago was the fear of nuclear war. Now their greatest fear is abandonment.

- We live in a “service provider” culture. I have discussed this in previous reports, so I will not rehearse it again, save to say that community building and character building endeavors have a hard time competing with the plethora of “fun” activities and programs that are available.

FINDING THE WAY FORWARD

The history of the Christian community through the last two thousand years has demonstrated that the church becomes strongest, most innovative and most compelling in those times when it is most challenged. Though the challenges we face are bigger than we are—that is to say they are culturally driven rather than specific to this congregation—they do not have the power to compromise our message or undo our

(Continued on page 3)

January 3

USHERS: (8:15) Eric King, James Alderman, Thomas Helm, Ralph Harkins, Roy Miller, Harry Woods, Winslow Brown; (10:45) Rick Kauffman, Brian Vogl, Rodney Cook, Barry Dively, Ed Johnson, Chuck Kershner, Wayde Leister, Cephas Zimmerman
 MEDIA: Ron Nichols & Roger Walton
 ACOLYTE: TBD (8:15), Josh Herring (10:45)
 CHILDCARE GREETER: Mary Wagner (8:15) Tracy Holliday (10:45)
 CRIB/TODDLERS: Patti Yeager, Shannon O'Leary, Hayley Holloway, Mary Eckrote (8:15), Sandy Downey, Patti Herring, Janet & Janelle Almond (10:45)
 WEE WORSHIP: Rob & Gerri Nuss, Elisabeth Herring
 KIDS WORSHIP: Liza Schneider, Norma Bingham

January 17

USHERS: (8:15) Gerry Sheely, Elvin Hess, Bill Seig, Bob Shannon, Roy Miller; (10:45) Larry Buddenbaum, Rick Kauffman, Bob Bittenbender, Barry Eaton, Chuck Kershner, Mike Ogden, Rose Rohlmeier, Mark Rutch
 MEDIA: Chris Grant, Ken Rapp
 ACOLYTE: TBD (8:15), Kayleigh DeWalt (10:45)
 CHILDCARE GREETER: Sharon Hayes (8:15), Angie Britcher (10:45)
 CRIB/TODDLERS: Angie & Chuck Allgood, Colin Hayes (8:15), Amy Dively, Gwen DeLuca, Dawn Merris, Rachel Miller (10:45)
 WEE WORSHIP: Lynn Grant, Tracy McHale
 KIDS WORSHIP: Liza Schneider, Dave & Norma Lockney

January 31

USHERS: (8:15) Elvin & Charlotte Hess, Fred & Marcia Espenshade, Gerald & Pat Sheely, Jim & Pam Van Kirk; (10:45) Ethan Spencer, Noah Briggs, Philip Noss, Davis Holiday, Jared Rebman, Alexandra Rebman, Lexi Ometz, Josh Eaton
 MEDIA: Eric DeWalt & Steve Morgan
 ACOLYTE: Lindsay Alderman (8:15), Matthew Canonizado (10:45)
 CHILDCARE GREETER: Sue Brady (8:15), Linda DeWire (10:45)
 CRIB/TODDLERS: Lynn & Shawn Rapp, Candise Everhart (8:15), Becky Orsinger, Jennifer & Kevin Long (10:45)
 WEE WORSHIP: Karen & Jerry Smith
 KIDS WORSHIP: Liza Schneider, Bonnie Campbell

January 10

USHERS: Youth
 MEDIA: Fred Espenshade, Roger Walton
 ACOLYTE: Lindsay Alderman (8:15), Ryan Eaton (10:45)
 CHILDCARE GREETER: Sandy Walton (8:15) Susanna Brill (10:45)
 CRIB/TODDLERS: Kathleen & Rodney Clark, Matt Ober, Shawn Rapp (8:15), Jill Rahal, Amy Erno, Lauren Kenes, Alex Clouser (10:45)
 WEE WORSHIP: Katie Hammaker, Rose Rohlmeier, Paige Snyder
 KIDS WORSHIP: Liza Schneider, Kasie Wertz

January 24

USHERS: (8:15) Tom Helm, Charles Glessner, Ben Miller, Ron Nichols, Jim Van Kirk; (10:45) Brian Vogl, Larry Buddenbaum, Stuart Diehl, Ken Guise, Mike Lehmer, Mike McHale, Rose Rohlmeier, Jake Sunday
 MEDIA: Eric DeWalt, Steve Morgan
 ACOLYTE: Kyle Eaton (8:15), Victoria Yother (10:45)
 CHILDCARE GREETER: Marilyn Knott (8:15), Sandy Leister (10:45)
 CRIB/TODDLERS: Kelly King, Megan Koontz, Caryn Knott, Jenna Magee (8:15), Jill Yother, Deb Noss, Shelli Spencer, Phoebe Noss (10:45)
 WEE WORSHIP: Brandi Zimmerman, Vicky Shambaugh, Megan Leister
 KIDS WORSHIP: Liza Schneider, Deb & Julie Lehmer

Snow Cancellation Procedure

The need to cancel events taking place at First Church can occur at any time. Though there are other things that can necessitate the cancellation of an event, weather is by far the most common cause. First Church has a cancellation process to assist leaders with determining if cancellation is necessary, coordinating with other event leaders, and communicating the information. Here are the steps to take if you are leading an event that you believe may need to be cancelled:

Call the Church Office at 766-4611 and ask to speak to one of the pastors or an available staff member to determine the best course of action. In order to have sufficient time to communicate the cancellation, please consider any need to cancel at least three hours before the event is scheduled to start. For example, if an event is scheduled to begin at 7 pm, a discussion and decision to cancel should occur no later than 4 pm.

Discuss and decide, in cooperation with the pastor or staff member, how leaders of other events taking place at the church that day will be notified of the cancellation.

When necessary, a staff member will be responsible for broadcasting the cancellation via the FUMC Website and on the following TV and Radio stations:

TV Stations:

WHP CBS 21,
 CW 15,
 Channel 27

Radio Stations:

BOB 94.9 FM,
 WHP 580 AM,
 KISS 99.3 FM,
 The River 97.3 FM,
 WLAN 96.9 FM,
 WLAN 1390 AM



Baptism



December 13, 2009

Reese Hilde Roberts

Born August 15, 2009 to Steven & Katie (Scott) Roberts.

Granddaughter of Dick and Marge Scott

Love & Sympathy to ...

the Lank family upon the death of Sharon's mother on November 25, 2009.

the Garrison family upon the death of Ernest Garrison on December 1, 2009.

the McKinney family upon the death of Lynn's brother on December 2, 2009.

the Quigley family upon the death of Paul's brother on December 6, 2009.

the Karns family upon the recent death of Debbie's uncle.

the McKenney upon the death of Lori's grandmother on December 11, 2009.

Birth

Julia Katherine Shaw

born December 1, 2009, to Kevin & Tammy (Hamsher) Shaw. Julia joins big brother, Christopher.

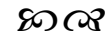
Congratulations to the Bittenbenders and Hamshers on the birth of their granddaughter.

Thank You

To my First Church family,

Thank you for the flowers and prayers. They mean a lot to both my wife and I.

Winslow Brown (Brownie)



To all my Friends,

Thank you for your prayers and cards when I was sick. God bless you all.

Elaine O'Hara



Thank God for the church family. During this time we really have appreciated the blessings and prayers of our First Church family. Food, calls, visits, gifts, flowers, and the many, many, many cards — Rose has enjoyed them all and these have brightened her days as she was homebound after surgery. Many thanks.

Leta & Rose Rohlmeier



Dear First Church,

What a blessing it is to be a part of such a supportive and caring church family! We are thankful for each and every one of you. We have felt so cared for through the cards, visits, meals, gifts, words of encouragement, and most importantly your thoughts and prayers for us. It has been quite an experience and a longer recovery process than we had anticipated. God has sustained us through it all and has used you as His messengers to minister to us. Thank you for being His hands and feet and for reaching out to us in our time of need. We have been blessed with a healthy baby boy and we praise God for him every day. He is a true gift and we know without a doubt he will be well cared for through all of you who are a part of this loving congregation!

With Deep Gratitude, Charlie & Joanna Renner & Baby Caleb

To our church family,

During the last several months, Larry has been fighting a difficult battle with cancer. Over that same time frame, along with the love and prayers of friends and family, our names have been included in many prayer lists. Knowing that so many people are praying on our behalf is an amazing source of strength; we are deeply grateful.

We thank you for the gifts of your prayers; we accept them with love and we wish for each of you a blessed Christmas and a new year filled with joy, love and hope.

Judy & Larry Brown



Special Birthdays

- William Henschke January 1
Kathryn Nailor January 5
Winnie Prowell January 7
Jesse Gunder January 13
Ruth Reed January 15
Charles Glessner January 16
Ida Bardell January 21
Mark Grosz January 21
David Richards January 23
Maye Carmany January 30

Addresses of these members, who are 80-plus years of age, can be found in the Church Directory.

From the Pastor (continued)

(Continued from page 2) ministry as long as we are diligent to maintain our identity as the community of faith, people of God, disciples of Christ. It is in tenaciously holding onto that identity that we find our way forward. We are challenged to do so, however, in some specific ways:

As in the Christian Scripture, the church remains counter-cultural rather than culture endorsing. Too many folks expect to be a part of the Christian community and find that we endorse the prevailing values: one or another political party or philosophy, or capitalism, or one or another aspect of the American way of life. Folks expect that the church will acquiesce to cultural values, ignoring their impact upon the fabric of community or the common good of all people. Christians attempt to stand above all those things in favor of broader values such as peace, justice, integrity, grace and compassion.

In order to do so, Christians are faced more and more with the necessity of being different. It was the case fifty or sixty years ago that one could be loyal to cultural values and a faithful Christian at the same time. That is becoming increasingly impossible, requiring that those who desire to be Christian are intentionally different from others around them, embracing values and practicing disciplines that are not shared generally as once they were. Thus, the community of faith must intentionally provide for such folks a community of affirmation and support because Christians live increasingly as "resident aliens" in a culture foreign to them.

"Christ Preeminent" is the motto of the neighborhood college in Grantham, and it expresses a vital principle for First Church in these days. The church's vocation is to connect people with Christ and nurture them to live long and consistent Christ-centered lives. In order to be faithful we must do both—"connecting" and "nurturing"—avoiding the temptation to neglect one in favor of the other. Christian commitment and Christian life are more than "having your ticket punched" at a particular time in your life. Living Christian values, practicing Christian disciplines, living consistently in Christian community are all hard work that

we can accomplish only with the strengthening presence of the Holy Spirit.

It is essential that we maintain a forward-looking focus rather than a backward-looking one. This marks the difference between evangelistic and revivalist expressions of faith. First Church holds a good balance between knowing and celebrating its history and living into the future in energetic and creative ways. But it remains a challenge to cut some of our moorings to the past so we are able to represent the Gospel in ways which capture people's imaginations, which they can comprehend and to which they can respond. In other words, many of the old ways of "doing church" are no longer compelling and we must continually seek to discover new ways of serving, worshiping, learning and proclaiming.

Learning is a life-long endeavor, especially in the church and with faith matters. There was a time when one could "pick up" Christian values and the Christian story simply by moving about in our culture. That is no longer the case, so the church must be more intentional about teaching the faith, its components, its history, its disciplines. Discovering ways to engage more folks in learning endeavors in the church is a challenge, but one of the most important ones we face.

In practical terms, First Church must continue to practice and even enhance its "compassion without boundaries" in order to embrace and maintain our identity as the people of God. First Church must continue to insist on the primary importance of corporate worship and work to keep our services of worship vibrant and inspiring. First Church must maintain its strong commitment to teaching and learning the faith by making classes, groups and study opportunities as numerous and compelling as possible. First Church is uniquely positioned to increase the effectiveness and the impact of her ministries in Mechanicsburg and beyond; there are abundant resources at our disposal to do the very things we imagine in response to God's call. All that remains is for us to take up the challenges as a community of faith and expend all our energy in the service of Christ.

Financial Report

Through November 30, 2009 92 % of year

Unified Budget

Table with 2 columns: Item, Amount. Income \$ 873,813 (90 % of budget), Expenses \$ 804,355, Income over spending... \$ 69,458

Building Fund..... \$ 17,988

Legacy Campaign..... \$ 77,134

2009 income is above last year but will fall short of the level assumed in the 2009 budget. Spending will also be less than budgeted, so we will end the year in balance.

The complete year-end financial report, as well as the approved 2010 budget, will appear in the February edition of First News First.

Penny Report

THERE WERE 1,944 PENNIES contributed this past month for a total to date of \$11,207.64. The church would like to thank all those who continue to support the African Well Project.



Father/Son Tailgate Party

NOW IS THE TIME to get your tickets for the Father/Son Tailgate Party on Saturday, January 9. Time will be determined by the NFL playoff schedule. Tickets are \$5 and can be purchased from any Elizabeth circle member or look in your classrooms for tickets.

Circle Meeting

MARY CIRCLE

Child care available
Friday, January 29
9:30 - 10:30 am — Church Library
Janice Bowen*
796-0809
jjgbowen@yahoo.com

ELIZABETH CIRCLE

Friday, January 15
9-10:30 am — Church Library
Patti Herring*
795-9721
familyzeke@verizon.net

DEBORAH CIRCLE

January 12 (2nd Tuesday)
7pm — Room 002
Sandy Walton*
swalton54@comcast.net

RUTH CIRCLE

January 5 (1st Wednesday)
11:15 am — Hoss's, Mechanicsburg
Doris Nesbit 766-8266
& Beryl Morgan*
Everyone Welcome!

MARTHA CIRCLE

Tuesday, January 5
7pm — Fran Davis's home
Marley Ann Schmick*
697-2233

*Circle Leaders

UMW 2009/10 Calendar

- **JANUARY 11**
UMW Executive Board Meeting
6 pm, Library
- **JANUARY 30**
Women's Prayer Breakfast
9:30-11am
- **FEBRUARY 5-7**
Women's Retreat
- **FEBRUARY 27**
ACCESS Ministry
Day of Pampering
- **APRIL 12**
Spiritual Enrichment,
Mt. Olivet
- **MAY 8**
Mother-Daughter Banquet
- **AUGUST 20-21**
Secondhand Sale
- **OCTOBER 3**
New Cumberland District
Annual Day, Mission Central
- **NOVEMBER 14**
World Thank Offering &
Mission Meal

UMW Circle Co-Presidents

Lori Hoffnagle	732-6430
Pat Sheely	766-3151

Missions Committee Liaison Needed

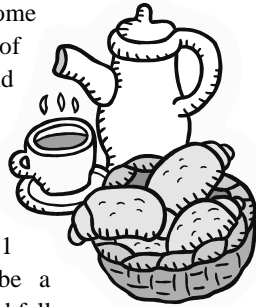
The Missions Committee is in need of a liaison to the FUMC missionaries to report at our monthly meetings.

Interested parties can contact Melissa Hiler at 791-9604 or at mahiler@comcast.net.

Ladies Prayer Breakfast

SATURDAY, JANUARY 30
9:30 – 11 AM

We welcome all women of FUMC to attend this informal service on Saturday, January 30, from 9:30 – 11 am. This will be a time of prayer and fellowship as we kick off the new year. Jeanne and Buddy Eakin will speak about their mission trips to Mexico. We will receive new secret prayer partners. A prayer and self-denial offering will be taken. The service will be held in the Adult Sunday School room with a light breakfast offered.



Thank You ...

to all who support the United Methodist Women through giving of monetary gifts, time and energy, as well as donated secondhand sale items. In 2009, your efforts enabled us to give more than \$1,303.71 to local organizations such as Mission Central, United Methodist Children's Home, Daron Shelter, New Hope Ministries, Neighborhood Center and New Life for Girls. Through the Prayer/Self-Denial and World Thank Offerings, you gave more than \$1,500 to support UMW missions worldwide. Again, thanks to your generous gifts, we make a difference both here in our local community and around the world.

Mission Opportunity:

FUMC GROCERY BAGGING for Bethesda Mission at Mission Central on Wednesday, January 20, at 6 pm. Contact Eric King at 697-0933 or eeking@verizon.net for information.

January Library News

JANUARY IS WHEN ALL THINGS ARE SUPPOSED TO BE NEW: new diet, new lifestyle, new year, new resolutions; and in the library we say, "NEW authors." If you have missed Dee Henderson as your favorite romantic suspense writer, two new women are vying for her title. (Unfortunately, we don't know why Ms. Henderson hasn't written anything new in over two years). Irene Hannon is busy writing the *HEROES OF QUANTICO* series and Amy Wallace is keeping us spellbound with her *DEFENDERS OF HOPE* series. Both series are based on FBI heroes, and both series are filled with suspense and enough action to keep you up past your bedtime. I personally recommend both series.

I know many of you enjoy Amish fiction. Our new author in that category is Suzanne Woods Fisher who has written, *THE CHOICE*, the first in her series *LANCASTER COUNTY SECRETS*. We have just that first book in her series but that may not hold you very long. It's a good thing we have stocked up on new offerings from Amish authors Wanda Brunstetter and Cindy Woodsmall.

Many of you firmly believe that romance books are the only way to go, so we have a new author for you. Annalisa Daugherty is writing a new series set in the great outdoors. *LOVE IS A BATTLEFIELD* is the first book in the *WALK IN THE PARK*

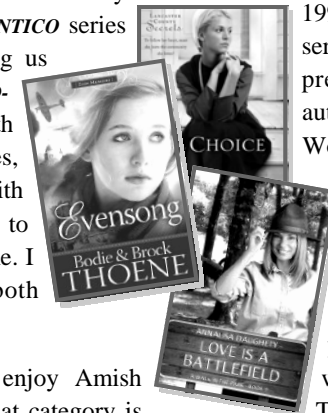
series set in a fictional national park. The only thing about reading this terrific book in January is that you might get spring fever early.

While all these books are great reads, the book I am personally waiting for is not coming 'til April. My favorite books of all times were written by Brock and Bodie Thoene in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The *ZION COVENANT* series is historical fiction set in pre-World War II. These authors then jumped to post-World War II in the *ZION CHRONICLES* and Israel's battle for statehood. Many of us longed to know what had happened to the characters in the in-between years. Now twenty years later we are going to find out. The Thoenes are meticulous writers, whose attention to detail bring the characters to life. So get in line for *EVENSONG*, the first book in the *ZION MEMOIRS* series—it will be worth the wait.

I think I have covered most of the genres with new authors; but, of course, all your favorite authors continue to write new books. So stop in the library to stock up for the long snowy nights.

See you in the library!

Fran, Pam and Donna



DAY OF PAMPERING

FEBRUARY 27

*is a day for us to be
the hands and feet of Christ
in our community.*

GET INVOLVED ...

*by volunteering for this
extraordinary outreach
as we minister to women
who care daily for
family members with disabilities.*



Get Involved In Day Of Pampering — February 27

DAY OF PAMPERING ... a day to honor mothers of children with disabilities and wives of husbands with disabilities. A day of quiet reflection and worship, an elegant luncheon, and an afternoon at the spa with hair cuts, manicures, make-up, massages, and more. A day of pampering for those who give so much to others. And a day for First Church to be the hands and feet of Christ in our community.

GET INVOLVED ... by volunteering to serve on one of the sub-committees for this extraordinary outreach! Sub-committees began planning in November for the February 27 event. If you haven't yet done so, now is the time to identify a specific area in which you would like to serve. Contact Lisa Wickenheiser at 975-0225 or wicks7@comcast.net for more information or to volunteer for this extraordinary day of ministry.

Widows / Widowers Group

The Widows/Widowers group will be dining at Snappers Restaurant in Mechanicsburg on Tuesday, January 12, at 6 pm.
Please notify Bonnie Guyer at 766-0145 if you plan on attending.

Weekend to Remember

VALENTINE'S DAY IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER. Plan to attend the FamilyLife "Weekend to Remember" marriage conference at the Hershey Lodge on February 12-14. You and your beloved will spend precious time together and will learn more about God's wonderful plan and purpose for your relationship.

Why not resolve, this year, to build up your marriage using "His" design and upon "His" foundation?

Think of it — a Valentine's day in Hershey (the chocolate capital of the world) and a date night to boot — all with God's blessing! Prayerfully consider sharing in this special getaway weekend.

If you are interested:

1. Check your calendar for the week of Feb 12 -14.
2. Go to <http://www.familylife.com/groups/fumc> to register and obtain discount information.
3. Then make your hotel reservation. The hotel fills up *Weekend to Remember* fast.

Contact Steve & Deb Noss for information on group rates, early registration discounts and other questions about the weekend. Home phone: 697-5982. Home email: sdppp@msn.com (please put *Weekend to Remember* in the subject line)

Brochures are available throughout the church.

Please invite others (friends or family members) to attend this weekend.

NOTE: If the dates don't work for you, check the website for other "weekend" events located in PA and MD.

Prayer Team

THE PRAYER TEAM would like to share some of the things we pray for when we gather. It is an always-changing list. Each month, each day presents different requests and requirements. Help us make First Church known as a Praying Church. Join with us in prayer ...

- A new year, a new beginning ... doesn't God promise us that all things become new when we place ourselves in His hands, when we have faith in Him? Start out this year believing that he truly loves you, wants only good for you, will give you all that you need and then live life like you believe it. Pray/talk to him each day, each moment and immerse yourself in the knowledge that you are His.

- Have you made your New Year's Resolutions? How about making a commitment this year to join a Bible study or prayer group? Joining others in fellowship and a search for a stronger relationship with him is the best agreement you can make with yourself.

Do you have other "vices" you want to give up? Give them over to him in prayer, listen to his promptings, and pray for strength.

- Pray for new ways to strengthen your families. Do you pray together as a family? Are your children seeing you talk to God on a daily basis? Are you gathering around the table instead of the TV? Do you have a day/evening committed to only the family? There is nothing you can give children that is more important than your time and your attention to their Christian upbringing.

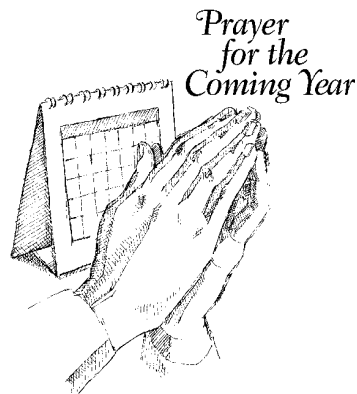
- How often do you honor your spouse by doing something special for them that is not on a notable occasion — like a birthday? God joined us together as a holy union. Do you think in those terms? It doesn't have to be anything costly, but it does need to be sincere. What about a card, a compliment, a tub full of water (with bubbles), peeling the potatoes, a massage or a prayer for their well being. Most often it's the simple things that are remembered and treasured.

- In writing these thoughts and prayers, I always try to get it to the office early so the staff has plenty of time to work with it. (Bless the staff!) It is now two days before the youth do the annual Sleepout for the Homeless. The December "Pray For" article was sent out last month (November) and now the January due date is just around the corner. I am thinking about being homeless and all that might mean. I hate the thought of anyone being cold and hungry and wish I could snap my fingers and it would all go away.

Luckily, we who have accepted Christ are spared an eternity of being homeless. We have a definite place to be — on God's right hand. Halleluiah!

- Pray with all your strength.

The Prayer Team meets the first Monday of each month at 7 pm in the Prayer Room above the narthex. If you have joys or concerns that you would like us to pray about at any time, contact either Sue Chapman or Deb Kenes.



Senegal Mission Team Update

Hello supporters, friends, and family,

The ministry here is going very, very well. Our team has shared the Gospel at least a dozen times in the past two weeks. I was able to give the story of how I became a Christian to a student today (December 2). Tomorrow [Thursday], Dayton and I are meeting with two students, both Muslim background, to study John 1.

I really do not want to give a rosy picture of life and ministry in Dakar. I much prefer an honest picture. Senegal is frustrating because everything is slow. The pace of life is so leisurely. Little gets done on my time table. Personally, my energy is zapped throughout the day by continually being wrong when I speak — my French is good enough to communicate roughly, yet so broken that every sentence I speak contains at least a tiny error. Working all day to make myself understood is surprisingly exhausting. Moreover, the language barrier exhaustion is exacerbated by how obviously different I am relative to our students — materially, racially, culturally, linguistically, etc. It's hard not to feel like you don't belong.

At the same time, my team is very encouraged by momentum in campus ministry.

The more we share the Gospel, the more we learn to love our students. The more we love our students, the more Gospel sharing opportunities are brought before us by the Holy Spirit.

On the whole, our ministry is going very well. The joy and victories outweigh the difficulties. Dayton and I have been talking about and quoting Nehemiah 8:10 to one another, "The joy of the Lord shall be your strength." God's Word is so refreshing and such a place of refuge for our team. I'll be deep into John, Mark, and the Psalms right after I compose this email! Praise God for His Word. What a gift!

PRAYER REQUESTS:

- For the conversion of our students. May I be so straightforward? I know

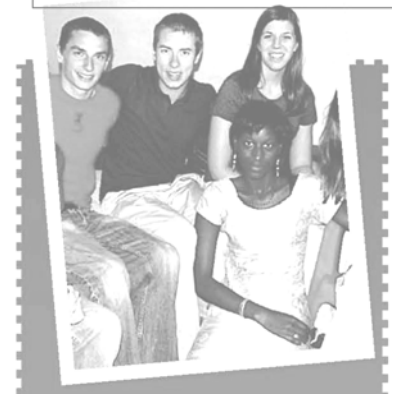
the word conversion grates against our ears and sensibilities. I am learning to not especially care if my 21st century American ears are offended by Gospel doctrine. John 3:3, "Jesus answered him, 'Truly, truly I tell you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.'" On the basis of this verse, please pray for pronounced life changes in our students through personal relationships with Jesus.

- Specific students: Mbagnick, Hermann, Pierre, and Alexe. Mbagnick and Alexe are the students studying the Gospel of John with me.
- Pray that my team love Jesus more than ministry. That is so true. Please ask the Lord to meet with us and remain our highest joy in Dakar.

*Yours in Christ,
Ben*

P.S. Exciting News! Thank you for all your prayers and emails. On December 11, Sophie, Sophie and Mama all gave their lives to the Lord. It was awesome! Ashley and Christy ran to our apartment right after their meeting to share the news. Our team has been careful not to push for decisions when we do not believe that the students understand the Gospel clearly. If this is any indication, Sophie said, "Thank you for telling us that Jesus is the only way to have a relationship with God." The girls want to know how to interact with their friends and Muslim girls. These girls are so brave, and I really admire their courage to follow the Lord. Although they will not face physical violence, they will face strong social and cultural pressure against worshipping Jesus as God.

Our team is encouraged and feels like we are just getting our feet wet with what God wants to do on our campus. We are again asking the Lord to see students born again this week. *Please join us in praying for more good news of conversion!*



Our Missionaries

DAKAR, SENEGAL:
Ben Ober (above, 2nd from left)

COORDINATOR OF THE AVIATION RESOURCE DEPT. FOR GBGM:
Steve & Gail Quigg

McCURDY SCHOOL:
Mr. & Mrs. Matt Nichols

HOME FOR REASSIGNMENT:
Chris & Martha Stockwell-Goering

New Hope Ministries Update

In addition to the FUMC food donations, Daybreak provided 2 Penske moving truck loads of food, followed by the Boy Scout food drive and St. Joe's. These put an abundance back on the all-but-bare shelves.

Many thanks to all who donated Thanksgiving baskets, food, turkeys, and turkey coupons. At least 50 households were provided for this Thanksgiving holiday.

Approximately 165 families will be blessed with a Christmas "basket" which contains the fixings for a wonderful holiday dinner. Thank you for the sweet potato donations.

In addition, approximately 150 families will be receiving gifts as part of the Adopt-A-Family program. Do remember to lift up these families in prayer.

Bouquet Blessing for Valentine's Day



GIVE THE BLESSING OF A BOUQUET of Flowers to a woman attending the Day of Pampering on February 27 (see page 13). When you donate \$20, the money will be used to buy a bouquet of flowers for a special woman attending this special day at First Church.

We will send a notification of your donation to Your Special Valentine and wish them a Happy Valentine's Day from you.

Your Name _____

Name and address of person to whom you want a notification card sent:

Name _____

Address _____

Please give this form, and a check for \$20, to Juanita Guise, made payable to *First United Methodist Church*. Her mailing address is: 331 West Meadow Drive, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055. Please do not leave it in her church mailbox. Deadline: January 30, 2010.

ALPHA Course Coming in February 2010

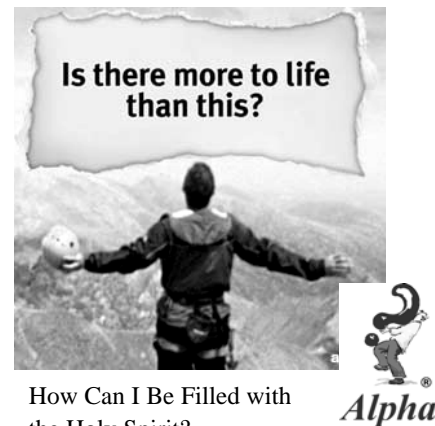
WHAT IS ALPHA? ALPHA is a small group study that more than 10 million people all over the world have completed.

ALPHA is a practical and exciting introduction to the Christian faith. It is an opportunity for anyone to explore the Christian faith and the meaning of life in a relaxed, nonthreatening setting over 10 weeks.

The course appeals to seekers of the Christian faith AND those believers who want to refresh and strengthen their faith journey.

The 10 sessions cover the following questions:

- Is There More to Life than This?
- Who Is Jesus?
- Why Did Jesus Die?
- How Can We Have Faith?
- Why and How Do I Pray?
- Why and How Should I Read the Bible?
- How Does God Guide Us?
- Who Is the Holy Spirit?
- What Does the Holy Spirit Do?



- How Can I Be Filled with the Holy Spirit?
- How Can I Resist Evil?
- Why and How Should I Tell Others?
- Does God Heal Today?
- What About the Church?
- How Can I Make the Most of the Rest of My Life?

MEETING TIMES:

Thursday Mornings & Evenings Begins February 4.

Other possible meeting times, if needed, will be announced in January.

Contact Juanita Guise at 766-2466 or kguise@comcast.net with questions.

Lent Devotional — 2010

We need brief devotionals for our 2010 Lent Devotional.

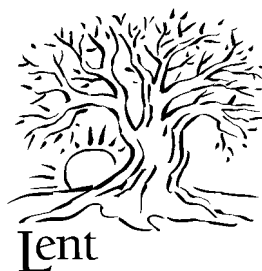
The focus this year is "Jesus Christ, First in All Things."

How has your faith in Jesus Christ changed your life? When did you meet or fall in love with Jesus?

Your sharing will give glory to our Lord and strengthen and encourage others.

If willing, please contact Juanita Guise at kguise@comcast.net or 766-2466 or sign up in the narthex.

Guidelines are in the lobby or available from Juanita. Deadline is January 15. (Lent begins in February this year.)



Servant Spotlight: Communion Stewards

SOME MEMBERS of First United Methodist Church are unable to attend weekly services for health reasons, but that does not mean they have to miss communion when it is offered.

Several First Church members volunteer as communion stewards. The stewards visit and deliver the communion elements to homebound or hospitalized members who simply cannot make the trip to church.

"It is a real joy and blessing to be a communion steward," said Deb Noss, a steward for two years. "You're being the hands and feet of Jesus."

"The communion elements are prepared by the Alter Guild," Deb explained. "That which is for the homebound is placed in special boxes and laid upon the altar when we take communion as a congregation. That way, all of the elements are consecrated, prayed upon and are in the presence of the church body during communion."

After the worship service, Deb and the other communion stewards take the boxes and visit their assigned member or members within a week. The stewards pray with them, administer the communion elements and recite the Biblical references explaining the elements.

But the stewards deliver much more than communion. They offer fellowship, friendship, an open ear and news about First Church.

"Many of our homebound members want the visitation and company," Deb said. "They want to know what's going on at church, for example, what babies have been born or what the sermons have been about."

"Sometimes it's a brief visit, and sometimes I am there for hours," Deb added.

Currently, there are 15 communion stewards within First Church. More volunteers are always needed. Youth are welcome to volunteer if an adult is available to accompany them on visits.

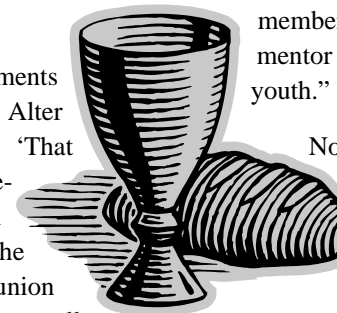
"We have found that having a youth/parent communion steward combination works great," Pastor Lucretia said. "Youth have an opportunity to form a meaningful relationship with an older church member, and our older church members have an opportunity to mentor and be connected with our youth."

No formal training is required to become a communion steward, and the pastors will gladly work with anyone who is interested.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

More communion stewards, both adults and youth, are always welcome! To volunteer, contact Pastor Lucretia at lucretia@fumchurch.com or at 766-4611, ext. 107.

"*Servant Spotlight*," a monthly column in *First News First*, highlights a committee or ministry group within First Church. Our goal is to recognize them, and help our congregation better understand how each committee/group enhances First Church. If you are interested in featuring your committee or ministry group in "*Servant Spotlight*," please contact Tina Eaton, Congregational Care Coordinator, at 766-4611, ext. 104, or wecare@fumchurch.com.



"Get My People Going!" — An Invitation to Wholeness

YOU ARE INVITED to take a healthy lifestyle challenge with others from our congregation that will take place from January 17 through March 7, 2010. This "invitation to wholeness" encourages you to identify small changes in your lifestyle which would help you be healthier. **You** choose three areas you would like to work on, and **you** set your own goals. **We** will encourage each other, and **we** will journey together.

Members of the Health & Wellness Committee — Nancy Rouch, Brenda Eckert, Flossie Ryder, Debbie Karns, and Tina Eaton — will be glad to answer any questions you might have about the program. You will receive a small packet of materials when you sign up. **Come to the kick-off "Healthy Habits" health lectures either on January 10 or 17 and sign up for the program.**



Blessings on your journey, Health & Wellness Committee

StrongWomen Strength Training Program Offered!

Classes will be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays, between January 26 and March 18, from 6:30 – 7:30 pm in Room B-003. An informational session for all those interested in participating will be held on Tuesday, January 19, 2010 at 6:30 pm in Room B-003. Mandatory paperwork must be completed by new and past participants in order to participate in the program. Fee is \$60. For more information or to register, contact Nancy Rouch at the Penn State Cooperative Extension office at 240-6500 or at home at 258-8954.



Registration Form for Women's Retreat Feb. 5-7, 2010

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Phone _____

Cell _____

Email _____

Allergies or diet restrictions: _____

Medications: _____

Emergency contact: _____

Phone: _____

\$25 deposit enclosed
(to be paid in full by 1/15/10)

\$100 total fee enclosed
(if paying after 1/15/10)

Is this your first retreat?

Yes No

"Follow the Yellow Brick Road Home!"

WOMEN'S RETREAT

February 5 — 7, 2010
Mt. Asbury Retreat Center
All women are invited!

JOIN US IN FEBRUARY at the brand new Mt. Asbury Retreat Center in Newville for our women's retreat. Our leader, Wanda Jacobs, will help us to "follow the yellow brick road home" with topics such as:

- If I only had a Brain like Solomon,
- If I only had a Heart like David,
- If I only had Courage like Daniel.

Program starts on Friday evening at 7 pm and concludes on Sunday at noon. Hotel-like accommodations and 4 meals included.

You don't want to miss this exciting opportunity to make new friends, grow in Christ and have fun! Sign up now as space is limited!

The Retreat fee is \$100. A \$25 deposit is required to reserve your space. Fees include a two-night stay and 4 meals. All registrations are due by January 15. Scholarships are available.

Please make checks payable to FUMC with "women's retreat" in the memo section. Registrations may be mailed to Patti Herring at 613 Lavina Drive, Mechanicsburg, 17055 or can be placed in the Scrip Box near the coffee area. (Please do not place checks in her mailbox).

If you have questions, please call Patti Herring at 795-9721 or email her at familyzeke@verizon.net.

2010 Men's' Retreat

If you have never been to the Men's Retreat before, now is your chance to experience one of the best ways to get to know yourself, your Christian brothers, and your God. The fellowship and informal programming is well-balanced with free time to do your own thing

We have reserved the lodge for the weekend of January 8 and would like to welcome some new men this year. Don't delay, sign up today. Contact John Bowen at 796-0809 or jjgbowen@yahoo.com with any questions.

John Bowen

Leadership Event Scheduled for January 16

IT TAKES MANY, MANY PEOPLE TO BE INVOLVED IN GROWING AND OPERATING AS THE BODY OF CHRIST!

Recently we elected and identified the leadership of our congregation for the coming year. Our church leadership is composed of elected positions to ongoing church committees, as well as the creation of teams who gather for specific needs in the Church. The Ministry Area Teams in our church will continually be adding membership during the year as necessitated by their ministry. This means that ALWAYS there is a place to get involved in the leadership of our church!

On January 16, from 9-11 am, in the Fellowship Hall we will hold a LEADERSHIP EVENT. All newly elected leaders, all members of Ministry Area Teams, as well as anyone who might wish to become part of a Team are strongly encouraged to attend. So, mark your calendars now.

If you wish any further information, contact Pastor Lucretia or Pastor Mike. See you there!

Disability Awareness Sunday

DANIEL BRENTEN MEGEE is a 12th grade homeschool student who was diagnosed with Autism at the age of 4. As a young child Brenten had great difficulty with both receptive and expressive language skills. At age 4 he was tested to have the language skills of a 7 month old. He did not respond to his name or use language to communicate, because he did not even understand that talking was a form of communication. But remember that with great difficulties God also brings special blessings. Brenten could sing. Even when he couldn't talk, he could sing. Not only could he sing, but the Lord gave him perfect pitch.



Brenten began studying voice and by age ten he began appearing locally, sharing his love for the Lord in song. Today Brenten celebrates 7 years in solo music ministry. He is a member of 6 choirs, including the Lancaster Symphony Chorus. He appears as a soloist at many area churches, Water Street Rescue Mission, and the Willow Valley Chapel. Brenten also performs solo concerts where he shares God's message of love to all through song. He has had the privilege of singing with Christian recording artists Steve Green, Damaris Carbaugh, and Marie Barlow Martin.

On January 31, during the Sunday School hour, Brenten and his mom will be sharing a message of hope and victory through times of challenge and blessing. How can you have victory in times of trial? You'll just have to come to find out!

Along with Brenten and his mother, a special speaker will address the congregation in both morning services on this special day designated to help us in ministering to those with disabilities. More information will be forthcoming throughout the month of January.

Youth Calendar for January

JANUARY 3
9:30 am - Sunday School
5:30 pm - Social time
6 pm - Junior High Small groups
6 pm - Senior High Bible study
JANUARY 8-9
Confirmation retreat at the church
JANUARY 10
9:30 am - Sunday School
5:30 pm - Social time
6 pm - Service project
7 pm - Choir
JANUARY 11
6 pm - Youth Activities Council (YAC) Meeting in the Youth Lounge
JANUARY 17
9:30 am - Sunday School
5:30 pm - Social time
6 pm - Junior High Small groups
6 pm - Senior High Bible study
7 pm - Choir Psalm 150
JANUARY 24
9:30 am - Sunday School
5:30 pm - Social time
6 pm - Combined Youth Fellowship
7 pm - Choir
JANUARY 31
6 pm - Tubing at Ski Roundtop (meet at church)

Youth Sleepout Results

This note was dropped in one of the milk jugs that the youth used to collect money on the night of the Sleepout for the Homeless:

Thank you for doing what you're doing. I just moved out of a homeless shelter and am currently unemployed, but thanks be to God the housing authority helped me get into an apartment in Carlisle. Now my two daughters have their own room and I have a kitchen where I can cook and bake, a place we can call HOME.

My church home is Grace UMC in Carlisle; they kept me lifted up. We lived in the Safe Harbor Homeless shelter for one year. Our room was small with a bathroom, no kitchen.

I feel so blessed, and I wish I could do more. God Bless all of you for doing what you're doing.

What a reminder of the purpose for the Sleepout! Over \$8,200 was collected for New Hope to use as they minister to families in need. Thank you to all who gave in so many ways!

Impact '10 T-Shirt Contest



- Salt'n Light accepting designs until January 15.
- The theme is: "Go," based on Matthew 28:19-20.
- Contest open to all youth.
- Winner gets \$50 cash, two Impact '10 passes, and six free T-shirts.
- Game on!

Wonderful Wednesday

Wonderful Wednesday's Spring Term Begins January 13

Pick up a registration form for the Passion Play and for Wonderful Wednesday at the Welcome Desk or Register Online!

Passion Play

(You may participate in the Passion Play and not in Wonderful Wednesday.)

Practice begins on February 10.

Mark your Calendar!

Passion Play:
Wednesday, March 31
at 7 pm

Questions? Contact Leslee Delong

FUM All-Church Family Roller Skating

Saturday, January 30
from 4:30 - 6:30

Olympic Skating Center
60 Shady Lane, Enola

Admission is FREE.
Skate rental is available.



Mark Your Calendar for Vacation Bible School 2010

GALACTIC BLAST!

A COSMIC ADVENTURE PRAISING GOD
JUNE 21-25, 9 AM — NOON

CADETS WILL VOYAGE INTO OUTER SPACE praising God. Through daily missions, kids will see space like never before, gain a new perspective on our planet Earth, and learn easy "green" earth tips they can practice at home. This cosmic combination of faith and fun will have cadets developing a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

Tween Fellowship (4th-6th grades)

Tween Fellowship combines fellowship with friends with play, a brief Bible message, prayer, and a service project. Tweens are learning how to balance the demands of academics, sports, and friendships. Time with God and family are essential too. Our goal is to help Tweens and families nurture their relationship with God and one another.

If you are in 4 - 6 grade you are invited to join us on Sunday, January 24, for Tween Fellowship. We will meet in the multipurpose room at 5:30 pm. Please come and join the fun and help us make a difference! Bring your friends too! Mom and Dad can plan to pick you up at 7 pm.

Floor Hockey

IT'S HOCKEY SEASON! Once again FUMC will be sponsoring Indoor Floor Hockey on Thursday nights in the multipurpose room from 7 to 8 pm We will begin on January 14 and conclude March 11.

We will combine the sessions again and invite boys and girls in grades 6 through 10 to participate. No experience is necessary as we will start everyone out with basic fundamentals and drills and then play pick-up games each week. Bring your sneakers and some energy. We will supply all other equipment.

If you have any questions about the program, please contact Nancy or Mark Rouch at 258-8954 or via email at mwrner@aol.com. If you are interested in helping out and/or providing some additional adult supervision, please let us know. We would be glad to have the assistance.

Help First Church Launch VBS Into Orbit!

VOLUNTEER! Vacation Bible School is a huge outreach event to children and their families in our community. Adult and youth volunteers are needed in all areas. Consider how you can use your gifts and talents to make VBS 2010 a success. Teachers and helpers are needed for all ages and in Recreation, Craft, Music, and Snack. Contact Kim Vensel to sign on to our galactic voyage.

Volunteer now for VBS 2010!

Camping News

Those who have been campers or had children who were campers this past year should be receiving a new camping brochure from the Conference Office. Additional brochures will be available at the church.

WOW — even as we celebrate Christ's birth and the New Year, the "camping elves" are preparing the Holy Grounds of our camps for those of us who will participate. I can't wait to sign all of you up for this year's camping experience! Happy New Year to you all!

Deb Noss
Camping Coordinator
sdppp@msn.com or 697-5982

Guess what I learned in Sunday School!

JANUARY 3

Three-year-olds — Grade 5: The Wise Men, Matthew 2:1-12, Jesus' birth changed the world. God's love is for everyone. God sent Jesus to be the Messiah for the whole world. Jesus is God's gift to all people. "We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him." Matthew 2:2



6th Grade: The Temptation of Jesus, Luke 4:1-13; Jesus shows us the way to resist temptation. "It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and only serve him.'" Luke 4:8

JANUARY 10

Three-year-olds — Grade 5: Mary and Martha, Luke 10:38-42, Mary knew that the most important thing for her to do was to listen to Jesus. Learning about Jesus is very important. Jesus teaches us what is important in our lives. We need to give Jesus priority in our lives. "Teach me your way, O Lord." Psalm 27:11

Grade 6: Jesus' Ministry Begins, Matthew 4:12-17; Mark 1:14-15; Luke 4:14-30, Through Jesus we recognize our need for repentance. "From that time Jesus began to proclaim, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.'" Matthew 4:17

JANUARY 17

Three-year-olds — Grade 5: Woman at the Well, John 4:1-42, Jesus loves everyone. Jesus teaches that God loves all people. Jesus shows us what God's love is like. Jesus is the Messiah God sent to show us the way. "Love one another." John 13:34

Grade 6: Calling the Twelve, Matthew 4:18-22, 9:9-13,10:1-4, Mark 1:16-20, 2:13-17; 3:13-19 Luke 5:1-11,6:12-19, John 1:43-51, We are called to follow Jesus. "And Jesus said to them, 'Follow me and I will make you fish for people.'" Mark 1:17

JANUARY 24

Three-year-olds — Grade 5: Jesus and the Rich Young Man, Matthew 19:16-23, Loving Jesus is the most important thing I can do. We love God more than anything else. Jesus teaches that disciples serve God. Loving God and Jesus makes you richer than having money. "As for me and my house we will serve the Lord." Joshua 24:15

6th Grade: Jesus' Teachings, Matthew 5-7, 22:37-39, What we value most determines how faithful we will be to God. "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Matthew 6:21

JANUARY 31

Three-year-olds — Grade 5: Peter Knows Who Jesus Is, Matthew 16:13-20, Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the living God. We recognize that Jesus is the Son of God. "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Matthew 16:16

6th Grade: Jairus' Daughter, Matthew 9:18-26, Jesus taught us the power of faith. "Hear my prayer, O Lord; let my cry come to you." Psalm 102:1



The Children's Department is eager to welcome you and your children to Sunday School. Sunday School classes are available for all children and adults. Sunday School gives everyone the opportunity to fellowship and learn more about God in a small group setting. The Sunday School hour begins at 9:30 am and ends at 10:30 am.

Classes for Newborns and children through Pre-Kindergarten are located on the first floor of the Children's Department. Check in with the greeter who will guide you to the classroom. Pagers are also available from the greeter. This enables the Sunday School or Worship childcare staff to contact you if your child needs you.

It is appreciated if you would complete an "All About..." form for your family. Please return forms to Kim Vensel or the church office. This enables the Sunday School staff to get to know your family better. We are blessed to have teams of teachers working together during the Sunday School hour. They have dedicated their time and energy to share their faith and God's love with your children. Please get to know them and feel free to call upon them.

Thank you ...

to everyone who gave to support Operation Christmas Child. This year First Church sent 200 shoebox gifts!

