

# St. John's United Methodist Church of Winter Haven, FL



## Good News

The monthly newsletter of St. John's United Methodist Church

December 2009

Issue 12  
Published monthly

St. John's United Methodist Church  
1800 Cypress Gardens Blvd  
Winter Haven, FL 33884



Dear Friends,

I received the following from Bob and Diana Strejc in a newsletter from their home church in Michigan. I thought you would enjoy it too.

"Leighton Farrell was the minister of Highland Park Church in Dallas for many years. He tells of a man in the church who once made a covenant with a former pastor to tithe ten percent of their income every year. They were both young and neither of them had much money. Both things changed. The layman tithed one thousand dollars the year he earned ten thousand, ten thousand dollars the year he earned one hundred thousand and one-hundred thousand dollars the year he earned one million. But, the year he earned six million dollars he just could not bring himself to write out that check for six-hundred thousand dollars to the church. He telephoned the minister, long since having moved to another church, and asked to see him. Walking into the pastor's office the man begged to be let out of the covenant, saying, "This tithing business has to stop. It was fine when my tithe was one thousand dollars, but I just cannot afford six-hundred dollars. You've got to do something, Reverend!" The pastor knelt on the floor and prayed silently for a long time. Eventually the man said, "What are you doing? Are you praying that God will let me out of the covenant to tithe?" "No," said the minister. "I am praying for God to reduce your income back to the level where one thousand dollars will be your tithe!"

This illustration reminds us that we like to receive God's blessings but we're challenged to return the proper portion as God requires.

When John Wesley visited his congregations he would question his assistants as to their progress in the faith. He would often ask if their Christianity had affected their pockets.

What a great question. "About Tithing" is a booklet we have available free in the church office. It ends with this: The reward of giving a tithe brings joy. It is a concrete way to acknowledge God's presence in our lives. Giving, in response to God's grace and generosity, brings a happiness that cannot be achieved through more self-centered activities.

The reward of giving 10% of our income brings fulfillment. People who tithe regularly strengthen the sincerity of their commitment to Christ. Tithing itself becomes deeply satisfying, a way to follow Christ.

You are committed to Christ and the church, and I thank you for your extravagant generosity. For those who are committing to tithe for the first time, a special thanks and a special blessing to you. The joy and fulfillment you will experience will be like none other you have ever experienced before. God bless you in your faithfulness. For those who may be thinking you can't afford to tithe, let us pray.....

Have a blessed Christmas and a happy new year.

United in Christ

**Kent**

**The St. John's Cookbooks have arrived! Stop by and see us when we have a table set up during fellowship or pick up a copy in the church office. These make wonderful Christmas gifts and are affordable at \$8.50 each. For further information please call Laura McBride at 325-8144. Proceeds benefit local charities. Happy Holidays!**

### The Angels Are Here!!!

The Angel "Tree" is located outside the Chapel. Please take an Angel and complete the sign up sheet. Include your name and phone number. Please bring your unwrapped gifts to the Education Office by Sunday, December 6<sup>th</sup>. Your gifts will go to those in the Winter Haven area. Thank you for helping others have a Merry CHRISTmas.

### Peanut Butter Update

Once again our special and sincere thanks for the many groceries donated in November. They amounted to 46 bags. Some will stay here on campus to be distributed to any persons who might come here needing a bag or two. The rest are divided between Project Love and Salvation Army, with a few bags going to individuals, some from our own church family. Please continue to be generous in your giving so that we can continue to feed hungry people in accordance with Jesus' words to feed his lambs. **We are in need of brown paper sacks;** if you have any, please drop them off in the church office. Next Peanut Butter Sunday is January 3rd.

Thank you again,  
Peanut Butter Team



### THANK YOU

To my Church family for their prayers, cards, visits, phone calls and the "meals on wheels".

This prayer from the Upper Room November 5<sup>th</sup> says it all. :Thank you God, for the gift of each new day and for friends who remind us of your grace. Amen"

Marion Miner

### THE MISSION'S TOP TEN WISH LIST

1. Prayers (without them nothing else matters)
2. Financial Support
3. Insect Repellent
4. Mens Jeans (size 32 & 34)
5. Powdered Laundry Soap
6. Socks and Undergarments
7. Sugar
8. Gas Powered Lawn Equipment
9. Gift Cars (Save a Lot, Publix, Sam's Club)

### YOUR CHANGE WILL CHANGE A CHILD'S LIFE...

Sincerest thanks to all who continue to bring their jars of coins for our ministry of feeding hungry children in the Democratic Republic of Congo. These monies are being distributed by the United Methodist Committee on Relief to three schools, purchasing meals and school supplies. Children's lives are being enhanced thanks to your generosity. We have collected 218.00 in October.

The pocket Change Team would like to hear from anyone with suggestions of other outreach, or missions to which they'd like to see the coins donated. We are open to your suggestions, please let us know.

Linda Moisa  
Bob Cunningham  
Hannah Phillips

### FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE ANNUAL FLEA MARKET

**SATURDAY, MARCH 6, 2010**

**7:30AM—NOON IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE CENTER**

Please begin saving all your household "treasures" at your homes to donate to our Flea Market to be held early next year. Proceeds will go to several community organizations in need of support.

Contact Kitty Walker 326-5523 if you have any questions. Thanks.

The Morning Circle will meet Thursday December 10 in Room 108-109 at 10am. Mary Louise Baumgardner will lead us in a Christmas program. Afterwards we will carpool to a local restaurant for lunch. For more info or a ride call 291-3372.



Dave Cromwell, Glen & Mary Louise Baumgardner, Richard Blue, Parke Boyer, Lorraine Buonviri, Nancy Carver, Gordon & Mary Coppage and Al Miner

### MISSION MOMENTS

From October 26-29<sup>th</sup>, thirteen folks (missing from the photo are Judy & Charles Cloninger & Janice Blue) from St. John's who gave 400 plus hours of work to help two families repair their homes damaged by water from tropical storms. One home was in Altamonte Springs and the other in Sanford, FL.

At both sites the teams were able to interact with the home owners and their families.

The repairs included installing drywall, painting, installing flooring and related work.

The team stayed at a Church in Sanford where the accommodations were very similar to our arrangements at St. John's.

The two projects were a cooperation effort between the Florida United Methodist Conference, Seminole County Emergency Management Agency and our own St. John's.

Thank you Mission Team Members. You make us proud to be called a "Community In Mission".

### WEARHOUSE .....

We need your helping hands. The Wearhouse is currently working short-handed. If you can spare some time, please contact Jean Stoner (cell #289-4047)-the hours are flexible. This Outreach of our Church is the life blood of our Mission programs.

To what work is God calling me?

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## MISSION MOMENTS – NOMADS

Recently, members of St. John's were part of a Nomad's Mission at Lake Junaluska, N.C. Jim & Anne Sippel were part of this Mission. They worked on two lodging facilities that were undergoing major renovations. The team was there from October 5-22<sup>nd</sup>. The work included new heating & cooling units, as well as new circuits for hair dryers & other utilities being added to the rooms. Other work included new insulated windows, paint & carpet. Work not completed will continue under another Nomads group in November & other volunteers throughout the winter.

The Nomad Missions started in 1988 under the United Methodist Church and their members continue to travel the country in Recreational vehicles to help non-profit Church related groups with their needs. Another Nomad Team worked on restorations at the United Methodist Life Enrichment Center in Fruitland Park, FL. (Leesburg) in November. Jim & Liz Traviss were part of this team. Our St. John's Nomads have worked on many Mission projects across the United States. Their outreach to others is a blessing to those being served & who serve.

# CHILDREN

## **MidWeek Warriors Dinner Theater**

Join us on December 9 at 6:15PM in the Christian Life Center. The children will be performing in the production "One Starry Night". Let's show our support for the children in the MidWeek Warriors program while they share the story of Christ with us.

## **Children of the City**

Children of the City is a community event sponsored by The Mission for needy families to provide presents for their children at Christmas. By our participation we can share Jesus with the families that will be in attendance. This year we will be hosting Santa and taking photos of the children. We are asking for monetary donations in order to purchase needed supplies for our participation. When you make your donation please make checks payable to St John's UMC and earmark it for Children's Enrichment. If you have any questions you can contact Erica Miracle at 324-6347.

## **Christmas Eve Family Service**

Join us on December 24 at 5PM in the Sanctuary. Praise Kidz will be performing "Shepherds, Sheep and a Savior".

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## **FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY**

Friendship Circle will hold a Christmas Party at Cypresswood Clubhouse on Tuesday, December 8, 2009 serving punch at 6:30 p.m. and dinner at 7:00 p.m. The cost including, tax and tip is \$20 per person (cash or check). Please bring a gag gift of something you have around the house, the funnier, the better. Call Edie Orvis at 324.9132 to make your reservation before December 3<sup>rd</sup>. Be sure to invite your spouse or a friend. We guarantee a good time.

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## **UNITED METHODIST WOMEN**

Tuesday, December 8<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. UMW will hold a luncheon meeting in the Christian Life Center. Please bring your favorite covered dish. The purpose is to install officers for 2010. We will be blessed with entertainment by St. John's Preschool. Be sure to mark your calendar and come!

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## **SUPER SENIORS/PRIME TIMERS/SENIOR ALERT MINISTRY (S.A.M.), ETC.**

Plans are in the making for the return of a group geared towards the "young at heart." Watch for more details as they unfold! Plan to be part of this group in 2010.

# MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW

ST. JOHN'S UMC  
2010 WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

SATURDAY, JANUARY 30, 2010  
7:45 AM – 1:15 PM

## **Is There More To Life Than This?**

Have you ever asked that question before? *Is there really more to life than this?* Is there more to life than schedules, trials, busyness and disappointment? Yes, *much more!* It isn't found by seeking more of anything we already possess. It's found in seeking a habitual fellowship with God. The possibility of a more fulfilling life is presented not only as practical, but attainable as well. In order to have more with God we must learn to listen to His promptings in our lives to *seek* Him. If we desire to have more in Him we must go to Him regularly to *inquire* of Him; asking our questions, presenting our concerns and seeking guidance for our days. And finally after seeking Him, inquiring of Him and developing that habitual fellowship with God, our hearts will *yearn* for Him and we will be usable to be more for Him than we could have ever imagined.

**Amy Brady** of Amy Brady Ministries will provide insight from God's Word on this timely topic. Amy has been a Bible study teacher in church and in her ministry for over a decade. **Amy Brady Ministries** is a growing ministry that began in 1999 as a neighborhood Bible study in Amy's living room. The aim of her ministry is to encourage and equip women to seek and valiantly pursue the freedom of Christ in their everyday lives. Amy has a passion for women to know God and know His Word for themselves. You will be able to see her love for the Lord as she teaches with transparency, passion and humor. Amy has written several Bible studies, a devotional and has spoken nationally.

*"I want nothing more than to see you come to know God's Word, but I also want to see you learn to apply it. It's one thing to know it, it's an entirely different thing to live it. The ultimate test of your faith comes when you choose to see life through the lens of your Heavenly Father in the midst of great temptation and suffering. Instead of pursuing a trouble-free life, you immerse yourself in the journey and learn to live rather than exist. To live freely rather than chained. Freedom is not an option in the Christ-absorbed life, it's a requirement. You must allow God to equip you and develop the desire within you to settle for nothing less than Jesus and His perfect purpose for your life. It is my honor to serve you and join you in your journey."*

**Join us for Passionate Worship, Fellowship, and a Powerful Message from God's Word.**

\$12.00 (conference includes breakfast & snack). Childcare available upon request.

Stay tuned for registration information in the Church Bulletin and on posters around the Church.

**St. John's UMC**  
**SUMMARY of Preschool Board Meeting (have not been approved)**  
**November 3, 2009**

There are 75 students enrolled. The Preschool is in need of items and have put a list in the bulletin to ask the congregation for help. They are discussing different fundraisers. They will be having the Annual Dinner and Silent Auction. Charlie Cloninger will prepare a spaghetti dinner. Date has not been final yet. The preschool will purchase multi-cultural items for the preschool from the money raised from the Dinner and Silent Auction.

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**St. John's UMC**  
**SUMMARY of Trustees**  
**(have not received the minutes; will be published next month)**

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**St. John's UMC**  
**SUMMARY of Finance**  
**(have not received the minutes; will be published next month)**

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**St. John's UMC**  
**SUMMARY of Missions (have not been approved)**  
**October 1, 2009**

Pat & George Evans told of many of their international trips in which they perform surgeries and of the situations they encounter. The attendance was very low; there was not much discussion.

**October Financials are available on the credenza in the narthex.**

**SERVICE OPPORTUNITY:** Right from your own home! Recently, two people from our Visitation Team were told by a woman how grateful she was to have received a greeting card from someone at St. John's. This homebound woman did not personally know the person who sent the card but was very appreciative of the fact that someone took the time to remember her. A list of those that are in nursing homes or homebound is always available on the credenza in the Narthex. Please consider sending greetings to those who can no longer attend church. You do not need to personally know those with whom you share a greeting, and the frequency of sending cards is your choice. Thank you for helping us with our ministry.

The Visitation Team

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Back By Popular Demand!! "A Taste of St. John's Ministries" is coming January 24th during the Fellowship Time between Sunday morning services! Put it on your new 2010 calendar now!!!

December 2009

From the desk of Merry Kendall,  
Christian Education Pastor



*Since hearing about my call into ordained ministry, many people have had questions. So, let me address some of those questions here.*

***Does this mean I am leaving St. John's?** The path to ordination in The United Methodist Church is a long, thorough one. I am in the very beginning of the process and do not anticipate leaving St. John's any time soon - unless, of course, God has other plans!*

***Am I doing this because I want to have my own church?** A call into ordained ministry originates with God, not the human. I want to be used by God, and I clearly "heard" God say the word "Deacon" to me in my prayer time. And so, I began the discernment process of that call. Since that time, the call has been confirmed by Pastor Kent, our Staff-Parish Relations Committee, and Charge Conference. At this moment in time, I have no idea how God will use me for His purposes. That is all part of the discernment process.*

*Here is a brief description of the tracks in ordained ministry as described by The Board of Discipleship of The United Methodist Church:*

***"As Clergy** - Within the body of all Christian ministers, though, some are called to fulfill a specific ministry through the church.*

- ***Deacons** - ordained ministers appointed to focus on servanthood. A deacon models the relationship between worship in the community of faith and service to God in the world. Deacons serve in a variety of ministry settings, both in the church and in the world.*
- ***Elders** - ordained ministers appointed to lead congregations of Christians in the celebration of the sacraments and to guide and care for the life of the community. Some elders may also serve in extension ministries beyond the local church."*

*Church, I ask that you remember me in your prayers as I go this process.*

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Christmas Open House

Rebecca and Sue Umstead cordially invite St John's members and friends to drop in for their annual open house on Fridays and Saturdays, Dec. 11, 12, 18, & 19, from 7:00 to 9:00 PM. Come share in the Christmas Spirit with their 18 trees, villages, & trains. Their address is 465 Liberty Ln. in ValenciaWood Hills.

**Kent Crow**

Sr. Pastor [kent@sjum.org](mailto:kent@sjum.org)

**Merry Kendall**

Christian Education Pastor [merry@sjum.org](mailto:merry@sjum.org)

**Dr. Pat Bennett**

Worship Arts Pastor [pat@sjum.org](mailto:pat@sjum.org)

**Erica Miracle**

Children's Pastor [erica@sjum.org](mailto:erica@sjum.org)

**Mike Lambert**

Youth Pastor [mike@sjum.org](mailto:mike@sjum.org)

**Joe Jones**

Organist/Piano/Bells [joe@sjum.org](mailto:joe@sjum.org)

**Barb Harris**

Church Administrator [barb@sjum.org](mailto:barb@sjum.org)

**Claudia Willoughby**

Finance Secretary [claudia@sjum.org](mailto:claudia@sjum.org)

**Patty Boska**

Preschool Director [patty@sjum.org](mailto:patty@sjum.org)

**Come and Worship with us!**

Sunday: 8:30 AM, 11:00 AM

- Children's Worship Service during 8:30 AM service!
- 9:45-9:55 Fellowship
- 10:00 AM - Sunday School for all ages!
- Professional Nursery Care is available for children 3 years and under during all services.
- Common Grounds Youth Ministry meets every Sunday Evening 5:30 - 8:00 PM. Open to all students in grades 6-12th.

Visit St. John's United Methodist Church on the web  
at **[www.sjum.org](http://www.sjum.org)**

**Church Office Hours:**

Monday - Thursday 8:00 AM- 5:00 PM

Friday 8:00 AM- 12:00 PM (noon)

**Good News Deadline-** If you or your ministry team would like to submit information for possible inclusion in the monthly Good News, please e-mail your completed article to Barb Harris at [barb@sjum.org](mailto:barb@sjum.org) by the **15th** of each month.

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ST. JOHN'S UMC CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES  
OCTOBER 27, 2009  
UNAPPROVED MINUTES

**ATTENDEES:**

Joe Blascik, Chairman	Pat Bennett, Worship Arts Pastor
June Rouseff, Pre-School	Kent Crow, Sr. Pastor
David Willoughby, UMM	Leaine Farris, Prayer Ministry
Erica Miracle, Children's Pastor	Carolyn Hayes, UMW
Merry Kendall, Education Pastor	Claudia Willoughby, Financial/Treasurer

**CALL TO ORDER**

Joe called the meeting to order. Kent opened with prayer. Joe read a devotion on criticism. The Church Council Covenant was read, and this will be done at the beginning of each meeting.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Merry made the motion to approve the minutes as written and Carolyn seconded and motion moved.

**FINANCIAL PICTURE**

Joe stated that at this point we need to have a more positive outlook and trust in the Lord that our finances will come through. November and December are our prime months and he feels that our people will come through. It is important that we have responsibility to God and our Church.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Bill Skukowski is not here to give a report on the Narthex. Kent did report that we can probably paint and take the mission field banner down and do some molding in the area. We will revisit our progress in three months with a priority list. Communication will be kept open. There is discussion of possibly doing an outside fund raiser. We can do some of the changes with very little cost. Money will come from the beautification fund.

**CHURCH CONFERENCE**

We had a good showing of over 20 people at our charge conference which was held at Beymer United Methodist. Our goal in 2009 to increase Worship by 5% had an increase by 3%. We are seeing more of our people stepping out of their comfort zone to help in the community.

We will be holding a special church conference on October 28 to vote on accepting the Eloise church property. We would have voted on this at charge conference but there was not enough time given to put this on the agenda. Kent would like the Church Council to make the motion to accept the Eloise church property. Any member that shows up for this special church conference can vote; no votes can be accepted by proxy. This is a win win situation to accept this property.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Trustees have been informed by the Fire Marshall that we need to have a fire alarm system installed in the Christian Life Center. Trustees have gotten two estimates from ADT; one being if we purchase the system and pay monthly for the monitoring and second with us leasing the equipment. Additional work and cost will also need to be done because of the needed phone line dedication, and monitoring in the elevator and air conditioning ducts. We are given a two year extension to have this system in place and we need to start planning now on how we will be paying for this and put together a plan.

Our goals for next year will be in passionate worship and salty service. We will strategize a plan for the next year.

## **MINISTRY REPORTS**

**PRESCHOOL** – Patty reported that the pre-school has needs and one of the parents has connections with a company that is donating 10 cases of paper products a month for as long as we have a need. There are several fund-raisers planned after the holiday. The Lord has blessed our pre-school. Going to downsize their Thanksgiving and hold it in the individual classrooms. Parents are interested in doing church activities for Christmas. Plans are to have the preschool participate in the Christmas program.

**UMM** – David reported that a group of men are now meeting. A group of men went to a men's camp and had a great weekend of fellowship. Kent is now heading up a bible study on Wednesday evenings and some of the men are meeting on Tuesday mornings. The men will be helping with Fall Fest, they will be supplying, hot dogs and drinks.

**CHILDREN'S MINISTRY** - Ghouls night is coming up and there are a lot of new volunteers. They will be doing pictures, passing out literature and candy. Fall Fest is right behind Ghouls night and a hayride has been added. Also St. Paul's Episcopal has donated some games for our Fest and the preschool teachers will be manning these games. The men's group is doing hot dogs and drinks.

**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION** – Merry reported that she has been planning the teaching calendar for 2010, and much of the calendar is full through June.

**WORSHIP** - The Christmas program is scheduled for December 13 at 6:00 this will include the pre-school, praise kids, youth and adult choir. The praise kids will be holding a dinner theater on December 9 at 6:15 and a Christmas musical on December 24 at 5:00. Pat and a couple of members of the choir will be attending the Florida Worship Choir workshop on January 28 and 29. Annie Moses band will be coming to perform on January 30, 2010. They will be performing for a love offering and hotel accommodations.

*\*Joe Jones and the handbells have decided to participate in the Dec. 13 presentation instead of presenting their own concert on Dec. 20<sup>th</sup>*

**PRAYER TEAM** – Leaine reported that Lew & Marissa Davis ask to have a team praying for them in Peru. The name for their prayer team will be Missionary Ventures – Peru. George and Pat Evans were asked if they would be prayer captains and they agreed to be co-captains. George and Pat have e-mailed Lew and Marissa to let them know that their team would be praying for them.

Kent commented that he appreciates each and everyone. It is wonderful to see so many people stepping up to challenges. It is great to see the outreach and love to Lew and Marissa Davis. God is doing great work through each and everyone. The freeze is still on and everyone is doing the best they can. We will pull through this sooner or later. God is calling us to be a community in mission. He thanks everyone for their sacrifice and to just keep doing what they are doing. Kent thanked Dave for stepping up to lead the Men's group.

Joe commented that we needed to support the staff because they are taking the brunt of the freeze.

## **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be December the 8<sup>th</sup> the November and December Council will be combined.

## **ADJOURNED**

Joe closed the meeting in prayer.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

Claudia Willoughby  
Financial/Treasurer

# Worship

Dr. Pat Bennett, Worship Arts Pastor  
Phone 324-6347 ext. 226, email [pat@sjum.org](mailto:pat@sjum.org)

## Our Worship Ministry Purpose Statement

*To enable the congregation of St. John's to experience and participate in meaningful worship  
as a community of believers and seekers.*

## **Special Worship Events at St. John's**

### Praise Kidz Christmas Dinner Theater

Wednesday, December 9, 6 PM  
In the Christian Life Center (CLC)

### St. John's Christmas Presentation

## ***Hallelujah – Light Has Come!***

Sunday, December 13, 6 PM

Featuring Celebration Singers, Worship Team, Testament, St. John's  
Ringers, Soloists, Praise Kidz, and St. John's Preschool

Admission – Free

*(Love Offering will be taken)*

### SPECIAL EVENT!!!

## **The Annie Moses Band in Concert**

Saturday, January 30, 2010, 6 PM

Admission – Free

*(Love Offering be taken)*

**The St. John's Christian Preschool is in need of the items listed below to help with their day-to-day operation. Parents have contributed help with many things but the school is still in need. Would you help? Items can be dropped off at the church or school office any day (except Saturday). Thank you for your generosity and help.**

Latex, non-powdered gloves-Medium

Baby Wipes

5 oz. Plastic Cups

Sm. & lg. Paper plates

Coffee filters (to serve snack in)

Hand Sanitizer

Kleenex

Plastic Spoons & Forks

Rolls of Paper towels

Washable paint

Laundry soap

Lysol/disinfectant spray or wipes

Lg. Bottle of hand soap refills

Construction paper

Copy paper

Assorted sizes paint brushes

Kids hand mirrors