

The mission of the  
 First United Methodist Church  
 is to embrace and extend  
 God's grace while passionately  
 growing servant leaders.

Office .....424-7771  
 Music Office .....429-6887  
 First Beginnings  
 Child Development  
 Center .....429-6890  
 PRAYER LINE .....429-6898  
 www.fumcshreveport.org  
 fumc@fumcshreveport.org



## Embracing Grace. Growing Leaders.

VOLUME LXIV NO.12 SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA DECEMBER 2011

### PAT'S PERSPECTIVE



Many of us observe Christmas, but very few of us know how to keep Christmas. Observing Christmas involves getting our Christmas cards addressed, gifts purchased and wrapped, decoration in place, holiday cooking completed and parties planned and attended. Unfortunately, observing Christmas puts us under a great deal of pressure and stress. Our schedules are packed with an unlimited number of things to do. We become Christmas junkies with more and more to do with less and less time.

It is sad that many of us don't realize that it doesn't have to be that way. Yet, it probably will be unless we do something about it right now. We have the opportunity to change. We have the opportunity to choose the type of Christmas that can have by learning how to keep Christmas. Henry Van Dyke in his classic poem, "Keeping Christmas," states, "There is a better thing than the observance of Christmas Day. That is the keeping of Christmas... Then if you can keep it for a day, why not always? But you can never keep it alone."

Keeping Christmas involves being willing to make a grace for your negative thoughts and feelings and a garden for your positive ones.

Like barnacles on a ship, it is easy to accumulate many emotional, relational and spiritual barnacles in our lives. Identify the negative thoughts and feelings in your life today. Ask God to help you make a grace for them and one by one put them to rest in it. Be careful that they are dead. If you aren't careful, they will come back to haunt you in the future, just like the ghost of Christmas past. Paul said it so well, "Forgetting what is behind and press on toward the goal which is in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:13) Very few people had a past that needed to be forgotten any more than the apostle Paul. Make friends with your past and bury it.

Plant a garden of positive thoughts, feelings and actions. Every day plant a positive seed and carefully nurture it until it becomes a part of you. There are many positive seeds or virtues that we need to plant: faith, hope, joy, kindness, love and understanding. You cultivate this garden daily by reading the Bible, praying and associating with positive faith-oriented people. You also develop these virtues by listening to positive faith-oriented messages, worshiping in a positive Christ-centered church and enjoying laughter with good friends.

During this special season may we discover the adventure of keeping Christmas every day. And if you can keep it for one day, why not every day? But remember, you can never keep it alone. You must share it with someone else.

See you Sunday in church!



- **First United Methodist Church**  
500 Common Street  
P. O. Box 1567  
Shreveport, LA 71165-1567
- **Sunday Worship Services**  
Traditional 8:30am & 11:00am  
Sanctuary (A deaf interpreter is available at the 11:00 service)
- **FAITHLink Contemporary**  
9:30am & 11:00am  
Emmett Hook Center
- **Wednesday Business Luncheon**  
Wednesdays at Noon  
Multimedia Room, Education & Administration Bldg., 3rd Floor
- **Wesleyan Communion Service**  
9:45-10:30am  
Couch Chapel  
(1st Sunday of month)
- **Sunday School**  
9:45am
- **Televised Sunday Services**  
11:00am (live)  
ABC KTBS-TV Ch. 3

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### FUMCServes Goodwill Clothes Closet

Advent is a time of preparation. Take this time to prepare your closets by choosing items you no longer wear to give to the Serving Ministry's monthly Goodwill clothes collection. Church youth will bag your gently used clothing and accessories when you bring them to the Hunter Motor Lobby on **Sunday, December 4**. In turn for our donations on the first Sunday of each month, Goodwill gives the Serving Ministry vouchers to be used in their stores by those in need.

### Christmas Bear Collection

Your 12- to 24-inch bears are needed by **Sunday, December 11**, to distribute to children at Central Elementary by December 14. Please bring your appropriately sized bears to the altar in the sanctuary or in FaithLink on December 4 or 11. These bears from our congregation help brighten the Christmases of children living in the church neighborhood. Don't let the time slip by; the Serving Ministry needs every bear you bring.



### December City Saturday

We are looking forward to our **December 17th's City Saturday** which will actually be taking place on site at the church for this month! Our service for the morning will go towards helping with the many preparations that help get Bain Hall ready to feed the 300-500 people that come through its doors on Christmas morning. We will be hanging lights, bagging groceries, sorting toys, and getting the space inviting for our neighborhood celebration of the birth of Jesus. This is a great time for those who are unable to join us for the Love Feast on the 25th but who really want to have a hand in the festivities. Bring your family and friends and meet us in Bain Hall at 8am!

### Family Sponsorship

If any families would like to be connected with a family in need of a sponsor for Christmas, call Britney Winn at the church, 424-7771 ext. 113.

### Love Feast

Join us on Christmas Day in Bain Hall as we continue our long tradition of opening our doors to share in celebration with 300-500 community members. **FUMC offers the only Christmas Day meal in our area.** We invite the homeless, agency clients, low-income individuals and families, volunteers, and congregation members



to join us. A hot meal is served, toys and supplies are distributed, songs about the birth of our Savior are sung together, and Santa usually makes his rounds for the kids. **We ask volunteers to come during the hours of 8am and 3pm.** Not everyone is expected to be present for the entire time. Feel free to decide between taking an early shift to assist with meal prep, a middle shift to assist with operation, or the later shift to assist with cleanup. We encourage you to invite individuals and families that you feel would enjoy joining us for this occasion!

### Global Missions: Join us in Haiti During the Summer of 2012!

**May 14-25, 2012:** Team members on this 12 day trip will teach subject and trade classes to the children at both orphan villages – Bighouse and Darivage. Cost \$2,000

**May 14-July 21, 2012:** Team members on this 10 week trip will teach French and English classes to the children of Bighouse and Darivage. Cost: TBD

**July 14-21, 2012:** Team members of this 1 week trip will complete small projects, deliver supplies, and care for the surrounding families in the village communities. Cost: \$1,700

Contact Britney Winn, [bwinn@fumcshreveport.org](mailto:bwinn@fumcshreveport.org) or 424-7771, if you are interested in traveling with us!

**SENIOR ADULTS**

**Treasure's Luncheon**

The M&Ms Choir will perform a program of Christmas music at the Treasure's Luncheon on **Thursday, December 1 at 12noon** (notice change of date due to Christmas) in Hunter Room 101. For reservations call 424-7771. Lunch will be served at a cost of \$6.

**Silver Screenings**

"It's a Wonderful Life" will be the Silver Screenings feature on **Tuesday, December 20**. For reservations call Brenda at 424-7771 by Friday, December 16 and mail a check for \$14. This includes the movie and lunch. **Meet at church at 9:45am** to be transported by church bus to the Robinson Center.

**WOMEN**

**UMW**

Let's keep the focus on Christmas with Deana Mitchell at our General Meeting on **Tuesday, December 6 at 11:00am** in Room 310 of the E&A building. We will have our Installation of Officers, World Thank Offering and Memorial Service. Lunch (\$6) will be served at 11:45am. All women of the church are invited. **Please note the change of place and our new meeting time to accommodate your lunch hour.**

**Circle 8**

December 19 at the home of Gail Nelson

**MEN**

**2011 Men's Ministry Celebrations**

The men had great speakers this year including Marc Pittman (author of 'Raising Cole'), The Duck Commander and Bill Cunningham (Shreveport BSF Leader). We had the largest Golf Tournament yet with 115 golfers in 3 man scrambles. We put on the first Sporting Clays Tournament in the history of First UMC Shreveport which was a great success with 130 participants!

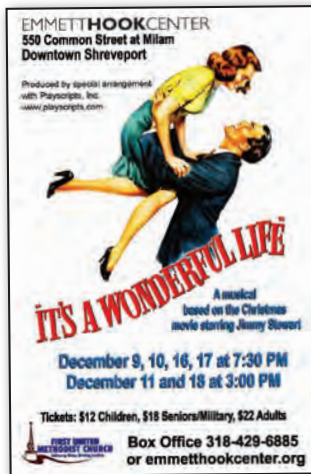
The proceeds allowed us to support some excellent charities and ministries

1. Sutton's Children's Hospital ..... \$4,000
2. FUMC Serving Ministries..... \$3,440
3. David Toms Foundation..... \$3,000
4. Shreveport UMMen District Missions ..... \$2,000
5. **TOTAL ..... \$12,440**

We put aside \$1,463 for future events and ministry opportunities.

**Thank You!**

A Special Thanks to Greg Watkins as he finishes his third strong year as President of the Men's Ministry; Trey Moore and Curt Thurmon for heading the Golf Tournament and David Wood, Brian Custer, Trey Smith and Jason Brady for heading the Sporting Clays Tournament.



**BOOK CLUB**

**Renew & Review**

In anticipation of Christmas, Gale Bridger will review David Baldacci's *The Christmas Train* on **December 13, 2011 at 10:00 a.m.** in Hunter Room 101. This popular author's "gift" to his readers is equal parts hilarious, poignant, suspenseful, and thrilling. Get into the spirit of this joyous season and join us for coffee, light refreshments, and conversation preceding the review. Annual dues are \$25.00. Cost for non-members is \$4.00. Young and old, male and female—all are welcome!

**BRIDGE**

**Bridge Lessons**

We are pleased to announce that Intermediate Bridge Lessons by Mrs. Betty Kennedy will be offered at FUMC, Shreveport, **January 3-24, 2012**. To register, please forward your name, address, telephone number and check payable to FUMC to PO Box 1567, Shreveport, LA 71165 Attn: Melanie. Classes will again be held on **Tuesday nights in Storer Activity Center on the first floor of the E&A building from 5:30-7:30pm**. Cost is \$40 each for FUMC members and \$45 for non-members.

For additional information please contact Melanie, 429-6887 or mbarron@fumcshreveport.org.

**HOLIDAYS**

**Holiday Schedule**

Due to Christmas and New Year's falling on Sundays this year, we will be adjusting our regular Sunday morning schedule for these dates only. Sunday school classes will not meet and traditional worship will be at 11am only on December 25 and January 1. FAITHLink will meet in Bain Hall at 11am on December 25 to worship during the Love Feast. January 1, FAITHLink will worship at 11am only in Emmett Hook Center.

Church Offices will be closed Friday, December 23 and Monday, December 26.

**DEVOTIONALS**

**Lenten Devotionals**

Jesus Christ is a Gift for all seasons. During Lent we reflect on our lives and obedience in order to properly serve the season of Eastertide. Members of FUMC are annually invited to contribute some thoughtful words for a book of daily Lenten devotions. You are sincerely invited to write a story, a testimony, an insight from scripture and prayer. The article should be 200-250 words long, and may include a scripture verse and short prayer, if you choose. **Submit entries no later than December 31** to Nan Dozier at nan\_dozier@hotmail.com. Share your Gift with us all!

**AFRICA**

**Africa**

Come join Will Andress on his next international trip, this one a **deluxe tour to Kenya and Tanzania, March 5-16, 2012**. Four places remain open. Phone 429-6887 for a brochure or further information.

**COUNCIL**

**Church Council Meeting**

The Church Council will meet on Sunday, December 11th in the Sanctuary immediately following the 11 o'clock worship services. The budget for 2012 will be presented and voted on. The meeting should last no longer than 30 minutes.

**New Members**



CAITLIN & REBECCA HOGAN



MARY ELIZABETH CHRISTIAN



ELISSA LITTLE

**CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS STEWARDSHIP**

**End-of-Year Contributions**

Giving is more than just tax breaks and charitable deductions. **Your generosity provides the meaningful difference in what our Church can accomplish.** If you are planning an end of the year gift, here are a few suggestions to assist you in accomplishing your goal:

1. **Where would you like your gift to go?**
  - a. The Eternal Flame Endowment Fund
  - b. Capital Building Campaign
  - c. Operating Budget
2. **How would you like to give?**
  - a. Gift of Cash
  - b. Gift of Stock
  - c. Other Gift

3. **In order to receive credit for this year, all contributions to First United Methodist Church need to be dated and/or postmarked no later than December 31, 2011.**

We will be glad to provide you with additional information on any gifts you may be considering. Please contact Jay Sawyer at 424-7771 with your questions. Thank you for your support at year-end and throughout the year!

**Christmas Church Night**

**Wednesday, December 7** – Christmas Dinner (\$7 adult, \$4 children) begins at 5:15pm; Program of music and drama at 5:45pm. RSVP required, call 424-7771.

**Birthday Party for Jesus**

Jesus Christ – the greatest gift ever given! Join other friends as we celebrate His birthday on **December 10, 10am-12noon in Bain Hall**. Children ages kindergarten and younger are invited for a morning filled with "Hands 2 Heart" Puppet Team, crafts, games, cupcakes and goodie bags! Please bring school supplies (no notebooks) for the children in Haiti. Register by contacting Mrs. Billie at 424-7771 or btate@fumcshreveport.org by December 5.

**Christmas Party for K-4th Grade**

**Sunday, December 11 at 9:45am.** Children are asked to bring school supplies (no notebooks) for children in Haiti.

**Step Up (Preteen)**

**Lighthouse Christmas Party:** December 14, 4:30-6:30pm

**WEE Lunch & Play**

Families with children ages infant-K4 are invited to join us in the Storer Activity Center on **December 18th** following the 11:00 services for "Christmas Countdown". Enjoy a meal and fellowship with other families with young children as we celebrate the birth of Christ. Cost is \$5. RSVP to Mrs. Billie at btate@fumcshreveport.org or 424-7771.

**LAND SALE**

**The Phillips Foundation Land Sale**

The Phillips Foundation will sell, approximately 170 acres, together with improvements, located near Greenwood, Louisiana. All mineral interests will be excluded from the sale. Sealed bids must be submitted in writing to: The Phillips Foundation, c/o John S. Hodge, Trustee, 333 Texas Street, Suite 2350, Shreveport, Louisiana, Telephone: (318)226-9100; so as to be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on **Thursday, December 15, 2011**. The bid must be irrevocable until the closing of a purchase of the Assets which must occur on or before December 30, 2011. The Trustee reserves the right to reject any bid, including failure of the bid to satisfy a secret reserve price. Contact the Trustee for additional information.



**Step Up (Preteen) Christmas Party**

Join us **December 18-19** for a Christmas party you will never forget! December 18 – meet at FUMC at 4pm. We will travel to Rice Farms for dinner and a gift exchange. We will then head over to Grace UMC for a pre-teen lock-in. December 19: SIX FLAGS! Pick up will be December 19 at 9pm at Grace UMC. Cost for this weekend of fun is \$35 (covers six flags ticket and gas) plus money for lunch and dinner in Dallas. Contact Ms. Emily (424-7771 or ebankston@fumcshreveport.org) to register before December 15!

**1st & 2nd Grade**

Christmas Fun Day for 1st & 2nd grade: **December 19, 10am-5pm**. The day will include a movie and lunch at the Boardwalk and then activities at the church. The cost for the day is \$15.00. RSVP to Mrs. Billie at btate@fumcshreveport.org or 424-7771.

*Poinsettia Memorials and Honorariums*



During the Christmas season, if you would like to have a poinsettia placed at the church in memory or in honor of a loved one or friend, please complete the below form and return it to Misty in the FUMC church office by **December 12, 2011**. The cost is \$12.00 per plant and checks should be made payable to First United Methodist Church.

Please print or type.

In memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

From: \_\_\_\_\_

**Memorials and honorariums will be listed in the worship bulletins on December 18th.**

(Sorry, telephone, fax or email requests cannot be accepted)