



Pulpit Guest Rev. Bill Dobbs Sunday, February 6

On Sunday, February 6, our guest preacher will be Rev. Bill Dobbs. Bill is currently the Michigan Area Clergy Assistant to the Bishop. Bill is located in Okemos at our Michigan Area Episcopal Offices. Bill has a long history of service for Christ in West Michigan. A native of "the Thumb," Bill was a public school music teacher before going into the ministry. He has now served almost 40 years in the West Michigan Conference, serving at: West Mendon, Lansing Calvary, Ludington United, East Lansing University, Holland First, as Central/Heartland District Superintendent, and now as Clergy Assistant to the Bishop.



Rev. Bill Dobbs

Bill will be here to bring a message on our United Methodist mission, "The Light That Transforms." We welcome Bill with our great First UMC hospitality.

Youth Sunday February 20

COURAGE: Just do it!

Matthew 5:38-48, 1 Corinthians 3: 10 -17



Join us at 8:30 and 11 a.m. for a youth-led worship experience that will include youth musicians and youth drama troupe performing, "The Menu" and "The Meaning of Love." We hope you will support our youth with your presence as they exemplify that faith takes courage, not only in leading worship, but in making the tough choices of day-to-day living. Come, be empowered by God's Spirit that calls us to serve in Jesus' name. We will be taking a special offering for Youth Missions.

Prophets of God: Martin Luther King, Jr.

By popular request, Rev. John Boley reprints his January 16, 2011 sermon

I was about half way through writing today's sermon to be entitled, "Stoning the Prophets," when I realized that I had something better and more foundational to offer you. What follows is an essay that I wrote not all that long ago up in Mt. Pleasant, in which I argued the case that Martin Luther King, Jr. was a prophet of God. Please forgive me that this will probably sound more like an academic lecture than the proclamation of the Word. Perhaps it will be both.

Old Testament Prophets. Prophets

are generally understood to be people who speak for God. That's it – it's that simple. Many cultures and civilizations have had people who they have understood to have special access to God or special powers from God. The shaman tradition of many cultures comes to mind.

But the Prophet took on a new meaning in Old Testament times in Israel and Judah. Particularly when Israel and Judah were independent and had their own political and economic power through the years of the kings, there arose individu-

als among the people who spoke for God and considered themselves to be outside of the dominant culture of religion, politics, and economics. Some of these prophets had unique access to the halls of power, but most either started, or became, outsiders to the political and economic rulers.

The primary prophets of Israel and Judah were Moses (pre-monarchy), Elijah, Amos, Isaiah, Hosea, Micah, and Jeremiah. There were many more.

cont. on p. 6

WELCOME to *The First Word*, a bi-monthly publication, except during the summer months of June, July, August and December when *The First Word* is published monthly. Articles for the next issue are due no later than Wednesday, **February 16, 2011**. The next newsletter will be mailed **February 23**. Articles submitted to the newsletter should preferably be sent electronically by email to Jennifer Stupica at jstupica@umc-kzo.org. **If you wish to receive an electronic form of this newsletter ONLY, please email Jennifer.**

FIRST CHURCH STAFF

The staff is here to empower and equip the congregation for ministry and mission. Email staff by entering the first letter of their first name and the entire last name, and then: @umc-kzo.org (i.e., jboley@umc-kzo.org).

| | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Rev. John Boley | Senior Pastor |
| Rev. Sandy Elfring | Pastor of Visitation |
| Rev. Julie Kline | Pastor of Youth Ministries |
| Rev. Shelly Wisdom-Long | Pastor of Children & Families Ministries |
| Jacqueline Stilger | Minister of Music |
| Bernie Foulk | Organist |
| Joe Konrad | Church Business Administrator |
| Jennifer Stupica | Communications Coordinator |
| Linda Lueth | Financial Assistant |
| Christi Landreville | Administrative Assistant |
| Kelly Green | Office Assistant |
| Darryl Poplar | Custodian |
| Bruce Sackett | Custodian |
| Walter Walker | Evening Security |
| Deborah Mulder | Day Greeter (AARP) |
| Julie Meyers | FIRST CARE Director |
| Ron Grant | (372-0961) Adjunct Pastoral Counselor |
| Bishop Jonathan Keaton | Bishop of the Michigan Area |
| Rev. Neil Davis | Kalamazoo District Superintendent |

GLOBAL STAFF

| | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Thom and Chris Denman | Red Bird Missionary Conference, Kentucky |
| Delbert and Sandy Groves | Zambia |
| Jeff and Ellen Hoover | Democratic Republic of the Congo |
| Rev. Irina Margulis | Russia |
| Helen Sheperd | Mongolia |

PRAYER CHAIN. Did you know that it is as easy as picking up the phone or e-mailing the office to have your prayers multiplied by many caring members of your church family? Please contact the church office, 381-6340, if you would like to be included in our weekly email prayer chain. If you would like to be added to our phone prayer chain, please contact Harold & Mary Beth Garman, 321-9332.



STEPHEN MINISTRY is a confidential care giving ministry of our church. If you would like a Stephen Minister to walk with you during a difficult time in your life, you are welcome to contact Donna Meninga, 388-5837.

Our sympathy and prayers go out to the family and friends of:

Kit Kovacic, long time member, who died January 12.
Thomas Simpson, Sr., father of Tom (Karen) Simpson, who died January 19
Leta Snyder, mother of Joanne (Andrew) Lehman, who died January 21 in Goshen, Indiana.

Please keep these friends in your prayers

Bob Baker, Mary Bullock, Jesse Clements, Alma Eby, Cleo Hayden, Richard Hodges, Darlene Hunkins, Dawn Kibler, Virginia Krake, Ruth Ann Mulder, Fanny Vail

Please keep these friends recently released from the hospital in your prayers

Rev. Sandy Elfring

Week day office volunteers needed

We currently are in need of week day office volunteers that can help greet visitors and answer the phones as well as other odd office jobs. Wednesday and Thursday afternoons and Friday mornings are currently available. Volunteers are scheduled for three hour shifts, but any time you have available to help would be appreciated! We also could use people that can help with "on call" special projects, such as large mailings. Please contact Christi Landreville in the office if you are interested at 381-6340 or email her at clandreville@umc-kzo.org. No experience necessary and training is available.

Share the Supper

Hearty Soups



You can leave your donations at the food pantry. Remember to bring food donations on the first Sunday of the month when we celebrate Holy Communion.

Endowment Committee requests your vote at Special Church Conference on Sunday, March 13

by Jeanne Grubb, Endowment Committee Chair

In an effort to identify additional income that we can always use to operate the church, the Endowment Committee is proposing two changes to the Endowment Plan Policies. On Sunday, March 13, after the 11:00 worship service, we need 10% of our membership to vote on these proposals. We need your vote to make this happen!

1. Endowment Fund Spending Policy

As members of the FUMC, you may be aware that our church has an endowment fund. However, you may not be aware that each year a distribution is made from the endowment fund to the church operations budget, and the amount of that distribution is dictated by a spending policy.

The current spending policy allows for an annual distribution of the interest and dividend income earned by the endowment fund during the previous year, or 5% of the average balance of the prior 12 quarters—whichever is less.

The key phrase in this policy is “whichever is less.” Twenty years ago this may have been appropriate as interest rates averaged 6-8% and about half of all stock market returns were in the form of stock dividends. We know that in order to preserve and sustain an endowment, distributions need to be limited to no more than 5% each year.

Today, interest rates on bonds are in the 3-4% range and yields on stock dividends are less than 2%. In the last few years, the “whichever is less” that we have been able to take from the endowment and distribute to our operating budget, has been interest and dividends—unfortunately, a very modest amount.

After careful consideration, the Endowment Committee is proposing a revision to the spending policy:

Each September 30, the average balance of the previous 12 quarters will be calculated and a 5% spending policy will be applied. This would be the maximum annual distribution from the fund. This would require that there has been enough growth from investments to allow for this distribution without invading the principal of the fund. If a 5% distribution cannot be made without invading the endowment principal, then interest and dividends will be distributed instead.

2. Undesignated Bequests

The current policy indicates that 100% of undesignated bequests are to be deposited into the endowment fund. We propose that to provide more needed support to the church Trustees, future undesignated bequests be allocated as follows:

- 75% to Endowment
- 25% to Trustees

January Church Council Highlights

by Molly Williams, Church Council Chair

On January 25, at our first meeting of 2011, Chair Molly Williams welcomed new council members and recognized those who have finished their terms. She also reviewed the role of Church Council as defined in the *Book of Discipline* to “provide for planning and implementing a program of nurture, outreach, witness, and resources in the local church. It shall also provide for the administration of its organization and temporal life. It shall envision, plan, implement, and annually evaluate the mission and ministry of the church.” While much of the detailed work is done by

committees and ministry teams, the Church Council is responsible for coordinating these efforts and setting direction for our programs.



Rev. John Boley presented updates to the 2011 Officiary. Since the Church Conference last November, there have been a few additions to ministry teams and committees, and to their leadership. The Nominating Committee continues

to work to fill any remaining vacancies.

Finance Committee Chair Ed Hessler reported that we are delighted to have finished 2010 with a positive balance of ~\$4600. Thank you to all those who completed their 2010 pledges and also to those who made extra year-end gifts.

Nevertheless, the 2011 budget presents significant challenges. Although the average pledge has risen steadily over the past few years, the number of households pledging to support the annual budget continues to *cont. on p. 4*





Children & Families Ministries

by Rev. Shelly Wisdom-Long

HAITI HOT LUNCH Mission Project - Feeding all God's children a healthy lunch everyday!

Don't forget to bring your offerings to Sunday school to help us feed our friends in Haiti. You can also bring your 'dollars and cents' up during our "Time with the Children" in worship on Sundays.

DO YOU HAVE A PASSION FOR DECORATING?

The CFM Team invites anyone interested in helping decorate The Arches (the 2nd floor gathering area) to contact either Andrea Murphy (aimurphy390@comcast.net) or Rev. Shelly Wisdom-Long (swisdomlong@umc-kzo.org).

Top Ten Reasons to Bring Your Child to Sunday School

#6. Systematic Bible Learning: Our Sunday school curriculum is designed to give a broad foundation, so children will understand how the Bible fits together and is applicable to their lives, at whatever age!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS TODAY!

Coffee and Conversation begins Wednesday, February 15. Are you the parent of a young child or young children? Do you sometimes need a place to just have adult conversation...or find out if what's happening at your house is like all the rest...or do you have questions about faith and family? If so, you are invited to join Pastor Shelly at 9:45 a.m. on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month in room 210. She'll have the coffee ready (and hot water for the tea drinkers!). No need to make reservations or sign up. Just come!

First Family Fellowship Fun Night

Friday, February 18 @ 6 p.m.

Bring the whole family for an evening of fellowship and fun! Pizza, salad, dessert, games and more in Wesley Hall! Watch here for more details!

January Church Council Highlights *(cont. from p. 3)*

decline, eroding our total annual income. We must find a way to close a gap of \$55,000 between expected income and requested expenditures. Our church, like many other service organizations, has an operating budget that is heavily devoted to personnel and to building expenses. Reducing our budget by this amount may require significant reductions to our outreach, our staff, and our building operations. Church Council has delayed approving a 2011 budget until the relevant committees can respond to the request to further reduce their expenditures.

The Evangelism Ministry Team is newly activated for 2011. Chair Eli Lake presented the results of the team's discussion and their recommendations to encourage our members to talk about our church and to invite people to join with us.

Deb Search Willoughby and David Lundquist presented a set of ten petitions jointly prepared by Reconciling Ministries Network and Methodist Federation for Social Action. These petitions seek to revise the UMC Book of Discipline and the Social Principles to remove language discriminatory of homosexuality. They are to be considered at the West Michigan Annual Conference in June 2011, and, if approved

there, would be considered at the General Conference in 2012. While any individual may submit petitions, multiple submissions of the same proposals by both individuals and groups strengthen the case for their adoption. Church Council unanimously approved these petitions, and they have been sent on to the West Michigan Conference.

Outreach Ministry Team Co-Chair Donna Duniak presented the list of special offerings to be taken approximately once per month throughout 2011. Six are required by the United Methodist Church. Additional special offerings support our youth, United Methodist Women's missions, and other outreach programs. Watch for descriptions of these opportunities for giving as they are announced each month.

Church Council meetings are open to our members. We meet on the 4th Tuesday evening of each month at 7 p.m. Our next meeting is scheduled for February 22. Items to be considered will be continuing work on our 2011 budget, Child Safe Sanctuary Policies being developed by the Children and Families Ministry Team, and a presentation by the Michigan Organizing Project on their programs.





United Methodist Women

No General Meeting in February

Tuesday, February 15

Ruth Circle: 7 p.m., church parlor

Program: "Music, Music, Music," by Jackie Stilger.
Hostesses Mary Bullock and Belle Harris

Wednesday, February 16

Anna Circle: 9:30 a.m. home of Fay Woolrich

Program: Pledge Service

Julia-Phoebe Circle: 1 p.m., church parlor

Program: "The Importance of Books,"
by Miriam Downey

Lydia Circle: 1 p.m., Friendship Village A-1 Lounge

Program: "Adult Drug Treatment Court Program,"
by Ann Filkins

Miriam Circle: 1 p.m. church parlor

Program by Shelly Wisdom Long
Hostess Joyce Moore

Wednesday, February 23

Executive Board Meeting, 9:30 a.m., church parlor

Ladies, get ready for our "Soup to Go" and "Bake Sale" fund raisers on Sunday, February 27! Brownies and cookies can be placed 4-5 pieces on small paper plates, then put inside plastic bags. Fruit breads and rolls sell very well. If you can help with soup preparation or selling, please notify Suzanne Ost at 353-8027.

A BIG THANK YOU to all those who helped with the New Year's Eve Fest as cooks, servers, greeters, clean-up and security. It was very successful thanks to each of you!

Feb. 27th "SOUPS TO GO"

Chili
Ham and corn soup
Minestrone soup

\$5/container



Michigan Blood Drive
Saturday, February 12
FUMC. Wesley Hall
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Donating blood is one of the best and easiest ways you can help save lives. You can choose to donate, but people can't choose when they need blood. When you donate, you can save the life of someone in your community who needs blood immediately and unexpectedly. Please take this opportunity to give blood or to be a volunteer. Contact your local Michigan Blood office if you are interested in volunteering at this event. No experience necessary, but need to be at least 16 years old.

New Outreach Ministry: Wesley Foundation meals

by Jonathan Richardson



"Wow!" and "thank you!" are the first words that come to mind in describing your support for our new ministry of sharing God's love through a meal for Western Michigan University/Kalamazoo College Wesley Foundation students. We are part of a very loving family that truly embraces the belief in God's abundance.

Twenty-one individuals and families signed up to offer a dish to pass, to help prepare the main dish, to help serve the meal, or all of the above--on just one Sunday! Most of us can relate to the students at Wesley, having been away from home at some point in our lives. There are few things that say, "You're safe and you're loved" more than a home cooked meal. May God bless each and every one of you for stepping up in this new way to share His love.

Because of your extraordinary support, we'll be offering another meal to the students on Sunday, March 13. If interested in signing up early to prepare a dish to pass or offer your support in another way, please send a note to either Donna Duniak (donna.s.duniak@pfizer.com) or Jonathan Richardson (jt62@chartermi.net).

Thanks again, First Church, for your generous support of our campus ministry, the Wesley Foundation!



Prophets of God: Martin Luther King, Jr. *(cont. from p. 1)*

What is remarkable about Jewish history is that these prophets, even though they were counter-cultural figures, were celebrated by the Jewish people in history and their writings made it into the Hebrew Scriptures as sacred. This is virtually unprecedented in any other historical culture. Here are the primary marks of the prophets. Not every prophet has all of these marks, but they are very consistent nonetheless.

- 1) They were called by God to speak for God and God's purposes. The Bible is full of these "call narratives." The call usually came in some kind of ecstatic or charismatic experience.
- 2) They deplored political and economic corruption and abuses of power.
- 3) They had unique insight into reality. They recognized political and economic exploitation and corruption when they saw it and called it what it was.
- 4) They had a unique desire to protect the weakest of society—the widows and orphans, the landless, and debtors—and to insist that social structures protect them.
- 5) They often spoke at risk of their lives. They suffered internally and externally for their unique role.
- 6) Their speech also provided hope for the people if they changed their ways, and offered promises of new gifts of well-being from God. Judgment and restoration were primary themes.
- 7) They re-imagined human life in the world as life lived before a sovereign, attentive God, with social structures which protected the people, especially the weakest of the people. They demanded nothing short of a world marked by peace with justice, a community that was an example to the nations of earth and a demonstration of devotion to God, reflecting God's own love for the community, the world, and the cosmos.

John the Baptist and Jesus. John the Baptist and Jesus are understood to be in the line of Old Testament Prophets. Although they were also more than that, they possessed many of the characteristics listed above. The difference is that the power structures of their time were different due to the existence of the Roman Empire. Still, they called for repentance and spoke their oracles against abusive power structures while attempting to protect the weakest of society.

Mischaracterization. These Old Testament prophets have often been poorly portrayed in Christian tradition, which has essentially described prophets as people who predict the future. It is correct that the Old Testament prophets predicted the future as they foretold about God's judgment against the people if the people did not turn toward right relationships. However, they did not "predict" the future in terms of specific events in the manner of clairvoyance. Rather, they merely

stated the logical cause and effect – what would happen to the people if they did not repent and turn toward God.

New Testament Prophecy. New Testament prophecy added a new dimension. It also has focused on the end times, coming from the apocalyptic writings of the New Testament, such as the Book of Revelation. It is still "prophetic" in that it is the intent to speak for God, but this kind of prophecy is different than the counter-cultural voices of the Old Testament prophets.

Martin Luther King Jr. Martin Luther King, Jr. possesses almost all of the qualities of an Old/New Testament Prophet. The difference is that King was a Christian Pastor, thereby placing these qualities within the context of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior – meaning that he superimposed Christian faith on top of Old Testament Prophetic models. He was not the first to do this, nor will he be the last.

Here is a list, in no particular order, of those aspects of his life which comport with the Prophetic tradition:

- 1) King was called by God into the Christian ministry. But more specifically, he was called by God to lead the Montgomery bus boycott. The call by God in "his kitchen experience" fits with the kind of ecstatic call that marks the call of the prophets. King was reluctant to take on the mantle of prophetic spokesperson. With respect to the Montgomery bus boycott, as a young pastor, he only took leadership when there was no other choice and he was conscripted by the other participants to be leader.
- 2) King suffered for his role. Not only was he at personal risk all the time, as was his family, but he suffered for what he did. He referred to the work of a prophetic preacher as "a vocation of agony." He suffered from loneliness, doubt, and isolation. And of course he suffered the ultimate – assassination.
- 3) King gradually understood that he was speaking for the Lord. Especially toward the end of his life and career, he was not afraid to say, "Thus saith the Lord." He was not just a social activist seeking to realign social priorities – he knew he was using prophetic privilege to speak unequivocally for God. He knew he was a preacher of the Gospel long before he was a civil rights leader. In all of his fame and notoriety, he never lost his primary identity as a preacher/prophet of the Gospel.
- 4) King was not afraid to call injustice what it was. He used language that was forceful and direct. He called what he perceived around him sin, racism, genocide, doom, cowardice, expediency, idolatry of nation, militarism, religious hypocrisy. He was bold and brave.

cont. on p. 7



Prophets of God: Martin Luther King, Jr.

(cont. from p. 6)

5) King spoke with a sense of urgency. He knew that the injustice and racism was festering, or metastasizing, and he was driven in his ministry.

6) King understood systemic evil when he saw it and how it oppressed his people. He saw this systemic evil as not only an affront to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but a violation of American principles.

7) King used language similar to the prophets. He was not a poet per se, as many of the prophets were, but his speeches and sermons invoke poetic language. His "I Have a Dream" speech is classic in its use of poetic language which tied together Old Testament, New Testament, and American values. As a preacher, he was gifted in putting language together which took it outside the realm of conceptual lecture and into the realm of prophetic poetry.

8) King was constantly at risk. He received hundreds of death threats and especially in the times before his assassination, he knew that his days were numbered.

9) King moved from being an "inside" prophet to being an "outside" prophet. In the 1950's and early 1960's, he had access to the corridors of power. Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson consulted with him over race issues. And he was recognized internationally, including with the Nobel Peace Prize. But by the mid 1960's, when frustrations mounted over the slow progress of civil rights, and especially with his vocal opposition to Vietnam, he was shunned by political leaders, especially the Johnson administration.

10) King was able to present an imaginative picture of America in the ways that prophets present an alternative society to the one which they judge. His imaginative picture was beautifully expressed in the "I Have a Dream" speech.

11) Rather than predict the future, he called America back to its moral and religious foundations, recognizing that God's judgment was not far behind.

12) King based his prophetic work in an unwavering commitment to Christian non-violence. He had studied deeply the ways of Christ, Ghandi, and the many non-violent witnesses before him. In so doing, he called his people to the highest principles of Christ. Even when there was immense frustration over the slow progression of the civil rights movement, and immense pressure to pursue violence from the African-American community, King never wavered in his commitment to Christian non-violence.

The Prophets of the Old Testament were a miraculous manifestation of God in our history. They brought something to ancient Israel and Judah that has no parallel in other ancient cultures. John the Baptist and Jesus Christ were in line with these prophets, and of course transformed the prophetic tradition with Christ's teaching, as best expressed in the Sermon on the Mount.

Jesus, of course, placed on this prophetic tradition new understandings, particularly with his teachings on Christian non-violence. Thereafter, prophets of God have combined the characteristics of the Old Testaments prophets with the faith and tactics of Christ. Martin Luther King fits into this mold more than anyone else in our time. There is no doubt in my mind that he was designated by God as a prophet to bring to America something it desperately needed and to speak God's truth.

Mark your calendars..... The Annual Youth Auction is coming in March!



Thank you First Church for supporting our awesome Youth Tribe programs and youth missions via past Youth Auctions. We are excited and look forward to this year's auction.

We will be taking auction donations during the month of February, with a target deadline date for donations of Sunday, February 27. Donation forms are available at the Welcome Center and may be turned into Rev. Julie Kline's church mailbox. You may also email information on the item/service you would like to donate to jamccubbin@aol.com.

If you have questions, please contact Rev. Julie Kline (jkline@umc-kzo.org, 381-6340) at the church or Andrea McCubbin at 665-0049 (home) or 598-5231 (cell).

The Silent Auction will be held the month of March. Our wonderful auction items will be available for viewing each Sunday in March. A table will be available for people to sign-up and receive a bidder number so that bidders may bid on the auction items.

The Youth Tribe will be delighted to help take your silent bids each Sunday. Please check back weekly to guarantee that you are still the highest bidder on your favorite items!

The auction will conclude Sunday morning, March 27. Thank you FUMC for supporting youth missions!



Sunday Morning Servants



HELP!! We especially need people to sign up to greet, help in the office and at the Welcome Center, as well as participate in worship as lay readers. Sign up soon at the Welcome Center or contact Christi Landreville in the office at 381-6340, or email clandreville@umc-kzo.org.

| | February 6 8:30 and 11 a.m. | February 13 8:30 and 11 a.m. | February 20 YOUTH SUNDAY | February 27 8:30 and 11 a.m. | March 6 8:30 and 11 a.m. | March 13 8:30 and 11 a.m. |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Van Driver | Andrew Lehman | Jay Gross | Daryl Ost | Andrew Lehman | Jay Gross | Daryl Ost |
| 8:15 - 10:15 office | Jeanne Plott | Fay Woolrich | Ginnie Hessler | Need someone | Fay Woolrich | Jeanne Plott |
| 8:30 Welcome Center | Jeanne Konrad | Fay Woolrich | Jeanne Konrad | Need someone | Need someone | Need someone |
| 8:30 Greeter | Jack & Laurabelle Roderick | Margene Fuller | YOUTH | Sue Turner | Need someone | Need someone |
| 8:30 Greeter | Marti Hearron | Need someone | YOUTH | Need someone | Need someone | Need someone |
| 8:30 Lay Reader | William Vorbrich | Jim Spurr | YOUTH | Need someone | Need someone | Need someone |
| 8:30 Sound/Lighting | Gordon Bundy | Jacob Texel | Riley Lundquist | Gordon Bundy | Jacob Texel | Riley Lundquist |
| 10:15 - 12:15 office | Dana Anderson | Joyce Treece | Dolores Heidanus | Joyce Treece | Need someone | Need someone |
| 11:00 Welcome Center | Need someone | Need someone | Need someone | Need someone | Need someone | Need someone |
| 11:00 Greeter | Carolyn, Spencer & Cooper Betke | Need someone | YOUTH | Hosung & Young | Sara & Geoff Anable | Need someone |
| 11:00 Greeter | Carol & John Holms | Need someone | YOUTH | Sharon Dougan Terry Mishler | Archie & Jan Murrish | Need someone |
| 11:00 Lay Reader | Liza Wolfe | Joan Rohs | YOUTH | Pam Buist | Judy Aardema | Fred Douglas |
| Acolytes | Elise Warnicke Hannah Geerlings | Jonah Bolton Andrew Peavler | Christopher Aranda William Hawthorne | Lukas Bolton Carly Braginton | Noah Gross Natalie Gross | Hannah Headapohl Sarah Headapohl |
| 11:00 Sound/Lighting | Greg Anderson | Stuart Wheaton | Bob Lane | Rich Peavler | Rich Peavler | Stuart Wheaton |
| MARTHA'S TABLE | Peavler Family | Chuck Willson Andrew Lehman | Virginia Weller, Deanna Hogarth | David & Judy Kinglsey | Ost Family | Bob Hunt Jan Kline-Hunt |

Dawn Patrol and Sunrise Patrol welcome men of the church to join them for biblical study

by Russ Gabier and Dick Shilts (edited by First Word editors)

We read, we debate (but seldom argue), we theorize, we discuss many biblical dynamics (like speaking in tongues), we may even doubt certain assumptions advanced by the elders (and there are a few!). We challenge those of you who need some new and challenging ideas in understanding your Christian faith to join the discussion. We have two groups that meet different days. **Sunrise Patrol** meets Monday mornings, 7-8 a.m. Contact John Clark or Dick Shilts for more information about this group. **Dawn Patrol** meets Wednesday mornings at 7:30 a.m. Contact Russ Gabier or Rev. John Boley for more information on this group. Both groups meet in the Fellowship Room.

To my church family,

I want to thank you so much for the emails, cards, phone calls, words of comfort and hugs that were bestowed upon me at the loss of my beloved Ron. What would I have done without you!

With a grateful heart,
Marilyn Tonander



Adult Sunday School Classes February 6 - March 6, 9:30 - 10:30 a.m.

Sunday morning Academy Classes are short-term gatherings for adults which explore a wide variety of faith issues and interests. Most are discussion oriented, with many opportunities to experience challenge, comfort, fellowship, reflection, conversation and – always – spiritual growth. Guided by exceptional leaders from the congregation and the community, all Academy Classes are open to everyone.

Assessing Your Call to Servant Leadership

Stewardship is not only making monetary gifts to God but also includes gifts of our time, talents and abilities. Participants in this class will discover, develop and maximize their God-given spiritual gifts, both for ongoing personal growth and to be offered in leadership. Goals for each participant will be to understand the meaning of spiritual gifts, to identify personal gifts, to discover one's passion, and to learn about opportunities to lead and serve in both church and community. Rev. John Boley and FUMC members Bob Hamet and Chris Peavler will lead this experiential class. **Allen Library (Room 303)**

Living the Questions 2.0

How can we apply the lessons of scripture to the challenges that confront us every day? Living the Questions 2.0 is an open-minded alternative to studies that attempt to give all the answers and instead creates an environment where participants can interact with one another in exploring what's next for Christianity. Each week will involve a 20-minute video and then active, open discussions among class participants. Although the class started in January, the format is such that new members are always welcome! Rev. Ron Grant will facilitate. **Parlor**

Introduction to the Old Testament

The 3 Cs class, an on-going small group fellowship, invites you to join their continuing study of the Old Testament. The class will use participant books, class discussion, and a video segment each week featuring Bible scholars. Although it is a Short-Term Disciple Bible Study, you need not have taken the foundational Disciple class to participate. All are welcome. **Room 310.**



Java & Jive

Youth Sunday School Classes
Sundays through March 6 @ 9:30 a.m.



Youth Sunday Worship Planners

Youth Sunday is February 20th. We will be using the Sunday morning class time to prepare and plan the worship. We will be choosing a theme, scripture and various elements of worship and deciding who will be responsible for each part. This class will also focus on a basic understanding of Christian worship, where our ways of worship came from, and why we worship the way we do. Musicians for Youth Sunday will meet with Jackie from 9:30 to 10:00. Led by Rev. Julie Kline and John Winchell.

Youth Sunday & Drama

"Take a Bow, Then Sit Down" is a drama class geared to youth being offered from February 6 - March 6. The reasoning behind the name of the class is we like to be recognized for doing things in life (like performing), so we are deserving of a BOW, but afterwards, we need to sit down and allow GOD to take center stage. Diane Lane and Paula Willson will be sharing various forms of drama (reader's theatre, skits, miming, etc.). The first two weeks of class will be preparing for Youth Sunday. Come and be the drama queen/king you want to be!



FEBRUARY 2011

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| | | 1 7:30 AM Faith Alliance Prayer Breakfast 10:00 AM Worship Planning 12:00 PM Staff Meeting 4:15 PM Children's Choir | 2 Church closed due to weather conditions | 3 9:30 AM First Stitches 1:00 PM Prayer Group 5:30 PM Depression Bipolar Support Alliance 6:00 PM Handbell Ensemble 6:30 PM NA 7:15 PM Chancel Choir | 4 | 5 Youth ski trip |
| 6 Holy Communion 8:30 AM Worship 9:30 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship 12:15 PM Capital Campaign Meeting 4:00 PM Martha's Table Youth ski trip | 7 7:00 AM Sunrise Patrol 5:30 PM Capital Campaign Communications Team | 8 10:00 AM Worship Planning 12:00 PM Staff Meeting 4:15 PM Children's Choir 6:30 PM Stephen Ministry 7:00 PM NA 7:00 PM Reconciling Team | 9 7:30 AM Dawn Patrol 9:45 AM Coffee & Conversation 12:30 PM Bronson Park Clergy Luncheon 4:30 PM Trustees 5:30 PM Acappazoo 7:00 PM Companions in Christ 7:00 PM Disciple I 7:00 PM Lou Gehrig's Support Group 7:00 PM NA | 10 9:30 AM First Stitches 1:00 PM Any Soldier Packing 1:00 PM Prayer Group 5:30 PM Depression Bipolar Support Alliance 6:00 PM Handbell Ensemble 6:30 PM NA 7:15 PM Chancel Choir | 11 | 12 10:00 AM Michigan Blood Drive |
| 13 8:30 AM Worship 9:00 AM Puppets Rehearsal 9:30 AM Blood Pressure Clinic 9:30 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship 4:00 PM Martha's Table 6:00 PM Youth Tribe | 14 7:00 AM Sunrise Patrol | 15 10:00 AM Worship Planning 12:00 PM Staff Meeting 4:15 PM Children's Choir 7:00 PM NA 7:00 PM Ruth Circle | 16 7:30 AM Dawn Patrol 9:30 AM Anna Circle 12:00 PM Endowment Committee 1:00 PM Julia-Phoebe Circle 1:00 PM Lydia Circle 1:00 PM Miriam Circle 5:15 PM Finance 5:30 PM Acappazoo 5:30 PM Outreach Team 7:00 PM Companions in Christ 7:00 PM Disciple I 7:00 PM NA | 17 9:30 AM First Stitches 1:00 PM Prayer Group 5:30 PM Depression Bipolar Support Alliance 6:00 PM Handbell Ensemble 6:30 PM NA 7:15 PM Chancel Choir | 18 6:00 PM First Family Fellowship Fun Night | 19 7:00 PM Movie Night |
| 20 Youth Missions Sunday 8:30 AM Worship 9:30 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship 12:15 PM Hospitality Team 4:00 PM Martha's Table 6:00 PM First Singers Rehearsal 6:00 PM Inquirer's Class 6:00 PM Youth Tribe | 21 7:00 AM Sunrise Patrol 11:30 AM Buildings & Grounds | 22 10:00 AM Worship Planning 12:00 PM Staff Meeting 4:15 PM Children's Choir 5:00 PM MOP/Justice 7:00 PM Church Council 7:00 PM NA | 23 7:30 AM Dawn Patrol 9:30 AM UMW Executive Board 9:45 AM Coffee & Conversation 12:00 PM Classical Wednesdays Concert Series 5:30 PM Acappazoo 7:00 PM Companions in Christ 7:00 PM Disciple I 7:00 PM NA | 24 9:30 AM First Stitches 1:00 PM Prayer Group 5:00 PM Justice Team 5:30 PM Depression Bipolar Support Alliance 5:30 PM Prime Timers 6:00 PM Handbell Ensemble 6:30 PM NA 7:15 PM Chancel Choir | 25 | 26 |



FUMC stewardship dictionary Volume 2

Abundant Thinkers:

1. **Who:** people who believe God provides enough to all, all the time
2. **Who:** people who live out of a theology of abundance, all the time
3. **Who:** people who actively serve as stewards of God's resources, everywhere, all the time

Synonyms: The Body of Christ, Members of FUMC

Antonyms: Is it I, Lord?

O God, this earth and everything in it is yours. All that we have is a gift from you. Forgive us for giving into fear and allowing anxiety to keep us from being the wise stewards you would have us to be. Prepare our hearts and minds that we may be always open to your instruction, your guidance and your loving generosity. Let us learn to be good stewards of all of life, and to trust You that when we are faithful, there is always enough. Amen.

(Prayer adapted from Adam Hamilton's Session 1 Closing Prayer: Enough: Discovering Joy Through Simplicity and Generosity)

A gift of hospitality is always a blessing

by Susan Eden, Hospitality Team

The gift of hospitality is shown in many ways. Our church family has embraced the mission of greeting and welcoming all who come in our doors. While in the Perks area, I have witnessed many members reach out to new guests in wonderful ways.

Recently I had the privilege of meeting a gentleman who chose to attend our church because while he was on Bronson Park contemplating which church to attend, he saw our open doors. He said it was a welcoming sign. I invited him to join our family in worship and he gratefully accepted.

During that service the children were presenting their Christmas program. When they handed out the stars to the congregation, he took his star and wrote on it. Then he handed it to me. It said, "Be Jesus the Star that leads you today." I was so touched by his gift to me that I put it on our creche at home.

Even though this gentleman is here only when he has business transactions with a local company, he knows that he has found a welcoming place to worship. But most important of all, I was able to give him the opportunity to show love and hospitality that he was so eager to share. He modeled to me the concept of being a "Follower of the Light," as was so beautifully revealed in Pastor Boley's recent sermon. We all are blessed by our efforts of hospitality.



"Be Jesus the star that leads you today"

December 2010 General Fund Financial Picture

Note: Building Fund numbers are not included

| | DEC | Year end 2010 | Year end 2009 | Annual Budget | YTD as a % of Budget |
|-------------------|-----------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Total Income | \$ 98,756 | \$914,990 | \$960,871 | \$900,000 | 101.67% |
| Total Expense | \$ 87,835 | \$ 910,389 | \$930,859 | \$912,396 | 99.78% |
| Net Income/(Loss) | \$ 10,921 | \$ 4,601 | \$ 30,012 | \$(12,396) | |

We hope you've heard, we finished 2010 in the black! As anticipated, total expenditures were slightly under budget. Over the years, we have cut the "fat" and are able to monitor closely our total expenditures. The real unknown comes in contributions. As the year was drawing to a close, it became apparent that pledges were falling behind, as our members continue to feel the effects of the weakened economy. At risk was the final payment of our ministry shares, if we wanted to avoid a deficit. Thus, a year-end appeal was made. The congregation came through! Over \$20,600 was received during December, which offset the shortfall of pledged gifts and allowed that final ministry share payment to be made as well as end the year with a small surplus. In addition, your "extra gifts" are still coming in. Thank you for sharing your blessings with your church!

Prime Timers "Out to Lunch!"

When
Friday, March 18

Where
Olive Garden
Westnedge Av., Portage

Time
11:30 a.m.

Everyone is welcome to join us. To reserve tables for everyone, the Karnemaats need your reservation by March 15. Call Millie and John at 382-3689.



Blanket and Pillow/Pillowcase Ministry needs your help

by Ellen McDonald

In 2010, we distributed 178 pillows/pillowcases and 264 blankets to the following agencies:

- Habitat for Humanity
- Bethany Christian Services
- Camp New Day
- Giving Tree
- Wonders of Love/Pregnancy Alternative
- Eleanor Family Shelter/Housing Resources



Thank you to all the many stitchers who created these gifts of love!

Now it's 2011!

We begin our 13th year of the YOU ARE WARMED BY GOD'S LOVE BLANKET PROJECT. The pillowcase and pillow project was added by Marsha McKenzie three years ago. Gather your fabric and your sewing machine, find a friend to join you, and begin a new year of making blankets and pillowcases for the many hurting children in our community. We hope to deliver blankets and pillows to the Eleanor Street Family Shelter by mid-March.

Please drop your gifts of love off at the church office with your name attached beginning in mid-March.

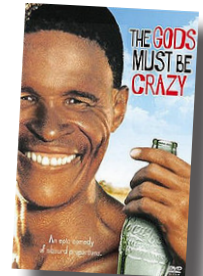
Do you need more information? A pillowcase lesson? Don't hesitate to call or email Ellen or Marsha:

Ellen McDonald, 327-1639, j-mcdonald@sbcglobal.net;
Marsha McKenzie, 323-3232, or email
MKMcKenzie@aol.com

Movie Nite

Saturday, February 19 @ 7 p.m.
FUMC Movie Lounge (lower level)

Everyone is invited to view the movie *The Gods Must Be Crazy*. Rated PG. Friends and family are welcome! Please bring your own beverage. Popcorn will be provided!



Review Summary

Movie: *The Gods Must Be Crazy*. Drama, Action & Adventure, Comedy. 1980

A Kalahari bushman discovers a Coke bottle thrown from a passing plane, which he believes is a gift from the gods. The "gift" proves to be more of a curse than a blessing when the tribesmen begin to fight over it and eventually use it as a weapon. To keep the peace in the village, the tribesman decides to take the bottle to "the end of the earth" and throw it back to the gods.

No special effects, no big name stars. Just a funny movie that will have you laughing at how something as minor as a coke bottle can change people's lives.

COMING IN LENT *Classical Wednesdays*

Musicians from Western Michigan University perform classical music in our Sanctuary at noon, February 23, March 30 and April 20. Freewill offering.



WE ARE A RECONCILING CONGREGATION. First United Methodist Church of Kalamazoo invites all persons to join us on our journey of faith. Jesus Christ calls us to be an inclusive church that exemplifies the kingdom of God. We strive to move toward reconciling relationships with all, affirming those who are marginalized for any reason, including sexual orientation or gender identity. We welcome all with open hearts, open minds, open doors.



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Kalamazoo, MI 49007
(269) 381-6340

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