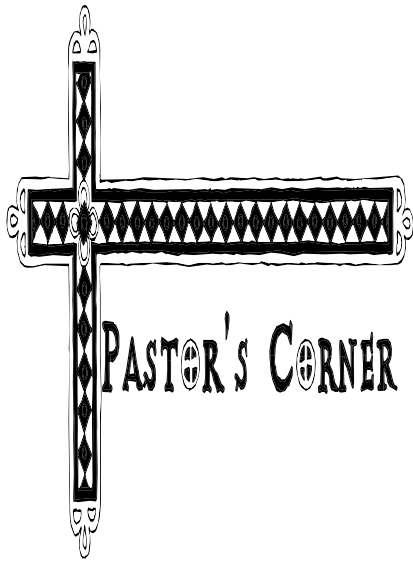




Good News at Gum Spring United Methodist Church



December 2009



Christmas is coming! Most of us are at least thinking about the preparations: cleaning the house, maybe some reorganizing or rearranging furniture. Then we go get the boxes and all the decorations so the house looks like we're ready for Christmas. Of

course, I haven't even mentioned the shopping that we'll do, for food and presents. It's a busy season.

We're getting ready at church, too. The sanctuary will be decorated, especially with the Advent wreath and tree. Our music and liturgy will help us look to the coming of Jesus, the infant born in a stable to parents when there was no room for them elsewhere. He was the greatest gift ever given to us. We recall the joy of his life, death, and resurrection and look to His return.

Christmas is also a time for others to return – the month of December has the highest attendance of the year (and that does not include Christmas Eve services). As school and sports activities wind down, families find more time available to come to church. Can we make them feel like we've missed them and they've missed something by being away?

Although many of us enjoy Christmas, it is a hard time for many (and January can be tough, too).

Christmastime can be a reminder of lost loved ones, broken relationships, even things that "could-have-been" but were not. Sometimes we get our hopes up and are disappointed when reality doesn't meet our expectations. Can we make them feel like someone loves and cares for them, even in spite of our failings?

Are we truly ready? I don't mean having all the decorations up in time for the in-laws to visit. I mean preparing ourselves for those who will enter our sanctuary and join our fellowship. Perhaps they feel that there is no room for them elsewhere – I hope that we will find room for them in our congregation. Setting up the Christmas tree is easy, making room for the stranger is much harder. Who knows? We may find that we have welcomed Christ in our midst. After all, we know that He is coming.

See Ya Sunday!

Jeff

Worship in the Coming Months

Our regular Sunday morning services are at 8:45 and 11 am. We celebrate Holy Communion at both services on the first Sunday of each month.

We have a nursery during Sunday School and both morning services. If you need nursery care during other church activities, please let us know. We also invite all children from ages 3 to 6 to children's church, right after the children's sermon during the 11:00 service.

Come and worship God with us.



Christmas Season Schedule

★ Christmas Craft-Gift-Bake Sale ★

Saturday, December 5, 2009

8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

★ Bell Choir Community Events ★

Lewis Ginter Park

Wednesday, December 2, 2009

6:00-8:00 p.m. in the Library

Colonial Williamsburg

Sunday, December 6, 2009

2:00-4:00 p.m. at the Market Square

Country Club of Virginia

Monday, December 7, 2009

1:30 p.m.

★ Family Night Dinner ★

Sunday, December 6, 2009-6:00 p.m.

★ Adult Choir Cantata ★

Sunday, December 13, 2009-11:00 a.m.

Sunday, December 20, 2009-8:45 a.m.

★ Hand Bell Choir Cantata ★

Sunday, December 20, 2009-11:00 a.m.

★ Children's Christmas Play ★

Sunday, December 20, 2009-7:00 p.m.

★ Christmas Caroling ★

Tuesday, December 22, 2009

Meet at the church at

6:45 p.m.

★ Christmas Eve Services ★

5:30 & 11:00 p.m.

Children's Christmas Play Rehearsal Schedule

★ Rehearsal only if needed on December 6th.

★ Dress Rehearsal, December 13th at 4:00 p.m., in full costume in the Sanctuary.

★ Assemble in the Fellowship Hall on December 20th at 6:30 p.m.

★ *Live From Bethlehem* Play on December 20th at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary



DECEMBER MEETINGS:

☉ **Prayer Shawl Ministry**, Tuesdays, December 1st, 15th & 29th at 7:00 p.m.

☉ **Men's Group Meeting**, Tuesday, December 1st at 7:00 p.m.

☉ **Youth Council Meeting**, Sunday, December 13th at 7:00 p.m.

☉ **Administrative Council Meeting**, Monday, December 14th at 7:30 p.m.

☉ **Seniors meet at Holly Grove Christian Church**, Thursday, December 17th at 10:00 a.m.

☉ **Finance Committee Meeting**, Monday, December 21st at 7:00 p.m.

UMW:

Christmas Craft-Gift and Bake Sale:

The United Methodist Women will hold a Christmas Gift and Bake Sale on Saturday, December 5th at 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

This event will provide an opportunity to purchase Christmas gifts and baked goods for your Christmas activities.

At present we have nine vendors who will be selling their items. There will also be some inexpensive gifts for children to do their shopping.

Please bring donations of baked goods and crafts to the church by Friday evening, December 4th.

All proceeds from this sale will go to the Building Fund.

Stewardship Report As of October 31, 2009

	Last Year	This Year	Difference	Percent
Budget (Revised)	\$ 246,809	\$ 237,416	\$ -9,393	-4%
Number of Weeks for this Report	42	43		
Operating Funds Giving	\$ 195,898	\$ 179,603	\$ -16,295	-8%
Versus Budget to Date	\$ 199,345	\$ 196,325	\$ -3,021	-2%
Difference from Budget	\$ 3,448	\$ -16,722		
Percent	2%	-9%		
Operating Expenses	\$ 172,521	\$ 182,847	\$10,326	6%
Remaining Budget	\$ 74,288	\$ 54,569		
Percent of Budget Remaining	30%	23%		
Building Fund Giving, This Year		\$ 123,137		
Contribution to New Construction through July		\$ 1,201,409		
Average Worship Attendance (Combined)	187	174	-13	-7%
Average Sunday School Attendance		90		

Change of Address

***Russell Pruden**

***Chelsie Uglow**

Please call the church office for details.



Andrew Sherman (Iraq), Lisa Milan (Iraq), Louis Parrish, Dennis Gammon, Louise Bird, Mary Johnson, Harry White, Chic Larsen, Tucker & Brenda Hill, Karla Best, Lois Royster, Eduardo Maia, Kathy LaJoie, Gwyn Taylor, Dale Hawk, Margaret Clements, Ruth Grubbs, Philip Berry, John Beahm, Brenda Dunn, Chelsie Uglow, Kathryn Robinson.

MISSIONS:

We are in need of a new person to take over the mission collection of magazines and eyeglasses. If any one would like to be responsible for finding a useful home for these items and/or taking over the delivering of these items, please contact the church office.

Church Humor:

A pastor announced to his congregation: "I have good news and bad news. The good news is, we have enough money to build the new church. The bad news is, it's still in your pockets."

Things God Won't Ask:

* God won't ask the square footage of your house. He'll ask how many people you welcomed into your home.

* God won't ask what your job title was. He'll ask if you performed your job to the best of your ability.

* God won't ask how many friends you had. He'll ask how many people to whom you were a friend.

* God won't ask in what neighborhood you lived. He'll ask how you treated your neighbors.