

The Circuit Writer

Mt. Jackson United Methodist Church



The Christmas Robe

The "Christmas Robe" for Jesus was the swaddling clothes in which he was laid in the manger. Nobody, not even a Wiseman, would recognize Jesus as "God's Awesome Son" by the clothes he wore. Only by the glory of the Christ Child himself, would such "Glory" be evident. Interesting enough, even dandelion's, "an unwanted weed," gets decked out in splendor with soft, yellow pedals, but Jesus, the King of Glory, gets thirty-something years of humility. It's a story of Jesus as the "Messiah of Humility" rather than a story of Jesus as the "Powerful and Proud Messiah." Jesus' Christmas entrance is an appropriate entrance for entering into the lives of the poor and of the outcast. Immediately, the message of God walking and living amongst the least and the last in society was launched.

Following in the footsteps of Christ who wore the "Christmas Robe" to enter into relationships, we too are encouraged to wear similar "Christmas Robes" as we enter into old and new relationships. Such humble entrances or re-entrances leave room for God to be made known and for God's glory to be revealed. God, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, wanted to make sure that designer robes or positions of earthly power were not cheap substitutes for the real substance of God's love and purposes. May the inspiration of God's entrance into the world change the way we "Robe Up" for Christmas!

Merry Christmas,
Pastor Ken



Happy December Birthdays!

- 12/1 Terri Dent
- 12/2 Karey Rexrode
- 12/12 Doris Barb
- 12/13 Carolyn Henry
- 12/16 Tracey Hepler
- 12/18 Brian Hepler
- 12/19 JW Good, III
- 12/19 Connie Hepler
- 12/20 Katelyn Hackenbracht
- 12/31 Lucas Ryan



United Methodist Men News

November 18, 2009



The United Methodist Men of the Mt. Jackson United Methodist Charge met Wednesday, November 18th, 2009 in the church social hall with 19 members and one guest, Douglas E. Phillips, present.

Following the invocation given by Pastor Ken, the women of the church served a delicious bar-b-que ribs dinner. Troy Hackenbracht prepared the sauce and bar-b-que the ribs before the meeting.

The business meeting was called to order by the President, Steve Forster.

Troy Hackenbracht presented a devotional story entitled "California Oranges" referenced to a passage from the Book of Psalms.

Roland Walters introduced Mr. Doug Phillips who gave an interesting account of the history and workings of the Open Door Food Pantry. Organized in April of 1991 by Donna Wolfe and several other men and women of the community, it has grown to serving 903 family units representing 2,765 people receiving 77,734 lbs. of food in the first 10 months of 2009. Between 95 and 100 family units are currently served on the third Thursday of each month. The Food Pantry operates on donated money from many different sources including individual donations, trusts, churches, FEMA, and others. Food donations are also received from many varied sources including USDA, Food Banks, farmers, individuals, churches, civic organizations, area grocers, along with food purchased by the Pantry. The administration and operation of the Food Pantry is conducted solely by dedicated, non-paid volunteers, 19 of whom are required for staff on Food Pantry Day. The Open Door Food Pantry serves Mt. Jackson and the immediate surrounding area.

The minutes of the October 21, 2009 meeting were read and approved.

The Treasurer reported a balance of \$2,164.13. The spaghetti supper grossed \$818.00 and netted \$707.22.

Old Business

Jack Sperry presented a card to the family of John Jordan expressing our sorrow over his recent passing and his absence at our meetings. It was signed by the President, Steve Forster, and all the attending mem-

bers. While not a member of Mt. Jackson UMC, he was a member of Otterbein Chapel UMC, and not having their own UMM, he, along with several other Otterbein members, enjoyed attending and participating with Mt. Jackson UMM.

Doug Estep reported the cost of the meals for the annual UMC Christmas Dinner would be \$12.04. Steve Forester and Ken Hackenbracht confirmed all arrangements for the event are taken care of.

President Steve stated head usher is set for December and assignments for 2010 will be made at the January 2010 meeting. Steve expressed his appreciation to all members who presented devotions, arranged programs, and served as head ushers this year.

New Business

President Steve announced that all the present officers were willing to serve another year. He declared the floor was open for nominations. Jack Sperry moved the nominations be closed and the secretary cast a unanimous ballot for the entire slate of currently serving officers. Motion seconded by Howard Hackenbracht. Motion carried unanimously.

President Steve asked the membership for suggestions for contributions the organization might make. Howard Hackenbracht stated he felt our historical practice of considering requests on a case by case basis has worked well and should be continued. The consensus of the group was agreement to follow past practice.

Jack Sperry informed the group that Lowes and Home Depot will give a 10% discount on purchases upon presentation of proof of military service such as VFW, American Legion, and etc. membership documentation. Several members reported having already received this discount.

Lawrence Frye suggested that a "coupon bank" at the church would be a help to the congregation during these hard economic times. Congregants could bring their excess or unneeded (for their use) coupons to church where they would be sorted as to specific use and available for others to use. This was hailed as a good idea and Pastor Ken said he had the necessary file and would organize the project.

Pastor Ken stated the Quicksburg church has a practice of members bring their Christmas cards to one another to church where they are put in a box for others to find their cards, thus saving the postage.

Bill Rasmussin wondered if there was any local place extra deer could be taken for food for needy people. He was advised Wholesome Food of Edinburg processes deer for hunters and gives any extra meat hunters don't want to charity as a tax writeoff.

There being no further business, Pastor Ken gave the closing prayer and the meeting closed by singing the Doxology.

Ken Hackenbracht
Secretary

United Methodist Women



Betty Luse called the women's meeting to order - there were nine members present.

Freddie Forster read the minutes from the October meeting and they were accepted as read.

Shirley Hackenbracht gave her financial report and also reported on cards from the UMW sent to church members, such as get well, thinking of you, and sympathy.

Jean Estep reported on our Kitchen news and the November 18 men's meeting dinner menu as well as the December 8 Ruritan dinner. Betty will purchase the turkeys; Jean will get the sign-up sheet ready. Jennifer Hackenbracht talked about the joint UMM and UMW's spaghetti fundraiser dinner November 8. We will sell cookbooks at that dinner.

Under Old Business:

Cookbook sales are good. Freddie will put a notice in the December newsletter about giving cookbooks for Christmas gifts.

The Apple/Grape Festival sales were very good. Bake sale items, knives and vanilla, and cookbook sales totaled over \$1,077. A motion was made and passed that the proceeds from the bake sale portion (\$600) be given to the church general fund.

Jennifer reported that the gifts for children of incarcerated persons apples on the apple tree were all gone by the time church service began last Sunday. Donations are also needed for 5"x8" legal pads and regular size toothpaste for the inmates.

Under new business:

The Lebanon-St. Stephens Choir will perform their Christmas Concert at the church on Saturday, December 12, 7:00 p.m., with refreshments to follow in the social hall. It was decided we will sell cookbooks that evening.

Nominations and voting was conducted for the 2010 UMW Officers; all current officers will serve next year.

President - Betty Luse
Vice President - Joan Bynaker
Treasurer - Shirley Hackenbracht
Secretary - Freddie Forster

The UMW Christmas party will be held Sunday, December 6, 5:00. Pot luck dinner followed by Secret Santa gift exchange.

The UMW will distribute Christmas baskets, a SEARCH box, and various gifts to shut-ins and members of the church on the morning of Saturday, December 12. We will meet at the church at 8:00 a.m.

Jean stated that at the January 7, 2010 meeting, we need to plan UMM meals for the year, and start thinking about next year's Mother/Daughter banquet plans to

come up with a theme. All women of the church are invited to join us at 7:00 p.m.

Jean closed the meeting with a prayer.

Freddie Forster, Secretary



**Holiday Gift --
United Methodist Women Cook-
book**

A reminder that the new cookbook will make a nice gift for the holidays. The color format is beautiful inside and out, there are 400 recipes, 14 plus pages of helpful hints, and the best part, family recipes. A cookbook containing Mom's or Grandma's or a relative's recipe could become a family heirloom. All this for only \$10. Cookbooks will be available for sale every Sunday following church service in the social hall, or call Freddie Forster at 477-3943. HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



**Lebanon-St. Stephens
Community Choir**



The Lebanon-St. Stephens Community Choir will be presenting their Christmas concert on December 12th at 7:00 PM in the church Sanctuary. Refreshments will follow in the Social Hall. Don't miss the wonderful music and fellowship this evening provides, not to mention the good food!

[Anyone who would like to assist with the refreshments, please bring a "finger food" to the kitchen prior to the concert. And thank you for your help!]



The Emblem

The Cross and Flame Award emblem carries the logo of the United Methodist Church. It may be worn with the uniform for dress and official occasions. It identifies the recipient as one who has served children and youth through the United Methodist Church.

This award was presented to Howard Hackenbracht, Scoutmaster of Mt. Jackson Troop 199. Howard is a member of our church. This award is the highest award given by the Methodist Church. Only three other members have received this award...Georgia Taylor, Leonard Hansberger, and Jack Sperry. The Emblem was presented to Howard by his son Troy, an Eagle Scout of Troop 199.



Legend of the Candy Cane

A candy maker in Indiana wanted to make a candy that would be a witness, so he made the Christmas Candy Cane. He incorporated several symbols from the birth, ministry, and death of Jesus Christ.

He began with a stick of pure white, hard candy. White, to symbolize the Virgin Birth and the sinless nature of Jesus, and hard to symbolize the Solid Rock, the foundation of the Church, and the firmness of the promises of God.

The candy maker made the candy in the form of a "J" to represent the precious name of Jesus, who came to earth as our Savior. It could also represent the staff of the "Good Shepherd" with which He reaches down into the ditches of the world to lift out the fallen lambs who, like all sheep, have gone astray.

Thinking that the candy was somewhat plain, the candy maker stained it with red stripes. He used three small stripes to show the stripes of the scourging Jesus received by which we are healed. The large red stripe was for the blood shed by Christ on the cross so that we could have the promise of eternal life.

Unfortunately, the candy became known as a Candy Cane—a meaningless decoration seen at Christmas time. But the meaning is still there for those who "have eyes to see and ears to hear." Every time you see a Candy Cane, remember the Wonder of Jesus and His Great Love that came down at Christmas, and that His Love remains the ultimate and dominant force in the universe today.



Poinsettias

If you would like to purchase a poinsettia in memory or honor of a loved one and add to the beauty of our Sanctuary this Christmas, please give Doris Barb or Pastor Ken \$6.00 for each 2-quart size red plant and the information about who you wish to honor so that may be noted in the weekly church bulletin.



**Did you know
that the total volunteer/outreach hours
recorded for the church so far in 2009
averaged over 30 hours per week!**

**Service
is a MJUMC
blessing to the community.**

Youth News



The children would like to thank the church for their support of their field trip in October. The children and their families shared a beautiful fall afternoon at Bridgemont Corn Maize on October 25. Everyone gathered at the maize at 4:15 PM. The maize was in the shape of the United States with all of the states represented. The group entered the maize and worked our way up the Mississippi River, through the New England states, down to Virginia and then out of the Maize by way of Florida. The children especially liked working together to figure out directions and landmarks within the maize. We made several wrong turns, but that's what made it fun!

The children have been studying Moses in Sunday school. While Moses wandered in the Desert with the Israelites the children wandered in the corn maize. They also learned that it takes practice to understand how to use a map. The children learned that God's map for our lives is the Bible.

Afterwards we all gathered for dinner in Mount Jackson for a relaxing meal. The children especially loved being able to sit together in a setting outside of church. We had eight adults and five children complete the maize. Fun was had by all. Thank you.



Also,
Shenandoah Place Thanksgiving Time of Sharing
November 2009

The Kids Own Worship Sunday School Class shared a special time of Thanksgiving sharing with the residents of Shenandoah Place Assisted Living Facility in New Market. The children made bookmarks, sun catchers and decorated homemade sugar cookies to share with the residents during a worship service conducted by Pastor Ken. The children also sang the songs "This Is the Day" and "Give Thanks" for the residents. After the worship service, the children passed out the gifts and went throughout the facility sharing Thanksgiving greetings and God's love with the residents. Thank you to Mrs. Bonnie Good, Katie Hackenbracht, and the Sunday school teachers for leading this project.

Sharon Clark
Youth Team Leader

Children, use the blank card below to write your very own Christmas Card, cut it out and give it to someone special!



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Thanks to all who helped with the Spaghetti Supper Saturday, November 7th. We served about 90 persons and received close to \$700.00.

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**.Congratulations to
Shirley & Ken Hackenbracht
on 52 years of marriage November 24th
and
Pat & Jack Sperry
on 59 years of marriage November 22nd—
and many more...**

**Church Calendar for
December 2009**



12/6 Sun. 2nd Sunday of Advent, Purple or Blue
 9:45 AM Sunday School
 10:00 AM Children/Youth SS
 -under Sanctuary
 11:00 AM Worship
 UMW Christmas Party

12/7 Mon. 7:00 PM Ruritan Dinner Prep
 8:00 PM AA, Library

12/8 Tues. 10:00 AM Ruritan Dinner Production

12/9 Wed. 7:00 PM Church Council
 Choir

12/11 Fri. 6:30 PM UMM Christmas Dinner
 8:00 PM AA, Library

12/12 Sat. 8:30 AM UMW Christmas Baskets
 7:00 PM Leb-St. Stephens Concert

12/13 Sun. 3rd Sunday of Advent, Purple
 9:45 AM Sunday School
 10:00 AM Children/Youth Sunday
 School-under Sanctuary
 11:00 AM Worship

12/14 Mon. 8:00 PM AA, Library

12/15 Tues. 7:00 PM Choir Practice

12/18 Fri. 8:00 PM AA, Library

12/20 Sun. 4th Sunday of Advent, Purple
 9:45 AM Sunday School
 10:00 AM Children/Youth SS
 -under Sanctuary
 11:00 AM Worship

12/21 Mon. 8:00 PM AA, Library

12/22 Tues. 7:00 PM Choir Practice

12/24 Thurs. 5:30 PM Christmas Eve Service,
 White or Gold

12/25 Fri. Christmas Day

12/27 Sun. 1st Sunday after Christmas, White or Gold
 8:00 AM UMM Breakfast
 9:45 AM Sunday School
 10:00 AM Children/Youth SS
 -under Sanctuary
 11:00 AM Worship
 Pastor out of town Sun—Sat

12/28 Mon. 8:00 PM AA, Library

12/29 Tues. 7:00 PM Choir Practice

1/1/10 Fri. New Year's Day

1/3 Sun. 21st Sunday after Pentecost, Green
 9:45 AM Sunday School
 10:00 AM Children/Youth Sunday
 School-under Sanctuary
 11:00 AM Worship