***T H E G O O D N E W S L E T T E R***

**First United Methodist Church**

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**Learn** the story. **Live** the story. **Tell** the story.



 **December 2015**

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Br. Scott’s Scrawling’s

I absolutely love this time of year! I must confess to you, that I am a Christmas light addict. I love all the lights of Christmas; it never comes too early for me! As Denise, Kaelin, Ali Grace and I prepare our home for the holidays with all our Christmas lights, we do so thinking of the greatest gift ever, Jesus Christ! But there is a close second in my opinion, your time! What a precious gift, your time! As the busy-ness of this season is on us, I pray you take some time to share one of the greatest gifts you can give, not from Wal-Mart or Belk, but the gift of your time! Check out this wonderful story circulating on the internet, true or not, it really illustrates my point!

“The Present”

Two men, both seriously ill, occupied the same hospital room. One man was allowed to sit up in his bed for an hour each afternoon to help drain the fluid from his lungs. His bed was next to the room's only window. The other man had to spend all his time flat on his back. The men talked for hours on end. They spoke of their wives and families, their homes, their jobs, their involvement in the military service, where they had been on vacation. Every afternoon, when the man in the bed by the window could sit up, he would pass the time by describing to his roommate all the things he could see outside the window. The man in the other bed began to live for those one hour periods where his world would be broadened and enlivened by all the activity and color of the world outside. The window overlooked a park with a lovely lake. Ducks and swans played on the water while children sailed their model boats. Young lovers walked arm in arm amidst flowers of every color and a fine view of the city skyline could be seen in the distance. As the man by the window described all this in exquisite details, the man on the other side of the room would close his eyes and imagine this picturesque scene. One warm afternoon, the man by the window described a parade passing by. Although the other man could not hear the band, he could see it in his mind's eye as the gentleman by the window portrayed it with descriptive words. Days, weeks and months passed. One morning, the day nurse arrived to bring water for their baths only to find the lifeless body of the man by the window, who had died peacefully in his sleep. She was saddened and called the hospital attendants to take the body away. As soon as it seemed appropriate, the other man asked if he could be moved next to the window. The nurse was happy to make the switch, and after making sure he was comfortable, she left him alone. Slowly, painfully, he propped himself up on one elbow to take his first look at the real world outside. He strained to slowly turn to look out the window beside the bed. It faced a blank wall. The man asked the nurse what could have compelled his deceased roommate who had described such wonderful things outside this window. The nurse responded that the man was blind and could not even see the wall. She said, 'Perhaps he just wanted to encourage you.'

There is tremendous happiness in making others happy, despite our own situations. Shared grief is half the sorrow, but happiness when shared, is doubled. If you want to feel rich, just count all the things you have that money can't buy. 'Today is a gift that is why it is called The Present.' “

We would love for you to join us for a “party at the parsonage” on Sunday, December 13 at 5p! Wishing you and yours, a very Merry Christmas! Br. Scott, Denise, Kaelin & Ali Grace

**FUMC ENDOWMENT FUNDS:** Have you remembered the Endowment Fund in your will and Estate Planning?

 Calling Children of all Ages

 Come ride the float for the Christmas parade

 float Monday night at 6:30 pm. More information

 to follow in weekly bulletin.

A special thank you note was received by the “Wild Bunch”. Congratulations on another job well done.

*Dear Mr. Mitchell,*

 *My daughter Laurie’s quality of life has improved immeasurably since your group installed the ramp for her at our home. She and all our family are really appreciative of your planning and efficient construction of the ramp.*

 *Please let us know soon what the supplies cost so that we can reimburse th church.*

*Thank you.*

 *Sincerely,*

 *Jeanne M. Wier*

**A View from the Pew by Peggy A. Keady December 2015**

What’s this business about becoming a contagious Christian?

The word contagious we most often hear in relation to disease or illness. It means to spread from one person to another by direct or indirect contact. Some examples of such illnesses are measles, mumps, pink eye, viruses, flu, aids, small pox, etc. Other words used are infectious, communicable, and transmittable.

 Another form of *contagion* is that of an emotion, feeling or attitude that is likely to spread and affect others. Some examples are fear, anger, excitement, prejudice, happiness, sadness.

(Think of 9/11, Ferguson Mo., seeing that State or Ole Miss quarterback cross the goal line, feelings about a person’s race or country of origin, the news o a marriage engagement or a special honor bestowed on a friend or family member, and the news of a loved one’s death.)

 As I was thinking about this topic I started with this premise: The Bible is God’s Word and He only speaks the truth. The word says that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God and that it is through Him ONLY that I can be forgiven for my sins and be restored to the Father. Since I believe this, I am forgiven and saved from hell to heaven and am in the process of being transformed even now. I have the Holy Spirit within me to provide me with all that I need to be a witness to the Risen Lord. This means that ignition is active and my life mission is to establish contact with those who walk in darkness. I am like a match…I make contact and ignite and the Holy Spirit brings light and warmth and healing into the encounter. If you need a demonstration, light a match and touch it to a second match and see what happens.

 Years ago when I lived in Georgia, I had the privilege of meeting the author Eugenia Price who had a home on St. Simons Island. One of her famous statements was:

“If Christ lives in us, controlling our personalities, we will leave glorious marks on the lives we touch. Not because of us but because of him.” The simple and profound truth is: The love of Jesus is contagious.

The Thanks giving meal was enjoyed by many families

this year. A special thanks to all who helped from

food preparation to delivery of the 24 homebound meals,

this event would not have been a success without your help.

**Just another special way our church**

**Family works together.**

 **Children Choir**  will present their

 Musical, “Glory to God in the Highest”

 On December 9, at 6:00 pm in the

 Upper Room. This will be an exciting

 night, so make plans to attend.

The Chancel Choir program will be *“A Celebration of Christmas”* Dec. 20 at the morning worship. Covered dish meal to follow. Watch bulletin for Sunday class assignments.

(**Remember that there are no other planned Wednesday night activities, except for the Children Choir program, until January 6 when we will resume with meals and studies.)**

The Mission Share luncheons have been a great success. This was started by the New Generation Sunday School class and through their financial contributions, there has been no outside expense to the church will all funds going to Mission Shares. If you desire to have fun with a group and serve the church, then there is a place for you with this ministry.

The last event of the year will be the sale of Chicken and Sausage Gumbo after church Dec. 6. This will be on a first come first serve base. This will be an excellent meal for the holidays, for freezes great.

 $12.00 half gallon, $20.00 gallon.

Times A-Changing

One of the results of our “cottage Meetings” was the idea to go to one morning worship service. Your voices have been heard! The Church Council decided unanimously to begin a new worship schedule beginning the first Sunday in January 2016. Help us spread the news….

8:30 am Coffee and Donut social

 (Parlor and Fellowship Hall)

9:00 am Sunday School Hour

(some may want to start a bit earlier, and that’s ok.)

10:00 Worship and **5:00** pm Vespers

Holiday Happening was successful and an enjoyable time by all. Thank you to everyone who set up and “manned” booths, to our breakfast servers, and the cooks for the wonderful chicken. Funds received were over $5000 before expenses. If you did not get a 1985 (2nd edition) of the church cookbook, they are available in the office for $5.

 *“Many, many thanks to all who donated jewelry to Holiday Happening. If you didn't see something you gave, we may not have had time to clean or repair it- or maybe you just didn't*

 *recognize it. We keep things for next time.*

*We love you and again, thanks.”*

 *Jeanenne and Judy*

 **Have you felt the excitement in the air at FUMC? Here’s what we’ve been doing in addition to the regular schelduled events.**

**September:** School started, children and adult choirs expanding, football team and cheer leaders enjoying the Fellowship hall and men’s fellowship meal, regular small groups and cottage meetings started.

**October**: Mission Share luncheon where our members and guests were treated to elegant meal with all the beauty and decoration of a 5 star restaurant. Cottage meetings. Men’s fellowship suppers, and then one of the best Halloween carnivals for both children and adults.

**November:** Homecoming with a revival led by Rev. John Moore and a delicious meal. Training followed for three nights will many members attending. Activity was great this week preparing for a successful Holiday Happening, another tasty Mission shares luncheon, Thanksgiving Wednesday night meal, and then ending with the Hanging of Greens celebrating the beginning of Advent.

**December:** The Christmas parade will start the month off, then children choir program, open house at the Parsonage, Angel tree gifts, Carols by Candlelight trip, the Chancel choir program and covered dish luncheon, and then the celebration of the birth of Jesus on Christmas Day.

 **November 29**, was the first Sunday of Advent. The church is beautifully decorated by our very talented members, and all throughout the halls are decorated doors ready for the season. Are you ready? To help you prepare for the season, devotions from various church members have been put in a booklet called, *“Unto Us a Child is Born”.* The devotional booklets are available in the front of the Sanctuary and foyer. Thank you to all who contributed.

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“Carols by Candlelight” will again be at the First Baptist Church in Jackson, December 12. All tickets are taken, but there is a waiting list in case of cancelation. Meet in the parking lot, at 12:30 to enjoy the bus ride with Br. Scott. Cost: $2. each for gas plus your meal on the way home.

 **Happy Thanksgiving to All,**

**Don’t forget during this season to share the many blessings you have been given!**

**Nancy**