

First United Methodist Church Commerce

Volume 11, Issue 1

January 2013

It's a Wrap on 2012 Bazaar

This Christmas season, loved ones will be taking delight in unique gifts from the Hand-made Holiday Bazaar. When they feel the warmth of a cozy scarf around their neck, they'll know a donation was made in their honor to the Prayer Shawl & More Ministry. When they simmer a pot of patchwork bean soup, they'll know that the Commerce Food Pantry received funds to serve the increasing number of families seeking assistance every week. When they hang their llama ornament on the tree, they'll know that Heifer International received a gift to help people obtain a sustainable source of income and food. Proceeds in excess of \$1,800 will be distributed to the various missions and programs supported by our church.



Special thanks to our Bazaar crafters, including the Prayer Shawl Ministers, Alison Walker and her M&M kids, United Methodist Women, Sisters Too, Melinda Reid & her Youth Sunday School Class, Fred & Anna Blohm, Nancy Doughty, Rick & Valarie Englert, Kay Jensen, Jamie Moore, Susan Patton, Mike Roberts, and Judy Rudoff.

4 Ways to Share Your Joy This Advent Season

1. Help pass out FISH Christmas food baskets at the church on Saturday, December 22. Arrive at 8:30am. (Angela Roberts @ 903.886.2142)
2. Bring baked cookies to the church Sunday morning, December 23, for delivery to families on the Angel Tree.
3. Deliver presents, cookies, and hope to Angel Tree families on Sunday, December 23. Pick up your deliveries that morning at church. (Tricia Dempsey @ 903.366.1055)
4. Make and deliver an extra plate of your Christmas dinner on Christmas day, December 25, to someone who is alone or may not be able to cook for themselves. (Angela Roberts @ 903.886.2142)

Thank You from Clothe-a-Child

The following note was received from the Commerce Clothe-a-Child (CAC) project. CAC purchased clothing and shoes for Commerce ISD children who were referred by teachers, counselors, and social service agencies. The Connect-Grow-Serve team designated a \$500 donation to this ministry using drop-a-dollar funds.

Dear Church Family,
Thank you for your continued support of Clothe-a-Child. We would not be able to care for our needy children without you.
Merry Christmas,
Belinda Miller

Candlelight Service
Monday, December 24
Christmas Eve Worship
Service at 7:00pm




ONE SERVICE— December 30
Sunday, December 30th we will have ONE
Worship Service beginning at 10:00am.
Come as you are and bring friends to sing carols
and share the Christmas story!

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Dear FUMC Friends:

A few years ago, at the beginning of Advent, I was putting out a few seasonal decorations in my office: an advent wreath, a nativity carving from Poland, and a crèche that was a gift from my aunt some years ago. The crèche holds special meaning, because my aunt had gone to some pains to find one that had a removable baby Jesus. (Maybe this is a weird quirk, but I like to wait until Christmas Eve to put the baby Jesus in the manger.) As I pulled out the ceramic pieces – Mary, Joseph, the manger – I admired them one by one as I set them in the stable. I then looked into the small box to take account of the other pieces – three wise men (check! they don't go into the crèche until Epiphany), and the baby Jesus.



Wait. . .no baby Jesus! I took all the wise men out and took a look in the box. Empty. I shook it to see if anything would fall out. Nope. I ran my fingers inside the box. Nada. I then looked into the larger box that stores the entire crèche. Nothing. No baby Jesus! I couldn't imagine what had happened. I dug through my desk drawers looking for the baby Jesus. Nope.

I was really concerned, because we would be using this crèche in Christmas Eve worship. The children would be adding to the nativity scene during worship as the Christmas Story was told, and the crowning piece was the baby Jesus, added by one of our youngest children toward the end of the service.

"Surely it will show up," I thought. Just in case, I went online and found a replacement (a poor substitute, I might add, the dimensions a bit too large and at way too high a price). It was to be shipped within the week, and I wrote down the confirmation number.

The days of Advent went by. I emptied drawers and bookshelves looking for the baby Jesus. I waited for the replacement baby Jesus to arrive. Nothing.

A few days before Christmas, I went back online to check on the status of my order. There was no record of my purchase. When I entered the confirmation number, a dialog box popped up telling me there was no such order number. I checked recent transactions on my credit card. No transaction for that website appeared.

I began to panic, then planned a last-ditch solution of going to Hobby Lobby to purchase a little plastic dollhouse baby. It didn't fit into the manger well at all, but I felt it would just have to make do.

On the 23rd, I picked up the little box that stored the ceramic pieces of the crèche. As I opened the lid, I peered into the bottom. There was the baby Jesus, wrapped in his little protective bubble-wrap covering.

Really. I am not making this up.

To this day, this is a head-scratcher for me. The little storage box had been empty. But it yielded fruit at just the right time, in the nick of time.

May the baby Jesus – the Christ Child – find you at times you least expect it.

God's deep peace be with you:

Valarie

Upcoming Worship

December 24
Candlelight Christmas Eve
 Service @ 7:00pm

December 30
One Service
 John 1:1-14

January 6
Epiphany Sunday
 Isaiah 60:1-6
 "God's Dream"

January 13
Baptism of the Lord Sunday
 Isaiah 43:1-7
 "Fill in the Blank"

January 21
The Love Feast in FMC
 during 10:50 service

8:45am ~ Chapel
9:45am ~ Chapel
10:50am ~ Sanctuary

Committee Chairs

Leadership Team Chair

Jim Patton
 (903) 886-2206

Lay Leader:

Gene Lockhart
 (903) 886-3498

Personnel Chair:

Chester Robinson
 (903) 886-8220

Property Chair:

Donna Tavener
 (903) 886-7891

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Mike Roberts
 (903) 886-2142

Foundation Chair:

Dan Shepherd
 (903) 886-6883

C-G-S Team Co-Chairs:

Ladonna Patterson
 (903) 886-4630
 Teresa Heatherly
 (903) 886-7070
 Angela Roberts
 (903) 886-2142

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@fumcccommerce.org, or call the office at 903-886-3220. Questions may be addressed to the Church office.

****The next deadline is Monday, January 22 by 9:00am****

The Love Feast

Sunday, January 21 will have a Love Feast during the 10:50 service. What is a Love Feast? The Love Feast, or Agape Meal, is a Christian fellowship meal recalling the meals Jesus shared with disciples during his ministry and expressing the *koinonia* (community, sharing, fellowship) enjoyed by the family of Christ.

Although its origins in the early church are closely interconnected with the origins of the Lord's Supper, the two services became quite distinct and should not be confused with each other. While the Lord's Supper has been practically universal among Christians throughout church history, the Love Feast has appeared only at certain times and among certain denominations.

The modern history of the Love Feast began when Count Zinzendorf and the Moravians in Germany introduced a service of sharing food, prayer, religious conversation, and hymns in 1727. John Wesley first experienced it among the Moravians in Savannah, Georgia, ten years later. His diary notes: "After evening prayers, we joined with the Germans in one of their love-feasts. It was begun and ended with thanksgiving and prayer, and celebrated in so decent and solemn a manner as a Christian of the apostolic age would have allowed to be worthy of Christ."

It quickly became a feature of the Evangelical Revival and a regular part of Methodist society meetings in Great Britain and throughout the English-speaking world. As Methodists immigrated to North America they made Love Feasts an important part of early American Methodism.

While Love Feasts became less frequent in the years that followed, they continued to be held in some places; and in recent years the Love Feast has been revived. Love Feasts have often been held at Annual Conferences and Charge Conferences, where persons may report on what God has been doing in their lives and on the hope and trust they place in God for the future. The Love Feast is also an important part of the practice of Covenant Discipleship groups. Christmas, New Year's Eve or Day, the weekdays of Holy Week, and the Day of Pentecost are also fitting occasions for a Love Feast. A Love Feast may also be held during a congregational supper.

The Love Feast has often been held on occasions when the celebration of the Lord's Supper would be inappropriate—where there is no one present authorized to administer the Sacrament, when persons of different denominations are present who do not feel free to take Holy Communion together, when there is a desire for a service more informal and spontaneous than the communion ritual, or at a full meal or some other setting to which it would be difficult to adapt the Lord's Supper. The Love Feast is most naturally held around a table or with persons seated in a circle; but it is possible to hold it with persons seated in rows. A church sanctuary, fellowship hall, or home is an appropriate location.

One of the advantages of the Love Feast is that any Christian may conduct it. Congregational participation and leadership are usually extensive and important, especially involving children.

Testimonies and praise are the focal point in most Love Feasts. Testimonies may include personal witness to God's grace or accounts of what God has been doing in the lives of others. Praise may take the form of hymns, songs, choruses, or spoken exclamations and may vary from the relative formality of an opening and closing hymn to spontaneous calling out of requests and singing as the Spirit moves. Sometimes the leader guides those present alternating spontaneous singing and sharing in free and familiar conversation for as long as the Spirit moves. Wesley counseled that all the above be done decently and in order.

Prayer is vital to a Love Feast. A fixed form of prayer may be used, especially something like the Lord's Prayer or Be present at our table, Lord, that is familiar to the people. Spontaneous prayer requests and prayers may come from the people. Scripture is also important. There may be scripture readings, or persons may quote Scripture spontaneously as the Spirit moves. There may be a sermon, an exhortation, or an address; but it should be informal and consist of the leader's adding personal witness to what spontaneously comes from the congregation.

Most Love Feasts include the sharing of food. It is customary not to use communion bread, wine, or grape juice because to do so might confuse the Love Feast with the Lord's Supper. The bread may be a loaf of ordinary bread, crackers, rolls, or a sweet bread baked especially for this service. If a loaf of bread, it may be broken in two or more pieces and then passed from hand to hand as each person breaks off a piece. Crackers, rolls, or slices of bread may be passed in a basket. The beverage has usually been water, but other beverages such as lemonade, tea, or coffee have been used. Early Methodists commonly passed a loving cup with two handles from person to person, but later the water was served in individual glasses. The food is served quietly without interrupting the service.

The Love Feast may also be followed by a full meal, in which case persons or families may bring dishes of food for all to share. During the meal there may be informal conversation in Christian fellowship, or the leader may direct the conversation by suggesting matters of mutual concern, or there may be spontaneous witnessing and praise.

If there is food left over, it may be taken as an expression of love to persons not present.



M&M visited County Homes Estates
Wednesday, December 5....
And had a little Cocoa & Christmas
Cookie party when we got back!



The church office holiday hours

Monday, Dec. 24: closed
 Tuesday, Dec. 25: closed
 Wednesday, Dec. 26: closed
 Thursday, Dec. 27: open 9-12
 Friday, Dec. 28: open 9-12
 Monday, Dec. 31: open 9-12
 Tuesday, Jan. 1: closed
 Wednesday, Jan. 2: open 9-12
 Thursday, Jan. 3: regular hours (9-4)



UMW will meet **Tuesday, January 15** at 10:00am.

Our January project is: Nursing Home Bingo Prizes, sugar free cookies, 6 oz drinks, peanut butter crackers, lotions, shampoos (small).

All women are invited to join us!

In memory of...

George & Cleo Kibler

By: Mr. & Mrs. A.W. Kibler
 Mr. & Mrs. Warner Reeder

Richard Englert

By: Linda Englert

Gary Kibler

By: Pearl Messick
 Henry & Carolyn Bishop
 Harry & Rheba Icenhower
 Wyman & Harriet Williams

Jerry Lambert

By: Harry & Rheba Icenhower



Attendance

	Dec 2	Dec 9	Dec 16
Early	27	19	18
9:45	17	12	16
Late	112	139	102
SS	63	69	57



Financial Update: General Operating Fund

	as of November 30, 2012	Year-to-Date
Income:	\$ 28,647	\$345,690
Expenses:	\$ 25,479	\$357,160
	\$ 3,168	-\$11,470



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, Jan 1	Matthew 25:31-46
Wednesday, Jan 2	Isaiah 60:1-6
Thursday, Jan 3	Isaiah 60:1-6
Friday, Jan 4	Psalms 72:1-14
Saturday, Jan 5	Ephesians 3:1-12
Sunday, Jan 6	Matthew 2:1-12
Monday, Jan 7	Acts 8:14-17
Tuesday, Jan 8	Psalms 29:1-9
Wednesday, Jan 9	Psalms 29
Thursday, Jan 10	Isaiah 43:1-4
Friday, Jan 11	Isaiah 43:5-7
Saturday, Jan 12	Luke 3:15-17
Sunday, Jan 13	Luke 3:21-22
Monday, Jan 14	Psalms 36:5-10
Tuesday, Jan 15	Isaiah 62:1-4
Wednesday, Jan 16	Isaiah 62:5
Thursday, Jan 17	1 Corinthians 12:1-3
Friday, Jan 18	1 Corinthians 12:4-11
Saturday, Jan 19	John 2:1-5
Sunday, Jan 20	John 2:6-11
Monday, Jan 21	Nehemiah 8:1-3,5-6,8-10
Tuesday, Jan 22	Psalms 19:1-6
Wednesday, Jan 23	1 Corinthians 12:12-31a
Thursday, Jan 24	Luke 4:18-19
Friday, Jan 25	Psalms 19:7-14
Saturday, Jan 26	1 Corinthians 12:27-31a
Sunday, Jan 27	Luke 4:14-21
Monday, Jan 28	Jeremiah 1:4-10
Tuesday, Jan 29	1 Corinthians 13
Wednesday, Jan 30	Psalms 71:1-6
Thursday, Jan 31	Jeremiah 1:7-8



Prayer Lists

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

Becca Smith (Mike Smith's mother), Gene Casselberry, Glenda Helton (Jeff Helton's sister-in-law), Craig Dagenhart, Becky Bosque (the Englerts' friend), Braden Murray (little boy with leukemia in Waco area), Henry & Jeannette Heiberger (Mary Dagenhart's grandparents), Ralph & Alma Moyer, Michael Klinck (Ryan Klinck's brother), Josh Madena, Sandy Rudoff (Judy Rudoff's brother-in-law), Clay Yeager, Lana Fallis, Tiffany Peek (Jim Peek's daughter-in-law), Lois Cranford, Betty Morton, Robert Seay, Louella McIntyre, Sharon Brewton, Amy Sallstrom Smith (Bill Heitholt's cousin), Sam Duckworth, Ray Sandifer, Jim and Diane Price, Billy Guinn, Chris Sterzik (Shelley Jackson's son-in-law), Sondra Feduccia, Frederick Lucas, Pam Allgood, Kay Webber, Judy Greenwood, George O'Kelley

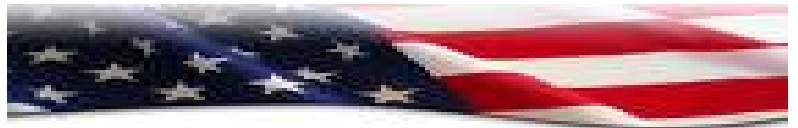
Others to Remember in Prayer...

The town of Newtown, CT
Draughn's/Country Home Estate:
Ahtrell Dalton, Helen Dickson, Dorothy Ingram, Lucy Potts, Pete Robinson, and Jessie Short

*"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
Lt. Col. Richard Bailey
Lt. Dan Barton
Lt. Col. Jeremy Quatacker (Korea)-Mark and Frances Sartwell's son-in-law
Tyler Craig(Afghanistan)-Brad and Vickie Boynton's son-in-law
Jason Timmons-seriously injured
Ensign Terry Starkey-Wanda Beane's brother and Tom Starkey's son
Chief Robert Starkey-Wanda Beane's brother and Tom Starkey's son
Christopher Kendrick-Navy (Helen Rowe's friend)
Jim Hunsicker (Afghanistan)-Carolyn Miller's brother
Travis Miller-Lena Faulkner's great-grandson
Alex Dech (Afghanistan)-Pastor Ron Dech's son
Captain Daniel Robnett-Clyde and Wanda Robnett's grandson
Sgt. Stephen Smith & Denise Smith
Keith L. Boone-former Associate Pastor
Kris Yoder-John & Rebecca Sneed's son-in-law
Staff Sgt. Geoff Abbe & Sgt. Eric Abbe- Ladonna & Chris Patterson's cousins
Garrett Johnson
Col. Peter Bailey
Lt. Col. Keith Williams
Nathan Grove



Phone: 903-886-3220
Fax: 903-886-3240
www.fumcccommerce.org
office@fumcccommerce.org

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THE
NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
Articles for the next newsletter are due
Monday, January 22 by 9:00am**

Place Label Here

First United Methodist Church
1709 Highway 50
Commerce, TX 75428
Senior Pastor - Rev. Valarie Englert