

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
DECEMBER 08, 2008

The story is told of a teacher who was celebrating her eightieth birthday. It turned out to be a marvelous occasion. Many of her former students came back to celebrate with her. It was obvious that her former students held her in high esteem.

This lady had taught in one of the worst sections of Baltimore. Before she came to teach at this particular school there had been instances of juvenile crime and delinquency, but when this teacher came to the school things began to change. The change became noticeable over time with so many of this lady's students turning out to be good citizens, men and women of very good character. Some became doctors. Others became lawyers. Some became educators with others becoming ministers, and many becoming honorable craftsmen and skilled technicians. It was no accident that so many of her students remembered her on special occasions like her eightieth birthday. They owed this lady a debt of gratitude.

It so happened that a newspaper got wind of this eightieth birthday celebration, and the paper sent a reporter to cover the occasion and write a story about it. Among the questions the reporter asked this teacher was what her secret was that made her teaching so rewarding and so respected. This modest woman replied, "Oh, I don't know. When I look at the young teachers in our schools today, so well-equipped with training and learning, I realize that I was ill-prepared to teach. I had nothing to give but love."

In the First Letter of John we find these words. "Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way. God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins" (I John 4:8-10). The Gospel of John says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life" (John 3:16).

Jesus came into the world and gave a lot of things, but he primarily gave love. Jesus loved so much that he gave himself. What Jesus had primarily to give was love - God's love and his love.

Isaiah 61 says, "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion - to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit" (Isaiah 61:1-3a). In the New Testament we find that the Gospels say this of Jesus (Luke 4:18-19). He is this one. Jesus brings joy to our hearts because Jesus comes giving love - God's love.

And so we find Advent to be a season in which we celebrate joy as well as hope. Christ brings joy to our lives because Christ brings his love to our hearts, and in receiving Christ's love there is indeed rejoicing. Just

something for us to think about in this Advent Season.

Until next time, **Bro. Jim**

CHRISTIANS CONNECT

Please join us for Christians Connect this Sunday, following the 8:15 a.m. service in the Friends & Fellowship classroom. This month's Christian's Connect will be hosted by the Jerry Thomas and the Stellar Classes.

CONFIRMATION CLASSES

In the early part of next year, we will offer a Confirmation Class, if there is enough interest. The class will be for 6th grade and up. If your child is interested, please contact Alecia Fischer or the church office.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT STUDY

Our Wednesday night study, beginning January 21st, will be "Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations" by Bishop Robert Schnase. The study will include a devotional book that each participant will need to read daily. We would encourage as many adults as possible to join in this study on Wednesday nights, and we need to know who might be interested so we know the number of books to order. Please let us know at the church office if you plan to participate in the study.

READ ALL ABOUT IT, "A NIGHT IN BETHLEHEM" WAS A HUGE SUCCESS!!!

Well we pulled it off; our first annual "A Night in Bethlehem" was a huge success. We had around 330 guests that came and experienced Bethlehem this past Saturday and Sunday in the CLC. Comments that were heard, "Breathtaking", "beautiful", "My Kids loved the crafts". We also had around 60 people working as Crafters, Bakers, Actors, Greeters, Set Builders, and Decorators. \$71 cash was donated to Loaves and Fishes along with several cans of food. I want to personally thank everyone who was involved with "A Night in Bethlehem"; it took a village to raise a town and we did it! Thank you. I look forward to our second annual "A Night in Bethlehem" next year. We helped many people to make Christmas and Christ a little more real in this hectic Christmas season.

Peace, **Alecia Fischer**

LOAVES AND FISHES MINISTRY

For those who currently aren't working in the daytime and would like to participate in one of the most active ministries at First UMC, you might consider volunteering in the Loaves and Fishes ministry. The food pantry is open two days a week, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. Two volunteers work on those days. Due to the economy, we are seeing more and more people in the community who need help. We also give donated coats away. The food pantry is so busy some days that three people are needed to work. If you feel you could donate some time to the pantry, please contact Jerry Gibbs or the church office. Your help is much appreciated. We are giving away coats as fast as we can get them. We need all sizes (especially large) in adult and children. Thank you for your support of this ministry.

NOTES OF THANKS

Dear First United Methodist,

Thank you so much for my finals care package. In such a stressful time of the semester, it is very uplifting to be reminded of people who care about you. I feel very blessed to be part of such a thoughtful and supportive church family. The snacks and goodies will definitely come in handy during long hours in the library. Thanks again!

Fondly, **Kate Boston**

Thank you very much to all who helped provide a meal for the family of Mrs. Martha Looney this past weekend during the time of her funeral. Your kindness was much appreciated by her family. Thank you again for your help.

Mary Ann Clayton

WARMTH IN WINTER

All youth 7th-12th grades are invited to attend the Tennessee Conference annual Warmth in Winter, January 30th - February 1st in Nashville. We will be taking a group and if you are interested, please contact Alecia. Deadline to sign up is December 31, 2008. The cost is \$60.

CELL PHONE RECYCLING

The Youth will be collecting Cell Phones until the end of the year. Bring your old cell phones to church and the youth will recycle the phones, (and earn a little cash in the process AND help the environment!) We are collecting only phones, no cords, no chargers, **ONLY PHONES.**

NEW CHURCH COOKBOOKS AVAILABLE

If you are looking for a great (and reasonable) Christmas gift or gifts for someone, you may want to pick up a copy of the new First United Methodist Church cookbook. The cookbook, which sells for \$8.00, is filled with wonderful recipes from appetizers to main dishes to desserts. There are also sections on side dishes, breads and rolls, cookies and candy, and even a this & that section. Cookbooks may be purchased in the church office Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. until noon, and 1:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m.

LOAVES AND FISHES MINISTRY

For those who currently aren't working in the daytime and would like to participate in one of the most active ministries at First UMC, you might consider volunteering in the Loaves and Fishes ministry. The food pantry is open two days a week, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. Two volunteers work on those days. Due to the economy, we are seeing more and more people in the community who need help. We also give donated coats away. The food pantry is so busy some days that three people are needed to work. If you feel you could donate some time to the pantry, please contact Jerry Gibbs or the church office. Your help is much appreciated.

REMEMBER AMATITAN IN YOUR CHRISTMAS GIVING

Please remember to include the children of Amatitan in your Christmas giving. Because of the gifts last year more than 150 students were able to attend school. The gift of an education is the one thing they will always have and the only way to help them break the cycle of poverty in which they were born. This is truly one gift that you can give that is truly appreciated, keeps on giving, and won't be returned.

"A NIGHT IN BETHLEHEM" PICTURES FEATURED ON CHURCH WEBSITE

Pictures from "A Night in Bethlehem" are now featured on the church's website (thank you to Teresa Glover for doing this). Be sure and check them out at:

<http://lawrenceburgfumc.com>

WITH ONE ANOTHER

David Robertson
Freddie Mae Jackson
Oscar and Agnes McCarter
Bill Evans
Edythe Edwards
Robert White
Elmer Hackney
Scottie McMackin
Rev. Clifton Johnston
Ruby Lopp
T. J. Moore
David Shaw
Meredith Nordin
Norman Marston
Evelyn Gallaher

Cathy Skinner
 Daniel & Leslie Hunt
 Shelia Moore
 El James
 Scott Dean
 Willodean Grinnell
 Elmer Cooke
 Dave Hancock

...We extend our love and sympathy to Mrs. Wilma Morrison and her family on the loss of her brother-in-law who lived in Memphis.

SPRING MISSION TRIP

Anyone who is interested in a Spring mission trip to the Henderson Settlement is asked to contact Jerry Gibbs or Alecia Fischer (762-3696).

LOST AND FOUND

A leather glove (black, lined, right hand) was found at the church on Sunday. The brand name on the tag is Merona-size XL. If you are missing a glove, please contact the church office at 762-3696.

A ladies watch was found in the church van. The brand is Amitron and has gold and silver links.

One pair of Nike (Elite) size 11, athletic shoes were left in the CLC. North Carolina blue and white.

††††††††††††††††††††††††††††††

**I Will Be Loyal
 To The United Methodist Church And
 Support It With: My Presence:
 Sunday, December 07, 2008**

8:15 a.m. Worship Attendance.....29
 Sunday school Attendance.....75
 10:30 a.m. Worship Attendance.....111

**My Service: Sunday, Dec. 14, 2008
 Acolytes: J. P. Story & Lucy Benson**

Nursery Helper:

Loaves and Fishes: Tues. & Thurs.

Tues. Dec. 16: Loulie Brown & Gracie Henson
Thurs. Dec. 18: Jean Robertson & Volunteer needed

LOAVES & FISHES MINISTRY UPDATE

...We are always in need of more volunteers in the Loaves and Fishes Ministry. If you would like to help, please contact the church office.

...The Loaves and Fishes Ministry is giving away donated coats as fast as we get them. If you have any coats to donate, please drop them by the church. Large sizes are especially needed (all ages).

See You At Christians Connect-Sunday

††††††††††††††††††††††††††††††

