



December 2011



Dear Friends –  
On behalf of our entire family I want to take this time to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. This has been an exciting year for us as a church, as a community of

believers. Many new things have been accomplished – many more things will be done in the coming year.

During this busy and hectic holiday season, I ask you to pause and remember the real reason we are celebrating Christmas – the birth of our Savior, Jesus the Christ.

Please remember to take the time (and be intentional) to pray for our church, that its ministry might continue to advance and reach those who have never heard the Gospel message. Be invitational and bring a friend to church with you. Please also be in prayer for one another, and for me as your pastor.

My prayer is that Centenary United Methodist Church and all of you as its ministers will continue to be doers and not just hearers of the Word. May God bless you and your family during Advent and the Christmas season. May you always remember to have Christ in your hearts.

Grace and Peace,



Best wishes to our Centenary UMC Family for a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from Pastors Rick and Liz Ecklund and their family. (This is not a picture of one of their miniature dachshunds, Pastor Rick just likes the picture.)

**STEPHEN MINISTRY**



## Stephen Leaders Being Trained

By Alice Wilkinson, *Stephen Leader*

Our Stephen Ministry at Centenary UMC is growing stronger and the demands for directing it call for additional leaders to accomplish all of our goals.

Beginning on Sunday, January 8, 2012, Garland Harper and his wife Peggy Harper will be attending a week-long Stephen Series Leader's Training course in Orlando, Florida. They will learn how to organize and direct Stephen Ministry.

As they return they will join our present leader Alice Wilkinson. Together they will lead our Stephen Ministers as they carry out their assignments in this much-needed ministry at Centenary UMC and our community.

We ask you to lift them up in your prayers that they will have safe travels and a spirit filled learning experience.

**Candlelight  
Communion Service  
on Christmas Eve –  
December 24 at  
7:00 pm.**



**Christmas Eve**  
CANDLELIGHT  
SERVICE

**Sunday,  
December 25  
– Worship at  
11:00 am.**



The best evangelism & outreach you can do is to simply invite someone you know to come and worship with you during Advent and the Christmas season.



## Two Great Mission Opportunities

If you have forgotten to sign up to Ring The Bells for the Salvation Army, you can still have a chance. We have two dates left: Tuesday 12/6 (we still have a couple of hour slots open) and on Thursday, 12/15 (we still have lots of times available). If you are interested please call Paula Howell, 847-8138 or see me at church this week. It is such a small thing that helps so many in our immediate area.

JIFF hats and gloves, if you forget to bring to church on 12/4 when the Mission committee designated it as Hat & Glove Sunday, just be sure you get them to the church before 12/13. We will give them to the JIFF Kids on Thursday 12/15 at their annual Christmas Party.

## A BIG Thank You!!

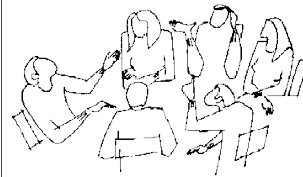
Bazaar Coordinator  
 Extraordinaire Linda "Gigi"  
 Porter wants to thank everyone who contributed to the bazaar's great success! Many people helped create the baked goods, casseroles and crafts...and helped set up/break down...donated goods and services for the silent auction. And, of course, it couldn't be successful without shoppers!! After selling the remaining frozen foods (in freezers in the pantry...leave \$ in church office), we expect the profit to top \$4,000!



## Day of Difference Activities

Day of Difference will be entering a float in the annual Christmas Parade on 12/4, you are welcome to meet at Centenary's back parking lot to ride on the float and then return to Rivermont Ave Baptist Church for Cookies and Hot Chocolate after the parade. If you are not interested in riding in the parade please come around 7 PM for cookies, hot chocolate and good fellowship. On 12/19 we will be taking cards and singing at the Odd Fellows Home and the Williams Home at 6 PM. Let me know if you are coming. These events will help us all get in the Christmas spirit.

### Centenary's Marvelous Mature Methodists



## Planning Meeting

MMM is a significant contributor to the ministries of Centenary United Methodist Church. Your input is important! Please come to this meeting prepared to offer ideas for specific future programs, speakers, trips, activities and projects. Your contributions are essential and appreciated.

We shall begin and end promptly.

2:00 - 3:00pm

Monday, December 5th

## Evening at Blackstone

Blackstone Conference and Retreat Center, 707 Fourth St., Blackstone, will hold its annual "Evening at Blackstone" Sunday, December 11. Holiday open house begins at 4 pm; banquet is at 5:30 pm.



Performances begin at 7pm and will include "Star of Wonder," theatrical production by youths from Crenshaw United Methodist Church, and Dean Shostak's Crystal Concert featuring

glass instruments from Benjamin Franklin's Glass 1761 Armonica.



For reservations, call (434) 292-5308. Cost is \$45/individual or \$80/couple for entire evening. Cost of \$80/individual or \$150/couple) includes

evening's activities plus lodging and breakfast.

December 2011

## Honor Your Family & Friends While Feeding the Hungry

While you and your family are celebrating the joyous Christmas season, many Americans will experience first-hand the reality of hunger and poverty in our land of abundance. Even in this economic downturn, America is still the richest nation on earth, but some 40 million of its citizens are suffering in poverty. This Christmas you can give them hope by the simple act of honoring your loved ones with a gift donation to feed the hungry.

Each \$12 gift donation to the Society of St. Andrew provides about 600 servings of fresh, nutritious food to America's hungry families. It's such a sincere and loving way to feed the hungry and honor special people in your life. And when you do, each person you so honor will receive the exclusive Alternative Christmas Card announcing your generous gift in their name.

SOSA's Alternative Christmas Card was designed exclusively for and donated to the Society of St. Andrew by Texas artist Jerry Malzahn. This unique card announces your generous gift to feed the hungry in the name of your chosen honoree(s). You will also receive the same card with our thanks and confirmation of the number of people you honored.

This is the perfect gift for family, friends, coworkers and the people important in your life. You give a gift that demonstrates your love and respect to the recipient and to those in need. It is a wonderful way to say "thank you" ... a terrific stocking stuffer ... a great host/hostess and last-minute gift

No other gift can do so much, for so many, with so little. Visit <http://www.endhunger.org/card/> They will send you the cards and envelopes to personalize and mail or, if you prefer, we will send them on your behalf in time for Christmas. For your convenience, you can use your VISA, MasterCard or American Express credit card on their secure website.



## Centenary Helps Heart Havens Build

"What an incredible weekend!" That is how Heart Havens CEO Jennifer Boyden-Barrett described October 29-30. She continues, "We watched on Saturday as the newest Heart Havens home in Lynchburg went from a cement foundation to a framed house with openings for doors, windows and separate rooms. On Sunday, the exterior walls went up and were covered in vinyl siding. Windows appeared, along with roofing and a front porch. This barn-raising style of build is a wonderful way to involve the community and give them ownership of this home on Farley Branch Drive."

United Methodists from the Lynchburg District and beyond offered willing hands under the direction of a few professional builders in a dawn to dusk effort. Residents of the first Heart Havens home relished watching home number two materialize across the street. Heart Havens staff from the Richmond office were present throughout.

Garland Harper coordinated volunteers for the weekend blitz build. Ann Harper and Evelyn Condrey secured and served food for two hundred workers, available throughout the two day effort. Garland has been secretary of the local Heart Havens board and Ida Powell its Community Services liaison since its inception in Lynchburg.

A second Saturday work day was held November 19. As efforts continue to finish this second home, Jennifer Boyden-Barrett observes, "Through your tireless efforts you have enriched lives and helped to answer that grave question parents of persons with intellectual disabilities face: 'Where will my child live when I am gone?'"

*See Heart Havens Continued on Page 5*

## Heart Havens (continued)

*Following is an excerpt from an email from Build Leader Tom Gerdy*

We had a couple of challenges on Saturday as we started framing Lynchburg's Heart Havens Home II. The only road access to the site was shut down for three hours as we were starting the blitz. The weather didn't exactly cooperate for the first four hours. Some people would say it was a downpour. I prefer to call it "extremely high humidity". It didn't help that with the "extremely high humidity" we also had cool temperatures and windy conditions. In spite of all of that, we had a great turnout. I am thankful that some United Methodists are just a bit crazy. It really helped because it took some crazy people to frame through the "high humidity" we faced on Saturday morning.

By shortly after lunch on Saturday we had the walls standing and we were preparing to set the roof trusses. The "extremely high humidity" had stopped and the crane showed up on time. We spent Saturday afternoon setting the truss system.

Sunday, we had another good turnout. We finished most of the roof, got the front porch roof system put together, and installed over half of the siding. Heritage United Methodist Church treated us to a wonderful covered dish lunch in their fellowship hall. The food was off the charts good and I thank all who helped put that together. I have to admit that the pace of work slowed on Sunday afternoon after everyone had second and third helpings at lunch.

It was a good feeling to stand at the street late Sunday evening and look at what had been accomplished. Just 36 hours earlier, it was nothing but a slab and several piles of lumber. Because people let their hands do what their hearts told them was right, we were looking Lynchburg's Heart Haven II.

I want to thank everyone who helped. It was a wonderful weekend. The pros have been doing the plumbing, heating, and electrical but we will have some more work days. Keep your eyes open for notices!! Thanks again!

Peace,  
Tom Gerdy

## Leadership Training for our Church & our Servant Leaders Our 2012 District Leadership Training Event SATURDAY, JANUARY 28, 2012 8:30 am – 2:00 pm

### A Lynchburg District Event at Heritage UMC

It's that time again. Local laity and clergy will soon gather for the sake of growing in and into our ministry roles. Whether it is administrative committee work or the nuts and bolts of ministry with young people—visioning and implementation or cultivating small groups—this event is designed to send local United Methodists back into the congregation equipped and inspired. Virginia Annual Conference Directors of Congregational Excellence and Mission and Global Justice will offer workshops alongside of many others. Participants will share in worship, lunch, and two instructional sessions of their choosing. *Detailed descriptions and registration materials coming soon!!*

## What is Advent?

- \* Advent begins on the Sunday between November 27 and December 3 and ends at sunset on Christmas Eve, always including four Sundays.
- \* The first Sunday of Advent marks the beginning of the Christian year.
- \* Both purple and blue are traditional colors of Advent and are both recognized in The UM Book of Worship. Purple is used because, as the color of royalty, it is fitting for Christ our King. Blue signifies hope and also is traditionally associated with Mary, the mother of Jesus.
- \* In some traditions the color rose is associated with the third Sunday of Advent to signify joy. Sometimes one rose candle is used in Advent wreaths.
- \* White is the color of the Christmas season, which begins with Christmas Eve services, and is used through the Sunday after January 6, the day celebrating the baptism of the Lord.
- \* Christmas Eve is not part of Advent but is the beginning of Christmas itself, since days in the Christian calendar begin at sunset the day before, as they do in the Jewish calendar. The practice of beginning and ending days at midnight in our secular calendar began with the ancient Romans. — Hoyt Hickman

## Investing for Time and Eternity

The Lord Jesus said, “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” Matthew 6:19–21).



As managers and stewards of what God has entrusted to us, we have a responsibility to manage well what rightfully belongs to God. By storing up treasures in heaven, we safeguard that which we value. There, our treasures are not subject to destruction, damage or even inflation. Nor are they subject to theft since God provides the universe’s greatest security system!

There’s nothing wrong with saving or investing here on earth. In fact, Jesus gave a commendation to faithful stewards for that very action. But the primary place to invest is in what might be called “God’s Eternal Bank.” There are many ways to invest in that special “bank.” When given in the name of the Lord Jesus and for His sake, even a cup of water can be an investment in God’s Eternal Bank. Our financial resources can also be used in this way. Each time we give our tithes and offerings at Centenary United Methodist Church for the glory of God, we are storing up treasure in heaven, “investing for time and eternity.”

The universal principle of giving is found in 2 Corinthians 9:7 — We are to give as we have decided in our hearts to give. In other words, giving (including when to give and how much to give) is a matter of the heart. It is the same principle Moses

expressed in Exodus 25:2 — We are to give willingly from the heart.

Dr. George W. Truett was invited to dinner in the home of a very wealthy man in his congregation. After the meal, the host led him to a place where they could get a good view of the surrounding area. Pointing to the oil wells punctuating the landscape, he boasted, “Twenty-five years ago I had nothing. Now, as far as you can see, it’s all mine.”

Looking in the opposite direction at his sprawling fields of grain, he said, “That’s all mine.” Turning east toward huge herds of cattle, he bragged, “They’re all mine.” Then pointing to the west and a beautiful forest, he exclaimed, “That, too, is all mine.”

Dr. Truett simply placed one hand on the man’s shoulder and pointed heavenward with the other. “How much do you have in that direction?” he asked.

That’s a good question, isn’t it? No matter what our wealth and financial holdings here on earth may be, what really counts is what we have in store in heaven.



As you consider our annual stewardship emphasis, and perhaps even more importantly, as you consider the year which lies ahead and your commitment to the Lord to give to this ministry, what will you — by faith — promise to give in the coming year?

If you haven’t turned in your “Faith Promise” card for 2012, it isn’t too late! Your gifts are important for the many programs we offer at Centenary UMC. We offer our gifts in thanksgiving for God’s blessings in the past and in anticipation of God’s provisions in the future.

“ . . . the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Cor. 9:6–7).



**2011 Operating Budget  
through November 21, 2011**

Receipts:

Pledged Offering	181,168
Prior Year Pledge	970
Unpledged Offering	30,266
Loose Plate Offering	1,444
Church School Offering	2,215
From Rustburg UMC	3,000
From UMFS	3,000
Miscellaneous Offering	1,926
Bazaar Income	3,343
Easter Offering	2,261
Thanksgiving Offering	230
Steeple Income	15,870
Interest Income	181
From Gifts/Memorials	3,881
Total Receipts.....	\$249,755

Expenses:

Support Staff Expense	-81,407
Pastor Expense	-71,082
Building & Grounds	-58,022
Apportionments	-48,537
Office	-16,228
Programs	-9,938
Total Expenses.....	\$285,214

Benevolence Receipts

Outside of Budget

Stephen Ministries	1,140
Fellowship Fund	1,238
JIFF	2,144
Pennies with a Purpose	689
Local Benevolences	75
UMCOR	1,703
Brazil Mission Trip	3,262
Health Ministry	100
Operation Teddy Bear	168
Conference Offerings	105
TOTAL	\$10,614

**MEMORIALS**



In Memory of Elizabeth  
Campbell

Martha Ann Potts Gregory  
Hope Montague  
Laura Montague

Eugene Harrison Russell  
Angie and Tim Campbell

**Hat & Glove  
Collection on  
Sunday,  
December 4  
during worship for  
the children of JIFF  
and other local area  
missions.**

**Please bring new  
hats & gloves to  
worship at 11am.  
Thanks!**

**Park View  
Community  
Mission**

The weather is getting colder and the need for shelter is getting desperate. Park View Community Mission is aware of more people needing shelter this year than



last, some who had jobs and homes just months ago. If you have camping gear that is no longer being used it can help shelter some of the homeless in our area.



Please donate any tents, sleeping bags, camp stoves, propane canisters, heaters, tarps, boots, heavy socks, thermals, coats, - anything to help them stay warm - to the Park View Community Mission. The mission has already given out sleeping bags and a donated tent. Please help us meet the other known needs and those in the future. We will pick up items if you cannot get them to the mission, please contact Lee Ann Powers 546-7507 [lighting@jetbroadband.com](mailto:lighting@jetbroadband.com); or Pastor Phil Showers at 401-5129.

**Stewardship - November 2011  
Operating Budget**

<b>October 23</b>	<b>2,582</b>
<b>October 30</b>	<b>3,690</b>
<b>November 6</b>	<b>23,911</b>
<b>November 13</b>	<b>5,764</b>
<b>November 20</b>	<b>8,472</b>

**Teddy Bear Project Continues**

"Children Helping Children" is continuing the "Teddy Bear Drive." Thrift stores are a good place to get good buys on stuffed animals. Used ones are fine as long as they are clean and in good condition. Your support is always appreciated and Gleaning for the World will distribute them in orphanages around the world. There are a lot of children who would love to have one of these animals to hug. The next delivery will be August 2012.

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## **CUMC Chimes... a backwards strike:**

Can you believe we are entering a new church calendar year soon? Can you also believe I still have detailed notes and packing information from the Chimes delivered October 1st, 2009 and ringing ever since October 18th, 2009? Its been over two years and still going, not to mention less than half way through the warranty period.

Although I can't hear them anymore from North Jersey, I hope they inspire many of you as once again they prepare to ring the holiday season familiar tunes.

The hour has been struck approximately 10,434 times, and the half-hour about 9618 times. Over 500 of the 2000 installed hymns have been played at some time or another on a rotating basis in conjunction to the church calendar.

Sometimes its the simple things in life that remind us or cause us to reflect back and remember who's upstairs. And I'm not referring to the attic either. As the leaves finally all fall off the trees, and mother nature prepares for the fruit and new life next season, take a moment and listen.

Until next time, *Carl Gravely*



**Centenary United Methodist Church  
1501 Rivermont Avenue  
Lynchburg, VA 24503**

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