

Send articles to Kathy's attention by the deadline posted below. Share with your church family! We reserve the right to edit or omit any and all articles for the newsletter in the interest of space or content. **Next newsletter deadline: morning of Tues., Feb. 7, 2012.**

HAVE YOU HEARD...?

- *MMDC (Midwest Mission Distribution Center), located in Chatham, IL, now has a new website. Check them out at: midwestmissiondc.org and see where you can help!
- *The Spoon River District webpage will be updated weekly on the IGRC.org website under the sidebar "Our Districts" Please add it to your "favorites" and check it on a regular basis.
- *Human Relations Day Sunday is Jan. 15th. Almost everyone seeks to be a part of a good community, one that nurtures and supports. The Human Relations Day offering (received each year on the Sunday before the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. holiday) helps support improving the fabric of communities and the quality of life for those who live in them.



Imagine No Malaria Celebration!

Mark your calendars for an Imagine No Malaria Celebration on Sunday, Jan. 29th, at 3:00 p.m., here at Galesburg First United Methodist Church. Bishop Gregory V. Palmer will be here to help us celebrate the 27,000 lives we have saved in just the first year of our fundraising and to inspire us to continue our efforts to eradicate deaths by malaria in Africa. Please join us!

OUR SINCERE SYMPATHIES to the family of *Harvey Stremmel*, Galesburg, who died December 15th, and the family of *Dorothy Wabel*, Galesburg, who died December 28th, and to the family of *Barb LaHood*, Peoria, (sister of Martha Cochran) who died December 29th.



Our church staff: All Members - Ministers

- Melva England* - Directing Pastor *Sarah Wanck* - Associate Pastor
- Mary Runge* - Sr. Adult Ministry - *Kristin Hammond* - Worship Arts Director
- Alisa Ramer* - Organist *Susan Hayes* - Media Technician *Jenny Han* - Website
- Kathy Keneipp* - Office Manager *Deanna Mathers* - Treasurer *Alvah Fryer* - Finance Secretary
- Kelly Reese* - Children's Ministry *Jake Runge* - Ministry Area Assistant *Irma Spilman* - Nursery
- Vi Welty* - Kitchen Coordinator *Jim Spilman*, *Steve Southard*, *Greg Washabaugh* - Custodians

"The News" Issue #1 Jan. 10, 2012

Postmaster: Send address changes to:

First United Methodist Church (Non-Profit Organization)
120 N. Kellogg St., Galesburg, IL. 61401-4785 309-342-3197

e-mail: firstumc@firstumcgalesburg.org web address: www.firstumcgalesburg.org
Periodical postage paid and published monthly at Galesburg, IL. (USPS 882-200)



Sunday Worship - 8:00 & 10:30 am (nursery available)
9:00 am (contemporary worship - chapel)

Holy Communion - monthly - 1st Sunday - both services
Sunday School for all ages - 9:00 am Coffee Time - 10:00 am



WE ARE A COMMUNITY OF FAITH WHERE ...

**... open hearts are passionately rekindled ...open minds are nurtured
... open hands are reaching out to the needs of the neighborhood
ALL FOR JESUS CHRIST!**



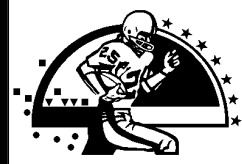
Inside this month's issue:

- Imagine No Malaria Celebration...*
- The Orpheus Choir in Concert...*
- UMW January Soup Luncheon...*
- A Message from our Bishop...*
- Souper Bowl of Caring...*
- The Year in Review...*
- WII Game Night...*
- Italian Dinner...*
- Luau Bingo...*



... and much, much more!

**Share your newsletter
with a friend!**



What If We Focused On...?

"I'm not saying that I have this all together, that I have it made. But I am well on my way, reaching out for Christ, who has so wondrously reached out for me. Friends... I've got my eye on the goal, where God is beckoning us onward - to Jesus. I'm off and running, and I'm not turning back.

So let's keep focused on that goal, those of us who want everything God has for us. If any of you have something else in mind, something less than total commitment, God will clear your blurred vision - you'll see it yet! Now that we're on the right track, let's stay on it." -The Apostle Paul

Did you make any New Year resolutions?

Recent polls show that more than 50% of

Americans vow to "appreciate loved ones and spend more time with family and friends this year" making it the number one resolution of 2012. While this is a noble goal, if past statistics run true, this resolution like most will fail. Albert Einstein speaks to the heart of failed resolutions in his famous quote: *"Insanity: doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results."* We set goals for a better and brighter future without changing anything. Too often we give up at the first sign of failure.



But there is grace, Paul reminds us, because we don't have to get it right every time. We just need to get on the right track. The real change required is changing our focus. Yesterday's priorities can blur our vision, but if we commit ourselves to staying focused on the goal of receiving all that God has for us, then we'll be off and running!

Bishop Gregory V. Palmer shares that we should focus on tomorrow as a new day; begin it well by setting aside old nonsense and then finish every day and be done with it. "You have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities no doubt have crept in; forget them as soon as you can." - *Bishop Gregory V. Palmer*
(For his full letter, read 'A Message From our Bishop' in this newsletter)

Let's resolve together to keep our eye on the goal so that we can fulfill our mission as a church of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

- Pastor Melva



*...setting aside old nonsense
and then finish every day and
be done with it.*

SARAH WANCK (Youth Pastor) Call her at: 309-335-8170

ENJOY YOUTH GROUP ON SUNDAYS!

The youth ministry of Galesburg First UMC is open to all students 6th-12th grades. Youth Group meets Sunday nights from 4:30-6 in #112 [unless special activities are planned that day]. Please check out the monthly calendar to see what's happening in the ministry!



**Join the
Youth Group**

Jr. and Sr. High Youth Group is on a break for the holidays!

There will be no youth group in the coming weeks while Pastor Sarah is away at school. Please enjoy extra time with your family and friends - and plan on kicking off another great year of ministry on Sunday, January 22! See you then!



OLIVET NAZARENE UNIVERSITY ANNOUNCES:

THE ORPHEUS CHOIR IN CONCERT

Friday, January 27th, 7:00 p.m.,

First Church of the Nazarene, 1501 Webster St., Galesburg.

There is no fee, but a free-will offering will be taken to cover expenses.

Come and enjoy a night of great music!

FEBRUARY 5TH - SUPER BOWL OF CARING

Souper Bowl of Caring is a national movement of young people working to fight hunger and poverty in their own communities around the Super Bowl football game. The Jr. and Sr. High Youth Ministry of our church will take up a collection, asking for **one dollar** for people in need. They will collect donations at church on **Super-Bowl Sunday, February 5th**. One hundred percent of this collection will be given directly to a local hunger-relief charity in Galesburg.

In 2011, more than 260,000 youth participated in **Souper Bowl of Caring**, collecting more than \$9.5 million in dollars and food for local hunger-relief charities. That's a total of more than \$81 million collected since the movement began in 1990! This year's goal is to empower 275,000 young people to collect \$11 million for charities in their communities.

The youth of our church will be collecting to help meet this goal. Please bring a **dollar** with you that Sunday and support our community with **The Souper Bowl of Caring!** Help us tackle hunger in America!





2012 JANUARY/FEBRUARY CIRCLE MEETINGS

Friday, January 20th - NO Kindness Circle this month!
Monday, February 13th, 7:00 p.m. - Love Circle - lounge
Friday, February 17th, 1:00 p.m. - Kindness Circle - lounge
All women are invited to attend Circle meetings!

Questions about our United Methodist Women? Call Dee Milner at 341-2658 today!

WOMEN'S PRAYER BREAKFASTS meet each Wednesday at 7:00 a.m. at Hardee's and 8:30 a.m. at Hy-Vee on Henderson St. All women invited!

CRAFTERS - After January, they meet Mondays & Thursdays, 9 a.m., room #121. Thanks for all donations. Questions? Call Vi Welty: 368-6734. You can even help from home with woodworking, needlepoint, etc. - call Vi for a project! *We also need donations of pretty, cute designs of cotton or cotton-blend material (lengths of 1 yard or more).* Thank you.

CHURCH WOMEN UNITED - The next meeting is Feb. 2nd, 2012, at 9:15 a.m., at First Christian Church. All women are invited.

UMW BOARD - The next meeting is Friday, Feb. 3rd at 9:30 a.m. in the church library.

UMW PINK BOUTIQUE ADDS HOURS! - Besides their hours Mondays & Thursdays, 9 a.m. - noon. (and an occasional Sunday), the Pink Boutique will also be open during Dinner Delight on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month from 3:30 - 6:30 p.m. They are located next to the handicap restroom across from Fellowship Hall, north side. All proceeds support UMW Missions. Donated items AND sales are needed to keep it going. Thank you!

UMW SPONSORED SOUP LUNCHEON - Sunday, January 15th, 11:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. You may choose between two kinds of soup. Included: condiments, dessert & beverage for a modest fee. You need to eat lunch anyway - eat here & help support the United Methodist Women's missions! The next Soup Luncheon is scheduled for Sunday, February 19th!



WHEN "UN"DECORATING YOUR HOME for the holidays, our crafters will gladly take any unwanted decorations, wreaths, holiday items, etc. to be "repurposed" for next year's bazaar. (Please - NO Christmas trees unless they are very small (table top size).

SOMETIMES WE GET A GIFT we don't really need or want. That's where our "Pink Boutique" comes in! They will happily accept your donated items, then price & sell them to support our United Methodist Women's Missions. We thank you for all donations!

NEEDED - New or very gently used toys, games, puzzles & books for boys and girls age 8 - 12 to sell in the UMW Pink Boutique. Thank you for all donations.



NICKELS FOR HUNGER - On January 29th and each last Sunday of the month, we will collect this offering. Please set aside a nickel per meal so the less fortunate may also eat. **ALSO:** Food & paper donations may be left in the FISH box (narthex) each Sunday!

M.A.C.S.(Mature Adult Christian Singles) - Next meeting is February 3rd, 6:30 p.m., Fellowship Hall. **Potluck:** bring a dish to pass. Questions? Call Jeri Godsil: 342-5724.



LOVE COVERS (QUILTERS) meet the 2nd & 4th Thursdays of the month, room #110. For more info, call Jean Paul at 297-6097 or email her at: homebiz4u@winco.net

"DINNER DELIGHT" is a tasty meal on the 1st & 3rd Thursdays at 5:30 for only \$7.00 each. Sign up at the banner table by Tuesday of that week. Rides available-call 342-3197! **"DINNER EXTRA"** is at 4:30 the same nights with a movie - join us! Open to ALL ages!

CHRISTIAN BOOK CLUB - Thursday, Jan. 26, 6:30 p.m., church lounge: Snow Day by Billy Coffey. Bring a snack to share & a friend. All women & men invited! Questions? Call Susan Hayes at 342-5681.

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST - Every 2nd Saturday of the month, 8:30 a.m., in Fellowship Hall. Cost: \$6 donation at the door. Reservations appreciated. Call Bill Hayes: 342-5681 or email hayes91@comcast.net All men invited & bring a friend!

WE COLLECT GOOD, USED COATS - ALL SIZES! Please leave coats on the "Donated Coats" rack at the bottom of the north steps to be given to the Salvation Army (not the thrift store). We also collect used eyeglasses. A basket for those is on the table outside the church office. Thanks for all donations to those in need!



TRIVIA FANS! Knox Co. United Way will host a "Smarty Pants" Trivia Night, Saturday, January 21st, 2012, at Knights of Columbus Hall, 1556 E. Fremont St., Galesburg. Doors open at 5:00 p.m. Trivia begins at 6:00 p.m. Tables/Teams seating for 8 is \$160.00. No outside food or beverages allowed - this is available inside. All ages welcome. For more information, call 309-343-4434 or to register online: www.unitedway-galesburg.net

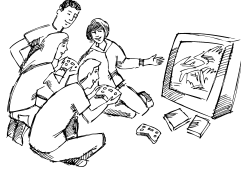
NURSERY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! We need volunteers to take a rotation for our Sunday morning 10:30 worship services (need to be here by 10:15). Also needed is a volunteer for the 1st Sunday of each month for our 8:00 a.m. service (need to be here at 7:45). Please call Irma Spilman as soon as possible - the more volunteers, the less Sundays you'll have. Adults or Jr. thru Sr. High only, please. Call Irma Spilman at 342-2919.

SEVERAL NEW LAWS FOR ILLINOIS have gone into effect this month. For a listing of these, check out this site: www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/01/01/new-?illinois-laws-in...

FROM KELLY REESE (Children's Ministry) Questions? Call Kelly: 309-303-5076!

Thank you to our Children who lead our 9:00 & 10:30 worship services on January 8th. You all are blessings to our church!

Wii are having a Wii game night on Saturday, Feb. 4th, from 6-8 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Wii will have 5-6 televisions connected to Wii's with a variety of games to choose from. All ages are invited to attend and join in the fun. (Wii guarantee that wii can find a game that interests everyone!) Please bring a snack to share. Drinks provided.



Sunday School teachers desperately needed! Our Kindergarten through 5th grade class is in need of teachers. They will be starting another DVD lead curriculum this time; focusing on the Beatitudes. Please contact Kelly Reese if interested. (343-0588 - home, or kelly.fumc@gmail.com)

Christian Education meets the second Tuesday of January, March, May, August, September, & November) at 7:00 p.m. in room 114. Everyone is welcome to attend!!!

BUDGET REPORT

The General Budget set for 2012 is \$577,010.00. To meet that, we need to receive \$ weekly. Amounts below are received from pledged, unpledged, and church loose toward the budget.

This **does not** include monies pledged to Building or Music Funds. The weekly giving pays for our apportionments for Church World Service, church programs, church staff, gas, electricity, water, & phones. Thank you for your faithfulness.

DATE	OFFERING
12-04-11	\$10,544.53
12-11-11	7,575.84
12-18-11	7,106.06
12-25-11	2,840.74
12-29-11	<u>2,674.00</u> (end of year)
TOTAL	\$28,067.17

YEAR END STATEMENTS have been sent electronically, that were listed with the church. Remaining statements will be in the narthex or church office during the month of January. Thank you for picking up your own statement.
- Alvah Fryer, Finance Secretary

Dec. weekly giving average: \$7,016.79 Received year to date: \$373,517.78



WINTER WEATHER CAN BE VERY UNPREDICTABLE!

If our weather is "mis-behavin", just check WGIL (radio station 14) or T.V. Stations: WHOI, WAOE, WEEK (HOI-19) WEATHER PLUS, or the CW [Peoria news] for the stream across the bottom of the screen for information on meeting or service cancellations & time changes (due to weather) at our church! If in doubt, call WGIL at 342-9194. We want you to stay safe!

Thank you ...

...to all who donated items to the Pink Boutique and Craft Department. We had a very good year, ending with a great Holiday Bazaar! Thanks to all who came & shopped with us and to all who helped and donated items! We look forward to being with you in the new year!

- Blessings to you always, Vi Welty & the crafters

...to all of our wonderful helpers around the office & building - what would we do without you? We don't want to find out! Thank you so much for giving of your time & talents to help our church run smoothly. God bless each you all & have a very blessed 2012!

- Office Staff

... to Pastor Melva and to Mary Runge for visiting me in the hospital following my surgery. And thanks to all for your visits, cards, and prayers. I truly appreciate it.

- Bev Jordan

...to those who filled our mitten tree with hats, mittens, and scarves. These items were delivered to Cooke School before Christmas break.

- Kelly Reese

...everyone who made my Christmas a merry one by giving me cards, gifts and well-wishes. May God bless each of you in the new year!

- Irma Spilman

...for the meal brought to us by Judy Geer. It was much appreciated.

- Jay & Helen Thomas

...for all of the cards and the Christmas basket!

- Sandra Jo Burgess

...to all who helped with the soup luncheon. We had another success.

- Libby Boydston

...to all who donated items for our pre-school. Blessings in the new year!

- CNS Teachers

...to all who helped with our Christmas preparations, music, and services. Your participation helped add to that very special time of year, and we appreciate you all!

- Staff of First

...to my church family for their help & support to deliver Christmas Food Baskets this year. We delivered 43 baskets to families in our community. Thank you to all who brought food for the baskets and those who gave money to the Thanksgiving Offering. We collected around \$3,300 & I spent about \$3,000. A special thank you to Vicki Trant for assisting me with this project again this year. Also, special thanks to Kathy for her help in making this project run smoothly. My sincere thanks to all who helped deliver baskets. Many of you have delivered for several years & I appreciate your support. This year, we were blessed to have several new volunteers. When you see Faith UMC members, please thank them for the use of their church. It makes our work much easier being on ground level. They are always so kind to open their church to us. As always, I am so blessed to work with such wonderful people and do a job that I know is pleasing to God. Most of all, I thank God for blessing this project every year. May our work continue to honor and bring glory to Him.

- Dana Price

The volunteers who work in the nursery are absolutely wonderful! Thank you sooooo much! Hope to see you in 2012, also!

- Irma Spilman



"FIRSTS NEWS" (for those 60 +)

Dinner Delight Meal: Every 1st & 3rd Thursdays, 5:30 p.m. We begin at 4:30 p.m. with a movie, book, etc. and you are welcome to come early and join in the fun before the meal!

(Shop the Pink Boutique on Dinner Delight evenings from 3:30 - 6:30 p.m.!)
ALSO - Starting this month, we will be increasing the cost of dinner to \$7.00.

Luau Bingo! Saturday, January 21, 2012 at 1:30 PM in the Fellowship Hall -

Are the cold winter blues bringing you down? Come to Luau Bingo to warm your spirits for a time of fellowship & fun with other senior Adults! This is a **FREE** event with a photo booth, prizes, snacks, and a special surprise for everyone who attends. Wear your best luau (or flowered) attire!



----- FOR FEBRUARY -----

Rustic Italian Dinner Party - Sunday, Feb. 12, 5:00 p.m., in Fellowship Hall. Do you like spaghetti? Do you like going to a special dinner with a friend or loved one? There will be door prizes, a meal, and a special surprise for each person who attends. Tickets are limited, so purchase early! Money is due at the time of purchase. See Mary Runge or a member of the FIRSTS Council for tickets.



Knox Galesburg Symphony - Saturday, Feb. 25, 2012 at 7:30 p.m. at the Orpheum Theater. Come hear celloist, Maurice Cohn. Cost is \$10. Please sign up on the banner table at the back of the sanctuary. Money is due to the church office by February 1st. Please make checks payable to FIRSTS. Questions? Call or e-mail Mary Runge: 342-3197 or mary@firststumcgalesburg.org

JANUARY/FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS OF OUR GOLDEN FOLKS (persons who are home-bound or shut-in)

<u>NAME</u>	<u>BIRTHDAY</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>
Betty Yates	1-03	2345 N. Seminary St., #205
Ruth McKinnon	1-14	1347 Bridge Ave.
Dorothy White	1-14	2345 N. Seminary St., #406
Bill Bycroft	1-20	261 Linwood Road, #101
Pat Webber	1-22	550 E. Carl Sandburg Dr., #125
Fern Pumfrey	1-29	2245 N. Seminary St., #426
Shirley Krause	1-30	2307 N. Broad St.
Lois Parkinson	2-08	311 E. Simmons St.
Shirley Lockard	2-19	550 E. Carl Sandburg Dr., #126
Marianna Seitz	2-20	800 N. Market St., Knoxville, IL



*Put a smile
☺ on
someone
e's face
- send
a card!
(If we
have
missed a
birthday
, please
call the
church
office.)*

A MESSAGE FROM OUR BISHOP

Beloved in Christ Jesus:

Many people find it useful to bring some focus to the end of one calendar year and the start of a new one. This happens in a variety of ways. Some approaches are shaped by our families of origin, some by faith traditions, some by cultural particularity. The list could go on and on. For many persons several streams come together to create the currents of how we approach the new year.

There isn't just one way to "do it". What action or practice we choose matters far less than how we approach the new year. So below are a few snippets, with attribution, that help me approach a new year and for that matter each new day that I am given by God's grace and mercy.

- Finish every day and be done with it. You have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities no doubt have crept in; forget them as soon as you can.
- Tomorrow is a new day; begin it well and serenely and with too high a spirit to be cumbered with your old nonsense.
- "This day is all that is good and fair. It is too dear, with its hopes and invitations, to waste a moment on yesterdays." (Ralph Waldo Emerson)
- "The New Year means a fresh start, a second wind, another chance, a kind of reprieve, a divine act of grace bestowed upon the children of [mortals]. Let whatever suffering we brought on ourselves or others teach us to understand life more completely, and in our understanding, love it more wisely, thus fulfilling God's faith in us by permitting us to begin this New Year." (Howard Thurman)

Pressing toward the Goal

- "Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own;* but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us then who are mature be of the same mind; and if you think differently about anything, this too God will reveal to you. Only let us hold fast to what we have attained." (The Apostle Paul)
- "All who want to come after me must say no to themselves, take up their cross daily, and follow me." (Jesus the Christ)



PRESS ON TOWARD THE GOAL

*Your servant in Christ Jesus,
Gregory Vaughn Palmer
Resident Bishop*



January - Our Youth Group enjoyed a ski trip to Snow Star •Kelly held a winter "Fun Day" in the rec. room for the children •The District Office sponsored a well-attended "Imagine No Malaria" workshop here

February - We closed the church for two days due to a "Big Bad Blizzard" (as described on T.V.) •Lion's Club held their annual Pancake Day •Valentine goodie bags were taken to our homebound & shut-in folks •The UMW held a potato bar luncheon •Youth Group held a well-attended Valentine's Dinner/Dance fund-raiser •FIRSTS held a Valentine's Day party

March - We began our Lenten Study: "The First to Follow" •The Ash Wednesday Service was led by our Confirmation Class •FIRSTS held a "hearing" program •Kelly arranged a Wii Game Night in Fellowship Hall

April - Youth Group attended "Winter Jam" •Church members performed a Maundy Thursday Service with a living Last Supper •The UMW held their annual Spring Luncheon & Craft Sale •68 Easter plants were ordered and the sanctuary was beautifully decorated for our Easter worship services

May - The annual Mother-Daughter Banquet was well attended •Kelly Reese organized a fun "All Church Carnival" with games, midway-style food & a magician! •Our spring musical "A Technicolor Promise" directed by Kristin was a huge success •An "All Church" photo was taken on the East steps (the photo now hangs on the wall outside the chapel) •The New UMW "Pink Boutique" opened for business

June - Youth group began doing service projects for our members & local community •A summer "Kick Off" picnic was organized by Kelly & held at Lake Storey •Church staff held a "Farewell to Marilyn Staff Retreat" to Kobi Steakhouse in Peoria, followed by a movie - but not before we surprised Marilyn by all wearing "We ♥ Marilyn" T-shirts (and she got one with "I ♥ First UMC") - a nice surprise! •Our Confirmation Class graduated •Sadly, Rev. Anell delivered her farewell sermon as she prepared to move to Florida

July - VBS was in full swing •Galesburg Rescue Mission held their annual summer concert in our sanctuary •Trustees worked on chapel upgrading •Lindsey Hayes gave a slide show on her Africa trip •A Saturday "Work Day" was held in the church building •We had a new Pepsi machine installed in our building

August - FIRSTS group held their annual ice cream social at Lake Storey •Youth Group helped the United Way at Knox Co. Fair Grounds •Jr. High Youth Girls had a "lock-in" •Our Annual Stewardship campaign began •Mike Cook retired as head custodian after 12 1/2 years here and Jim Spilman began his duties as head custodian

September - The Men's Fellowship Saturday breakfasts began •A special service to commemorate the 10th anniversary of 9/11 was held on 9/11 •Wednesday night KFC & LIGHT programs began •UMW Sunday was held •A welcome reception was held for Pastor Sarah and Jake & Mary Runge •The UMW held their annual Fall Luncheon & Craft Sale

October - Youth Group had a movie night •The congregation was invited to an outing to Country Corners •Kelly sponsored a Trunk or Treat Festival here with costumes, photos, games & goodies •Pastor Sarah came back from maternity leave & shared baby Hudson with staff •Commitment Sunday was held followed by a luncheon for all who made a reservation •Adult volunteers left for the Joplin, MO worktrip •We celebrated the 100th anniversary of the laying of our cornerstone & interred the cornerstone of Emmanuel UMC on our grounds

November - All Saints Sunday was well-attended with many out of town visitors •Advent booklets were made with stories from our senior adults •FIRSTS took a trip to Circa 21 •Annual Charge Conference was held

December - UMW held their Annual Christmas Tea •Church staff & spouses enjoyed a Christmas party in Fellowship Hall with a fun game of "Mean Santa" •Forty-three Christmas food baskets were assembled at Faith UMC •Some of our children sang with Choral Dynamics at the Orpheum •Youth group Christmas shopped for Angel Tree kids •UMW held a Holiday Bazaar/Luncheon •Kristin directed our annual Christmas Musical "The Rose of Sharon" •Christmas Eve services were well attended with wonderful music and a fun pageant by the children •Christmas Day was Sunday with one 10:00 am service

As we remove the worn, torn, wrinkled 2011 office wall calendar, we see that it was a very good year! Apportionments were met, pledges were received, bills were paid, and many new members joined our church family. We are a busy church - - - having fun, enjoying fellowship, building ministry, and reaching out to those in need - the ill, the lonely, the poor, the hungry - - doing what our Lord calls us to do. Let us all be mindful of what we have & are able to share. What does 2012 hold for us? A crisp new calendar awaits all of those "penciled-in ideas" but only God knows the outcome! May His blessings be abundant to you & yours in the New Year!

ST. VALENTINE'S SACRIFICE

Each February 14, we celebrate the loved ones in our lives with cards, flowers & candy. But Valentine's Day has another meaning that's been lost. First declared a holiday by King Henry VIII of England in 1537, it observes the beheading of St. Valentine on Feb. 14, 270 A.D. His crime? Performing wedding services after Roman Emperor Claudius II had outlawed marriage. Valentine was martyred for loyally doing the work God had given him. Although it's good to celebrate love and marriage, let's also remember the courage of a man who gave his life following his beliefs.

