



The Messenger

First United Methodist Church

Mansfield, Pennsylvania 16933

Pastor, Richard L. Berg

E-mail: firmc@ptd.net

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March

2009

STEPPING UP IN OUR FAITHFULNESS!

~ Faithfulness ~

I know when the proposition comes from God
because of its quiet persistence.

When I have to weigh the pros and cons,
and doubt and debate come in,
I am bringing in an element that is not of God.

Many of us are loyal to our notions of Jesus Christ,
but how many of us are loyal to Him?

Loyalty to Jesus means...

I have to step out where I do not see anything;
(Peter trusted Jesus, stepped out of the boat and walked on the water) Matt 14:29

Faith is not intelligent understanding.
Faith is deliberate commitment to a Person where I see no way.

Are you debating whether to take a step in faith in Jesus,
Or, to wait until you can see how to do the thing yourself?

Obey him with glad reckless joy!

—*My Utmost for His Highest*, March 29, Oswald Chambers

Consecration Sunday Is Coming — April 26

Our congregation's Church Council has once again selected the *New Consecration Sunday Stewardship Program* as a way to teach the biblical and spiritual principles of generous giving in our stewardship education emphasis this year.

New Consecration Sunday is based on the biblical philosophy of the need of the giver to give for his or her own spiritual development, rather than on the need of the church to receive. Instead of treating people like members of a social club who should pay dues, we will treat people like followers of Jesus Christ who want to give unselfishly as an act of discipleship.

This program encourages people toward proportionate and systematic giving in response to the question: "What percentage of my income is God calling me to give?"

During morning worship on Consecration Sunday, we are asking our attendees and members to make their financial commitments to our church's missionary, benevolent, and educational ministries in this community and around the world. Every attendee and member who completes an *Estimate of Giving Card* does so voluntarily by attending morning worship on Consecration Sunday. We urge you to attend even if you are opposed to completing a card. If you choose not to fill out a card, the procedure is done in such a way that no one feels personal embarrassment.

We will **not do** home solicitation to ask people to complete cards. During morning worship our guest leader will conduct a brief period of instruction and inspiration, climaxed by members making their commitments as a confidential act of worship.

We will encourage participation in Consecration Sunday events through the Consecration Sunday team and church council members. Since we will make no follow-up visits to ask people to complete their cards, we will make every effort to inform, inspire, and commit everyone to attend Consecration Sunday worship on April 26.

Thanks in advance for your enthusiastic participation in Consecration Sunday events.

Sincerely, Louella Hext,
Chair, Consecration Sunday Team

Congregations that approach financial stewardship from a biblical perspective do not view the money Christians give to their church merely as a way to pay its bills.

Rather, such congregations see financial contributions as a way to help people grow spiritually in their relationship with God by supporting their church's mission and ministry with a percentage of their incomes.

STEWARDSHIP

The most important aspect of tithing and stewardship is not the raising of money for the church, but the development of devoted Christians."

~Fred M. Wood~

Submitted by Joyce Taylor

Celebrating our 2008 Giving

Thank you! We wanted to say thank you. Thank you for your faithful giving to the First UMC and to the Kingdom of God. As we have tallied the giving reports from 2008, you have given an increase of \$10,000 over the giving for 2007. Thank you for your faithfulness and love.

On the other side, as we have looked at our giving for the month of January, we are not doing as well. The snow, ice, and cold weather have kept many of you away. This reflects less giving to our expenditures. Would you consider a one-time gift to help defray this loss? Pray about this and see how God is directing. Thank you for your consideration, prayer and donation.

UMW Rummage Sale

The annual rummage sale will be held on April 17, 18 and 25 from 9 AM to 1 PM.

Remember to bring your donations of good used items to the church no later than April 10. Please do not bring clothing. Items may be left on the stage in the dining room.

UMW Meeting — Monday, March 16.

Barbara Bell will give a report about her latest trip to the United Nations. All ladies are invited.

PASTORS LETTER TO MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

Dear Members and Friends of the First United Methodist Church:

I have just returned from the mission trip to Mississippi. We were working in the little town of Moss Point. Most of you have heard the story of Mrs. Washington and her new home; but to make a long story short, I helped a team of men and women make a house for this woman in a period of two weeks. I cannot take a lot of credit for this to happen because I don't know a whole lot about the building process...but I can do some things. A cold spell hit the South while we were there and most days did not reach much above 50 degrees. It was cold (but warmer than here). I am thankful that God (and others) can use the little talent that I may have in this way. Mrs. Washington now has a new home to welcome her grandchildren into...she had been waiting for over three years.

That is the main story that I am able to tell. You pull me aside and I can tell you more of this incredible tale of building a house for this woman. Now, each day we had to get up early...breakfast was at 7 AM. While I was waiting, I would take a walk for about a mile around the community of Vancleave where we were staying. And each cold morning – they had frost – I would be enthralled by the crowing of a rooster off in the distance. I never met him, never saw him, but I sure could hear him. Faithfully, he would be calling out in the dawn of the day. That is what got me thinking as I walked in the twilight of the morning.

Faithful. Each morning that rooster would be crowing. Now, I don't know a lot about roosters, but I do know that when I am in the presence of a farm, roosters sure do love to crow in the morning. There is just something in them that they have to let the world know that morning is here. And they faithfully do it each and every day. Now, I can't imagine one or all of them getting up one morning and saying to themselves, "I don't feel like crowing this morning...I am going to sleep in." Or, "I feel sluggish today, maybe the pigs can take over." Well, you get the idea. They are faithful in welcoming the new day. They have to do it...they have to crow.

It's the same with Christians. You and I are to love. There is just something within us (Christ) that wants to make us love. Faithfully love. When we "put on" Christ, we will then have to love. It's not something that we have to think about; it is just something that we have to do. Each and every day, we will love. Jesus said, "They will know that you are my disciples when you love one another." It's not – when I want too. It's not – if I want too. It is that I must – love.

So, how are you doing? How are you loving? It is a new dawn. The Son is arising upon us...get up....get ready ... and.....crow. Oh, uh, I mean love. It should be something that you just have to do.

From one walker to another....
Pastor Rich

LENTEN SERVICES

DATE:	HOSTED BY:	TIME:	SPEAKER:
February 25 (Thurs)	First UM Church	12 Noon	Pastor Rich Berg
March 1 (Sun)	Covington UM Church	7 PM	Pastor Sherry Good
March 5 (Thurs)	First UMC Church	12 Noon	Pastor Keith Paris
March 8 (Sun.)	Mainesburg UM Church	7 PM	Pastor Chris Schafer
March 12 (Thurs.)	First UM Church	12 Noon	Pastor Rowena Gibbons
March 15 (Sun.)	Millerton UM Church	7 PM	Pastor Jennifer Wolf
March 19 (Thurs.)	First UM Church	12 Noon	Chaplain Courtney Hull
March 22 (Sun.)	Calvary UM Lawrenceville	7 PM	Pastor Bob Strozyk
March 26 (Thurs.)	First UM Church	12 Noon	Pastor Sharon Littrell
March 29 (Sun.)	East Point UM Liberty	7 PM	Pastor Tom Harmic
April 2 (Thurs.)	First UM Church	12 Noon	Pastor Deb Casey
April 5 (Sun.)	First UM Church Mansfield	7 PM	Pastor Rich Berg

PROFILE OF PARISHIONERS

Let's get to know the new members – Louella and Deward Hext.

Many of us remember the name Louella from not only being one of our pianists, but also from several years ago when she worked for Pastor Rich and the church as our secretary. She came to FUMC Mansfield after seeing an ad in the Penny Saver. She began calling, calling, calling to set up an interview. After Pastor Rich got tired of hearing the ringing, he finally answered and “voila” we had a new person in charge of the office. And a fine job she did!!!

Louella hails from the Lawrenceville area where her family owned and operated Birch Hill Orchards. She has lived in various locations in the world, including: Arizona, California, Oregon, Texas, Saudi Arabia, and of course, North Central Pennsylvania.

While she was living in Arizona, Louella met Deward while working at the same airport. When they married, Deward had four children and Louella one. Between them they have eleven grandchildren – all living on the west coast. They have been married nearly thirty-four years.

Deward hails from central Oregon. He is Air Force trained as a fighter pilot and also has his private pilot's license. After leaving the Air Force, he worked for Delta Airlines for ten years and during that time, he earned a B.S. in management and economics from Georgia State University. He then spent thirty years in airport management — including five years building airports in Saudi Arabia. He also served as a school board member and as a referee for most school sports. Each job, in its own way, was important to the development and education of young people.

Deward and Louella bought the Birch Hill Orchards property in 1982. In November 2003, they moved “back home”. It was undoubtedly God's plan as Louella needed to be here to care for her mother because of the unexpected death of her brother. This left Louella as the primary caretaker of her mother (Wilma Harrison) – who now resides at the Green Home. It also left Deward with a steep learning curve – getting familiar with managing and operating an apple orchard.

Louella has a great interest in church office management and is in the process of writing a book.. Her book deals with ways to improve communication in the church office, with the church leaders and the congregation. She has done several workshops in this area with another to come in Oregon. Her website is: churchofficemanager.com.

The decision to be part of our church family was made after some dissatisfaction at their previous church and then visiting others in the area from Westfield to Blossburg. Fortunately, FUMC Mansfield fit the bill. Since becoming members, Louella has been teaching a class and Deward has the “chair” of the church council. His hope is that we, the church, can create a five-year plan and then develop that vision in the years to come.

Both Louella and Deward feel that Pastor Rich is great to work for and with. His messages are wonderful and are great worshipful experiences. They are both very glad to have found FUMC Mansfield and we, the church, are blessed to have them.

Church Library News

I hope to have 3 monthly magazines available for reading and loaning: *The Interpreter*, *Angels and Guidepost*.

For the SOS Bible Study: There are five books available with information on both Islam and Christianity. They are *Life's the World's Great Religions*, *The Illustrated World Religions* by Huston Smith, *Charts of World Religions* by H. Wayne House, *Faith and Religions of the World* by David Gibbons, and *Man's Religions* by John B. Noss.

There are also three paperbacks on the topic of Islam. They are *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran* by Mohammed Marmaduke Pickthall, *God is One: The Way of Islam* by R. Marston Speight, and *A Brief Illustrated Guide to Understanding Islam* by I.A. Ibrahim. These books will help you understand Islam.

Submitted by Rosalie Connelly - Church Librarian

Community Dinner

Friday, March 6, 2009

4 PM – 6 PM

Chicken and Biscuits Dinner
Mashed Potatoes, Gravy
Green Bean Casserole
Fruited Jello Salad
Dessert Bar and Beverage

All You Care to Eat! \$8.00

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Wellsboro District Women's Retreat!

Saturday, April 25, 2009, 9:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.;
Warren L. Miller Elementary School, Mansfield.

“Living with Fear: Afraid of the
Uncertainties of Life”

Facilitator: Rev. Pat Woolever,
Pastor of the Millerstown Charge in the
New Cumberland District

There is a \$15.00 registration fee and the deadline is April 15, 2009. A registration form will be put in the bulletin several weeks before the deadline, so that if you are interested in attending you can fill it out and submit it to Belinda Frost, 2927 Rte. 660, Wellsboro, PA 16901.

Leadership University March 21 & 28

9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.; UMC of Wellsboro

(All classes will meet both days.)

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| “United Methodist Polity” | Instructor: Rev. Tom Willard
(Meets CLM requirements) |
| “Care of the Congregation” | Instructor: Pastor Sherry Good
(Meets CLM requirements) |
| “Leading from a Spiritual Base – Prayer” | Instructor: Pastor Robin Baer |
| “PLACE Ministries” | Instructor: Marty Willard
(meets Spiritual Gifts requirement) |

Contact the district office if you need a registration form or you can download a form off of the conference website: www.epcumc.org.

Registration deadline is March 14.

HISTORY MOMENT

Hymns at the Reformation

At the time of the Reformation – in the 16th Century – the reformers wanted the liturgy to be said in the vernacular. They also insisted upon hymns which could be understood and sung by the people, and they wished to get away from plainchant hymnody, most of which could only be performed by monks.

The reformers demanded that the new hymns should have a strictly scriptural basis and they therefore began to introduce metrical versions of the psalms – where the psalms were given a rhyme and rhythm and verse structure – making them easy to sing and understood. Take The Lord's my Shepherd for example. In doing so they began the divide between metrical psalms and hymns, which caused so much controversy in the Anglican church in the 18th and 19th centuries.

The Reformation coincided with the world-shaking introduction of printing and this gave church-goers access to many vernacular hymns. Martin Luther (1483-1546) played a great role in the development of hymnody – not only was he a radical theologian, he was also a fine musician with a deep knowledge of German folksong, an influence which can still be heard in his famous hymn *Ein'feste Burg*.

To be Continued. Chester Bailey

MISSION TRIP UPDATE & PRAISE

Carl Koch, one of the organizers of the latest Wellsboro District mission trip to Mississippi, was in the district office today sharing blessings from the trip. Of course, one of the greatest blessings was being able to provide a new home for a woman who was living among mold, thus making frequent trips to the hospital, since Hurricane Katrina. Other blessings were the bond & fellowship among the volunteers and the construction skills of many of the volunteers.

As of this date, approximately \$53,000 in donations was raised for the trip. The work team spent \$33,991 of that money in construction costs and gave \$15,981 to Camp Hope to finish up the house and for future projects. Our hope is to send additional funds after all expenses have been paid. Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

Pictures of the mission trip can be found on the district website: www.gbgmumc.org/wellsboropadistrict.

The group has been in discussion and believe that God is calling them for their next step to be a more local construction outreach ministry within our own district. District Superintendent Rev. Tom Willard

March Anniversaries & Birthdays

1. Victor Otruba
3. Rich Wilbur
4. Joanna Fuller
5. Lynne Andrews
6. Kristen Wise D'Angelo
8. Gene & Irene Walsh (A)
11. Erica Wilson
12. Gretchen Lawrence
13. Shirley Beagle
17. Leo Packard
18. Amanda Kuhl Holtzman
20. Jourdyn Buckheit
24. Carolyn Swinsick
27. Phil Brennan
Marc Lawrence
28. Virginia B. Smith
29. Ellen Bartholomew
Oliver "Dick" Bartlett
30. JoAnne Davis
Christopher DeVore
31. Allen Schanbacher



**DON'T FORGET
THAT ON SUNDAY,
MARCH 8th
DAYLIGHT SAVINGS
TIME BEGINS!
MOVE YOUR CLOCKS
AHEAD.**

SCRIPTURE READING (Tentative)

- March 1 Acts 2:42-47
Acts 5:12-16
Apostles' Creed pg. 881
- March 8 Acts 10:1-35
Revelation 7:9-12
Responsive Reading (Insert)
- March 15 Acts 18:24-28
II Corinthians 5:16-6:1
Responsive Reading (Insert)
- March 22 Acts 20:13-38
Acts 5:1-11
Responsive Reading (Insert)
- March 29 James 2:14-17
Responsive Reading (Insert)

Westfield Mission Central Hub

Pastor Rich, JoAnne Davis and myself went to the Westfield Mission Central Hub on Tuesday, February 24, 2009. We assembled, verified and packed 96 health kits for Mission Central.

We scheduled another trip to assemble kits for Tuesday, April 21, 2009. Hope you can join us!

Submitted by Rosalie Connelly—Mission Person

March 2009	March 1	March 8	March 15	March 22	March 29
Greeters	Sue Howe	Betsy & Tanya Kuhl	Jane Mudge	Jim and Dot Colegrove	Rosalie Connelly
Acolytes		Seth Watkins		Michael Wilston	
Liturgists	Jane Mudge	Laurie Piquero	Jane Mudge	Gary Wilston	Joyce Taylor
Altar Flowers		Jim & Dot Colegrove	Piquero		
Refreshments for Coffee Hour	Lloyd & Joyce Colegrove	JoAnne Davis		Nan Wilcox	
Cleaning Donation	Farrer's	Barb Rundell	Margaret Mortimer	Jerry & Deanna Rumsey	Jane & Rich McGee
Nursery					Rosalie Connelly

FROM THE YOUTH

Greetings everyone, this is a word from the youth. This upcoming summer, the youth of our church and some community churches are going on a mission trip to Tampa, Florida. Once there, we will be taking part in various activities. Some of the different events we may be participating in are: working at a migrant workers camp, working day camps and building homes, and we may also be helping with a deaf camp. This mission trip aids us in our walk with Christ and also gives us the opportunity to help those less fortunate and spread the Word of God.. We have gone on two previous mission trips and each year the group has grown. This is a wonderful blessing.

This year the group has almost doubled. We are looking at a group of 17 people. Although it is wonderful having this many people to go, this also raises the expenses of our trip.

Instead of doing a typical fundraiser, we have decided to offer our skills. We want to help you and the church with different chores. If you have any little projects you have been putting off because you just don't have the time or energy, let us help you. You can contact either Pastor Rich at the church office or myself (Erica Wilson) at 662-3361. If you don't have any projects you want completed and you still want to help, you can also provide donations or sponsor a child. You can contact Pastor Rich about any donations you would like to make. The cost per person to go on this trip is going to be \$269.00. We thank you for any support that you may give whether that is in the form of prayer or a monetary gift. Thank you once again and I hope all is well with everyone.

Erica Wilson, Church Youth Representative

Your Church Council Needs Your Help!

After discussion at the February Council meeting it has become clear that if our church is to carry out the mission of our United Methodist Church it is vitally necessary to develop and adopt a vision of what you and we want the Church to become. This is the WHAT of the future of our Church; following then is the need to determine HOW that can be accomplished, and finally set out to determine WHEN it can be accomplished.

All of these tasks require the involvement of every church attender and member in forming and shaping this Vision, after much prayer for guidance which is necessary if our Vision is to be consistent with God's will for this church.

There is a major difference between a mission statement and a vision statement. The Mission statement for a church is a general statement of ministry objectives; it is philosophic.

A Vision for a church is the reflection of what God wants the church to accomplish in building His kingdom. It is a specific, detailed statement of direction and uniqueness; it is strategic!

You may get a better indication of visions for churches by visiting the internet and bringing up "vision statements United Methodist Church". The vision statements there range from three sentence paragraphs to up to two pages. Please take the time to review these to become familiar with what some churches have done.

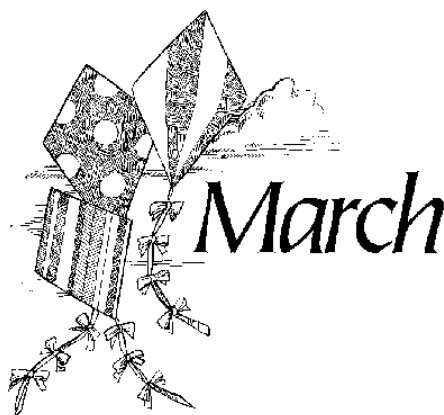
The Council urgently asks each of you to pray for our church as we embark on this vital task, and we invite you to become part of the process by attending a special meeting at 7:00 PM on March 17 at the church.

What do YOU want YOUR church to become? What thoughts and ideas do YOU have for ministries and services our church might offer to carry out the mission of United Methodist Church: *The mission of the Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.*

Please give this prayerful consideration and plan to attend the meeting and become part of this adventure.

Deward Hext Chairman Church Council

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Dining Room: 570-662-7719



*This Newsletter is sent
with a blessing and a prayer to....*

Church Dinners

We need more help to continue the dinners.

We need to continue the dinners to help pay our bills and a new furnace for the dinner room.

Please check the items you would be willing to help with the dinners.

Feel free to check as many as you would like.

- Help to put flyers around town.
- Help prepare the food on Wednesday or Thursday in the morning.
- Help cook the food on Friday morning and/or early afternoon.
- Help with the serving line.
- Help answer the phone with orders.
- Help deliver the dinners around Mansfield.
- Help with the cleanup.
- Help with curb service.

In your opinion, on what day would a dinner sell the best?

- Wednesday evening
- Thursday evening
- Friday evening

Any questions? Contact Betsy Kuhl at 662-3223.

Name

Phone Number