

# TOWER TOPICS

## First United Methodist Church Newsletter



Vol. 66 No.1

First United Methodist Church, Huntington, WV

January 2012



It was once said, "It is easy to talk on religion, but difficult to practice it." I think that may be

a true statement. So, it is time for us to practice. Christmas is past and Lent will be here before we know it. And the only way to be ready is to practice. Join us in next seven weeks leading up to Lent as we spend some time practicing. What does that mean? Join us Sunday mornings at 8:45 in the Fellowship Hall to find out.

### New Wednesday Evening Bible Study Begins

We begin a new year by looking at resolutions. More specifically, New Year's Resolutions from the wisest man who ever lived. We will be studying Proverbs 3 as we consider the resolutions we need to make for the new year. Everyone is welcome to join us each Wednesday at 6:00 in Room 208.



### Finance Update

Thank you for turning in your pledge for 2012. The response has been very good; we have more people pledging than we had last year. If you have not already pledged, it's not too late to do so. Pledge cards can be found on the table at the back of the sanctuary.

### SeaSide Escape Women's Retreat Asbury Woods January 20-22 \$30

The beach in January? What better place is there? Join us on January 20-22 at the Asbury Woods Beach for a time of escape, study, fun and renewal.

SeaSide Escape consists of seven unique sessions. During our retreat, we will use seven items typically found at the beach as metaphors for what we're learning. Most sessions include worship and Bible study focusing on the story of Sarah and Hagar from Genesis. Of course there will be time for laughter and fun. We will draw close to God during a personal time of reflection and prayer, and come to truly understand the meaning of Psalm 46:10, "Be still, and know that I am God."

*Consider being a day camper if you can't stay overnight.*

You will find a registration form on the back page of this newsletter. The deadline for registering is January 15. The cost is \$30.

### First Church Dinner Theater to Present Another Bitsy and Boots Production February 10, 11 & 14

They're back! But, where are they? Not Getaway, that's for sure. How did Bitsy and Boots end up on a tropical island? Will Tommy and Kat get to enjoy their romantic vacation? How many people can one hotel room hold? Will Max survive?

All these questions will be answered when you attend "Bitsy and Boots in the Tropics" another hilarious comedy by our resident playwright, Jonathan Joy.

Watch for more information, but mark your calendars now and plan to attend.

# I Love Chick-Fil-A!

Following is an article written by Perry Noble.

I love Chick-Fil-A! (AND love Tim Hawkins song about it) We eat there at least two or three times a week (not kiddingí we've actually pushed that number up to 6-7 a few times.)

The food is ALWAYS good, they get the order right nearly every time and their customer service is second to none. It is always clean and no matter how long the line seems to be people are always served as quickly and efficiently as possible.

So, imagine my surprise when my wife came home the other day and, as we were catching each other up on the things that had taken place while we had been apart all morning and afternoon she told me about a bad experience she had at Chick-Fil-A.

I was immediately frustrated! (Any husband would be!) ANDí before I knew it I had literally told myself in my mind, "Well, if that's the way things are going to be then I guess we just won't be going to Chick-Fil-A anymore, they've lost my business."

TIME OUT!!! How stupid was THAT thought? Seriously, let's review!

#1 ó They ALWAYS deliver great food!

#2 ó They ALWAYS have friendly people!

#3 ó They ALWAYS have a clean environment!

#4 ó What my wife had experienced was not in line with what normally happens.

(ANDí I want to be completely fair to Lucretia, she was NOT saying she would not go back, nor was she angryí she was just telling me about her day and I am the one who became irrational!)

I lost my mind! I was literally going to allow one bad experience

with one employee ruin a reputation of excellence that had been consistent for years! (ANDí no one knows what was going on in that employee's lifeí she could have had one of the worst days of her life and was trying her best to just hold it together until she could clock out!)

Before you agree with me too quicklyí I think there are people who have done the same thing to the church!

It has become quite popular, even in some "Christian" circles, to bash the church for all of the dumb things that she has done.

I have met people since being in ministry for over 20 years that have the same attitude with the church that I almost had with Chick-Fil-A! They will attend, serve, be devoted to a local church for months or even yearsí and then, all of a sudden!

Someone didn't call them when they were out for two weeks.

Someone said something hurtful to or about them.

They didn't like what the preacher said.

They didn't like what the youth group was doing.

I could go on and oní but you get the point. There are times when people will allow one thing in the church to trump the decades of ministry and impact that have taken place through that body of believers, and that's a bit insane.

Yes, if you stay in a church long enough I promise you that you will see hypocrisy.

Someone will say something to you or about you that will hurt you.

Decisions will be made that you do not like.

There are going to be sermons that make you mad.

When that happens the enemy is

going to try his best to convince you to just walk awayí because he knows that the first step away from God is usually getting people to step away from the people of God.

Yes, the church, EVERY church, has made some unwise decisions and, in the process have hurt or disappointed people along the wayí but let's know throw the baby out with the bathwater!

She's STILL being built by Jesusóthat makes her important!

She's STILL reaching out to the broken, the forgotten and the poor.

She's STILL making a difference that's going to be seen for eternity.

She's STILL GOD'S PLAN for reaching the world.

She's STILL necessary for believers! (If church is not necessary then why did Jesus say He would build it, died for it, will

one day redeem it and spends so much time in the New Testament talking to it and about it?ó

No, the church is NOT perfectí but neither are you (or me!) So, when we're tempted to walk away because of the one thing that seems to hurt us or trip us up we should simply ask, "Is this consistent with this church's character?ó

Stay in a church long enough and you will have a bad experienceí but let that push you closer to Jesus as you recognize that HE uses imperfect people in His plan, which means sometimes they get it wrong, and then beg the Lord to teach both them and yourself how to best deal with the situationí because, she's STILL the church and STILL His bride.

Nowí anyone want to go to Chick-Fil-A with me?

## In Our Thoughts and Prayers

Visit us Jesus Christ with the sharpness of your truths and pray for us Holy Spirit when we do not know what to pray. Together, let us pray...

### For those who are sick or homebound...

Barbara Allen, Myrtle Archer, Helen Bardall, Carol Bartram, Lander Beal, Brady Blake, Maxine Blake, Eloise Bland, Faye Brangham, Mabel Brooks, Fred & Betty Bugg, Rod Burns, Clarissa Carson, Bob Cartmill, Sue Clay, Mel Cummings III, Jack & Bobby Jo Cundiff, Eddie Danford, Mary Jo Danford, Florence Davidson, Ella Dennison, Bernistine Gill, Kerry Hampton, Ginny Lee Hastings, Cathy Hutchinson, John Knight, Gil Lester, Gloria Lester, Ray & Tiny Moser, Jane Mossman, Geraldine Pigman, Luella Pinson, Nina Richardson, Jack & Pat Sale, Ted Vidal

### For those who grieve...

Myrtle Mancini on the death of her sister, Lula McCalla  
Family and friends of Madeline Harmon  
Family and friends of Amini Rafee  
Family and friends of Margaret Sydenstricker

### For those celebrating new life...

Sarah Haymes and V Turbayevskiy on the birth of their daughter Kira on December 26.

Remember those in the military who are in harmø way.

## In Our Mail

The Campus Christian Center would like to express their appreciation to First Church and the Mission Committee for providing a \$1,000 contribution from the Dinner Theater funds to assist with repairing the boiler of their HVAC system. Your generosity is much appreciated. We would also like to thank the church for the \$200 contribution from the UM Foundation Trust for programming for the UM Student ministry. During finals week, Rev. Benjamin Wells and students distributed free coffee, hot chocolate, and tea to others on campus. Events, such as this, increases the visibility of the United Methodist campus ministry and provides a service to the students. The students enjoy the respite provided by this project.

Thank you for being supportive of the UM Campus Ministry.

Blessings,  
Pamela McCoy

My mother, Jane Mossman wants you to know how much she appreciates the care and attention she receives from members of the church while she is a resident of Madison Park.

It's nice to know that someone who was (and is) a member of a church for 70 years is not forgotten in her senior years.

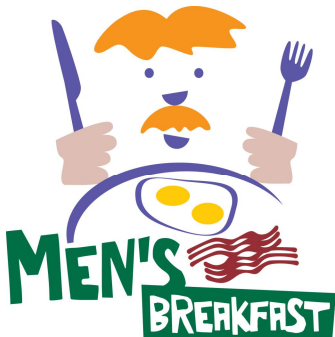
Blessings on you all.

Sincerely,  
Sallie Mossman Manassah



## January Birthdays

			Eli Crager
	1/18		Alexee Powell
	1/20		Sarah Young
	1/22		Nancy Slaughter
	1/23		Jack Patrick
			Stephen Fowler
1/2		1/24	Pat Sale
1/3		1/25	Wes Shanholtzer
			Kevin Ray
1/6			Holly McKenna
			Alex Bradley
			Brady Blake
1/7		1/27	Marikate Polcyn
		1/29	Vivian Tschop
1/13		1/30	Kerry Winkler
1/14			Alex Hagan
1/17		1/31	Emily Tschop
			Cassie Bacon
			Zendal Tatum



## Saturday, January 14

The men will be gathering once again for breakfast on Saturday, January 14 at 8:00. Our usual great chefs will be hard at work, and can always use some helping hands who can show up early. Celes Sheffield from Ebenezer Community Outreach Center will present the program. All men of the church plan to join us, and invite a friend.

## Do We Have Your Email?

In the light of rising postage costs, we are attempting to send as many meeting announcements and other communications as possible via email. We have email addresses for many of you and send out Tower Topics to over 120 individuals. If you don't think we have your current address, please email us at [firstunited-methodist@frontier.com](mailto:firstunited-methodist@frontier.com) so we can add you to our email database.

## Family Game Night Planned in January

Everyone is invited to come out on Saturday, January 28 at 5:00 for a night of games, food, and good fellowship. Come for the fun, *bring a side dish or dessert, and a favorite game or two.* We will provide hot dogs and drinks. The Wii will be set up on the big screen and game tables will be available throughout the church. Plan to join your church family for a great night of fun and fellowship.



## Notes from Debbie



Many thanks to all who helped with "Arrest These Merry Gentlemen", the children's Christmas musical. For those of us old enough to remember the character of Joe Friday of "Dragnet" it was quite a hoot seeing Caleb as Joe Sabbath. Didn't he do a wonderful job? It's amazing that a 4th grader can learn all those lines! And Andy Legg was the perfect sidekick and rookie cop, Rookie. Thanks to all the children who did such a fine job presenting the musical. I'd also like to thank all the adults who helped, although you would think that letting Bob Ganzer be the STAR of Bethlehem would be spot-light enough, right? Yet he still had to PROTEST; Occupy Bethlehem indeed!

I would also like to thank all the choir children and parents for the wonderful presents I received. I can't wait to use the movie gift card. And I LOVE the awesome sheherd ornament, the candle and all the other great stuff. The beautiful Willow Tree angel from the staff was also a lovely gesture. So, thank you, thank you, thank you!

I'll be sending home a choir schedule for spring semester soon. In the meantime, I'll see you on Wednesday nights!

Debbie

## Meetings and Special Events for January



Jan. 4	Wednesday Activities Resume
	6:30 Staff Parish Relations Committee
Jan. 5	10:30 Love Bee Circle
Jan. 11	6:00 Finance Committee
	7:00 Trustees
Jan. 14	8:00 Men's Prayer Breakfast
	Noon Pinewood Derby
Jan. 16	Church office closed for Martin Luther King Day
Jan. 20-22	Women's Retreat at Asbury Woods
Jan. 28	5:00 Family Game Night
Jan. 29	Noon Administrative Council

# Children & Youth News

From Tracie

## The Least of These:

### A look at Poverty in the Modern World

Starting January 4<sup>th</sup>, the youth will begin a series of lessons on "The Least of These." It is a youth ministry 360 Bible study that focuses on God, Poverty and You. We will be taking an in-depth look at poverty and the vital role that God has for us in helping to ease the burden of the poor and needy. All youth, come and join us on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 for this important lesson.

## Youth Parents Meeting

There will be a brief meeting of all youth parents on Wednesday, January 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:30. We will meet in the panel room following youth that evening. We will be discussing the youth room renovations, and future plans and activities for the group. Please make every effort to attend. Parent involvement and knowledge is a vital key to building up our youth and I want to make every effort to get you involved.

## Jubilee City

Starting on Sunday, January 8, Jubilee City will begin a new unit called "Calling All Disciples." It will be led by Donna Griffith. It is a look at how Jesus called ordinary people to do extraordinary things, and how He calls us too, each and every day. Come join us at 9:30 on Sunday mornings and see how God calls us to His work!

## Education Team Meeting

There will be an education team meeting on Sunday, February 5 immediately following the 10:45 worship service. The meeting will be held in the panel room. All those members of the education team please make an effort to be there. We will discuss spring and summer programming.

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**Senior Pastor**  
 Paul Russell

**Associate Pastor**  
 Stephen Hensley

**Director of Christian Education**  
 Tracie M. Long

**Sunday Worship Opportunities**

First Light	8:45 a.m.
Sunday School	9:30 a.m.
Morning Worship	10:45 a.m.
Korean Church	1:00 p.m.

**Next Tower Topics Deadline is January 25**

**Menus and Helpers  
 for January**

- 1/4 Matthew's Parlor**  
 Salad Bar, Chinese Chicken, Rice,  
 Stir-fried Vegetables, Dessert
- 1/11 Christian Ed. Ministry Teams**  
 Salad Bar, Ham Loaf, Sweet Potatoes,  
 Green Beans, Dessert.
- 1/18 Wesley Class**  
 Salad Bar, Tacos 'n' Fixin's, Soup,  
 Dessert
- 1/25 Youth Group**  
 Salad Bar, Meat Loaf, Baked Potatoes,  
 Broccoli, Dessert

Thank you to all the groups who help to serve each Wednesday!



**2012  
 Women of January  
 Retreat Registration Form  
 January 20<sup>st</sup>, 21<sup>nd</sup>, and 22<sup>rd</sup>  
 "SeaSide Escape"**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

Registration Fee **\$30.00** Weekend camper \_\_\_\_\_ Day camper \_\_\_\_\_

Any Special Needs \_\_\_\_\_

Friend You'd Like to Room With \_\_\_\_\_

**Registration Deadline—January 15**