

The Messenger

A Bi-Monthly Newsletter of Good Shepherd United Methodist Church

Vol. #12

Issue #6

November/December 2009

THE BEARER OF GOD

Pastor Doug Ralston

“Theotokos” is a Greek word which, in Eastern Orthodoxy, is the designation of Mary as the bearer of God because she brought God into her world. While it is sometimes also defined as “Mother of God,”



Theotokos especially refers to the incarnation. It speaks to Mary’s cooperation with God by calling our attention to the fact that Mary was the bearer, the protector, and the provider for a tiny baby who was destined to redefine the relationship between God and

humanity for all time.

We don’t talk very much about Mary in our United Methodist tradition, but as we rapidly approach Christmastide it is both accurate and important to acknowledge that this human being was an instrument used by God and that she did so with great joy and celebration.

Each Christmas we celebrate the coming of the greatest promise of all, the child savior lying in a manger and wrapped in swaddling clothes. But we leave him there. We don’t unwind the swaddling clothes and let him free to hold him in our arms and in our hearts. But Mary did!

Mary was able to live her faith because when God’s promise lives in your heart you can do whatever God calls you to do. When God’s promise lives in our hearts, we change. Worldly things don’t hold the attraction they used to. Even the ridicule of the world doesn’t matter as much any more.

Can you imagine the ridicule Mary must have gotten? Imagine the stares and the whispers and the

gossip behind the backs of Mary and Joseph. But none of that mattered to Mary. God had touched her life in a spectacular way. The promise of God was alive in her heart.

Mary celebrated God’s active participation in her life. In Luke 1:46-55, we read the “Magnificat” also called “Mary’s Song,” “My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me - holy is his name.”

Mary is known as the “Theotokos,” but she is not the only bearer of God. We sing the song, “Come into My Heart Lord Jesus,” and we believe that he does. We have been taught that we are made in the image of God. In the very beginning of the Old Testament, Genesis 1:27, we find the text, “So God created humans in God’s own image, in the image of God, God created them; male and female he created them.” We carry the “Image of God” in us.

We may not have been visited by an angel announcing that God is using us at this moment to bring the Kingdom of God into this world. But, in truth, we *are* instruments of God to bring Christ to the world in our time as surely was the Mary in hers. We are the bearers of God to our world, to our families, to our friends, and to our workplaces.



As we search the festive store shelves and catalogs with Christmas on the horizon, trying to find that perfect gift for those we care most about, here’s a suggestion from John Wesley. Through your life, your love, your care, and your compassion, “Offer them Christ!” Offer them the Christ that is in you!



United Methodist Women

We want to thank everyone who participated at our American Pie fundraiser. All monies raised at our fundraisers go towards local missions the rest of this year. We have paid our Mission Pledge to the Detroit East District for missions around the world and in the U.S. Methodist Women purchase all supplies for the church kitchen and paper product prices have been increasing all year so some of the money does go towards that.

NOVEMBER Love and Rebecca Circles will be meeting at their regular times. Our regular General Meeting will be on Monday, November 16 at 7:00 p.m.

UM...UM...GOOD.... November also brings our HOLIDAY PIE BAKE SALE. We will be baking both PUMPKIN AND DUTCH APPLE PIES. There is a sign up sheet on the Methodist Women board to order pies. We are baking pies on Saturday, November 21 starting at 9:00 a.m. You may pick up your pies after church on Sunday, November 22.

DECEMBER.... Holiday time again and the wonder of Christ's Birth. December brings joy to all. Rebecca Circle will not be meeting in December. Love Circle is having their annual CHRISTMAS LUNCH OUT on Wednesday, December 9 at noon. We will be going to the Cutting Board on Schoenherr just south of 12 Mile. All ladies of the church are welcome. Just give Sally a seat count by December 7.

COOKIE WALK On Saturday, December 12 our annual cookie walk will be taking place from 9:00 am. to 1:00 p.m. If possible, we are asking our ladies to make 6 dozen of their favorite Christmas cookie and have them at the church by Friday night, December 11. We will be setting up starting at 6:30 p.m. that evening. Sign up sheet will be on the Board after Thanksgiving.

THEN the event of the year. Our Christmas Appetizer Supper at the home of Carol Money on Monday, December 14 at 6:30 p.m. Come and bring an appetizer to share and a wrapped REGIFTABLE PRESENT. Join us for this fun filled entertaining and delicious evening. See you there.

Sally Goodrow, President.

A Message from Pastor/Parish Relations Committee

Our thanks to our congregation for the effort involved as we moved from the pastorate of Rev. Elias and Tapuwa Mumbiro to the first days of Rev. Douglas and Sharon Ralston. While we said a tender good-bye, we also said a hearty welcome.

As we move on into Pastor Doug's time with us, we are also busy preparing for our first church conference together. We will meet with Rev. Duane Miller, District Superintendent, on November 22. PPRC will meet with Rev. Miller at 9:30 AM and conference itself will be right after service.

My personal thanks to all the committee members as we have been working steadily since June on these responsibilities.

Bill Arendall, Chair

Part of the 50th Anniversary Celebration was REMEMBERING . . . We are fortunate to have a past filled with events to invite others to come and experience. Roxann and Paul share with us some of those invited others events.

Mary Ellen Chapman was the Ministerial Assistant with Pastor Emmanuel Giddings. She invited me to the UMW Service that she was sharing the message that March, 1999. And I've been here ever since. I have been so blessed over these last 10 years to be a member here at Good Shepherd United Methodist church. Roxann Kohler.

In the late 70's we had a large group of men in our Men's Club, we even had a baseball team and it was a strong team. At every meeting we had 15 to 20 men. It was nice to run a project and have 8 or more guys helping. We did work on people's homes and we ran a Boy Scout Pack. We had dinners almost every month. We did golf outings and even had time for a baseball team, the good old days. We still have 3 men of our church that played baseball; they were Clarence Johnson, Center Field; Paul Goodrow, short stop, one of the best and there was Paul Niemela, Pitcher. I was the President back then and still am the President today. Paul Niemela

Editor's Note; Bill Arendall also played on the team in positions of outfield or first base.

*Birthdays
and
Anniversaries*



**Lil's
Kitchen
Korner....**



Chili Con Turkey - Mild Turkey Chili

Serves 4 to 6.

November Birthdays

- 3 – Casey Pelt
- 10 – Margo Boismier
Abby McDonald
- 13 – Mildred Jacobson
- 14 – Alwyn Morgan
- 16 – Norma Stalker
Heather Trevino
- 18 – Mary Arafles
- 20 – Betty Edwards
- 21 – Rev. Fred Heath
- 24 – Laurie Koivula
- 28 – Tom Arendall
- 29 – Helen Walter
Kyle Finner
Douglas W. Gettleson

November Anniversaries

- 1 – Bill & Ruth Flynn
- 28 – Clarence & Ellen Johnson
- 29 – Al & Carroll Urquhart

December Birthdays

- 5 – Lil Beverly
Maximilian Whittredge
- 6 – Nadine Johnson
- 8 – Julie Heath
- 9 – Karen Arendall
- 10 – Peter Nieman
- 17 – Linda Tavana
- 21 – Mary Money
- 22 – Peter Arendall
- 23 – Deric Boismier
- 25 – Grant Baxter
- 26 – Abbe Heath

December Anniversaries

- 5 – Christine & Allen Whittredge
- 9 – Heather & Jesse Trevino
- 14 – Shirley & Dan Klug

- 2 tbs. vegetable oil
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 ¼ lbs. ground turkey
- 1 (15 oz.) can tomato sauce
- 2 tbs. mild chili powder
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- 1 (15 oz.) can pinto or red kidney beans
- Salt and pepper to taste

1. In a medium skilled, over low heat, heat oil and sauté onion, celery and garlic until onion is golden. Add turkey, raise heat to medium and sauté until turkey is no longer pink. **Stir to break up meat into small pieces.** **2.** Add tomato sauce, chili powder and cumin; stir. Bring to a boil, reduce to low, cover and simmer 20 minutes. Stir occasionally. **3.** Mix in beans, salt and pepper to taste. Cover and simmer 30 minutes longer. Let rest 5 minutes before serving.

**Pumpkin Cheesecake Bars
Homemade with Love**

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/3 cup packed golden brown sugar
- 5 tablespoons butter, softened
- ½ cup finely chopped pecans or walnuts
- 1 package (8 ounces) softened cream cheese
- ¾ cup sugar
- ½ cup Libby's Solid Pack Pumpkin
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1½ teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Combine flour and brown sugar in medium bowl. Cut in butter to make a crumb mixture. Stir in nuts. Set aside ¾ cup mixture for topping. Press remaining mixture into bottom of 8 x 8 x 1 ½-inch baking pan. Bake in preheated 350 F oven for 15 minutes. Cool slightly. Combine cream cheese, sugar, pumpkin, eggs, cinnamon, allspice and vanilla in large mixer bowl. Blend until smooth. Pour over baked crust. Sprinkle with reserved topping. Bake an additional 30 to 35 minutes. Cool before cutting into bars. Makes 32 1 x 2 inch bar cookies.

It was decided at Church Council to do 15-20 baskets for families in St. Clair Shores this year. Also donations of cash are needed to buy the turkeys. If you are interested in helping pack or deliver the baskets,



Thanksgiving

please contact Roxann Kohler or Laurie Koivula. Many hands make light work.

Items needed: Canned corn, green beans, cream of mushroom soup, French fried onion rings, boxed stuffing, canned

gravy, cranberry sauce, olives, boxed mashed potatoes, canned sweet potatoes, red jello, brownies or cookie mixes, boxed pie crust and cans of prepared pumpkin pie filling.

Also we have received the names of 10 children from the Angel Tree Program. This means we have 10 clothing gifts and 10 toy or game gifts to purchase. The gift tags will be available on Sunday November 1 & 8 in the Fellowship Hall during coffee hour.

If you have any questions regarding the Thanksgiving Baskets or Angel Tree, please see Roxann Kohler or Laurie Koivula.

May there be hope, peace, love and joy in your life today! Roxy



January and February Messenger Deadline
December 13, 2009

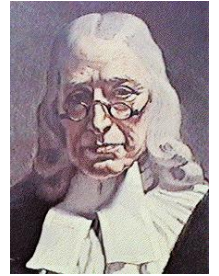
Church Calendar Web Address...

<http://www.mychurchevents.com/calendar/calendar.aspx?ci=L6G1I3K5H2I3O9L6I3>

Wesley's Attic: Part 1

Pastor Doug Ralston

I loved those times growing up, when I could spend some time in the attic. Usually, I had to sneak up the stairs ever so quietly. My mother didn't think that the attic was the most appropriate place for a child to play. Let's return together to those times of wild-eyed anticipation and heart-thumping excitement as we spend some time exploring the attic of the father of Methodism, John Wesley.



There is so very much neatly packed away and in perfect order (after all, this is *Wesley's* attic), but there are many shelves and boxes where the dust makes it obvious that they have remained untouched for quite some time.

Wesley's movement was not supposed to create a new church, but rather to revive the Church of England. The church had grown stale within its sanctuaries and there was no desire to stretch out beyond its appointed time and place into the desperate world that surrounded it.

John Wesley, and brother Charles, felt the need for a deeper personal holiness and knew that fulfilling that need ought to lead to a response that could be seen and felt by the world outside the doors. Wesley created a system where small groups could come together. This box is labeled "The Bands."

As Wesley wrote in his "Rules of the Bands," "The design of the bands is to obey the command of God, 'Confess your faults one to another; and pray for another, that ye may be healed.'" The concept of small groups whose members hold each other accountable for their personal holiness and share the openness to allow for the possibility of confession is a box that ought not to be closed and put back on its shelf. United Methodism of the 21st century needs renewal as much as did the Church of England in the 18th century.

The Wesleyan Band and its confessional nature were clearly echoed in the work of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. He writes that self forgiveness can never lead to a break with sin, but the other believer breaks our circle of self deception. The forming of bands creates the opportunity for the development of the Blessed Community whose members hold each other in great enough love through and in Christ to act as confessor and truth-teller. *Next time...Mission and John Wesley*