

The First United Methodist Church of Lowell

Tele-Christian

January 2012

Pastor's Thoughts....

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

Another year gone by and here comes 2012. I know that we have heard nothing really good about this year, but I have to say it is exciting because whatever comes our way God is in charge, not me, and He works all things for our good.

There's a verse from Philippians 4:13 that speaks to the attitude that we need to have for our lives, our world and our church. It reads, "I can do all things through Him who *STRENGTHENS ME*." I like this verse best of all because it speaks of the reality of our lives – we will face things that are joyous and good, but also things that will challenge us and sometimes overwhelm our senses. I keep this verse on my desk and pray about it. I pray that the Lord will strengthen my faith, my spirit, and my resolve that in all things I follow my Lord. When I do that all things in my life, the life of the church, our community, and the world will come together bringing excitement and a large quantity of peace. I'm not a Pollyanna thinking if I do things just right then all will be good, but things will have a better chance if my walk with the Lord is strong. So I look for Him to strengthen me as I walk in faith with Him in this life and in this time.

So 2012, what do you think? End of the world or a new beginning for the old world? It doesn't matter because I am not in control. I will try to make each day rewarding by working hard for His Kingdom and for others and then just let everything else work itself out.

Happy New Year!

And also Grace and Peace
Pastor Bill and Pat

A HAPPY
NEW YEAR

Jan. 1, 2012

Begin your new year with worship!

One service at 10:00 am



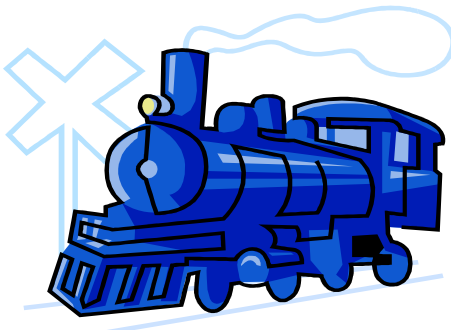
5TH SUNDAY SERVICE

SUNDAY JAN. 29, 2012

ONE WORSHIP SERVICE AT 10:00 AM

FOLLOWED BY A POTLUCK BRUNCH

CELEBRATION FOR NEW MEMBERS



All Aboard the Sonshine Express in January!
We invite all children age 4 through 5th grade
to come down to the Sonshine Express dur-
ing both the 9:15 and 10:30 service.

Here is the itinerary for January:

January 1 – No Sonshine Express – Happy New Year!

January 8 – Christian Living – Keep Your Eyes on Jesus

January 15 – Christian Living – Practice What You Preach

January 22 – Christian Living – Loving God, Loving Each Other

January 29 – Sonshine Express will share a song or two and lessons
from our classes during the one service at 10:00.

Come and join us as we learn how to live like Jesus and work on
something special to share with our church family!

Kathie Stoner, Children's Education Chair

It's all about what we do.

Recently I saw Chicago news broadcaster Ron Magers being interviewed on a weekday morning television show. One of the others in the discussion was a female newscaster who had been mentored by Ron early in her career. She thanked Ron for the advice he gave her to “Be nice to everyone.” She had always remembered and followed his advice and it had served her well. Ron credited his own father with instilling that credo into him early in life. It had proven to be such a wise credo in the complex often intersecting and recurring human relationships throughout his career that Ron shared it with others in the genuine hope they would benefit, not just in their careers but in their personal lives and relationships.

I thought of the wisdom of our Father and the many words He has used to teach us to live by that same credo: “Do to others as you would have them do to you.” (Luke 6:30-32); “...Love one another.” (John 13:34); “... but love your neighbor as yourself.” (Leviticus 19: 17-19); “Do not judge, or you will be judged.” (Matt. 7:1). Wise counsel to be passed on and shown by example to new generations of believers. I think of those who met me ‘where I was’ in my early years at this church, who accepted me and showed me by example what it meant to be a Christian. Rather than judge me, they encouraged me and guided me along my spiritual journey...and still do...way beyond ‘being nice’ to me. (Although it truly was the ‘nicest’ thing they could have done for me!)

As the discussion continued on the TV show, Ron Magers remarked how sooner or later all well-known national newscasters will have the same experience...they will begin to think “it’s all about them”. In reality, Ron said, “It’s all about what we **do**”. Once again I thought, “How true!”. Here at FUMC, it’s not about us. It’s all about what we **do** to help others come to know and experience Christ in their lives. It’s not about sitting comfortably in church on Sunday, it’s all about what we **do** outside the church every day. It’s about having a servant heart and **doing** for others. It’s about meeting others ‘where they are’. It’s about adapting our ways if that’s what it takes to meet the needs and lifestyles of the unchurched. It’s about inviting someone to a class, worship or a church event. It’s about welcoming those who come, accepting them as they are, and setting an example before them. It’s all about **doing** what Jesus commanded us to **do**....”Go and make disciples.” (Matt. 23: 18-20)

A fresh new year is dawning... a new opportunity. Let’s not make a New Year’s resolution because those are usually broken. Instead, let’s pray as a church, asking God to help us ‘be nice to everyone’ and to focus on **doing** everything we can to bring glory and honor to Him. This year, and every year, it’s all about what we **do** for God.



From Don Favors, Lay Leadership Team

Did you get what you asked for this year for Christmas? To be honest I don't even expect it anymore. For years I made lists of wants only to receive what others thought I needed. My mom was good for this, but she made sure that Santa remembered a couple of the things that were on the list. All too often I wanted toys, but received clothes and such. Imagine my excitement. "Socks... great. Thanks, Mom and Dad." But mom knew that I needed socks. And although the Tonka trucks of old were pretty indestructible, some of my most wanted toys ended up breaking within a week or so.

Then there were gifts I got that I did not ask for, but found it was just what I needed and it was a good gift. For instance, I remember when I was about 4 years old my grandfather gave me my first fishing pole. I didn't ask for it, but it started a love for fishing and spending time not only with him, but with my dad and other friends of mine who fished as well. I was fortunate to find a local farm pond that we could fish. I spent a lot of my youth catching and releasing a great many fish as well as spending time with good friends and family. I see that pole and I think back to how it all started. Now my new poles sit in my boat that I use to take my family fishing. Taking my sons fishing brings me a lot of joy and happiness, even if they do better than me. And they let me know when they are out-fishing the 'old man'.

Sometimes you ask for one thing and you get another...and it turns out to be what you really needed in the first place. That can only come from someone who knows you better than you know yourself. Imagine the disappointment that the children of God felt when they asked for a Warrior Savior and all they got was a baby. "Great... a baby. Thanks God, but not quite what we were looking for here."

Sometimes a gift takes time to bloom into what it was intended to bring. Salvation for the world lying in that manger may not have been what they saw, but it's what that precious gift would turn into. Thank you, God, for looking beyond our wants and giving us what we needed. Thank you for your gift of your Son Jesus.

It might be a little early to start planning for next Christmas, but I think I will get my grandson his first fishing pole from his 'papa' and he may not realize why.



Lay Leaders Report

As 2011 has come to an end I find myself reflecting on a wonderful year, both personally and spiritually. A new job I truly enjoy, a new daughter-in-law who is truly wonderful, and, of course, finished off the year with a new granddaughter who is perfect in every way (no bias here). We were able to participate in Financial Peace University where we learned God's plan for how we should manage our money. I have been fortunate to facilitate a Disciple Bible Study with a group of people that provide me with far more than I provide them. I was also blessed to become a Stephen Minister. We were blessed as a church to have the children present a program at the 7:00 service on Christmas Eve. Thank you to all who worked on that production.

While I know financially we are not in very good shape, I believe spiritually we are in much better shape. We brought in new members in October and will bring in more new members in January. It is our intention to bring in new members each month that has 5 Sundays. I look forward to what God has in store for First United Methodist Church of Lowell in 2012.

In His Perfect Love,

Tom Stoner

DOING WHAT JESUS WOULD DO—SERVING THOSE IN NEED

The Household Pantry

The Household Pantry is doing well. We serviced a 155 people this month. This would not be possible without the congregation's support.

Your monthly monetary and product donations keep us up and running.

We are open each Tuesday of every month. The hours are from 9:00 to 12:00. Volunteers are needed for the first and third weeks.

The job is not difficult and very rewarding. If you like helping others in your community, this is the JOB for you. If you are interested, please call the church at 696-9219.

Sharon Stagner, Mary Ann Mahler



UMM

The United Methodist Men recently delivered 46 singing Christmas cards to families inside and outside of the Lowell area. We would like to thank all who purchased the singing Christmas cards for their friends and family.

The United Methodist Men continue to meet on the last Wednesday of the month on the third floor at 7:00 pm. Our next meeting is January 25th. We would like to invite all men to join us!

In His Love
Tom Stoner
UMM President



Trustees

A big thank you to Bob McGinley for cleaning out the kitchen drain pipes.

Also, thank you to all the trustees for helping with lots of projects in 2011 – lawn and landscaping maintenance, church and parsonage maintenance, bathroom remodeling, Christmas decorating, storage barn relocation, etc. Also thanks to all our non-trustee helpers. Everyone did a great job in 2011.

Have a Happy New Year!

Dave Bauman
Trustee Chairperson.





STEPHEN MINISTRY

*Bear one another's burdens.
Love one another as I have loved you.*

This is the call of Stephen Ministers. We help others bear their burdens, love them, and pray with and for them. It sounds simple. And it works because Christ is in the center. God provides the healing.

Perhaps you need someone to talk to. Perhaps you are struggling with your faith in God. Perhaps you are anxious, discouraged, lonely. Perhaps you are coping with a broken relationship or grieving the loss of a loved one. Perhaps you are struggling with an illness or caring for someone who is. Perhaps you are new to our congregation or community.

Stephen Ministers are available for both men and women. If you could use someone to help bear your burden, give one of the Stephen Leaders a call. We will explain how Stephen Ministry works and then you can decide if you would like a Stephen Minister. Let us help you heal. Please call the church office at 696-9219.



The United Methodist Women's Naomi Circle ladies put together two wonderful Christmas boxes to send to Alan Wardell. Alan is Kim McGinley's nephew and is now serving our country in Afghanistan. Please join us in praying for Alan and all of our soldiers for their safety and well-being. Pray that they feel our prayers and support and God's comfort and protection while they are away from loved ones.

Submitted by Marie Woolfolk for Naomi Circle



MISSIONS COMMITTEE

HABITAT HAPPENINGS

“To our friends at United Methodist Church,
Thanks to everyone for all your generosity and contributions in building our beautiful new home. We will cherish you always.

Danah Dietz and boys”

The above note was sent to our church, thanking the nearly 40 people who provided food and worked on making a home a reality for new Habitat home owner, Danah Dietz. More than half the people involved in building Danah’s home were from Lowell FUMC.

There were nearly 25 men and women each day, some doing construction and others serving food. Lowell FUMC provided luncheon meals and snacks on two of the five building days. At the end of the first day, all interior and exterior walls were erected. At the end of five days, the house was nearly completed on the outside, with doors and windows installed and siding on the house, ready for plumbers, electricians and heating contractors. On the sixth and seventh days, four volunteers completed shingling the roof.

In the week prior to the home being started, nine men and women from our church built a garage behind the home.

Take a drive past the home located on Burnham Street, (across from the nursing home). See the results of 10 days work, all with volunteers.

Thank you to everyone who was part of a local mission in Christ’s name. You helped change the lives of the Dietz family.

CHRISTMAS CLOTHESLINE

Because of your love for others and your generosity for children in need, 75 Lowell elementary school children received gifts on Christmas. The Christmas Clothesline is an annual sharing mission that helps needy children and you made a difference.

The Lowell First United Methodist Church is seen as a beacon of God’s love in the Lowell community.

THANK YOU for sharing.

Getting to Know our Church Employees

From Marti Bisacchi, Staff Parish Committee

Carol Goodrich graduated from high school in Illinois and in 1992 she moved with her family to Lowell. Mark and Francis Gould introduced them to our church. Before she took the staff position of Youth Director Carol served our church by being the Cherub Choir Director and the Youth Choir Director. Carol was also on the church staff as custodian.

Pastor Jeff Newton encouraged Carol to apply for the Youth Director position, and she was pleasantly surprised to be hired. With three children at home, (Kim, Stephanie, and Johnny) and a husband (Joe) she took on the huge ministry of working with the youth at our church and all the guests that our youth bring with them.

Before Carol became our Youth Director, either the assistant pastor or senior pastor always ran the youth program. While Carol was trained as a dental assistant, she feels God has called her to work at our church and she is doing a magnificent job.

At one winter lock-in at our church Carol had 100 youth attend. Talk about having your hands full! Just going to camp with both the junior and senior high youth would wear anyone out. Luckily Carol has a dedicated group of parents who help out.

When Carol has a little time to herself she likes to boat, fish, swim and keep up with her flowerbeds. Carol is an involved parent and supporter of many Lowell High School organizations that her son and other church youth are involved in. Carol's son, Johnny, recently traveled to the Hands of Love Orphanage in Kenya where he helped deliver the clothing and toys our youth collected.



Membership Class Offered

Pastor Bill and the Lay Leadership team will be conducting a class for those interested in becoming members of our church. The class will take place in two sessions. The session dates are Jan. 8 and Jan. 22 at 11:30 a.m. A light lunch will be offered to class participants. All interested persons should contact Pastor Bill or the office.

