

# The Church Spire

First United Methodist Church of Athens, Ohio  
Knowing, Growing, Showing God's Love

Volume 17, Issue 1

February 2012



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And much more!

## Martha Sloan Appointed Interim Director of Children's Ministries

What happens when years of life in a congregation, years of teaching in the public school, and months of prayers for a Director of Children's Ministry intersect?

We are pleased and grateful to announce that Martha Sloan has been hired as Interim Director of Children's Ministry for First UMC effective February 7, 2012!!

A member of First UMC since 1973, Martha has been active in teaching and participating in Christian Education classes for adults and children, a member and leader in a variety of committees, and a regular volunteer at Monday Lunch. Martha retired as an elementary teacher from Athens City Schools in 2010.

Before her first week on the job was through she had met with the Leadership Team and the Children's Council and is gathering names of children and families within the congregation.

This is an important step forward for the congregation, which has resulted from the Vision work begun in 2010, and is integral in our living into our mission of Knowing, Growing, Showing God's Love. Please join us in welcoming Martha to our ministry staff!!

## The Season of Lent @ FUMC:

### Living A Cross † Shaped Life

Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and concludes on Holy Saturday, the day before Easter.

In the Gospel of Mark, we read "[Jesus] called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.'" While we wear a cross as a piece of jewelry, or mount it on a wall as a decorative symbol of our faith, ancient cathedrals were built in the shape of a cross, to recall symbolically the cross on which Jesus was crucified, but also to function practically as different parts of the building are divided into sections where different activities took place. This Lent, we will consider what it means to "live a cross-shaped life", to shaper our lives in the characteristics of a follower of Jesus

As Lent is a time of preparation for celebrating Jesus' Resurrection, often observed by "giving up" and/or "taking on". Here are some opportunities for "taking on" during Lent:

### Ash Wednesday Worship: Feb 22 at noon and 7 pm

As we begin the season of Lent, this service calls us to a time of confession and repentance. Imposition of Ashes will be offered and is a

## Season of Lent (Con't)

powerful way of participating in the call to repentance and reconciliation. The palm branches from Palm Sunday worship are burned to produce the ashes for this service.

### **Sunday Worship: 8:45 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.**

During the six Sundays of Lent, we will journey with Jesus and the disciples in the Gospel of Mark, searching for what it means to follow Jesus and live life with “the cross” on our back. We will explore the characteristics of Discipleship, Servanthood, Surrender, Love, Reconciliation, Sacrifice.

- February 26: **A Radical Reorientation** (Mark 8:27-38)
- March 4: **The Way to Greatness** (Mark 10:35-45)
- March 11: **Nothing Short of Everything** (Mark 10:17-34)
- March 18: **The Radical Center** (Mark 12:28-34)
- March 25: **To Build Up or Tear Down?** (Ephesians 2:12-22)
- April 1 [Palm Sunday]: **It Is Nothing if It Costs Nothing** (Mark 11:1-11; Mark 14:1-19)

### **Lenten Study**

Each week during Lent, groups will meet to participate in the Lenten Study “Radical Renovation: Living the Cross-Shaped Life” by James Harnish. Each week, the groups will explore the text for the coming (or current) Sunday and discuss the corresponding chapter in the book. Groups currently scheduled are:

- Wednesday @ noon: led by Pastor Wendy, in 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Lounge
- Wednesday @ 6 pm: led by Pastor Wendy, in 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Lounge
- Thursday @ noon: (FOCUS) in the Fellowship Hall
- Sunday @ 9:30: Trinity Class in 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Lounge; Women of Faith Class in Library (2<sup>nd</sup> floor) and @9:45: led by Steve Sloan and Bill Wooddell in 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Lounge

### **Serving during Lent**

Join the fun, fellowship, and hospitality as we continue to welcome the community for a mid-day meal each week at Monday Lunch. Preparation begins in the morning; servers are needed prior to noon, and clean-up begins about 12:30.

### ***Where’s God? Study with Pastor Wendy***

Can searching the stories of Scripture help us find God in the realities of today? Join Pastor Wendy on *Wednesdays at noon February 15* to reflect on the happenings of everyday life and day-to-day encounters to discover God in the crowd. The Scriptures studied will correspond to the Scriptures presented February 19.

### ***Did you receive new technology for***

***Christmas?*** We have been made aware of a situation where a used, WI-FI enabled laptop, would be very useful. If you can help, please contact the church office at 593-3977, or email at leisa@firstumcathens.org

### **Can’t join us for worship?**

**Watch the service live on your computer:**

**How?** Go to the website [www.athensi.com](http://www.athensi.com), and enter the *45701 Online Media* section in the lower right portion of their website.

**Listen on the Radio – two options now**

**available:** Tune in to WATH on the AM dial (970) or **NOW**, if you live within the Athens city limits, you can pick up the station on **97.1 FM**. They usually begin broadcasting our services at the beginning of worship.

## Bazaar News – Thank you, thank you, thank you!!!!

The United Methodist Women would like to thank everyone for helping to make the bazaar a success. We were able to make a profit of over \$3,100. The money from the rummage sales and bazaar supports mission work locally and throughout the world.



Special thanks to those who:

brought in canning jars,  
 donated ingredients for the soup,  
 purchased quart jars of soup,  
 purchased items and stayed for lunch,  
 volunteered their time to make the soup,  
 made the food,  
 worked in the booths,  
 set up before or cleaned up after bazaar,  
 the scout troop and all the people that helped with the luncheon,  
 and most especially to Bonita Maze and Barb Dingle for being in charge of this huge endeavor.

Thanks also for all of you who donated the quart canning jars **after** bazaar. If you still have jars that you are finished using, please bring them to Fellowship Hall or the downstairs kitchen for use at the next bazaar.

## Let's "Sing a New Song to the Lord" – *The Faith We Sing* Hymnals Coming to FUMC

O sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things. His right hand and his holy arm have gotten him victory. – Psalm 98:1

*Since Jesus Came in My Heart, There's a Song of Love in My Heart. I've Got Peace Like a River, and I know His Eye is On the Sparrow. I'm so Glad Jesus Lifted Me* that I want to sing continuously *I Love You, Lord. Yes, I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me, and When We Are Called to Sing Your Praise, We Will Glorify the King of Kings* through the hymns and choruses in our new hymnal supplement, *The Faith We Sing*.

Yes, these are just some of the titles of the almost 300 songs in *The Faith We Sing* hymnal supplement – some "old favorites" that aren't in the United Methodist Hymnal, some new hymn texts to familiar hymn tunes, some gospel classics, some Taize choruses, and even congregational versions of "contemporary" Christian classics (that are now in their 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> decade of popularity).

We're excited to bring *The Faith We Sing* to our worship services at FUMC. If you would like to support this work of the Vision Team of bringing a "new song" to FUMC, we welcome donations to cover the cost. Nameplates are available for those who would like to give "in honor of" and/or "in memory of." A contribution of \$12.50 covers the cost of one, and \$25 will cover the cost of two.

Please complete the form below and drop it in an offering plate or send it to the church office. Make checks payable to *First United Methodist Church*.

Yes, I/we would like to cover the cost of \_\_\_\_\_ hymnals.

Given in honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

## Monday Lunch News

Allene Kilgore, Monday Lunch Coordinator

### The Hearts of Athens Pour Forth Bounty—Christmas at Monday Lunch

Monday Lunch had a wonderful Christmas Party thanks to you and many others (Say, you didn't donate anything for the party? But, you did, as a part of your regular donation to FUMC goes to provide a working budget for Monday Lunch).

We had a long buffet line of great "party food" (meatballs, deli trays, relish and fruit trays, desserts and much, much more). Church members donated special dishes, area restaurants donated chicken wings, pizza and casseroles and our Monday Lunch volunteers prepared other food as well.

Scott Ewing and Bob Williams played Christmas music on guitars and sang with guests between 11 and 12 while we served punch, coffee and hot cocoa. At noon David Maze on piano led FUMC choir members and Ken Edwards on trombone in more caroling.

We had at least 230 guests join us, and, although people had to wait in line for quite a while, they definitely thought it was worth it. Plus, when you're waiting in line, you get to talk to your neighbors.

Monday Lunch was able to purchase some nice items for our guests' goody bags at 18 cents a lb! These included pistachios, figs, rechargeable flashlights, jars of peanut butter, pretzels, and M & M's, as well as assorted hotel toiletries donated by church members.

After we had started serving and I could take a breath, I looked around at all the food and thought, "We have too much food." Then I realized that we had just the right amount; that our guests needed to be given "too much" for all the days they did not have enough. And, this is our Monday Lunch miracle each year, not only "too much" food but "too much joy and love and sharing of our humanness" with our guests and receiving theirs from them. We were able to send the extra food home with our guests so that they had leftovers for the holiday week.

I also want to thank all of the folks who came to help – help us get ready, help us serve, help us clean up. There were lots of extra helpers that day – in addition to the regular and very loyal Monday Lunch volunteers, we had 27 from our congregation, in addition to 10 from outside of our congregation. We also had a visit from the official Monday Lunch mascot, Taffy, the Maze's dog.

To everyone who helped – THANK YOU! You were needed and appreciated. Thanks for being there!! May God Bless Us Everyone! --Allene Kilgore

### Businesses Give to Monday Lunch Christmas

Once again, many area restaurants came through by

making donations to the Christmas Party. This is always my favorite time of year – preparing for our Christmas Party. One part of that preparation is contacting area restaurants to ask for donations.

Each year, usually the week before Thanksgiving, I send a letter asking them to donate a dish that would serve 20-25 people. The week after Thanksgiving, I call or stop by to ask personally. It often takes 2 or 3 attempts before I can connect with the right person and am able to find out if they are able to give.

Even though this process is time consuming, once I can make contact with the right person, I really enjoy it. All the managers/owners who I speak to are very gracious, and, if they are able to, they eagerly help.

Some restaurants that have given in the past were not able to do so this year. Reasons varied from "corporate policy says 'no,'" to "because of the continuous rise in food costs and fewer customers eating out they can't donate," to "we have already given our budgeted limit for the year."

No matter the reason, they all express regret. I believe they would sincerely like to help, yet, in spite of these responses, these calls are pleasant. No one has ever had any inkling of a "bah-humbug" spirit.

Of course, the interaction is a lot more fun if the restaurant is able to donate. We had several first-timers this year, and many who have given before, some *many* times before.

Two restaurants, Quizno's and Casa Nueva, called me first, within a couple days of their receiving the letter. KFC always gives more than they are asked to give, and this year it was 2 gallons of coleslaw in addition to 100 chicken wings. Domino's always gives the most pizza (5). Purple Chopsticks sent an unexpected fruit tray along with their casserole. WalMart gave us a \$50 gift card for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year.

For the past 2 years, DP Dough, who is usually closed at this time, has helped by donating things like enough calzone dough and marinara sauce, fresh toppings, pepperoni, cheese and olives that we have had home-made pizza for everyone the Monday after Christmas, along with 2 very large bowls of tossed salad for the meal.

There was so much that we froze much of it. The fresh produce that we couldn't keep or use immediately, was given to the Gathering Place.

Below is a list of the businesses who participated. Please consider doing one of the following:

If you visit the business, please ask to speak to the manager and thank him/her.

Leave a note expressing your appreciation and recognition of their support.

With a heart-full of thanks, Allene

### Business Contributors to Christmas Party:

Broney's, Casa Lopez, Casa Nueva, Dominos, KFC, Miller's, OU Inn, Pizza Hut (E. State St), Ponderosa, Purple Chopsticks, Quizno's

**The Sympathy of the Congregation** is extended to the family and friends of Margaret Stephenson who passed away December 19. Sympathy is also extended to Mary Day in the death of her brother and to Rollie Swart in the death of his sister.

**Parking on Sunday Mornings** Parking in the Municipal Parking Garage is free on Sundays and elevators are available. Be sure to park in one of the metered spaces. If you have an OU Parking hang tag, either faculty/staff or retired, you may park in OU Lot 39 (the lot in front of the School of Music and Seigfred).

**District Information Available on the Internet** There are lots of things going on in our Foothills District. You can find the web site at: <http://www.foothillsdistrict.org>

**Calendar Information Available 24/7** Remember, if you need to check on dates and times of church events, that information is available on our web site ([www.firstumcathens.org/calendar](http://www.firstumcathens.org/calendar)) and also on the automated portion of our phone system (extension 3) - *available seven days a week, 24 hours a day.*

### Recent Thank You Notes We've Received

"Dear friends at the First United Methodist Church,  
Hello from the Timothy House Good Works Community.

I want to thank you for the great donation of needs list items you shared with the Timothy House last week. It was so thoughtful of you and it was evident that you planned to bless us abundantly and you did it very well.

All items were in great need, especially the socks and the locks. The umbrellas will be appreciated also.

I am the Timothy House Supervisor and I work with residents daily and make sure the house is always a safe and table area for them. I help them remember to do chores to completion and to be neat and tidy. I also answer phones and grant shelter when it happens.

Blessed Christmas to you all and thank you for your generosity.

Sharon Hudson, Timothy House Supervisor"

"Dear Kristina and Congregation of First United Methodist Church,

On behalf of the residents, clients, staff and Board of Trustees of My Sister's Place, thank you for your generous donation of lots of new items for Christmas gifts. Your gifts are greatly appreciated and will help us provide needed items and services to battered women and children from Athens, Hocking and Vinton Counties.

Sincerely,  
Maryann Stalder  
Support Services Coordinator"

"Dear Friends in Mission:

Thank you for your gift of \$200.89 to the General Board of Global Ministries through The Advance, the designated mission giving channel of The United Methodist Church. We are pleased to share that **100 percent** of your contribution will go to **United Methodist Children's Fund for Christian Mission, Advance #302113.**

Your gift of \$200.89 is educating children about mission and supporting four selected mission projects per year.

The generosity of faithful people such as you makes it possible for the church to extend God's mission around the world. Ministries, missionaries, and projects that United Methodists can support through The Advance exist in more than 100 countries and many areas of the United States. These focus on evangelism, church development, education, disaster relief and rehabilitation, health services, and programs for children and young people.... Roland Fernandes & Shawn Baker, General Board of Global Ministries"



## Have You Heard?

Hey, kids—have you heard there's a place just for *you* at FUMC on Sunday mornings?

Have you heard you're welcome to bring your friends—the more, the merrier?

Have you heard you get to listen to and act out stories?

Have you heard you get to play games in Fellowship Hall and be as loud as you want?

Have you heard you get to do art projects with lots of fun stuff and be as creative and special as can be?

Have you heard you get to do all kinds of cool science experiments that might even get a little messy?

Have you heard it's okay to be loud and dramatic and creative and messy in church?!!

**WELL IT IS!!!** The place to be and do all those things is Children's Sunday School!!

**WHEN?** Just about every Sunday morning, 9:30 until 10:15 (Come on—that's not too early. You go to school much earlier than that every day!)

**WHERE?** Meet in Fellowship Hall first—then go to your station for the day. (Don't worry—the grown-ups will help you get to the right place and keep you safe.)

**WHY?** Because God made you and loves you and this is the place to learn more about God and have a lot of fun at the same time.

So, wake up your parents and come to Sunday School. We need you and you need us. See you Sunday!

Moms and Dads—here's what we'll be focusing on this month:

Title of Unit: "The Lord's Supper"

Main Idea: Jesus gave his disciples, and us, the Lord's Supper as a way to remember him and all he taught us.

Objectives: By the end of this unit, the children will experience  
                   the Lord's Supper through their sense of sight and visualization  
                   the Lord's Supper through the telling and hearing of the story

Teachers: Science—Shawn Ostermann  
               Games—Chris Hitchcock  
               Art—Betty Ranck  
               Storytelling—Martha Sloan

Schedule: February 12—PreK-1<sup>st</sup> Grade—Science, 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> Grade—Games  
               February 19—PreK-1<sup>st</sup> Grade—Games, 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> Grade—Science  
               February 26—PreK-1<sup>st</sup> Grade—Storytelling, 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> Grade—Art  
               March 4—PreK-1<sup>st</sup> Grade—Art, 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> Grade—Storytelling

Please make sure your children experience this "lead into Lent" unit, taught by an outstanding team of teachers and shepherded, as always, by our faithful and dedicated group of adult shepherds. See you Sunday.



## Knowing, Growing and Showing God's Love at Growing Tree

This month at Growing Tree, we'll KNOW GOD'S LOVE by gathering together each morning and celebrating our brotherhood and sisterhood as God's precious children. As we prepare to celebrate our love for family and friends on Valentine's Day, we'll remember that "we love because God first loved us."



We'll GROW IN GOD'S LOVE by exploring units as diverse as "Frogs and Toads" to "Pancakes" to "Pizza." We'll feel God's presence in books, games, art projects, science experiments and other activities that remind us that God is the creator of everything from creatures in the natural world to foods that nourish and delight our bodies.

We'll SHOW GOD'S LOVE by taking the things we learn each day about respect, kindness and selflessness with us to our families, our neighbors and our out-of-school activities. We'll also show God's love by welcoming two new friends to our T/Th class.

Special plans include a Pancake Breakfast and a field trip later in the month.

Growing Tree will begin accepting applications for enrollment for fall, 2012 on March 1. Although fall seems like a long time from now, Growing Tree does tend to fill rather quickly so, it's important to get applications in as early as possible. If you are or know of someone who is looking for a quality early childhood program, rooted in a Christian atmosphere, please contact Cathy Bigger (593-3977, ext. 14 or [bigger@firstumcathens.org](mailto:bigger@firstumcathens.org) for more information.

Growing Tree will be closed on Monday, February 20 in observance of President's Day.

Have a great month and, as always, thank you for your support, encouragement and, most of all, your prayers for Growing Tree Preschool.

### Youth News

<http://www.firstumcathens.org/youth>

### Fabulous February

**February 5<sup>th</sup>** – Super Bowl Party! Come root for your favorite team (or at least your favorite commercials) at Danny Pagan's house. We will gather at 6:30 for kickoff, share tailgate style dinner and break up at 8:00. NOTE THE CHANGE IN TIME FROM OUR REGULAR PROGRAM.

**February 12<sup>th</sup>** - Youth Group will return to FUMC Fellowship Hall in our regularly scheduled time slot 6:00 – 7:30 PM. Join us for dinner and fun.

**February 19<sup>th</sup>** - No Youth Group – Enjoy President's Day Weekend

**February 26<sup>th</sup>** – Come escape the cold at Youth Group 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM, FUMC Fellowship Hall

# FORGIVENESS Game

Try this twist on musical chairs.

### What you need:

- 28 large index cards
- Black marker
- Two teams of people
- Radio or CD player

### What you do:

1. On index cards, write out *forgiveness*, one letter per card. Make two sets (two F's, two O's, etc.).
2. Mix up the cards and form them face up in a circle on the floor. (You'll have six blanks mixed in.)
3. Have teams mix themselves up and stand in a circle around the cards. Ask an extra person to turn the music on and off.
4. As the music plays, teams walk around the circle. When the music stops, players each pick up the card nearest them.
5. Team members take their cards to a designated area and try to spell forgiveness. Any double letters or blanks go back to the "music person," who reorganizes remaining cards, spacing them evenly into a fresh circle.
6. Play continues until one team spells *forgiveness*.



## FOLLOW GOD'S EXAMPLE

In a letter to the church in Colossae, the apostle Paul wrote about the importance of forgiveness.

### •••• DIRECTIONS ••••

To complete Colossians 3:13 (NIV), use the smaller words to fill in the larger words.



gain as or ear van an for give  
gave her on it one other he an a

B \_\_\_\_\_ w \_\_\_\_\_ h each  
ot \_\_\_\_\_ d \_\_\_\_\_ give  
\_\_\_\_\_ e an \_\_\_\_\_ if \_\_\_\_\_ y  
of you h \_\_\_\_\_ grie \_\_\_\_\_ ce  
a \_\_\_\_\_ st some \_\_\_\_\_ .  
For \_\_\_\_\_ as t \_\_\_\_\_ L \_\_\_\_\_ d  
for \_\_\_\_\_ you.”

COLOSSIANS 3:13, NIV

Answers: "Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you." Colossians 3:13, NIV

## Trustees Report on a Busy Year

One of the major responsibilities of the Board of Trustees is to maintain the church building and the parsonage. Our Board takes this responsibility very seriously. During 2011 \$43,775.25 was spent for Major Repairs and Improvements and \$7,172.05 was spent for Routine Maintenance.

Major Repairs and Improvements for the parsonage included repairing one of two heat pumps, painting interior rooms and repairing ceiling damage, new flooring on the main floor, bathroom plumbing repairs, and attending to squirrel damage to attic junction box as well as a bee problem.

At the church, these included replacing our 50+ year old air compressor (related to our heating system), a new boiler, convection oven repair, new paint and carpet for pastor's office, new blinds for our ground floor Sunday school/preschool rooms, and a new mixer for the Sanctuary sound system along with other things like attending to a leak in the steeple, a problem with our pipe organ electronics, and a door that needed a new "panic" lock bar.

Todd Bradford does an excellent job caring for the more "Routine Maintenance" needs, which, in a building the age of ours, are on-going. He is always eager to tackle whatever is on the "to do" list, and often finds things that need attention and haven't made their way onto the list.

In addition to the Major and Routine needs, the endowment earnings also pay for things like property tax on the parsonage, insurance coverage for the church and parsonage, pipe organ tuning, internet access for the church, and salary support for the maintenance and security positions. Altogether, \$88,418.28 was spent in 2011. In addition, funds are also set aside each year to build reserves for computer replacements, exterior painting and interior painting.

During 2012 the Trustees will be addressing the need to paint the exterior of our church building and are beginning to work on gathering bids for that project. Plans are also in the works to replace the Church Street entrance doors, extensive repairs to the main outside Sanctuary doors, and will continue making improvements to the Sanctuary sound system (new speakers have been ordered!), ... plus whatever emergency needs may arise that aren't currently on the list.

We are able to cover all of these expenses thanks to the blessing of our endowment, which the Board also manages. Gary Pfeiffer, Treasurer, along with the assistance of the Trustee investment subcommittee, works diligently and faithfully to make sure the funds that have been given to the church through various bequests over the years, are managed and invested soundly in order to provide the revenue needed to meet these maintenance expenses. According to Gary, "when all givings and spendings are accounted for, we still have in the Endowment every dollar that we've ever received!"

Since endowment earnings cover nuts and bolts needs, it results in funds being available in our Operating Budget for "Knowing, Growing and Showing" ministries. We extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to members of the Congregation, past, present, and future whose gifts and bequests make all such work possible!

We also thank our Board for their dedication to this ministry and often hands-on involvement throughout 2011: Chairperson, Martha Sloan, Jack Bigger, Dave Dabelko, Ouisie Grim, Janice Huwe, Joyce Lambert, Ralph Martin, Deb Murray, Shawn Ostermann, and Gary Pfeiffer.



**Lilies for Easter Morning, April 8** You are invited to help decorate the Chapel and Sanctuary on Easter morning by purchasing Lily plants through the church. They are \$8.50 per plant.

Checks should be made payable to **First United Methodist Church**.

Please complete the form and return it to the church office no later than **March 29**.

### Lilies for Easter

I/We will give \_\_\_ (indicate #) lilies

**Optional:** I/We want to give lilies in memory of:

\_\_\_\_\_

in honor of \_\_\_\_\_

for the following reason: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

## Administrative Council Adopts 2012 Budget

After hours of reviewing ministry priorities and crunching numbers, the Finance Committee proposed and the Administrative Council adopted a ministry budget for 2012.

This budget projects an overall 2.6% decrease (more than \$10,000) in spending, realized primarily from reducing expenses in utilities, apportionments, benefits, and the Wesley Student Center (which is not currently staffed).

The budget reflects our mission of **“Knowing, Growing, Showing God’s Love”**, with an increase in our investment in our worship ministry, discipleship ministries for all ages (adult, youth, and children), and mission work (specifically Monday Lunch). We are also excited to be able to fund a new “emerging ministry” area,

which will provide seed money to begin the ministry initiatives identified through our Visioning Leadership Team.

Realizing that our staff is integral to our ministry, the budget also includes modest raises plus the funding for two new ministry positions – a part-time Director of Children’s Ministry and part-time Director of Youth Ministry. These new positions are partially funded over the next 3 years by gifts designated for this work.

The Finance Team meets monthly to provide oversight of our financial health. If you would like more details on the budget, please see Jean Witkowski, Finance Committee chairperson; Sharon Stoltzfus, Director of Finance and Communications; or Pastor Wendy.

## Financial Highlights of 2011

At year end, **pledges** were paid at **100%**! Our non-pledged giving was within \$176.50 of what we had budgeted.

Thanks to your generosity toward **Our 2<sup>nd</sup> Mile Giving Funds**, we were able to provide \$2,691.25 for the Athens County Food Pantry, \$741.83 for the Hope and Possibilities Ministry needs, \$3,025.25 to the Faith Build Coalition of the local Habitat for Humanity, and send \$1,476.50 to the PET folks for the purchase of PET (Personal Energy Transportation) vehicles.

**The Christmas Offering** brought in \$4,331.75.

**Utility Costs are Down!** Yes, you read that correctly! In 2011 our utility costs were 10% lower than they were in 2010. How? Several factors: The long-term effect of insulating the attic area over the Sanctuary, extensive work on our boiler controls, replacing one of our boilers with a newer-more energy efficient model and warmer fall/early winter temperatures are some of the factors.

We are also hopeful that we will see another overall decrease by the end of 2012, due in part to moving our Columbia Gas contract to Volunteer Energy of Ohio in September 2011, which resulted in a significant drop in our gas rate. We also were able to move our electric utility carrier to the same company prior to the AEP rate increase. That contract will be in effect for 3 years. That move happened late in 2011, so it is difficult to determine exactly how much savings will result.

**Gifts to the Growing Tree Scholarship Fund** totaled \$2,015. So far \$915 has been used to help families with tuition payments, and the remaining \$1,100 has been carried forward into 2012 for the remainder of the current term which ends in May.

After all expenses were met, we were able to place \$808.78 in a holding fund for next year’s **Honduras Mission Trip**.

We continue to receive quarterly **Kroger Checks**. These funds are used to meet the expenses of FUMC college students who participate in FUMC Mission Trips. In 2011 we received \$1,970.17 thanks to your registration in the program. We spent \$2,800 for the students who went on the Honduras Mission Trip in December, leaving a balance available of \$3,108.30, which includes money received in previous years. It is such a blessing that this money is available to meet those needs!

**Monday Lunch Reaches Beyond Its Budget** The demand of the Monday Lunch ministry generated \$5,169.26 in expenses this year. While \$4,000 was budgeted, thanks to the generosity of those who gave beyond their pledge and income from the Venen Memorial Fund, Allene was able to meet these expenses.

It is exciting to report news of this nature from the realm of Finance! God is good, all the time; and all the time, God is good! We are grateful for the way you allow God to use you and your resources to bless FUMC ministries through your generosity.

## West Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church Our Connection to the World

**This comes to us through “News.Net” a monthly email publication by the West Ohio Conference, Communications Division:**

A letter from our Bishop...Looking ahead to Annual Conference and this year's *Love First* miracle offering—supporting the **Wings of the Morning** aviation ministry in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Bishop Ough writes, *I am eagerly looking forward to our June 10 - 13, 2012 Annual Conference session at Lakeside. The theme for the session is **Unleashed! Proclaiming the Good News and Healing People Everywhere.** We will celebrate the multiple ways the Conference contributes to improving the health of individuals, congregations and communities in West Ohio and in all four corners of the world. Together, we will explore how we can more fully embrace Jesus' ministry of "proclaiming the good news and healing people everywhere." (Luke 9:6 niv) In keeping with our theme, we will once again receive a **Love First Miracle Offering.***

[More](#)

## News from Habitat for Humanity

### **Habitat Help Needed – No Construction Experience Required!**

Can't drive a straight nail? Think truss is something you do to a turkey, and cutting-in is something people do on the dance floor? Well, Habitat needs volunteers just like you! In addition to needing volunteers to help with the houses it builds, Habitat needs volunteers to help in its store – the Habitat ReStore. If you like to greet customers, help them find things or ring up their purchases, then this is a job for you. If you want to work sorting and pricing merchandise or cleaning and stocking shelves, then this is a job for you. If you want to be in the know about cheap fixtures, tools and materials for home remodeling, then this is a job for you. As volunteer Janey Copeland puts it, the store has “price cuts on things people need for remodeling. . . [It's] another place for people to shop...[It] reduces the amount of waste that goes into the landfill...[It] helps more families in need.” Habitat is earnestly looking for volunteers like you who can spend a few hours once a week, once a month, or even a few hours here and there in the store. More help in the store means more sales (as well as more fun!), and thus more income to help build Habitat

homes. Volunteer today by contacting Molly at [restore@athenshabitat.org](mailto:restore@athenshabitat.org) or calling 677-4024.

### **Latest Build Continues**

Usually noon to six Saturday and Sunday. Sign up online or e-mail Ed Baum, [ed@athenshabitat.org](mailto:ed@athenshabitat.org).

### **Second Annual Taste of Athens to Benefit Habitat**

Want to indulge your taste buds, and help Habitat at the same time? Put March 10<sup>th</sup> on your calendar. Tickets are \$25, or two for \$40. Reserve your tickets early - sales will be limited to fit the Hocking College venue. Restaurants include Abrio's, Culter's, Kiser's BBQ, Lui Lui, Restaurant Salaam and others. Call 592-0032 to reserve your tickets, or contact Jean Marie Cackowski-Campbell.

**Habitat's Breakfast at Applebees raised \$648.** Special thanks to Joyce Lambert for helping that morning.

## February 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<a href="#">Home</a> <span style="float: right;">29</span>	<span style="float: right;">30</span>	<span style="float: right;">31</span>	<span style="float: right;">1</span> 12:00 PM <i>Where's God?</i> Study 6:00 PM Bell Choir 7:00 PM Chancel Choir 7:00 PM Korean Worship Service	<span style="float: right;">2</span> 7:00 AM Men's Breakfast 9:00 AM Korean Ladies Prayer Group 12:00 PM F.O.C.U.S 12:00 PM AA 5:30 PM Kappa Phi 6:00 PM Alpha Phi Omega Event in FH	<span style="float: right;">3</span> 11 AM Kiwanis Chili Lunch 9:00 AM Korean Ladies Prayer Group 2:00 PM Campus Crusade PGIF 5:30 PM AA	<span style="float: right;">4</span> 6:00 PM AA
<span style="float: right;">5</span> 8:30 AM Worship 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship 11:30 AM Holy Hands Puppet Rehearsal 2:30 PM Korean Worship Service 6:00 PM Youth Group	<span style="float: right;">6</span> 9:00 AM Korean Ladies Prayer Group 12:00 PM Monday Lunch 6:00 PM Court of Honor 7:00 PM Admin Council	<span style="float: right;">7</span> 9:00 AM Korean Ladies Prayer Group 12:00 PM AA 4:00 PM Visioning Core Team 5:00 PM Zumba Class 9:00 PM ChiRho Greek Bible Study	<span style="float: right;">8</span> 12:00 PM <i>Where's God?</i> Study 6:00 PM Bell Choir 7:00 PM Chancel Choir 7:00 PM Korean Worship Service	<span style="float: right;">9</span> 7:00 AM Men's Breakfast 9:00 AM Korean Ladies Prayer Group 12:00 PM F.O.C.U.S 12:00 PM AA 1 PM All-Staff Meeting 5:30 PM Kappa Phi practice for Sunday 2-12 6:00 PM AA	<span style="float: right;">10</span> 9:00 AM Korean Ladies Prayer Group 2:00 PM Campus Crusade PGIF 5:30 PM AA	<span style="float: right;">11</span> 6:00 PM AA
<span style="float: right;">12</span> 8:30 AM Worship 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship 11:30 AM Holy Hands Puppet Rehearsal 2:30 PM Korean Worship Service 6:00 PM Youth Group	<span style="float: right;">13</span> 9:00 AM Korean Ladies Prayer Group 12:00 PM Monday Lunch 7:00 PM SPRC	<span style="float: right;">14</span> 9:00 AM Korean Ladies Prayer Group 12:00 PM AA 5:00 PM Zumba Class 9:00 PM ChiRho Greek Bible Study	<span style="float: right;">15</span> 12:00 PM <i>Where's God?</i> Study 6:00 PM Bell Choir 7:00 PM Chancel Choir 7:00 PM Korean Worship Service	<span style="float: right;">16</span> 7:00 AM Men's Breakfast 9:00 AM Korean Ladies Prayer Group 12:00 PM AA 12:00 PM F.O.C.U.S 5:30 PM Kappa Phi	<span style="float: right;">17</span> 9:00 AM Korean Ladies Prayer Group 2:00 PM Campus Crusade PGIF 5:30 PM AA 10:00 PM Alpha Phi Alpha Dance	<span style="float: right;">18</span> 2:00 PM Abundant Life Church Valentine Banquet 6:00 PM AA
<span style="float: right;">19</span> 8:30 AM Worship 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship 11:30 AM Holy Hands Puppet Rehearsal 2:30 PM Korean Worship Service 6:00 PM Youth Group	<span style="float: right;">20</span> 9:00 AM Korean Ladies Prayer Group 12:00 PM Monday Lunch 6:00 PM Stephen Supervision 7:00 PM Finance Committee	<span style="float: right;">21</span> 9:00 AM Korean Ladies Prayer Group 12:00 PM AA 5:00 PM Zumba Class 9:00 PM ChiRho Greek Bible Study	<span style="float: right;">22</span> Ash Wednesday 12:10 PM Ash Wednesday Service 6:00 PM Bell Choir 7:00 PM Chancel Choir 7:00 PM Ash Wednesday Service 7:00 PM Korean Worship Service	<span style="float: right;">23</span> 7:00 AM Men's Breakfast 9:00 AM Korean Ladies Prayer Group 12:00 PM F.O.C.U.S 12:00 PM AA 5:30 PM Kappa Phi	<span style="float: right;">24</span> 9:00 AM Korean Ladies Prayer Group 2:00 PM Campus Crusade PGIF 5:30 PM AA	<span style="float: right;">25</span> 6:00 PM AA
<span style="float: right;">26</span> 8:30 AM Worship 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship 2:30 PM Korean Worship Service 6:00 PM Youth Group	<span style="float: right;">27</span> 9:00 AM Korean Ladies Prayer Group 12:00 PM Monday Lunch 7:00 PM Trustees	<span style="float: right;">28</span> Circle Meetings 9:00 AM Korean Ladies Prayer Group 12:00 PM AA 5:00 PM Zumba Class 9:00 PM ChiRho Greek Bible Study	<span style="float: right;">29</span> 12:00 PM Bible Study 6:00 PM Bell Choir 7:00 PM Chancel Choir 7:00 PM Korean Worship Service	<span style="float: right;">1</span> <a href="#">Home</a>	<span style="float: right;">2</span>	<span style="float: right;">3</span>

Printed: Thursday, February 02, 2012

Color Keys: "Knowing" Activities, "Growing" Activities, "Showing" Activities, Church Meetings

## **THE CHURCH SPIRE**

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*The Church Spire* is the newsletter of the First United Methodist Church of Athens, Ohio. It is published monthly August—May with a combined issue for June/July.

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### **Worship Schedule**

**Sunday Morning Worship 8:45 and 10:30**

**Sunday School Classes, 9:30 a.m.**

**Worship Broadcast on WATH Sundays 11-11:30 a.m.**

**Child Care Provided During 10:30 Service**

**Free Parking in the City Parking Garage on Sundays**