

First United Methodist Church Commerce

Volume 13, Issue 12

December 2015

Community Thanksgiving Dinner



Join us for Thanksgiving dinner and wonderful fellowship with the community on Thanksgiving Day, November 26, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Family Ministry Center.

There are many ways to become involved with this annual tradition. You can make soup to be included with home-delivered meals or bake a pie and drop off at the church. If you can help set up, serve, deliver or clean up Thanksgiving Day, that is great too! Contact Sheryl Zelhart at 903.366.1220 if you have questions or can help!



*Candlelight
Christmas Eve
Service
Thursday, Dec. 24
7:00pm
in the Sanctuary*

Advent 2015 Poinsettias

Orders for poinsettias will be taken until Monday, November 30th. You may take them home after the December 24th Candlelight Worship Service.



Saturday, December 5

10 am - 3 pm

*First United Methodist Church
1709 Hwy 24 in Commerce*



EAT! • ENJOY! • SHOP!

Homemade Stew & Cornbread

\$3 Children & Students • \$5 Adults • \$8 Jars To Go

Christmas Activity Station For Kids

Baked Goods & Other Delights

Antiques & Vintage Finds

Christmas Decorations & Gifts

Alternative Gifts



All Proceeds Go Directly To Missions In Commerce & Beyond

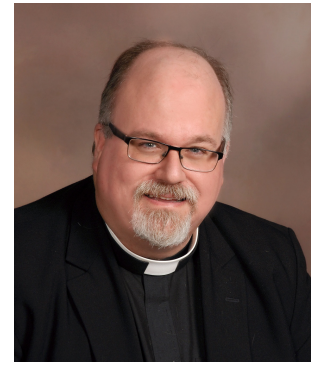
Inside this issue:

Pastor's Page	pg. 2	Office Hours, Announcements	pg. 3
Food Baskets & LSB, Proyecto Abrigo	pg. 4	Angel Tree, UMW, Food Pantry	pg. 5
WCM, Foundation	pg. 6	Men's Breakfast, Memorials	pg. 7
Attendance, Finances, Daily Scriptures	pg. 7	Prayer List	pg. 8

Why Was Jesus Born?

By: Dr. Gregory S. Neal

When people ask questions about the birth of Jesus they usually ask “when, where, and how” about his conception and birth, but rarely will they ask “why.” Specifically, why was Jesus born? God could have worked the Divine Will by some means other than being born a human being. God could have reached across the gulf of our sins and made things right without anyone having to die. God could have wiped out our sins, converted us into perfect, obedient children, and placed us all in paradise. God didn’t have to come as Jesus of Nazareth to die in our place ... right?



While it is true that God could have achieved our redemption by some other means, God nevertheless saved us through personal presence and sacrifice:

It was not by messenger or by angel, but by his presence, that God saved his children; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them. (Isaiah 53:9b)

God’s very presence is essential to our salvation. This is, without a doubt, one of the most amazing elements in the entire Jesus-story. Another amazing element to the story is that God actually desires our response of love and faith. Sending an angel to give us a message of how to live, while wiping out our sin without any response on our part, might have worked, but it would have violated God’s word. Throughout scripture, and most especially revealed in God’s willingness to continually strive with the Israelites even despite their idolatry and disobedience, it is clear that God desires children who will respond with love and trust. We failed to trust God in the Garden of Eden, where we listened to and accepted the word of the serpent rather than God’s Word. And, so, Jesus was born to give us the opportunity and ability to love and trust God.

“I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters, in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.” (Hebrews 2:12)

Jesus’ name – in Hebrew, *Yeshua* – means “Yahweh Saves” or “Yahweh Delivers.” This is precisely what God planned to do through the incarnation, birth, life, death, and resurrection of our Lord. And, as was said through the prophet Isaiah, God’s presence saves us.

“I will put my trust in him.” (Hebrews 2:13a)

Jesus places his faith in God the Father, trusting that God would honor God’s word and, after the crucifixion, would raise him from the dead. Such faith acts as a confirmation and empowerment of our faith as Christians. We are enabled to have faith because of Jesus’ own faith.

Jesus was born to proclaim the very essence of God as the one who saves us. Jesus he was born to empower our faith by placing his faith in God the Father. Jesus was born to die for us and, hence, stand with and for us before the Father as our righteous savior. God comes, in Jesus of Nazareth, to be our savior and to enable and empower our faith. No angel, no messenger, no unrelated entity could have ever done this. To accomplish these purposes, God needed to become one of us – God had to become human – so that God could die. In other words, Jesus was born to live and to die as one of us and for every one of us.

The Pastor’s Bible Study meets **Tuesdays** from **1-2:30pm**. Dr. Neal is leading “The Pastor’s Bible Study,” a weekly study dealing with the books of Luke & Acts.



Holiday Schedule

Happy Thanksgiving!

The church office will be closed
Wednesday, Nov. 25 through
Friday, Nov. 27 for Thanksgiving.

Merry Christmas!

The church office will be closed
Thursday, Dec. 24 through
Monday, Dec. 28 for Christmas.



Upcoming Worship

Sunday, December 6

Sunday, December 13

Sunday, December 20

Thursday, December 24

Christmas Eve Service

Sunday, December 27

8:45am ~ Chapel

10:50am ~ Sanctuary

Midweek Eucharist

Wednesdays

@ 5:30pm ~ Chapel



First Thursday
Potluck Luncheon
December 3 @ 12pm

**COMMERCE
CARES**



Saturday, Dec. 5
9:00-1:00

Committee Chairs

Ad Council Chair:

Gene Lockhart (903) 886-3498

Lay Leader:

John Heatherly (903) 886-7070

SPPRC Chair:

Wes Underwood (903) 886-1503

Trustees Chair:

Jim Brown (903) 886-7439

Finance Chair:

Gil Naizer (903) 886-1961

FUMC Foundation President:

Anne Mills (903) 886-6792

Connect Team Chair: TBD

Grow Team Chair: TBD

Serve Team Chair:

Angela Roberts (903) 886-2142

Lay Member:

Carole Walker (903) 886-4450

UMW President:

Mary Lou Heatherly (903) 886-8381



MERRY CHRISTMAS



from your Church Staff

The First United Methodist Newsletter is the official publication of FUMC Commerce. The newsletter is published at the beginning of the month. Inputs may be submitted to the Church office to Bonnie Smith, Communications Specialist, at communications@fumccommerce.org, or call the office at 903-886-3220. Questions may be addressed to the Church office.

****The next deadline is Monday, December 14 by 9:00am****

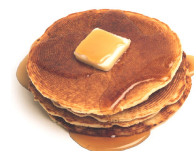
A Morning of Thanks & Giving



On the Saturday before Thanksgiving, we were blessed to distribute food baskets to 128 local families in need on behalf of Hunt County Shared Ministries and to provide a hearty breakfast and hospitality for the community. Volunteers came together to serve from our church family, the community, the Wesleyan Campus Ministry, Men of Vision (MOV) at TAMU-C, and the Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) at TAMU-C. We also had the support of Ben E. Keith, which provided a forklift and operator to unload pallets of food, and of Fix & Feed, which loaned us a pallet jack to move the pallets.

Mark your calendar for December 19.

We will do it again – Christmas basket distribution and (almost) Last Saturday Breakfast. Contact Angela Roberts at 972.765.6547 to sign up to volunteer. Childcare is available for volunteers when requested in advance.



Our December Mission of the Month is Projecto Abrigo, a nonprofit, ecumenical ministry serving the poorest of



the poor who live in Tierra Nueva on the outskirts of Juarez, Mexico. Since 1996, this ministry has built over 7,000 cement block homes, two churches, a medical clinic, and a vocational school. Now the first stage of an educational cooperative is under construction to provide tutoring for children, instruction for younger children with special needs, and ELS for youth and adults!

Over the years, FUMC-C and the Wesleyan Campus Ministry have sent teams to Tierra Nueva to work under the direction of a construction maestro and alongside the family who will be blessed with the new home. We are not sending a mission team this year so our drop-a-dollar giving will be combined with the 2015 Lenten offering and given to Projecto Abrigo to go to work where funds are needed the most.



Projecto Abrigo also benefits from the ongoing empty prescription bottle collection. Jan Helton regularly sends these to Projecto Abrigo and is collecting additional healthcare items to send at the end of the December. She is seeking extra toothbrushes such as those you receive at the dentist's office, vitamins (particularly pre-natal vitamins), pain relievers (ibuprofen, acetaminophen, children's Motrin), cold medicines, bar soap, antibiotic ointment, bandages, etc. Please place your donations by December 31 in the bin located across from the community bulletin board between the Gathering Area and the church office. To learn more about Projecto Abrigo, visit www.projectoabrigo.org.



Children with a parent in prison grow up wondering if their mom or dad still loves them. Through Prison Fellowship Angel Tree, you can be one to show them they do! Look for the Angel Tree in the narthex to select your angel. You'll find requests for clothing and toys on behalf of the child's incarcerated parent. Please return unwrapped gifts to the church no later than Sunday, December 6.



Judy Rudoff reminded us during Children's Time that there's much work in this world for our love to do. One way we can show our love is by supporting the Prison Fellowship Angel Tree ministry.



Volunteers are needed to bake cookies for the party at the church on December 20 when gifts will be presented. A few drivers will also be needed to deliver to those unable to attend the party, often due to a parent's or guardian's work schedule. Contact Tricia Dempsey at 903.366.1055 or Judy Rudoff at 903.456.2412 for more information or if you would like to help.



UMW will meet **Tuesday, Dec. 15** at 12:00pm for our covered dish holiday luncheon and Christmas carols. Our December project is gifts and donations to church special projects. **All women are invited to join us!**



UMW is still collecting Box Tops for Education and Labels for Education.

BREAD OF LIFE FOOD PANTRY

Proud partners with NTFB and FundSponge



joy
love
peace
believe
christmas

BOL Food Pantry distributes food from NTFB on the 3rd Wed. of every month serving 200 low income families right here in Commerce.

In order to purchase a 10 lb. bag of chicken quarters and a dozen eggs for each of these families for November and December, we need an additional \$700. You can help! When you order online from any of the 70+ retailers who are supporting this program, a percentage of your purchases will be donated to us for this purpose. Do your usual holiday online shopping and know you are supporting local food security and helping to give your Commerce neighbors a happier holiday. Please use this URL to access your favorite online stores:

http://fundsponge.com/groups/Bread_of_Life_Food_Pantry

Here is just a sampling of some of the participating retailers and the percentage of your purchases they will donate:

GameStop 2.5%	amazon.com 4%	macy's 1.5%	NEW! Nutrisystem Lose weight. Save money. 7.5%	ORBITZ 1.5%	GROUPON See Today's Deal 2%	Microsoft 2%
BEST BUY 1%	FedEx Office 2.5%	Advance Auto Parts Service is our best part! 4%	Expedia.com 1%	1-800PetMeds 6%	1-800Flowers.com 3%	
Hotels.com 3%	Beauty.com 4%	Perfume.com 5%	Fragrance.net 2.5%			

Go to the website above to see LOTS more of your favorite online retailers! Happy shopping!

Holiday blessings to all and thank you for your time and donations,
Laura Ingelido
Bread of Life Food Pantry

WCM Represents at Charge Conference and Worship

Rev. Vic Casad, our District Superintendent, asked the Wesleyan to have a table at the district-wide Charge Conference. This was an outstanding opportunity to get the word out about the amazing ministries happening at WCM, because each church in the East District was represented at Charge Conference. Myself and 7 student leaders attended Charge Conference and manned/womaned our table. We talked with several interested persons and churches, sold baked goods, handed out fundraising letters and promoted the Wesleyan to the whole district.



The students attracted some big attention from special guests. Rev. Marti Sopher, in charge of the Center for Leadership Development, talked with everyone and spoke to David Owsley about his call to ministry! Rev. Sheron Patterson, Communications Officer for the Conference, asked us questions about gratitude and was eager to hear the young adult perspective on several issues. Even Bishop McKee took time to talk with all of us, in particular he wanted to hear the students' reflections of the Interfaith Reunion event.

It was a great afternoon, we made new contacts and raised over \$100 with our baked goods.

The next Sunday, 11/15, WCM students led FUMC in worship. Students led all aspects of worship, except for the hymns. Thank you to Carlos, Austin, Jo, Vanessa, John, Tyler, Emily, Sammy, David and all those in attendance. This semester two students have led worship by delivering the sermon! Austin King preached at the Wesleyan's Illuminate in November and David Owsley preached at FUMC on Sunday!! I'm proud of all of our gifted student leaders, and am deeply blessed to witness the ways they use their spiritual gifts in leading others into a deeper discipleship.

God Bless our Church Family, Pastor Brian

PUTTING YOUR HOUSE IN ORDER ESTATE PLANNING MADE EASIER WORKSHOP December 13, 2015 after the 10:50am service



PUTTING YOUR HOUSE IN ORDER is a program that helps us think about the unthinkable.

- What will happen to your estate when you are no longer here?
- Why should you have a will?
- Have you thought about who should have your most precious possessions when you have died?
- How can you relieve the stress upon your family when it comes time to plan your funeral or memorial service?
- Do you know the tax advantages of remembering the church and other charitable organizations in your legacy giving?
- How would you like to express your gratitude to God and allow your generosity to continue after your death?

Come December 13th if you are interested in answers to these questions. The FUMC-Commerce Church Foundation Board is sponsoring the event. You will hear Rev. John Thornburg discuss issues of estate planning. He is affiliated with the Texas Methodist Foundation in Austin and has met with many United Methodist congregations throughout North Texas.

The Church Foundation will provide a luncheon and pay for the planning documents. Don't worry if you are planning to watch the Dallas Cowboys play football on TV as the 3:25 kick-off will not interfere. The workshop will last for only about an hour.

Rev. Thornburg presents information in a deeply practical way to provide your loved ones ways to honor your wishes and help them with the probate process. If applicable to your situation, you will not want to miss this unique opportunity.

Please let us know before December 1st if you are coming so we can prepare for the luncheon and order printed materials. Please register for the workshop on December 13 by calling the church office (903-886-3220). You do not have to be a member of our church to attend. Bring a guest if you wish.

Men's Breakfast

Monday, Nov. 30th
@ 7am

McKay's Restaurant!

Come and have breakfast with Pastors Greg and Brian, talk about "stuff" and enjoy fellowship and good food together!



In memory of...

Jean Ward

By: Dough Rollins SS Class
Lena & Lynne Faulkner



Attendance

	<u>Early</u>	<u>5:30</u>	<u>Late</u>	<u>SS</u>
Oct 28		—		
Nov 1	27	—	100	62
Nov 4		9		
Nov 8	28	—	168	70
Nov 11		—		
Nov 15	38	—	111	85
Nov 18		11		
Nov 22	28	—	89	64



Financial Information General Operating Fund

	<u>as of October 31, 2015</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>
Income:	\$ 43,292	\$314,826
Expenses:	<u>\$ 36,941</u>	<u>\$317,694</u>
	\$ 6,351	-\$ 2,868

Reading the Bible Daily



As you seek to grow closer to God through daily prayer and Bible study, you may have your own favorite daily readings. If not, you will find Scriptures for each day listed below. We hope you'll read daily and ask yourself: "How will I be different today because of what I just read?" Some other questions you might ask are: "What does this text say about who God is?" "What does this text say about who I am/who we are as human beings?" "What does this text say about our relationship with God?" You may want to reflect on paper with a journal or note pad. We hope this will become a part of your daily prayer time.

Daily Scripture Readings:

Tuesday, Dec 1	Luke 1:67-75
Wednesday, Dec 2	Luke 1:76-79
Thursday, Dec 3	Luke 3:1-2
Friday, Dec 4	Luke 3:3-6
Saturday, Dec 5	Philippians 1:3-8
Sunday, Dec 6	Philippians 1:9-11
Monday, Dec 7	Philippians 4:4-7
Tuesday, Dec 8	Philippians 4:4-7
Wednesday, Dec 9	Zephaniah 3:14-20
Thursday, Dec 10	Isaiah 12:2-6
Friday, Dec 11	Isaiah 12:3-6
Saturday, Dec 12	Luke 3:7-9
Sunday, Dec 13	Luke 3:10-18
Monday, Dec 14	Micah 5:2-5a
Tuesday, Dec 15	Luke 1:39-45
Wednesday, Dec 16	Micah 5:2-5a
Thursday, Dec 17	Luke 1:46-55
Friday, Dec 18	Hebrews 10:5-10
Saturday, Dec 19	Hebrews 10:5-10
Sunday, Dec 20	Psalms 80:1-7
Monday, Dec 21	1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26
Tuesday, Dec 22	Colossians 3:12-14
Wednesday, Dec 23	Colossians 3:15-17
Thursday, Dec 24	Luke 2:1-20
Friday, Dec 25	Hebrews 1:1-12
Saturday, Dec 26	Psalms 148
Sunday, Dec 27	Luke 2:41-52
Monday, Dec 28	Jeremiah 31:7-9
Tuesday, Dec 29	Jeremiah 31:10-14
Wednesday, Dec 30	Ephesians 1:3-14
Thursday, Dec 31	Psalms 147:12-20



Prayer Lists

We pray for those who have experienced a loss. Condolences to...

The Family of Robin Sullivan (Janet Sullivan's sister-in-law)
The Family of Dorothy Ingram

We pray for those who have experienced an illness...

Rev. Tom Waitschies (Pastor Greg's friend), Bonnie Smith, Kathy Benton, Jennifer Martin, Jim Parker (Walt Parker's son), Dalton Borders, David Polk, Diane Price, Frances Robinson, Will Dorsey, Donna Galvan, George McFarland, Doris Kerbow, Jessica Coe, Lavonne Wells, David Miller (Bob Grove's friend), Rev. Clay Yeager, Garrett Cramer, Harold McFarland (Julia Robinson's father), Lois Cranford, Betty Morton, Charles Ranley (at Webb Hill), Michelle Bone, Hugh Hanby, Wendel Underwood (Wes Underwood's father), Robert Seay

Others to Remember in Prayer...

Draughn's/Country Home Estate: Ahtrell Dalton, Helen Dickson, Barbara Gish, Joe and Mary Louise McMahan, James Moody, Edna O'Quinn, Ruby Vander Velde, and Euple Walker

Briarcliff: Glenna Siebenhausen

The Laurels (San Antonio): Lewis and Faye Jackson

Almeda Oaks (Corpus Christi): Pete Robinson

River Point (Kerrville, TX): Lucy Potts

*"The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective."
James 5:16*

Help us hold each other in prayer by contacting the church office with new prayer concerns and updates on existing prayer requests.

If you have someone you would like to add or remove from the prayer list, please let the church office know (903-886-3220).



Remembering those serving in our military...

2nd Marine Division Sgt. Stephen Smith & Denise Smith
Col. Peter Bailey Garrett Johnson
Nathan Grove Lt. Col. Keith Williams
Lt. Dan Barton Mike Dempsey (Washington)
Josh Ham-Nadine and Clay Yeager's grandson-in-law
Lt. Col. Jeremy Quatacker-Mark and Frances Sartwell's son-in-law
Tyler Craig (Afghanistan)-Brad and Vickie Boynton's son-in-law
Chief Robert Starkey-Wanda Beane's brother and Tom Starkey's son
Lt. JG. Terry Starkey-Wanda Beane's brother and Tom Starkey's son
Jim Hunsicker (Afghanistan)-Carolyn Miller's brother
Alex Dech (Afghanistan)-Pastor Ron Dech's son
Captain Daniel Robnett-Clyde and Wanda Robnett's grandson
Kris Yoder-John & Rebecca Sneed's son-in-law
Staff Sgt. Geoff Abbe & Sgt. Eric Abbe-Ladonna & Chris Patterson's cousins



Phone: 903-886-3220
www.fumcccommerce.org
office@fumcccommerce.org

**First United Methodist Church
1709 Highway 24
Commerce, TX 75428
Senior Pastor - Dr. Gregory S. Neal**

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THE
NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**
Articles for the next newsletter are due
Monday, December 14 by 9:00am