

February 2012



the Messenger

Evangelical United Methodist Church

Pastor Ponders

Christmas 2011 in some ways seems such a long time ago. With most of our decorations and festivities gone for the holidays, I would be remised if I did not pause and say thank you to you the church family at Evangelical United Methodist Church.

Over the holidays, Barb and I have received many cards with beautiful thoughts, delicious and of course very healthy gifts from the kitchens of some of you, and paper certificates from local places that can transform the paper into a great meal.

We also appreciated the financial gift from the church family as one; though I was confused on the Sunday morning when you represented it to us.

Instead of sending Christmas greetings to all of you by mail, or email; we have given gifts of assistance to persons who wander by our church in need of help. One person is someone who I have known for years, and the gift caught him by surprise; and another person was someone who came by our church, because in years past when he was “down and out”, he came to this church and found the pastor and church to be so understanding. Hopefully the gift this time will do the same thing for him; even perhaps help him to have a taste of God’s love.

And now I share a word or two to ponder. With the first month of the new year almost completed, I want to share with you a small plaque that I have in my office. The words on it are:

Only as high as I reach, can I grow.

Only as far as I seek, can I go.

Only as deep as I look, can I see.

Only as much as I dream, can I be.

Since we are in the midst of basketball season, as a young boy I remember trying to jump high enough to touch the rim of the basketball hoop. You would keep trying, stretching, and jumping; each time asking your body to go just a little bit higher. If you never asked it (your body that is) you would have never touched the rim. If you never reached for it, the odds were that your growth would be limited and you would never accomplish it.

I am pondering what this reading, the plaque, might say to us about our life and our journey of faith. Reach a little higher in our goals of studying the Bible, like instead of saying I have read the Bible before or I will rely upon my spouse to tell me what is in the Good Book. I will reach a little higher and reread the four gospels in the Bible and write a few notes in the margins about my thoughts at this moment.

Look deeper in my relationships with those persons whom I love. As I say to couples who come by my office on their journey to get married; “keeping a household going has very little to do with love, it is really endurance that makes the difference”. My intent is not to shock them, but to have them think about the different parts of their relationship and how they can deepen intentionally their connection with each other.

And so in your pondering and praying, I invite you to consider the words of this small plaque and it might just lead you in the direction to grow in wisdom, in understanding, and in love as we journey together in the year of 2012.

Council Notes

The up-coming Lenten Season is going to be an inspiring journey with Christ here at EUM. The various programs will include our Sunday Evening schedule, a morning bible study, and possibly Community Lenten lunches with other United Methodist Churches of the area. Stay tuned to the church bulletin for further times and places.

Council also voted to pay off our loan with money in the Renovation Fund, hopefully putting us a little bit ahead financially.

The Christian Education Committee is looking for some people interested in helping with the children's Sunday School, Junior Church and the Coffeehouse Program. If you are interested in any way please contact Kim Schlicher, our Coordinator.

Pastor Graybill is looking for youth or adults interested in joining in membership with EUM. He is desirous of starting a Confirmation Class. Please contact him if you are interested or have any questions.

Community Dinners

A big thanks to everyone who helped with our community dinner, to those who furnished desserts, and to all who enjoyed the delicious roast beef dinner. Our pies were a big hit, as were the cakes and other specialties. We served 170 persons (including workers) and made a profit of \$632.71. According to our existing policy, the funds will be distributed as follows:

Dinner Fund share - \$316.35
Church share - \$158.18
Sunshine Fund share - \$158.18

Scheduled Community Dinners For February: (served 4:30-6:30 p.m.; \$7 adults; \$3 under 12 years of age)

February 6 - Presbyterian - Open faced hot roast beef sandwich
February 13 - St. Peters Lutheran - Chicken pot pie
February 20 - Evan - Chicken and waffles
February 27 - Church of God - Filled chicken breast

Lenten Bible Study

A Lenten Bible Study will be offered on Wednesday's at 10 a.m. and Thursday's at 7 p.m. beginning on February 22 by Pastor Graybill. The study will use as a guide the book, "Mosaic," that was written by Rev. Shane Stanford, senior pastor of Christ U.M. Church in Memphis, TN. He examines how God uses the broken pieces of our lives to be transformed into a beautiful mosaic of his love. As we journey along the path Jesus walked on his way to Jerusalem, it will give us an opportunity to see how our journeys can be similar; how at times we feel rejection, or experience restlessness and regrets; and when God is given the chance, a beautiful mosaic can be created.

Our gatherings each week will center on a key word for the week, with a daily reading of the Scriptures and a reflection upon our life as human beings.

A sign-up sheet has been posted on the bulletin board. Please sign up for the day you want to attend--Wednesday morning or Thursday evening. If you will have to miss a session at your preferred time, e.g. Wednesday, you will be able to make it up on Thursday since it will be the same on both days.

Senior Fellowship Schedule For 2012

February, March and April, Lenten Bible Study (Wednesday 10-11:30 a.m.)

February 29, 8 a.m. - Honorary senior breakfast at Lower Dauphin and spring musical, "Crazy for You" (Sign-up sheet will be available February 5; deadline to register is February 24.)

March 24, Daffodil Day - Sell daffodils from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (place to be confirmed)

April 10 - Photo program on Australia (Deb Weaver)

May 8, Tour of WITF - Tour lasts 1-1 1/2 hrs, followed by lunch (place to be confirmed)

September, Visit Fort Hunter - Tour of mansion and picnic lunch (bring your own) date to be announced

October - To be announced

November 28, Rainbow Dinner Theatre - "Christmas in Paradise"

Something New For Lent

Middletown Area Community Lenten Luncheons

Don't know what to cook for lunch, or just would be nice to sit and have lunch with an old friend; why not try our new Community Lenten Luncheons on Wednesdays of Lent. The Middletown area United Methodist Churches will have a noon luncheon and moment of devotions together on Wednesdays at noon. The time of fellowship and lunch begins at 12 Noon, and then at 12:30-1:00, a time of Lenten devotions lead by area United Methodist pastors. The theme for our gathering is "the Longest Parade in History". The first three Wednesdays will be at Evangelical United Methodist Church on Water Street, (the first is Feb 29) and the last three Wednesdays will be at Wesley United Methodist Church on Ann Street in Middletown. You can sign up for the meal by calling our church office or completing a form from the Sunday bulletin.

Give a friend a call and invite them to join you for this time of fellowship and reflection in the season of Lent. Oh, by the way, your friend does not need to be a United Methodist, this gathering is open to everyone.

Ash Wednesday

Evening Service of Holy Communion and the Imposition of Ashes

The Season of Lent begins our forty-day journey from Ash Wednesday to Easter. This year Ash Wednesday is February 22. We will hold a traditional evening service of worship at 7:30 in our sanctuary. The traditional focus of our time together is two-fold; the distribution of the ashes, a reminder of our own mortality and need for repentance; and the celebration of Holy Communion, a moment to recognize the great sacrifice of Christ for our benefit, not his.

Take an hour of your time on this day, and begin your reflective journey to Easter Morning on Sunday, April 8.

A Morning of Celebration

First Sunday of Lent - February 26, 2012

We will pause on this Sunday in worship for a moment to look back at the accomplishments of the Cornerstone Projects over the past few years. Through our endless efforts and many financial gifts, we will give our Lord the praise for how He has helped us in our tasks of upgrading and retooling of church home. With confidence that is grounded in our Lord, it will also be a moment to step forth on some new endeavors. We have accomplished much, and we still have some work to do for Him!

Lenten Services

Our first Lenten Service will be on Sunday, February 26 at 7 p.m. featuring Ablen. Ablen is a Christian, folk, indie, and acoustic duo from Grantham, PA. The duo includes, Abby Madden of Middletown, PA and Helen Furry of Harrisonburg, VA. They are both currently studying music at Messiah College and hope to be setting their first premier tour in the very near future.

These services are sponsored by Evangelical Church.

Concert Offered

Wesley United Methodist Church presents "Neighborhood Matters" on Sunday, February 19 at 4:30 p.m. A Concert featuring Mark Miller, Assistant Professor of Church Music at Drew Theological School, Lecturer in the Practice of Sacred Music at Yale University. The concert is free to the public with a Love Offering to benefit the Harrisburg Youth Coalition of the Susquehanna Conference of the United Methodist Church.

View from the Loft

Wow!! Can you believe it? The Christmas decorations have hardly settled in their boxes and here we are getting ready to start the Lenten season. Sometimes this church season feels like the “Valley” of David’s Psalm 23. We leave the mountaintop sky-high feeling of our Savior’s birth and it seems we start right away on His journey through the Valley. Praise God! We are surrounded by His love and Grace and know He is coming again for us through the Promise of Easter!!

Couponing Update

We want to update the members of Evangelical United Methodist Church on our couponing adventures. Since the congregation has helped us with our couponing for the food bank, we have donated four times to the food bank by the end of 2011. We took food to the food bank where our Aunt Jane gave us a tour. We were curious as to their facilities. We have learned of refrigerators, freezers, and perishable and non-perishable items. We even got to stock the shelves with a few of our items we donated. We asked questions and have a list of much needed items we can look for. We have donated Scott tissues, Blistex chapstick, cat and dog food, deodorant, L’Oreal shampoo and conditioner, and L’Oreal hair mousse among other items. A few of the food items we donated were Betty Crocker fruit roll ups, Tostino's pizza rolls, Campbell's spaghetti's, Bob Evans potatoes, Turkey Hill Ice Cream and Betty Crocker pouches of cookie mix. We also have donated items to other places as well as other individuals. Thank you for your support and coupons and also thank you to those of you who have given us money towards our mission. We look forward to continuing our couponing and to challenge ourselves to get more for less! Thanks again. Broghan and Brynne

February Lay Visitors

During February, the following persons from the Lay Visitation Committee will visit shut-in members of our church: Bill and Alberta Harris.

The following shut-in will celebrate her birthday in February:

February 8 – Mrs. Lois Coleman
153 North Catherine Street
Middletown, PA 17057

Attendance Report for November 2011

	Worship	Sunday School
November 6	120	37
November 13	151	36
November 20	133	33
November 27	139	36
Total	136	35

Attendance Report for December 2011

	Worship	Sunday School
December 4	126	35
December 11	132	33
November 18	128	28
December 24	E – 109 L – 103	
December 25	108	20
Total*	123	29

*Does not include the Christmas Eve Services

Receipts Report for November 2011

Weekly Envelopes	\$11,600.00
Plate Offering.....	583.00
Church School.....	176.00
Communion Envelopes.....	450.00
Heat Offering	870.00
Red Bird Mission	176.00
Church Improvement Fund.....	683.00
Cornerstone Project.....	490.00
Electronic Giving.....	1,301.50
Gift Cards.....	370.00
Bulletin Sponsor.....	20.00
Interest from Conference	2,953.81
Signs.....	100.00
Hummert Wedding.....	375.00
Use of Hall	50.00
Sierre Leone	500.00
Cokesbury Bill	338.00
Magical Night of Giving.....	140.00
Total.....	\$21,476.31

Receipts Report for December 2011

Weekly Envelopes	\$11,893.00
Plate Offering.....	1,303.20
Church School.....	155.00
Black Buckets	1,632.20
Communion Envelopes.....	356.000
Initial Envelopes	4.00
Heat Offering	5.00
Benevolent Homes	404.00
Red Bird Mission	203.00
Church Improvement Fund.....	358.00
Cornerstone Project.....	370.00
Electronic Giving.....	1,676.75
Gift Cards.....	318.75
Bulletin Sponsor.....	20.00
Sierre Leone	330.00
Community Dinner	175.62
Christmas Eve Offering	1,373.00
Hunger Fund	1,252.50
Alwine Estate	2,466.46
Christmas Offering.....	1,495.00
Birthday Calendar	181.00
Memorial Fund – R. Rowland	100.00
Poinsettias	580.00
Kuhn Endowment	2,485.00
Use of Hall	170.00
Total.....	\$29,307.48

Faithful Thoughts and Prayers

Updates and Changes:

Joyce Gass - heart operation
Lois Coleman – walking pneumonia
Dorothy Laverty – surgery
Ted Martin – surgery
Pai Swanger – knee surgery

Recent Surgery and Illness:

Irv Strohecker – hip surgery
Jane Goshorn – was hospitalized briefly again
Helen and Jack Staub – in the midst of Jack's illness
Betty Geyer Espenshade – stroke - niece of Grace Aston

Living with Cancer:

Barb Miller's brother in law, Joe
Julie Kupp, Tami Hile
Karley – friend of Kayla Strohecker & family
Bunny Prussack, Madison Lewis, Sam Rainal, Jr.,
Dave Shellenhamer
Christy Rinker-Barb Graybill's co-worker
Woody & Cathy Nipple –friend of Graybill family
Chris Miller's mother – Margie
Tina Miller – friend of Pearl Hoch's granddaughter
Heaven – friend of Joey Underdonk's sister
And Each Soul as they wait for cancer treatment

Challenges of Living:

Dauphin County Prison Ministry - Paul Alexander
Britt Strohecker - Pastor for New Beginnings
Church
Jason Kester – nephew of Barb Graybill,
deployment with Ohio National Guard to
Afghanistan
Adam Geschwindt – nephew of Deb Lidle
deployment with US Marines Unit 38437 to
Afghanistan
Military families far and near: Logan Cassner
Jack O'Donnell – waiting on double transplant
Ben Gingrich & his Mother, Erin – childhood disease
Barb Miller's brother

Please inform the church office whenever a loved one is hospitalized by calling 944-6181 or call Rev. Graybill at 731-2951