

# TOWER TOPICS

First United Methodist Church Newsletter



Vol. 65 No. 2

First United Methodist Church, Huntington, WV

February 2012

## Sunday's Palms are Wednesday's Ashes

Again this year there will be two opportunities to receive the imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday, February 22nd.

The Community Ash Wednesday will take place at 12:05 PM at the Central Christian Church with the Rev. John Minihan (the new Senior pastor at First Presbyterian Church) preaching.

First Church's Ash Wednesday service will take place in the Fellowship Hall at 5:45 PM.

Plan to begin your Lenten journey by attending one, or both, of the services.

## Bitsy and Boots in the Tropics First Church Dinner Theater 2012 *20 Years of Fun for Mission*



Have you put in your reservations to see *Bitsy and Boots in the Tropics*? You have the chance to enjoy a fabulous meal and a hilarious show, and support your church's mission work all at the same time!

**Friday, February 10; Saturday, February 11;  
Tuesday, February 14**

Dinner served at 6:30 PM Show at 8:00 PM  
Choice of entrees: Prime Rib Au Jus or Glazed Cornish Hen  
**Adults, \$24.00 Children under 12, \$8.00**

*Call 304-522-0357 or 740-867-8576 for reservations.*

## Looking Beyond Numbers

By Pastor Paul

We Methodists are great at numbers. We count everything: offering, attendance, bulletins, hats and mittens, kids, donuts and much more. Many times our measure of success, and even self-worth, hinges on how the numbers look.

Forty years ago, a Philadelphia congregation watched as three nine-year-old boys were baptized and joined the church. Not long after, the church sold the building and disbanded.

One of those boys was Dr. Tony Campolo, Christian sociologist at Eastern University, Pennsylvania. Dr. Cam-

polo remembers: "Years later when I was doing research in the archives of our denomination, I decided to look up the church report for the year of my baptism. There was my name and Dick White—he is now a missionary—and Bert Newman who is a professor of theology at an African seminary."

Then Campolo read the church report for the year he joined the church. It said, "It has not been a good year for our church. We have lost twenty-seven members. Three joined, and they were only children."

It is amazing that in the reporting the only positive statement was "three joined, and they were only children." Those "only children" have become giants in the faith. A faith journey started

at an altar in a small church that seemed to have very little to celebrate.

Numbers are important, but sometimes we need to see beyond those numbers to things such as: youth who had never been to church before now attending, the children leading us to share "stone soup," the children at the Ebenezer Child Care Center receiving Christmas gifts and sending thank you cards, First Light becoming even more exciting and up-beat, members traveling to Nicaragua over Christmas, the Methodist Men taking on more leadership in the church, and on and on.

Who knows what the future holds. Maybe one of our children (or adults) will become a giant in the faith.

# Lenten Studies and Services Announced

**Lenten Bible Study:** Join us on Wednesday evenings as we take a journey through the last day of Jesus' life. Once again we will join Adam Hamilton as we examine Christ's dying hours and his final words as seen and heard through the eyes and ears of those who stood near the cross. Join us each Wednesday evening during Lent at 6:00 in Room 208.

**Noon Lenten Services:** Our noon Lenten services will begin on Wednesday, February 29. Services will be in the chapel beginning at 12:05. The services will last about a half hour, and lunch for a buck will be served afterward in the Fellowship Hall. Rev. Stephen Hensley will be preaching at our first service.

**Lent at First Light:** Hope changes everything. Your world, your life, your relationship with Jesus. Join us in First Light during Lent as we take a seven-week Journey of Hope. We will travel with Jesus to the cross and find hope in the midst of life's difficult circumstances. Join us at First Light each Sunday morning at 8:45 in the Fellowship Hall.

## Ash Wednesday is February 22

Worship with the Community at Noon at Central Christian Church or at First Church at 5:45.



## Men's Breakfast

All men are invited to join us for breakfast on February 11 at 8:00 in the Panel Room. Once again our wonderful chefs, and maybe a surprise guest chef like last month, will prepare a delicious breakfast for us. Our speaker will be Marc Rutherford who will share with us about the recent Christmas in Nicaragua trip. All men are encouraged to join us and bring a guest.

## Meetings and Special Events for February

2/1	6:00	Staff Parish Relations Committee
2/2	10:30	Love Bee Circle
2/5	Souper Bowl of Caring	Noon Education Team Meeting
2/8	7:00	Trustees
2/10	6:30	Dinner Theater
2/11	8:00	Men's Breakfast
	6:30	Dinner Theater
2/14	6:30	Dinner Theater
2/15	6:00	Finance Committee
2/22	Ash Wednesday	Noon Community Ash Wednesday Service
	5:45	Ash Wednesday Service at First Church
2/29	Noontime	Lenten Services Begin

## C.O.M.E. is Coming May 6 at Pea Ridge UMC!

Come join the congregations of the West Virginia Conference in their ingathering of gifts in the Celebration of Mission Event for West Virginia Missions (seven mission projects, four Church and Community workers and Volunteers in Mission.)

Despite hard times, the churches of the WV Conference opened their hearts and wallets in 2011, giving \$101,395.87 to support WV Missions, plus a mountain of donated goods. Each mission project received \$9,380.70 in work funds. Each Church and Community Worker received \$4,690.85 in additional work funds. Of the Conference total, First Church donated \$2,306.00 in cash, plus underwear, layette items and Christmas presents for Ebenezer. Let's redouble our efforts in 2012. This year, Western District will be concentrating our efforts on Ebenezer Outreach and the Greater Clarksburg Cooperative Parish.

### Ebenezer Community Outreach Center offers:

- Pre-school for ages 2-5
- Youth Energized of Success (Y.E.S.) - a before and after-school program licensed for 60 children
- Family Enrichment Center
- Baby Bassinette for newborns
- Clothing Closet
- School Supplies
- Christmas Angels
- Idus Jones Scholarship for high school seniors
- 4-H
- Girl Scouts

**Greater Clarksburg Cooperative Parish** consists of 22 United Methodist churches in the Clarksburg /Bridgeport area. Church and Community Worker, Gayle Lesure, coordinates two food pantries, leadership training, youth ministries, worship services, and Open Heart Ministries for emergency housing and utility relief.

Each year, our congregation has led the Western District in support of the COME fundraising. Let's keep up the good work in 2012. Once again we challenge each class, circle and group in the church to plan a fundraiser or collection.

## 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, Sherry 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, Grace Hammond, Kerry Hampton, Ginny Lee Hastings, Cathy Hutchinson, Pat Jenkins, John Knight, Gil Lester, Ray & Tiny Moser, Jane Mossman, Geraldine Pigman, Luella Pinson, Nina Richardson, Jack & Pat Sale, Nancy & Herman Slaughter, Lonnie Thompson, Ted Vidal

### For those who grieve...

Tom Pafford and family on the death of his brother, William Pafford

Remember those in the military who are in harmø way.

## Christmas Bounty

Thanks to you, we were able to feed, clothe and bring cheer to a great many people this holiday season. Our First Church Angels saw to it that our Ebenezer Angels had gifts under the Christmas tree. We collected four big boxes of baby items for Ebenezer Basinette.

The Mitten tree overflowed with 32 hats and ear muffs, 71 pairs of mittens and gloves, 15 pairs of socks, 4 scarves, and a pair of boots. These items were delivered to Cridlin for distribution. The Mission Committee bought groceries for Cridlin and a high chair for a family at Ebenezer. Different classes collected blankets, coats, and other goodies. You sent cards and made visits. The Nicaragua team delivered hundreds of pounds of food and clothing. Thank you for being Christø hands on earth.

## Dinner Theater Helpers Needed

*So many opportunities! So little time before they may slip away!*

Have you signed up to help in the kitchen or the dining room for one or more of the dinner theater performances?

As you read this message, only 12% of the needed helper spots have been filled, and itø only two weeks away! Can you help raise that number to 100%?

Sign up sheets are located in the back of the sanctuary and in the fellowship hall; or call Linda Hay, 304-529-6400 to volunteer.

## Walking with God

The essence of the Christian life is knowing God and walking with him. It's about sticking with him when the sky is blue and also when it's filled with clouds or choked with smoke. It's about walking with the Lord through thick and thin, and pressing on through every heartache and trial that happens to come our way.

-Greg Laurie

## February Birthdays

2/1	Yeon Choi	2/17	John Erenrich
2/2	Jean Fredrick		Emily Phipps
	Leslie Cummings		Justin Legg
2/4	Bob Cartmill	2/18	Harriett Evans
2/7	Jim Cummings	2/20	Bill Archer
	Jax OøRoark		Rick Brown
2/9	Karen Shanholtzer		Drew Cummings
	Kaitlin Whitley	2/21	Julie Taylor
	Matthew Duncan		Betsy Hager
	Lewis Aldridge		Mathew Allen
	Lillian Meeks	2/22	Eric Cummings
2/10	Portia Warner		Becky Fisher
	Abby Naegele	2/23	Fenton Cummings
2/11	Bill Rhoten	2/24	Jordan Fulford
2/12	Zara Harold	2/25	Olivia Morris
2/13	Ashley Davis	2/26	Sarah Haymes
	Brianne Holbrook	2/27	Gil Lester
2/14	Alex Nelson		Troy Jones

## Menus and Helpers for February

- 2/1 **Sanctuary Choir**  
Salad Bar, Savory Chicken and Rice, Mixed Vegetables, Dessert
- 2/8 **Staff Parish Relations Committee**  
Salad Bar, Spaghetti, Garlic Bread, Dessert
- 2/15 **Boy Scouts**  
Salad Bar, Ham, Baked Beans, Dessert
- 2/22 **Finance Committee**  
Salad Bar, Chicken and Dumplings, Green Beans, Dessert
- 2/29 **Seekers Class**  
Salad Bar, Pork Roast, Potatoes, Vegetable Medley, Dessert

# Children & Youth

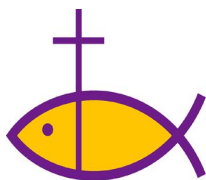
## Did you know...Children's Ministry Edition

*Did you know...*

- That our children have a rotational style Sunday school program that allows each child to learn in their best way through a variety of activities?
- That we have a children's program called Bible Max that meets every Wednesday night during the school year?
- That we currently have 60 children involved in all our children's ministries?
- That we had 55 kids come to this year's "Under Construction" Vacation Bible School?
- That we have two active children's choirs - Wesley/Primary and Cherub?
- That we have nursery care available for our children during First Light, Sunday School, Traditional Worship and Wednesday nights?
- That our children's choir does two plays a year, one at Christmas and one in the spring?
- That our Octoberfest for our children raised almost \$1,000 to go towards building a well in Nicaragua?
- That you can invite a friend or neighbor to come to church and bring their children?
- That the fastest way to build up your children's ministry begins with YOU!

## Confirmation

Confirmation Classes for youth ages 6<sup>th</sup> grade and above will begin February 19<sup>th</sup>. We will be using the new Credo curriculum from Cokesbury.



Through confirmation, youth will get a better understanding of the church, its beliefs and practices, as well as a better understanding of their own personal faith journey. We will meet during the Sunday School hour in the Panel Room. All youth who have not yet been confirmed are invited to attend classes. A letter will be sent out explaining full details. If you have a youth who is confirmation age, please contact Tracie to add them to the list of those participating this year.

## Youth Fundraising Ideas

Our youth are looking for new and fun ways to raise money for trips and special events! If you have an idea that you would like to share with the youth, please contact Tracie at the office.

## Bible Quiz

During Jesus' time in the wilderness after his baptism, Satan tempted him to do three things. Which of the following was not one of the temptations?

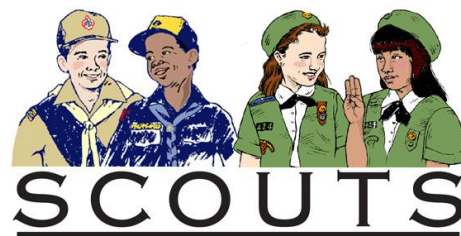
- A. To change water into wine so wedding guests would know he was God's Son
- B. To throw himself down from the top of the temple, expecting angels to save him
- C. To turn stones into bread to satisfy his hunger
- D. To worship Satan in order to gain all the world's kingdoms

Answer: A (See Matthew 4:1-11 and Luke 4:1-13.)

## Debbie's Notes

Calling all kids: it's time for a round up of all K through 5th grade kids to take part in our new musical, "Jonah's Druthers" - set in the wild, wild WEST. Rehearsals are every Wednesday night and we'll be giving out speaking parts soon. The performance date will be Wednesday, May 16 - our last Wednesday night of the church year. Don't miss out on this rollicking adventure of the prophet Jonah. You'll have fun while learning about following God's plans.

We will also be singing for 10:45 worship on the following Sundays: February 12, March 11, April 8 (Easter) and May 13. We have some great anthems lined up, so don't miss out.



## Scout Sunday

All scouts, boys and girls, are encouraged to attend Scout Sunday at First Church. The date is February 26<sup>th</sup>. It does not matter if you belong to one of our units or not. Please come in uniform. The scouts will be leading the worship. Following the service pizza will be provided for the scouts, their families and anyone interested in scouting.

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

**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 February 22**

# Men's Retreat

**March 2, 3 & 4**

## Where are you men of courage?

The men's retreat is upon us, and we are calling all men in our church to join us at Asbury Woods March 2-4 as we strive to live courageous lives. During this week-end we will be called to live courageously for our faith and our families, and we will be challenged to become the men God created us to be. Are you up for the challenge? It will take courage to take this step, but it will be worth it. Registration forms are in this newsletter and throughout the church. Cost for the retreat is \$30. Please have your registration and payment in no later than February 26. It is time for our men to step up. See you at Asbury Woods.

**Registration for Men's Retreat  
March 2, 3 & 4  
Asbury Woods Retreat Center  
Cost: \$30.00**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Include your \$30 fee with registration. Checks may be made payable to FUMC. Please put Men's Retreat on the memo line. Deadline: February 26.**