

NEW MARKET UMC NEWSLETTER FOR DECEMBER 2009

It has probably happened to all of us. We have searched far and wide for the perfect gift to give someone. The day arrives for the unwrapping. The anticipation builds; we can't wait to see the expression on their faces. We are so sure that we have found the perfect gift! The moment of the unwrapping comes and the recipient of our carefully sought after gift accepts it with what we think is the appropriate joy and excitement. Then the gift is put aside as they move on to other gifts. Days pass, then weeks, perhaps even years and we never see them use the gift, or display it. The recipient may not even remember the gift or where it came from! This kind of thing happens with my kids. Room cleaning with them is like an archeological dig. Long forgotten treasures are uncovered and then just as quickly forgotten. We try so hard to find something they really want and need, only to find it shoved under the bed a few weeks later.

Well it's happened to God too. God found the perfect gift to give us. He sought out the desire of our hearts which was love. He sought out our greatest need which was forgiveness. He found the perfect gift. He carefully prepared the gift and wrapped it in the form of a child and sent the gift to earth. The anticipated day of the gifts arrival came. And only a few people even noticed, just a few shepherds. The gift got lost in all the hustle and bustle of a busy world. In the beginning very few acknowledged the gift or thanked God for it. As time went on many have come to recognize and accept the gift only to set it aside again; their attention drawn to "more immediate concerns". Yet God continues to offer the gift-his Son- for our salvation. He does so because he loves us and we need it. What do we do with the gift of salvation in Jesus Christ when we receive it? Do we gratefully unwrap it then set it aside or do we display it for everyone to see.

Once again we are coming to the time when we celebrate the arrival of God's perfect gift. Will we bother to unwrap it this year? Will we accept Christ in our hearts joyfully and claim him as our own? Will we be found carrying the gift of Jesus around in our hearts unwilling to let him go? Will we acknowledge

our appreciation with every breath praising God for the gift? I pray it will be so.

Because God found us the perfect gift, the only one that really matters. Enjoy the unwrapping! And praise God! Because it is the perfect gift, the greatest gift we will ever receive. Jesus Christ our Lord!

Joy and Peace, Pastor Mike

MESSAGE FROM THE LAY LEADER (RET)

Grace and peace to you from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

During this Advent season it might be well for all of us to step back from our busy schedules and reflect on what we celebrate, and why. In Psalm 25:10 it says, "All the ways of the Lord are loving and faithful for those who keep the demands of his covenant." Christmas is a celebration of love; "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." (John 3:16) And we celebrate love because that is the pure essence of Jesus. This Rabbi came to teach just one subject, LOVE. Let me share this simple story with you.

A brother and sister had made their usual hurried obligatory pre-Christmas visit to the little farm where dwelt their elderly parents with their small herd of horses. The farm was where they had grown up and had been named, Lone Pine Farm, because of the huge pine, which topped the hill behind the farm. Through the years the tree had become a talisman to the old man and his wife. The young siblings had fond memories of their childhood here, but city hustle and bustle added more excitement to their lives, and called them away to a different life. The old couple no longer showed their horses for the years had taken their toll. They sold a few foals each year, and horses were their reason for the joy in the morning and contentment at day's end. Angry, as they prepared to leave, the young couple confronted the old folks. Why don't you at least dispose of the Old One, she is no longer of use to you? It's been years since you've had foals from her. How can this old horse bring you anything but expense and work? The Old man looked down at his worn boots, scuffed at the barn floor and replied: yes I could use a new pair of boots. His arm slid defensively about the Old One's neck as he said, we keep her because of love. Baffled and irritated the young folks wished them a Merry Christmas and headed back toward the city. The old couple shook their heads in sorrow that it had not been a happy visit. A tear fell upon their cheeks, how is it these young folks do not understand the peace of the love that filled their hearts? So it was, that because of the unhappy leave-taking no one noticed the insulation smoldering on the frayed wires in the old barn. No one saw the first spark fall. No one but the Old One. In a matter of minutes, the whole barn was ablaze. With a cry of horror and despair, the man shouted to his wife to call for help as he raced to the barn to save his beloved horses, but the flames were roaring now, and the blazing heat drove him back. By the time the fire department arrived, only smoking, glowing ruins were left; and the

old man and his wife exhausted from their grief huddled together before the barn. They nodded thanks to the firemen, as there was nothing anyone could do now. We have lost much but God has spared our home on this eve of Christmas. Let us gather strength and climb the hill to the old pine where we have sought comfort in times of despair. We will look down on our home and give thanks to God that it has been spared. The journey up the hill was hard on their old bodies in the steep snow. At the crest of the hill, they paused to rest and looking up to the top of the hill the old couple gasped and fell to their knees in amazement at the incredible beauty before them. The snow-frosted branches of their beloved pine were aglow with heavenly candles. Suddenly, the old man gave a cry of wonder and incredible joy. There, beneath the tree, in resplendent glory was their Christmas gift. Bedded down about the Old One, close to the trunk of the tree was the entire herd, safe. At the first hint of smoke, she had pushed the door ajar with her muzzle and had led the horses through it. She had led them cautiously up the hill. The mares that were in foal with a new years crop of babies, pressed uneasily against the Old One as she moved calmly up the hill and to safety beneath the pine. And now, she lay among them and gazed at the faces of the Old man and his wife. Those she loved she had not disappointed. Her body was brittle with years, tired from the climb, but the golden eyes were filled with devotion as she offered her gift. Because of love. Only because of love. Let us remember why Christ came, because of love, only because of love.

Blessings and Merry Christmas,
Ron Hunter



This month's mission offering will go to the Board of Child Care. Their ministry of serving is rooted in a strong Christian foundation based on Wesleyan traditions. This ministry of serving is constantly changing to meet the needs of today's troubled children and families. We are part of the Central Maryland District of the Board of Child Care who helps foster care and birth families in our community. The Sunday School classes will also be filling the little red cardboard Christmas stockings with coins again this year for the Board of Child Care. Please consider giving this month and remember a little kindness goes a long way!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS @ NMUMC

Tuesday, December 1st-Trustee's meeting-
7:00 pm Schoolhouse.

Wednesday, December 2nd- Advent Bible Study-7:00 pm Ed Bldg.

Saturday, December 5th- Christmas Recital-
3:00 pm sanctuary.

Wednesday, December 8th-SPRC meeting-
7:00 pm Schoolhouse.

Sunday, December 13th-Christmas singing-
3:00pm at Bush Creek Church.

Tuesday, December 15th-UMW Afternoon Circle Christmas Party-12:00pm Schoolhouse.

Council meeting-7:00 pm Schoolhouse.

Sunday, December 20th-Potluck Brunch & Santa- 9:30 am Schoolhouse. **Christmas caroling-** following the 11:00 Service.

Thursday, December 24th- Christmas Eve Service- 8:00 pm (NO 11:00 PM SERVICE) by candlelight.

There is no Outreach committee meeting this month.

We are collecting new games for the Frederick Adult Detention Center. Requested games include: Monopoly, Scrabble, Clue, Yahtzee, Life, Tri-ominoes, regular playing cards, UNO, Rook, Skip-bo, Phase 10, puzzles and puzzle books. There will be a donation box in the back of the church. We are collecting games through Sunday December 13th.

HOLIDAY SERVICE SCHEDULE

Early worship- 8:30 AM

Fellowship time- 9:15-9:45 AM

Confirmation Class-9:30-10:30 AM

Sunday School- 9:45-10:45 AM

Worship- 11:00 AM (Nursery Available)

Christmas Eve Service-8:00 PM only



Birthdays This Month

Glenn Beard	12/1
Paul Goebel	12/1
Marsha Zimmerman	12/1
Joyce Boyd	12/3
Susan Miller	12/7
Maria Fauconnet	12/18
Ben Grenier	12/19
Alex Morrow	12/22
Karen Wood	12/25
Phil Gamble	12/26
Michael Fauconnet	12/27
Hypatia Selby	12/31

SALVATION ARMY STOCKINGS

Thank you to everyone who filled Christmas stockings for the Salvation Army. We had about 25 stockings brimming with goodies that will go to children in need this holiday season. Julie will be delivering the stockings this week. We have such a generous and caring congregation. Great Job!!!!

THANK YOU

For those of you who do not have email, Margaret Tollefson thanks everyone for the kind words, prayers and cards while she was sick and in the hospital. We are glad to have you back Margaret!

Thank you to Mike & Lisa Gaver for all the beautiful greens they gave us for decorating the church. The church looks beautiful with all the fresh greens, roping and wreaths adorning the windows. Thank you!!!!!!

Thank you to all those who helped on Saturday with the decorating of the church. It looks fantastic! Thank you to Barbara Stephen, Ed Stephen, Carolyn McMahon, Patty Robinson, Mike Grenier and Boy scout troop #628 for doing such a great job. We really appreciate it!

Thanks to everyone that participated in the Christmas Stockings for the Salvation Army outreach project. Our congregation filled 26 stockings, which will be delivered to the Salvation Army later in the week. Some of the toys in the stockings looked like such fun, I was tempted to try them out. I'm sure the children who receive the stockings will have a little brighter Christmas thanks to all of you.

Merry Christmas everyone! Julie Grenier

United Methodist Women

DID YOU KNOW that the new chairs we enjoyed during our warm weather fellowship gathering were purchased for the church by the UMW Evening Circle? Thank you to them for donating the chairs so we have nice new seating for our outdoor fellowship and other gatherings. We really appreciate it, UMW !



ORDER
YOUR
POINSETTIAS

The deadline for ordering poinsettias is December 6th. They are \$10.00 each. Please give your form to Cathy Gamble or drop in the collection plate and mark "for poinsettias" on your check.

This and That

JOY- Val, my late sister-in-law's favorite hymn was "Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee" and when you sing it you can't help but feel the joy. In the hymn it says, " hearts unfold like flowers before thee, opening to the sun above." You can be going through tough times but it will lift you up. I think happiness depends on circumstances but joy can hit you like a lightening bolt and light up your life anytime. I do believe that the joy of the Lord is our strength.

Have you ever noticed how joyful little children are? They have joy written all over their face and it's always something simple like Mom or Dad walks in the room, they see a puppy or hear a favorite song. I like this one commercial where a little girl (probably under one) is sitting at the table and her Mom and Dad turn to her and her face bubbles over in a big smile and you just want to bottle it up and give it as a gift. I think we quote, grown-ups, get too mired down in the day to day living (me included) that we don't let our hearts unfold like flowers and let more joy in.

I can't think of Christmas without the word "JOY" flashing through my mind. Joy to the World, The Lord has come.

Merry Christmas everyone!
Marilyn Brooks



*Kristen Elizabeth Spoales &
Livaldi Pereira Da Cruz
November 21, 2009*



