

The Circuit Writer
Mt. Jackson United Methodist Church



God Brings Thanksgiving!

God brings thanksgiving to people everywhere. God's thanksgiving is a thanksgiving which is available and abundant to the poor, the insecure, and the powerless. This thanksgiving is born in the freedoms which God alone can give. God's thanksgiving is rich because it is not confined to the food behind the calories. God's thanksgiving is rich because it belongs to the whole pantry of God. A pantry filled with much more than calories to sustain physical strength. A pantry filled with purpose, passion, and soul to equip people for lives of faith and godliness. We can learn a bit more about God's thanksgiving by looking at a few of the accounts in the Bible where God's provisions of food and purposes were intertwined.

Thanksgiving for Adam & Eve was an everyday experience. God provided and Adam and Eve were thankful. Yet, unaware of just how good their situation in the Garden of Eden was, they gambled away their relationship with God for some forbidden fruit.

Thanksgiving for the Israelites in their Exodus travels came to life when in their hunger they received manna from heaven and in their thirst they received water from the rocks. Although these provisions were nothing fancy, these provisions were remarkable in the context of their story.

Thanksgiving for Joshua and Caleb entering into the Promised Land, after forty years of wandering, involved milk, honey, and fat calves. Their new and improved food experience must have truly been a thanksgiving feast. Yet, their awareness of being foreigners in a land disinterested in their story, quickly overcame their grateful spirit.

Thanksgiving for the Disciples of Christ involved fish, bread, and wine. From generous miracles revealing Jesus' identity as the Son of God to the communion meal around the upper room table, thanksgiving moments lived amidst troubling times. Although Jesus' use of food was directed at fulfilling the spiritual needs of the people, the thanksgiving experiences of the Disciples mostly centered on just having their physical needs met. Once the Disciples gained further understanding of what Jesus was sharing with them, their thanksgiving experiences became crowded with doubt and the hard realities of following in the foot steps of God.

Thanksgiving for 20th Century Christians contains ingredients from each of the food stories contained

in the Bible. Not just the obvious provisions upon the table, but the deeper realities which are embedded in the stories of history. From seasons of plenty with temptations of forbidden fruit, to seasons of transition with remarkable provisions in the context of poverty, to seasons of abundance in the context of insecurity, to seasons where both poverty and insecurity are met in the person of Christ, God is busy bringing thanksgiving to people. Whether ancient or modern, all people fall short on their follow through with the thanksgiving which God brings. Thankfully, God's faithfulness includes mercy for our wastefulness and grace enough for future thanksgiving experience!

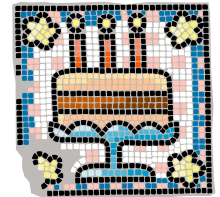
Whichever season you may find yourself, remember that it is God who brings thanksgiving to your table!

Happy Thanksgiving,
Pastor Ken



Happy November Birthdays!

- 11/1 Ken Hackenbracht*
- 11/1 Oliver Henry*
- 11/6 LuAnn Rowling*
- 11/20 Judy Dove*
- 11/21 Douglas Estep*
- 11/22 Ethel Garber*
- 11/30 Luci Dent*



**Happy Thanksgiving
 Everyone...
 Another
 Opportunity to Give Thanks
 To HIM**



United Methodist Men News

October 21, 2009

The United Methodist Men of the Mt. Jackson United Methodist Charge met Wednesday, October 21, 2009 in the church social hall with 21 members present.

Pastor Ken gave the invocation prior to the group enjoying a baked chicken dinner served by the women of the church.

Following dinner, the meeting was called to order by the president, Steve Forster.

Jack Sperry led devotions by asking various members to relate how or who "got you started in church." This turned out to be quite interesting and perhaps an idea for a future program.

The minutes of the September 16, 2009 meeting were read and approved.

The Treasurer reported a balance of \$1,541.91.

Old Business: The following events were reviewed.

- Howard Hackenbracht, co-chairman of the spaghetti supper to be held November 7th, handed out posters to be posted around town advertising the event. The sauce will be prepared on the morning of the 7th, the dining hall set up in the afternoon and serving to begin at 4 pm.
- The next quarterly Fellowship Breakfast will be held at 8 am, November 15th.
- Roland Walters is program chairman for November and has arranged for a speaker from the Open Door Food Pantry.
- The 13th annual Christmas Dinner and Social will be held at 6:30 pm, December 11th. Creekside Plain and Fancy will again cater the meal and musical entertainment will be provided by Mr. Ken Monger of Elkton.
- Devotions for the November meeting are arranged for, however, we need a head usher for November. December head usher is Ken Hackenbracht.

New Business:

- Jack Sperry urged everyone to get flu shots. Discussion followed about locations for receiving the shots.
- Jack suggested a letter be written to Mrs. Helena Jordon expressing our appreciation for her late husband John's attendance and contributions to our meetings that he loved to attend.
- Ken Hackenbracht asked the group to please help move the furniture from the social hall and hallway into the sanctuary immediately after the meeting. The floor is scheduled to be stripped and waxed the first thing tomorrow morning. Volunteers were arranged to meet at 8:00 am Sunday morning, October 25th to set the room back up.

Program:

Pastor Ken presented a side show featuring many pictures of this summers' local mission trip. This brought back many memories of hard work, good fellowship, and satisfaction of having served others and our

Lord.

The meeting closed with prayer by Pastor Ken and the group singing the Doxology.

Ken Hackenbracht

Secretary



United Methodist Women



We would like to invite all women of the church to our monthly meetings held on the first Thursday of every month, 7:00 PM. at the church. The following is a synopsis of our October 1 meeting:

Prior to the UMWomen meeting, a wedding shower was held for Joan Bynaker, with 20 women present; the hostess was Jane Thomas. Joan received many wonderful gifts, cake and punch was served, and everyone had a good time. Best of luck to Joan and Charlie.

President Betty Luse called the meeting to order with 15 members present. (Perhaps we should serve cake and punch at all our meetings!...good attendance.)

Secretary Freddie Forster read the minutes from the September meeting and they were accepted as read. Treasurer Shirley Hackenbracht gave her financial report. Shirley also reported on various cards sent to church members from the UMWomen during the last month, such as get well, thinking of you, and sympathy; 12 cards in all were sent.

Kitchen report: the October 21 men's meeting dinner will be baked chicken, macaroni and cheese, peas, sunshine salad, biscuits, and pumpkin pies. We had a good turnout at the September 16 dinner; the men met first at the Route 11 potato chip factory for a tour and then were joined by the tour employees for dinner at the church.

Under Old Business: Cookbooks; we have 204 books left to sell. Very good sales so far. Keep the cookbooks in mind for holiday gift shopping; they will make a great gift.

Under New Business: We discussed the upcoming October 10-11 Mt. Jackson Apple/Grape Festival. The UMMen will sell bean soup and the UMWomen will sell baked goods, cookbooks, knives, and vanilla. Baked goods can be delivered to the church between 5:00 and 8:00 p.m. and we will meet at 6:00 a.m. on Saturday morning for setup. Tammy Estep will secure three tents.

Jennifer Hackenbracht reminded attendees of the spaghetti dinner to be held at our church on Saturday, November 7, 5:00 p.m.

Joan Bynaker closed the meeting with a prayer.

Freddie Forster, Secretary

***God Did This!
It's His Fault!***

This past year has seen the loss of several friends and family members due to terminal illness or accident. There are others still within my circle of friends and family who are seriously ill and remain in my prayers and thoughts. My work also places me in an environment where death is both swift and lingering, where my mind often wonders to the “whys” and “hows” of death.

We hear the reports of deaths due to medical errors in healthcare, we read newspaper accounts of vehicle accidents that take the lives of the young and old; we see the television reports of gang- and drug-related murders. Why did these deaths happen—how could a loving and caring God do nothing when that terrific accident occurred and took the lives of an entire family. Some of these events surround the loss of a loved one are so unexpected or so horrific that we cannot wrap our minds around the “whys” and “hows” of the death. There are those too, who struggle with a lingering illness, with pain and suffering for what we feel is far too long. We know so little of the mysteries of life and death. We cry out for answers in our prayers; we pray for comfort and understanding.

Over eight years ago, an eighteen month old little girl, by the name of Josie, had an accident at her home in Maryland where she received severe burns. She was rushed to a local hospital where she did very well and was ready to be discharged and return to her family of three other siblings, her mother and father and numerous aunts and uncles within just a few days. And then something tragic occurred, a miscommunication between those providing care for Josie, and within less than 48 hours that beautiful little girl was dead. Her family struggled with the hows and whys and the anger that comes with a death under such circumstances. How could those responsible for her care let this happen? How could God let this happen?

I have been blessed to meet one of the Uncles and the mother of that little girl. I have heard how this mom struggled with her anger and her guilt and how she turned such a tragic event into a life devoted to making the health care environment a safer place. I have talked with her and read the book that she wrote this year entitled “Josie’s Story.” I have found comfort in her words and the words of comfort that others offered to her during her struggle. I know that reading a book and talking with others about their experiences does not make one an expert on death and dying, but there is comfort and hope in sharing the perspective that others gain from these experiences. In speaking with Sorrell King, the mother of that little girl, and reading her book, there is one message of comfort that was provided to Mrs. King that I have grasped onto and held close as my family and friends and I have struggled with the loss of our families this year. When Mrs. King expressed to a friend and counselor that she did not understand why God did this, why God allowed her precious little girl to die, her friend replied, **“God did not make this happen or let this happen, man did. God provided us with the comfort and strength to deal with the loss.”**

I have often mulled that thought over in my head, “man did”... God was not driving that vehicle over the speed limit, God did not grow and package those illegal drugs, and God did not have responsibility for a lot of those things that took family

and friends from us. I don’t completely understand the process of how cancer and the other serious illnesses that ravage the human body begin, but I would guess that we each make free choices that place us at risk for heart disease, lung cancer and other deadly maladies. Maybe that friend and counselor is on to something! Instead of our anguish with God and our blaming Him for our loss, we should recognize that our free will may be playing a significant part in the loss. And, instead of turning on God, we should turn to God for the comfort and strength to help us through our loss.

I don’t expect to ever be an expert on death and dying or to be able to explain all that surrounds this process. I don’t know why some die so young, or others so tragically. I do not know if or what plan our Heavenly Father has for our lives. But, what I do know, is that the words of that friend and counselor of Mrs. King’s helped me to stay on the right path; to not lash out so in my grief and anger. Maybe by sharing these words with others who are not struggling with the loss of a loved one or who in some unknown future time will be placed in such a situation, they, too, can understand that God is not the villain to be blamed for our loss. When we experience loss or our friends face such situations, perhaps words at that time will not bring much comfort, but when the debilitating grief begins to fade, maybe the advice given to that mother struggling with the loss of her child will help them remember and will allow them to turn *to* God and not *on* God.

Edna Carpenter
September 2009



Trustees Report



The Trustees held their regular quarterly meeting September 27th. We met two weeks earlier than normal (normal meetings are 6:30 pm, on the second Sunday of January, April, July and October) to consider action on the following:

We accepted an estimate of approximately \$1,580.00 from Earl Smoltz, Jr. to remove the broken brick veneer on the handicap ramp and hallway-kitchen porch. This turned out to be more of a job than anticipated. It was originally thought the footer beneath the brick had settled causing the cracking. The problem turned out to be the cavity under the floor of the porch was filled with sand and construction debris which had settled and pushed both the brick veneer and the cement block wall behind it out. Between five and six tons of sand and debris were shoved out by hand and new a block wall and brick veneer were laid up. Mr. Smoltz and his son did an excellent job and the bill was \$1,700.00 in spite of all the additional work and materials needed. Special thanks to Trustees Doug and Douglas Estep for bringing their skid steer loader and dump truck and Barry Davis for his truck to haul away the sand. Barry also brought his pressure washer in to wash off the parking lot residue from the job.

We accepted a bid of \$770.00 from C & S Carpets to replace the cove base in the old basement. The old had separated at the joints and was peeling away from the wall. This has been done and looks very nice. The new was matched to the same color as in the new addition. The condition of the tile floor in the hallway and social hall was discussed. The Chairman was directed to secure costs of stripping and waxing the floors. A special meeting was held after church on October 4th and the bid of \$545.00 from Fred Windill and Rick Dysert was accepted. The floors were stripped and two coats of wax applied on October 22nd and 23rd. The floors look much better. The social hall tile floor is showing its age and sometime down the road will need to be replaced. The hallway tile was replaced in 2007.

You have undoubtedly noticed the newly painted front doors. Thanks to Trustees Jon Reynolds who painted the doors and repaired the wood around the deadbolt, Doug Estep who painted the trim around the doors, and Barry Davis, Ken and Howard Hackenbracht, who helped Jon sand the doors.

The new boiler was turned on for the first time for services Sunday, October 4th. It works very well and does not airlock hot water lines like the old one. We will be very interested to see how efficient it is in oil use. We hope to see a substantial reduction. Thanks to Pastor Ken for his nice dedication service for the boiler October 18th and his kind words for the Trustees.

New dehumidifiers were purchased earlier this summer, one for the old basement in the church and one for the parsonage basement, replacing old units that wore out. Thanks to Doug Estep for building a stand to let the church unit drain automatically. No more having to empty the bucket by hand. More importantly, the unit does a much better job as it can run as necessary whereas before the bucket would fill and maybe not be emptied for two or three days before someone came through the basement and emptied it.

If you haven't been to the old basement to see the makeover of the area by Bonnie Good, please do so. The Trustees gave Bonnie permission to paint the walls and prepare the area for the children's Sunday School. It works much better for compliance with the Child Protection Policy as the bathrooms are right there. Thanks to Barry Davis for correcting some electrical problems in the room.

A special thanks to all the Methodist Men who helped remove the furniture from the area to be stripped and waxed after the UMM meeting and coming in early Sunday morning to put it all back.

Ken Hackenbracht, Chairman

Church Calendar for



11/1 Sun.	All Saints Day, Red or White	9:45 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Children/Youth SS -under Sanctuary 11:00 AM Worship 6-7:30 PM Youth Video Study (Parsonage)
11/2 Mon.	7:00 PM Disciple Bible Study 8:00 PM AA, Library	
11/3 Tues.	7:00 PM Choir Practice	
11/4 Wed.	10:30 AM Q'burg Disciple Bible Study	
11/5 Thurs.	7:00 PM UMW	
11/6 Fri.	8:00 PM AA, Library	
11/7 Sat.	4:00 PM— UMM Spaghetti Dinner	
11/8 Sun.	23rd Sunday after Pentecost, Green	9:45 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Children/Youth Sunday School-under Sanctuary 11:00 AM Worship 6-7:30 PM Youth Video Study (Parsonage)
11/9 Mon.	8:00 PM AA, Library	
11/10 Tues.	7:00 PM Choir Practice	
11/11 Wed.	7:00 PM Council Meeting—approve budget	
11/13 Fri.	8:00 PM AA, Library	
11/15 Sun.	24th Sunday after Pentecost, Green	9:45 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Children/Youth SS -under Sanctuary 11:00 AM Worship 2:00 PM Youth to Shen Place 2-6:00 PM District Conference
11/16 Mon.	8:00 PM AA, Library	
11/17 Tues.	10:30 AM Shenandoah Place 7:00 PM Choir Practice	
11/18 Wed.	6:00 PM UMM	
11/19 Thurs.	10:30 AM Life Care	
11/20 Fri.	8:00 PM AA, Library	
11/21 Sat.	4-7 PM Bowling ??	

11/22 Sun.	Christ the King, 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 12:00 PM Charge Conference — Pot Luck lunch
11/23 Mon.	6:30 PM Decorate Church for Advent 8:00 PM AA, Library	
11/24 Tues.	7:00 PM Choir Practice	
11/25 Wed.	7:00 PM Communion Service	
11/26 Thurs.	Thanksgiving Day Pastor Out of Town	
11/27 Fri.	Pastor Out of Town 8:00 PM AA, Library	
11/29 Sun.	21st Sunday after Pentecost, Green	9:45 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Children/Youth Sunday School-under Sanctuary 11:00 AM Worship
11/30 Mon.	8:00 PM AA, Library	
12/1 Tues.	7:00 PM Choir Practice	
12/4 Fri.	8:00 PM AA, Library	

