



TIDINGS

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A Letter Home...

Dear Mom, So much has been happening around here lately I thought I would give you an update. Christmas seems to have blown through like a whirlwind and left a path for us to follow if we're able to stay focused.

During Advent this year we focused on those gifts that make Christmas a life changing experience. I'm sure Christmas was a life-changing event for Joseph, Mary, the shepherds and the Magi, so why not us? I'm troubled that many people spend more time looking for bargains and less time looking for a reason. I don't know about you, but I think Christmas is beginning to look a lot more like Halloween, all dressed up but lacking a reason. We decorate our homes in evergreen and tinsel, we give and get gifts we really don't need, and then we breathe a sigh of relief when it's over. I really hope that as a church we can begin to change that attitude.

I think this year's Children's Christmas Pageant was a great start. "Photos of Christmas" was simply magical. Having all the kids singing their hearts out and dressed as shepherds, angels, camels and donkeys was a wonderful reminder of how much Christmas engages all of us in a conspiracy of wonder.

Tonight we're going caroling at the nursing home and deliver stuff bears that have been in our sanctuary all during advent. Each Sunday morning we encourage people to hug on, bless and love each bear as a reminder to shut-ins that they are neither forgotten nor unimportant. In many ways they are the reason why Christmas exists at all! Immanuel – God with us. No matter where we are God finds us.

Earlier this fall the whole church participated in a church-wide fall stewardship series called "Treasures of a

Transformed Life." The purpose of the study was to remind us why we're the church. You might think this would be obvious, but it's not. Our church is sort of a melting pot of all kinds of faith traditions and all kinds of expectations of what church means. When anyone joins our church they make a vow to honor Christ through their prayer, presence, gifts and service to the church. We feel membership vows are sacred and reflect the same kind of vow couples make to one another at a wedding.

Of course just like many marriages, over time we get distracted by lesser things and forget our vows, our dreams, and our passion. I remember my confirmation at St. Luke's almost 35 years ago, but to tell you the truth I really don't remember much of what I said. So I need to be reminded again and again (like cleaning up my room or saying 'thank you') by people who have a bigger perspective and my best interest at heart. Without these little reminders and a commitment on my part, I know my faithfulness will grow cold and eventually go out altogether. I've seen that happen this year to people I respect and it really breaks your heart. I've found that most people don't really reject Christ, the church or making life better for others; they just kinda get sidetracked by little things until they are in a place they don't know how to escape from. For many, even the security of being miserable is more appealing than the uncertainty of changing, so they stay trapped in a prison of their own making. Hence the reason for Christmas!

Well I've probably told you more than you want to know but I wanted to let you know that there are a lot of amazing people here who continue to inspire me and motivated me to keep Christmas alive throughout the year. All in all, not a bad goal.

See you next week,



George Wells, Dick Blauvelt, Cricket Roberts, Mark Epperly, Elouise Blouir, June Buchanan, Bill Huggins, Virginia Branson, Dolly Palmer

With Sincere Sympathy...

To the family of Nancy Bobbitt following the death of her sister, Louise Smith, on December 14.

The family of Evelyn Hisgen, following her death on September 8

The family of Geneva Bucey following her death on Dec. 22

Tammy Burge and Family following the death of her uncle.

WITH A JOYFUL AND GLAD HEART PLEASE WELCOME TO OUR CHURCH FAMILY...

Caron Barnard:
29 Granada Circle, Parkersburg WV 26104

Eric, Lynn, Elissa & Isabelle Erb
310 West Fourth Street, Williamstown, WV 26187

Serving in Our Military

Ryan Cutright (Navy)
8600 Glenmyrtle Ave
Apt. 2812
Norfolk, VA 23505

Schad Gates (Navy)
6540 Reflection Dr.
Unit 1224
San Diego, CA 92124

Dan Parks
CRM 445, Box 648
APO AE 09046-0648

Mason Wilfong (Marines)
Corp. Wilfong, Mason F.
2D Recon, B.Co.
PSC Box 20138
Camp LeJeune, NC 28542

2010-2011 College Students

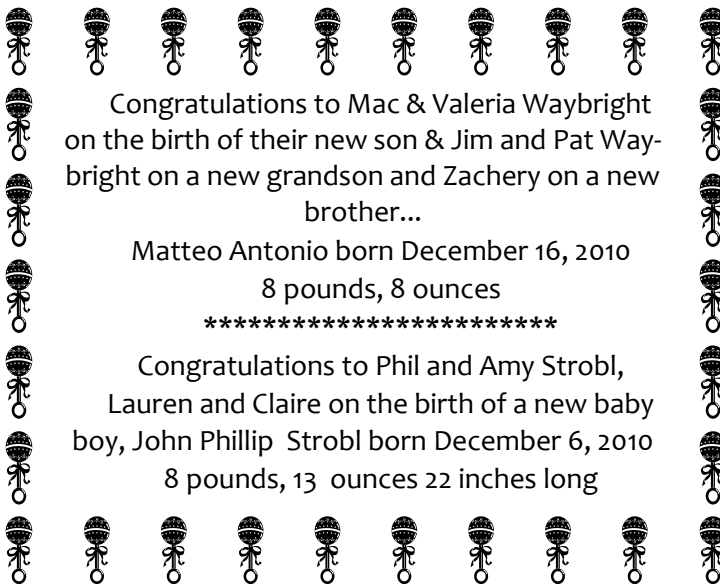
So sorry! I left out a College Student Address last month!

Anna Webb: MSC 2043, WVV College
59 College Ave, Buckhannon, WV 26201

Congratulations!

Liz Sexton placed first in her grade in the Math Competition

Rex Bush was awarded the
Melvin Jones Award from the Lions Club.
Previous winners include Gale Hall and Charles Pickens



Congratulations to Mac & Valeria Waybright on the birth of their new son & Jim and Pat Waybright on a new grandson and Zachery on a new brother...

Matteo Antonio born December 16, 2010
8 pounds, 8 ounces

Congratulations to Phil and Amy Strobl, Lauren and Claire on the birth of a new baby boy, John Phillip Strobl born December 6, 2010
8 pounds, 13 ounces 22 inches long

DON'T MISS OUR YOUNG AT HEART LUNCHEON—JAN. 7, NOON

BRrrrrrrrr! It's cold outside but the weather inside is delightful. Join us for Soup and sandwiches and the warmth of fellowship with friends and family. Be sure and bring a friend!



Share some TLC with our Homebound Church family!

Everyone enjoys receiving visits and mail from a friend or family member. Please don't forget our church family that are unable to join us for church events and activities. A simple card that says I'm thinking about you can brighten a day or, even better a stop by and visit! Addresses are available upon request at the church office!

Tidings as a Communication Tool?

The Tidings newsletter is an opportunity for Ministry chairs and church family to share the news and stories that are important to them and the life of our church. Have your ministries been busy? Are their joys or accomplishments that you want to share with your church family? Please take advantage of this opportunity to share your stories! Tidings deadline is the 20th of each month. Please drop your information off at the church office as early as possible or, BETTER YET, email it to fumcwmst@yahoo.com so that it may be included and shared with everyone on our mailing list! Don't miss out on this FREE opportunity to share your news!

FUMC MINISTRY TEAMS SHARE THEIR STORIES!


Activities for December

26 poinsettias have been purchased for Christmas Eve. Arrived on Dec. 23rd
Sanctuary Christmas Trees and decorations are donated gifts to the church.

Sound System upgrade is also an anonymous donation.

Christmas Calendars were approved and 150 will be ordered. Cost: \$540

Communion on January 2 has been postponed until January 9th

Joe Webb will be preaching on January 2

Blessings of the Home will take place on January 9th

Worship Budget has been set at \$4,200 for 2011

Worship Expenses YTD: \$2,496

Choir Director—[a volunteer position]

Purpose: To develop and direct the Adult choir at the 11 am service

Participate as an active member of First United Methodist Church and be a spiritual centered growing Christian with the ability to work well with others.

Select music for choir to sing and hold choir rehearsal as often as they deem necessary.

Direct choir three Sundays per month. Lead hymns during Sunday Services. Assist the Worship team as needed with Special Music.

Coordinate with the Worship Team, accompanist(s), organists, pastor and guest speakers. Keep in touch with the Office Staff to provide any hymn numbers, names of music or other details related to music at the choir service so that the Order of Worship may be prepared in a timely manner. The Choir Director (upon approval with the pastor) may select or suggest hymns for upcoming services. Familiarity with the Hymnal is essential.

Encourage people to join the choir, either by open call or by audition.

Encourage other instrumentalists in the church and the larger community to accompany the choir.

Lead music for special services which includes Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and Thanksgiving services.

Purchase or otherwise obtain music for the choir, staying within the annual music budget approved by the board.

Select inclusive music for performance, taking into account the varied skill levels of the choir members. The words of the music are crucial.

Supervise and provide direction to the accompanist(s)

This position is supervised by the Worship Team. Evaluations are performed and prepared jointly by the Pastor and SPRC with input from the Worship Team. The criteria for this position may develop and change over time per the mission of the church, in conjunction with the SPRC, Pastor and with input from the Worship Team. Although this is a "Volunteer" position, it is considered a staff position and is therefore under the direction of the SPRC in the matter of all personnel issues.

FUMC MINISTRY TEAMS SHARE THEIR STORIES! (CONT'D)



Over the past year, the Visitation Team has expanded in so many different directions that our name is no longer descriptive of all that we are doing. We have become an outreach into the lives of not only the shut-ins, but also, the lives of the sick, the grieving, and those seeking comfort.

Many of you have come to me indicating an interest in some facet of this ministry. You have shared new ideas of ways to help those in need of our support.

We have implemented a means of giving support to those who have lost a loved one. We are sending or delivering "Care Notes" which provide a lift when hopelessness and sadness takes over.

We hope to continue to provide entertainment to persons living in assisted living homes. Karen Young and her group of musically talented students are to be commended for the fine job that they have done sharing their talents.

Our Girl Scout Troop of Daisy's, under the direction of Tammy Burge, created Christmas decorations and wrote cards for some of our shut-ins. The Girl Scouts have always been so supportive of our mission and a big "THANKS" goes out to ALL of them.

We will continue to make a senior "Young at Heart" lunch available on the first Friday of each month (weather permitting) September thru May. Anyone wishing to help provide casseroles or entertainment should contact Marilyn Croucher at 304.375.6412.

Thanks to all of you for your help and support in 2010. I'm looking forward to making this outreach even better in 2011.

~Marilyn Croucher, Compassion Ministry Team Leader

Thanks to several new members of the Hospitality Team, we have been extremely busy in the past few months. Our team is busting with ideas and we are very excited to see what the New Year brings! Here is what we have been up to recently: Our team has been busy making coffee and decorating the MPR for Higher Grounds, keeping everyone warm and energized on Sunday mornings. We have had several new volunteers that have been taking turns bringing yummy goodies for Higher Grounds as well, making sure everyone's sweet tooth is satisfied. Our "clean up fairies" also stay after church to clean up the MPR. Thanks to these people, Higher Grounds continues to be a warm, welcoming place where members and visitors can enjoy fellowship between worship services.



The Greeters show up early every Sunday to give a smile and offer a hand shake to everyone who passes through our doors. No matter what the weather, our team of friendly greeters are waiting at each entrance to ensure a warm welcome to all who come to worship at FUMC. Next time a greeter opens the door for you on a Sunday morning, make sure to thank them for all they do.

The Hospitality Team has been very busy during Advent getting the It's A Boy yard signs available for the congregation. According to Pastor Steve, we had a visitor come to Sunday worship service after seeing these signs. She wanted to be a part of a church that could spread the Good News of His birth. What a wonderful blessing!

The Hospitality Team has also organized several fellowship dinners, the most recent one was in celebration of the Children's Christmas Pageant. To prepare for these meals, our team works overtime to set up tables, decorate, serve, make drinks, shop, and clean up. Thanks to all who help out in the kitchen and everyone who has contributed food to share at the fellowship meals. These meals are always a wonderful way for us to break bread as a church family and become closer to each other while we fill our bellies with yummy food.

The Hospitality Team has had a wonderful year and I would like to personally thank everyone on the team, as well as the "hospitality helpers" and greeters for making our ministry a success. We have so many wonderful blessings to look forward to in 2011 and we are excited to see what He has in store for us!

May God Bless You, Indeed!

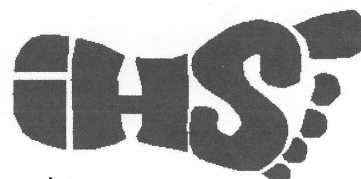
~Jennifer Fenton, Hospitality Ministry Team Leader

FUMC MINISTRY TEAMS SHARE THEIR STORIES! (CONT'D)

FUMC Youth Ministries served approximately 30 students in 2010 (12-18 attended Sunday School and/or Sunday Night Youth Group on a regular basis, including 4-6 students whose families do not attend FUMC). Sunday School & Youth Group lessons included overview studies of the Old & New testaments; a study series on hunger, poverty & social justice; a series on the Sermon on the Mount; a series on the Exodus; and a series on the Advent story.

FUMC Youth also participated in a number of events and activities in 2010, including:

- Youth Sunday (January)
- T-shirts & Easter Eggs Fundraising project (February)
- Confirmation Class (Feb-May)
- 30-Hour Famine (March)
- Church Yard Sale (April)
- Waverly Elementary Scholarship Dinner Service Project/Fundraiser (May)
- Creation Festival (June)
- FUMC VBS (July)
- St. James Mission Team (July)
- Kids' games at Church Picnic (August)
- MOV Emmaus UNIFY Festival (August)
- Painted Youth Room (August)
- FUMC Ministry Fair (October)
- UNICEF Fundraising (October)
- Raked Leaves for FUMC members (Nov)
- Advent Conspiracy/Water for Haiti (Nov/Dec)
- Children's Ministry Parents' Night Out (Dec)
- Christmas Lock-In (Dec)
- Hug-a-Bear/Christmas Caroling (Dec)
- Christmas Angels Gift Ministry with FBCW (Dec)
- Narnia Movie Invite-A-Friend event (Dec)
- Compassion International Child Sponsorship (all year)



Seven adult volunteers comprise the Youth Ministry Team. They are: Joe Webb, Shelley Ash, Andrea Flowers, Darla Kerns, Tom O'Donohue, Brad Thomas, and Cristie Winkler. These volunteers teach classes (Sunday morning & evening), plan events & activities, manage the budget, coordinate duties with one another and with other adults/parents, drive students to & from events & activities, chaperone, cook & serve meals, shop for materials, make phone calls, send e-mails, manage social networking accounts for communicating with students & families, and perform many other tasks related to the management & administration of Youth Ministries for FUMC. They also often find themselves in the role of confidant/counselor, and sometimes even as a liaison between students and parents to deal with personal issues. Their families and spouses also contribute greatly in time, dedication and resources.

IHS (In His Steps) Youth Group is open to all students in grades 7-12. Sunday School classes are held every week at 10am and Sunday evening youth group meets at 5:30pm in the Youth Room above the MPR. Each Sunday evening session begins with a meal prepared by parents or other adults from the congregation, and includes lessons and activities related to scripture and living as followers of Jesus in the world.

For more information on youth ministries, or to volunteer to cook a Sunday evening meal or to help with any other event, please contact any member of the Youth Ministry Team.



I.H.S. and FUMC Raise Money for Living Water International

Nearly a year after the devastating earthquake near Port-au-Prince, Haitians are in the midst of a rapidly spreading cholera outbreak as a result of drinking dirty water. Every \$2,000 we raise will represent a new or repaired water well for a community in Haiti. Thanks to your generosity, \$3300 was raised for this great need. Thank You!

FUMC MINISTRY TEAMS SHARE THEIR STORIES! (CONT'D)



FUMC Children's Ministry

FUMC Children's Ministry Team has had a wonderful year. 2011 gives us another year of opportunities to love and lead kids to Christ, to reach children while shaping their hearts and minds, to teach the Bible in a kid friendly way, and to equip children to be Jesus followers. That's our goal. Our hope and wish for 2011 is that we are able to give our children a strong foundation in growth, both in attendance and spiritual commitment to the Lord. Children's Ministry has been blessed with great volunteers that give of their time, talents, and hearts during special events and on Sundays each week. Thank you so much! If you have a heart for children and would like to help guide them on their exciting journey into faith and a life with God, please contact Kianna Anderson. Listed below are some great opportunities coming up in 2011...

PALS Children's Church Volunteer (Training Available), Sunday School Teachers, and Nursery Caregivers—All of these opportunities are available on a rotating basis—most serving only 1 time a month!

Lent/Easter Event and Easter Egg Hunt, End of School Activities, and Vacation Bible School!

Take a leap of faith and join us on the journey of a lifetime—make a difference for a child!

JANUARY ACOLYTES

9am Blended Service

- January 2: Abby Stoveken
- January 9: Dean Underwood
- January 16: Lauren Sexton
- January 23: Ethan Young
- January 30: Jaylin Burge

11am Traditional Service

- January 2: Katie & Allison Pickering
- January 9: Luke Nelson & Emily Pickering
- January 16: Jillian Leo and Davis Haynes
- January 23: Corey McClung and Brady Ankrom
- January 30: Katie and Emily Pickering

Acolytes bring the light of the Lord into our church services each Sunday. What a special way for our children to serve! We want to thank all of our Acolytes for serving their church family in such a special way. We also wish to thank the parents who allow their children to serve the Lord each Sunday.

If your child is a second grader or older and would like to serve as an Acolyte in either service, please contact the church office.



DATES TO REMEMBER

Weekly Activities

Community Walking	M-F, 8:30am
Praise Band Practice	TH, 8:00am
Leap Ahead Learning Center	M- TH, 9:00am
Wednesday Women’s Bible Study	Wed, 9:30am
Girl Scout Troop	Mon, 3:00pm
Praise Band Practice	Fri, 4:30pm
I.H.S. Youth Group	Sun, 5:30pm
French Class	Tues, 6:00pm
Boy Scouts	Mon, 6:30pm
Handbell Practice	Tues, 6:30pm
Choir Practice	Wed, 6:30pm

Monthly Meetings

January 3	Trustees (7:00pm)
January 3	Program Leadership (7:00pm)
January 12	Church Council (7:00pm)

Monthly Activities

January 6	Faithgirlz (3:30pm)
	Sr. Lunch Set Up (5:30pm)
January 7	Senior Luncheon (12:00pm)
	Girl Scout Cookie Rally (6:00pm)
January 13	RSU Girl Scout Meeting (6:30pm)
	Cub Scouts (6:00pm)
	Girl Scout Leader Mtg (6:30pm)
January 15	Community Breakfast (8:00am)
	Cub Scouts (9:00am)
January 20	Faithgirlz (3:30pm)
	Cub Scouts (6:00pm)
	Soccer Club Meeting (7:30pm)
January 22	Community Breakfast (8:00am)
January 26	Sarah Circle (7:00pm)
January 27	WHS Testing (8:00am)
	Mary Martha Circle (1:00pm)
	Esther Ruth Circle (1:30pm)
	Cub Scouts (6:00pm)

Join us for Worship
 9am Blended Service
 11am Traditional Service

Contact us at
 304.375.6386
 Email: fumcwmst@yahoo.com

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARY CALENDAR

January 3	Virginia Branson, Matthew Young Allison Constable
January 4	Shirley Lutz, Carron Wilfong
January 5	DeEtta Epperly, Allison Gibbs
January 6	Nan Clarke
January 7	James Fenton, Chip Pickering, Jennie Parks
January 8	Karen Nicewarner
January 10	Lauren Blauvelt, Janet Hasty Austin Westfall
January 11	Scott, Lutz, Allen Sexton
January 13	Stefanie Nelson
January 14	Ellie Ash
January 19	Luke Ankrom
January 20	Pete Miller, Nathan Westfall Jessie Boley
January 21	*John & Tammy Burge, Bob Meadows
January 22	*Lloyd & Kelly Roberts AnnMarie McCallister, Karen Young
January 23	David Armstrong, Claire Strobl
January 24	Braden Wilfong, Bob Woodford Brooke Patterson
January 26	Craig Fenton, Corby Anderson
January 27	Warren Epperly
January 28	Abbie Gedon, Charlotte Gray, Cyndy Goldsworthy, Donna Parrish
January 29	Eddie Constable
January 30	Carole McCallister, Brady Ankrom
January 31	Brian Burge, Kathleen Varnar

JANUARY USHERS

9am Blended Service

Brian Burge, Fred Burge, Steve Bodnar

11am Traditional Service

January 2 & January 30:

Wes Clarke, Gene Duncan, Karen Fenton (WA)
 (Helpers Requested)

January 9:

Rex Bush, Ken Cox, Chris Henderhan, Jim Schmidt,
 Bob Woodford

January 16:

Wayne King, Jeff & Pam Middleton,
 Charles Pickens, Warren Epperly (WA)

January 23:

Rick Blauvelt, Larry & Marilyn Croucher, Tim Sayre,
 (Helpers Requested)

**First United Methodist Church
304 West Fifth Street
Williamstown, WV 26187
Return Service Requested**

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SPRING CLASSES OFFERED—SIGN UP NOW!

Gospel In Life, Grace Changes Everything

Gospel in Life is an invitation to all who seek to live the message of Jesus right here and right now... in our hearts, in our homes, and in the community around us.

(8 sessions) Thursday Evenings—6-7pm beginning January 6th-March 3—Cost \$8

Register by E-mail at stevegedon@yahoo.com

The Reason for God, Lenten Study

Timothy Keller meets with a group of skeptics to address their doubts and questions about Christianity. Using literature, philosophy, real-life experiences, and the Bible, we'll explore the truth of Christianity. This course will train you on how to deal with six of the most common questions from skeptics.

(6 sessions) Thursday evenings—6-7pm

beginning March 10-April 14th—Cost \$7

Register by E-mail at stevegedon@yahoo.com
or call the church office.

The Prodigal God— Finding Your Place at the Table

The Prodigal God explores Jesus' most familiar parable to find its surprising truth for believers and skeptics alike. Uncover the essential message of Jesus, locked inside his most familiar parable. Within that parable, Jesus reveals God's prodigal grace toward both the irreligious and the moralistic. This book will challenge both the devout and the skeptics to see Christianity in a whole new way. The Prodigal God is a revelation of the very heart of the gospel: *God's radical love for sinners of every kind.*

Six Sessions

Thursday Evenings, 6-7:00 pm Beginning April 28 - June 2

Cost: \$7 Register by E-mail at stevegedon@yahoo.com or call the church office.