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Vol. 74, No. 12

December 2011 edition

First Church was founded in 1836



Our Mission Statement

"To be a spiritual home that welcomes, equips and sends all into the ministry to which Christ has called us."

Our Worship Schedule:

Saturday

5:30 pm in Fellowship Hall

Sunday

9:00 am in the Sanctuary

Children's Sunday School &

Adult Study Groups at 10:15 am

11:15 Praise & Worship in the Sanctuary

Office Hours: Monday - Friday

8:00 am - 4:30 pm

Phone: (319) 385-1740

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E-Mail: fumcmtp@iowatelecom.net

Web Site: www.firstmethodistonline.org

Information for the December Messenger is due Thursday, December 15th. It will be mailed to you on the 28th.

Our Staff

Rev. Herbert Shafer, Senior Pastor
Rev. David Bracht-Wagner, Pastor for Youth & Young Adult Faith Development
Jean Evans, Financial Coordinator/
Membership Secretary
Priscilla Marlar, Office Administrator/
Director of Children's Music
Nancy McGohan, Youth Assistant
Chuck Ring, Custodian
Jerry Lalaga, Organist



From Pastor Herb -

"And everyone went to his own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and to the line of David..." - Luke 2: 3-4

Dear friends,

Look uptown tonight and you will know what season it is. The lighted and attractive wreathes proclaim it from every lamp post, Christmas is near. This shopping season The Mt. Pleasant Chamber of commerce is promoting the theme "Look Local First". "Look Local" is the premise on the view that doing business locally benefits everyone, in fact many times over. A dollar spent locally, it is said, is recycled up to seven times. Communities don't happen by accident; they grow because they invest themselves with one another.

We have a convenient interstate highway system that can take us to the nearest mall and to connect us to the farthest coast. But at Christmas time all roads lead home. The Christmas Story is about that, a young family going to their ancestral home. And for Christians, rehearsing this story gives us a sense of belonging as its values become our values in the familiar retelling year after year.

This is a story we will reenact on Christmas eve and then tell again on Christmas day. It is a story that reminds us that no matter what happens in life, the important thing is that we have one another. It is a story of neighbor helping neighbor as we hear of temporary quarters and a manger for a bed. It is the story of the impact that one can have on other when we are told that when the shepherds saw the baby as told them by angels they proclaimed the "good news of great joy" to anyone who would listen. And the village which had cradled the baby became the launching place for the savior who would change the world. It is a story of how we all are connected, and indeed we are.

Right here in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa what we say and what we do impact that person next to us and ultimately have the potential to serve for the good of us all. So whatever your shopping habits, think also of your relationship habits. How are you investing yourself in the lives of others? And if you want to have a positive impact on your world, why not look local first.

Be blessed by being a blessing!

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BUDGET NEWS	
October 2011	
Current Budget	
Beginning Balance	\$ 668.73
Income:	
Pledges/Giving	\$ 30,679.57
Other Income	<u>7,944.04</u>
Total Oct. Income	\$ 38,623.61
Expenses:	(31,829.42)
Liabilities Withheld:	2,996.46
Ending Balance	\$ 10,459.38
Liabilities:	
Payroll Taxes	\$ (2,996.46)
Apportionments	<u>\$ (4,177.66)</u>
Funds Available:	\$ 3,285.26
Missions Budget	
Beginning Balance	\$ 2,622.18
Received	4,408.94
Disbursements:	<u>(3,871.13)</u>
Ending Balance	\$ 3,159.99

CHURCH ATTENDANCE	
October 29, 5:30 pm	39
October 30, 9:00 am	140
October 30, 11:15 am	<u>76</u>
Total	255
November 5, 5:30 pm	42
November 6, 9:00 am	133
November 6, 11:15 am	<u>110</u>
Total	285
November 12, 5:30 pm	49
November 13, 9:00 am	155
November 13, 11:15 am	<u>57</u>
Total	261
November 19, 5:30 pm	43
November 20, 9:00 am	165
November 20, 11:15 am	<u>48</u>
Total	256

2011 Old Threshers Report	
Total Receipts	\$58,386.14
Total Disbursements	\$37,095.46
Total Net	\$21,290.68
Profit Distribution	
Net Profit	\$21,290.68
10% to Committee (start up supplies for 2012)	\$ 2,129.07
Balance	\$19,161.61
Missions	\$ 6,387.20
Current Budget	\$ 6,387.21
Steering Committee Repairs and Equipment	\$ 6,387.20

Ad Council Minutes
November 16th, 2011
7:30 p.m.

Meeting was called to order by Chuck Albright

Devotions were given

Secretaries report was approved

Jean Evans gave the financial report which reflected we are about \$6,000 ahead of last year in giving. Missions giving is current. We expect apportionments to be paid in full. Pledges to date are \$158,177 with an overall increase of \$2,196 from last year.

Missions Committee gave their report and it was discussed that a meal would be hosted by the youth before the Community Thanksgiving Service on November 20th from 5-6:30 p.m.

Worship Committee gave their report.

Pastor Dave discussed the website as well as how time and talent surveys can be accessed online.

The kid's recreation league, Upward Sports, was discussed and it has not begun. It was concluded that Rec League participation may be down.

The community garden was discussed and fifty families were recorded to have signed up at the Fellowship Cup. Noon Rotary has donated \$1,000 for seeds and supplies. It was decided that this will also be part of an Eagle Scout Project.

The Scouts program was discussed and it was made known that a new charter signed with Cub Scout Pack 28. There are now 40 boys. The God and Life program has begun with 12 Boy Scouts. Religious life programs are available for Cub Scouts and Girl Scouts. Volunteers with Sunday School teaching experience are recommended.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.



Included in your *Messenger* this month is a Christmas offering envelope. Our Christmas offering is dedicated to helping local families in need, whether that be food for their table, transportation or lodging through our church, the Fellowship Cup, and the Tolson Center. Your gifts will help so many in the year to come.

Last year, your generosity raised approximately \$3,500.00 through which we were able to assist fifty families in 2011.



Ministry Opportunities

Looking for opportunities to lend a helping hand? Check back with this section of the Messenger each month to see an updated list of ministry opportunities. This month:

The Family Connection - 1st UMC will again be hosting the Family Connection traveling basket in December. Please contribute to this ministry. For more information, see pg. 12.

Angel and Mitten Tree - want to know how you can help? Check out page 9 for details.

Fellowship Cup - The Fellowship Cup is seeking volunteers to help fill Christmas baskets. Contact Melisa Bracht-Wagner at the Fellowship Cup for more information.

Use this page as a resource for finding out how you can be a minister in your own community. Not sure how to help? Fill out a volunteer form and return it to the church office. We'll discover your hidden talents! For additional information contact the church office.

Prayer Concerns



(Information current as of November 22nd, 2011)

Ongoing prayers for:

- Joy Sudbrink, missionary to Northern Azerbaijan. She is the sister of Ava Seibert.
- Drs. Lynn and Sharon Fogleman, missionaries soon to depart for South Sudan.
- Residents of the Care Centers and the homebound.
- Our soldiers who are serving in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and to those vulnerable populations that are in harm's way.
- **Sympathies to:** the family of Kathryn Hannum who passed away Tuesday, November 1st.
- **Congratulations to:** Megan and Jeremy Hopp on the birth of their daughter, Emily Di-
anne Hopp, born October 26th. Emily is the granddaughter of Deb and Dave Beal.



Growing a Spiritual Harvest...

Stewardship Pledges:

Since Stewardship Sunday on October 30th, 112 pledges have been received for a total of \$158,726.00 to date and \$26,659.00 designated to Missions to further the work of God's hand. Pledging forms are still available in the church office.

The Family Connection Traveling Basket



Last December, your church generously agreed to partner with The Family Connection by hosting our traveling basket. We received an outpouring of love and support from your congregation, and the items donated were gratefully received and used by the families we serve.

At The Family Connection, we offer various programs to support families with children under the age of five. In order to also help them on a more material level, we have The Nest, a store where parents can "purchase" items such as diapers, wipes, and other baby related needs. They buy these items using points they earn by attending our parenting classes, using our home visitation program, or our program for toddlers and their mothers.

Unfortunately, times are hard right now across the state and we are relying almost exclusively on donations, so we can continue to provide our services to young families in our community. Thank you so much for hosting our traveling basket again. Your generosity is truly a blessing.

Amy Clark

Family Support Specialist

Congregation Members,

We will again host The Family Connection traveling basket in December. Be thinking how you can contribute in this form of ministry. Organizations like The Family Connection help support our community and the young families that continue to grow here. Your donation of baby related products for The Nest store will be greatly appreciated and well used.



Advent Schedule
Signs of the Season

Sat/Sun. November 26/27: - The Advent Wreath

1st week of Advent—Season of Hope

Welcome home our college students for United Methodist Student Day

Sat/Sun. December 3/4: - The Evergreen

2nd week of Advent—Season of Peace

Celebrate Holy Communion and IWC Sunday

Sat/Sun. December 10/11: - Symbols of Faith

3rd week of Advent—Season of Love

Welcome to our missionaries to South Sudan, Drs. Lynn and Sharon Fogleman

Sat/Sun. December 17/18: - the Manger Awaits

4th week of Advent—Season of Joy

Attend the children's Christmas program at 10:45 a.m.

Sat. December 24th - Christmas Eve

5:30 p.m. Family Christmas Service

10:00 p.m. Candle light Communion Service

Sun. December 25th - Christmas Morning Service

One service at 9:00 a.m. (NO SUNDAY SCHOOL)

Sun. January 1st - New Year's Day Service

One service at 11:15 a.m. (NO SUNDAY SCHOOL)



Holiday Music Events



Before the Marvel of this Night!

Sunday, December 4th at 7:00 p.m. the Iowa Wesleyan College Choir and Mount Pleasant Chorale, under the direction of Professor Bradley Miller, will present their annual Christmas Choral Concert, A Service of Lessons and Carols, at First United Methodist Church

in Mount Pleasant. Highlights of the evening include performances of Felix Mendelssohn's famed *There Shall a Star Come Out of Jacob*, G. Winston Cassler's *The Godly Stranger*, Z. Randall Stroope's *Resonet in Laudibus*, and Carl Schalk's stunning *Before the Marvel of this Night*. The evening will include candle lighting and the singing of carols. A reception will follow in the 1st UMC Fellowship Hall. A \$5.00 donation is requested at the door. Please join us for a wonderful celebration of Christmas in song and word.

Messiah Sing!

Saturday, December 10th at 3:00 p.m., join the South East Iowa Symphony Orchestra and soloists in the annual community sing of George Frederick Handel's masterwork, *Messiah*. Bring your score and sing along or sit in the balcony of the Iowa Wesleyan College Chapel and enjoy the beautiful music.

Love Finds a Way

Sunday, December 18th at 10:45 a.m., the 1st UMC children will be putting on their annual Christmas program. *Love Finds a Way* is a story of a children's choir who learns that with a little faith in God, anything is possible.

Bells of Christmas

Wednesday, December 21st at 7:00 p.m., come ring in the season with Sound Appeal, the Mt. Pleasant Presbyterian Church bell choir. *Bells of Christmas* is the first concert in the Hometown Concert Series and will be held at the Iowa Wesleyan College Chapel. Tickets are available at Brown's Shoe Store.

December Birthdays

1
Whitney Barton
William Brickey

2
Gregg Crew
Abbie Leichty

3
Margaret Miller
Joel Ryon
Chris Stewart

4
Angela Reschly

5
Geneva Gambach

6
Samantha Doak
MaKenzie Sartorius

7
Anne Weir

8
Dylan Burden
Dale Calhoun
Julie Jennings
Prudy Mallams

9
Joseph Goody

10
Calvin Litwiller
Kelli Snodgrass

11
Olivia Elmore
Roy Ross
Stan Young

13
Barbara Garrels
Susie Kuhens
Marjorie McDowell
Heidi Snodgrass

14
Nikki McSorley
Brayton Meeker
Justin Oldt

15
Robert Krieger
Timothy Liechty
Courtney Menke

16
Aiden Blint
Allison Buckert
Barb Snodgrass
Sarah Stewart

17
Logan Calhoun
Betty Hazen
Sally Johnson
James Kinney
Douglas Marley
Jean Reschly

18
Brad Dyall

19
Gary Burns

Donna Gardner
Robert Jensen
Karol Ross

20
James Daughtry
Avery Elmore
Rachel Nellor
Kitt Rice

21
Chloe Anderson
Navid Falahpour
Jerry Mabeus
Tabbi Schimmelpfennig

22
Dorothy Boyd
Janice Jones
Suzanne Krieger

23
Trey Jennings
Kelly Kauffman
Anthony Liechty
Layke Millspaugh
Marc Mitchell
La lad Phanthouvong
Dave Snodgrass
Emma Stewart

24
Kathryn Lane
Linwood Miller
Justin Smith

25
Vincent Dale
Alberta Kitch

26
Rande McAllister

27
Alan Buckert
Louesa Bush
Grace Davidson
Marguerite Gohn
Brady Loyd
Jane Nyswonger
Samantha Shipman
Sheryl Woerdeman

28
Aaron Coe

29
Kevin Elmore
Jacob Johnson

30
Weston Barton
Kara Beauchamp
Aiden Humble
Trevje Karugo
Wayne Klopfenstein
Chancey Miller
Samantha Rosell

31
Aric Alexander
Ann Mallams
Richard McClellan IV
Claire Melzer
Beau Miller

A Note from Ad Council Chairman

As Chair of Administrative Council, it is my pleasure to express my gratitude to all the committee chairs, work area chairs, and other who have given freely of their time and talents this past year. Your contributions have worked wonders as the church seeks to continue its mission to welcome, equip and send.

Thank You!

United Methodist Women would like to thank all those who donated items and attended our annual rummage sale. This fall, we had a profit of \$2,038.50. Our profits are used for projects within our church. Some of our recent purchases have been: window coverings for Fellowship Hall and several classrooms, paint for classrooms, updating electrical wiring in classrooms and many more projects. Thank you to everyone for your support.

Poinsettia Time



It's time to fill up our worship space with those beautifully festive Christmas flowers! Please bring your poinsettias in no earlier than December 21st. The flowers don't last very long and we want them to look their best for our Christmas services. If you would like your plant to be listed as 'in honor' or 'in memory' of someone, please fill out the form below and place it in the offering plate on Saturday night or Sunday morning services **before** December 18th. (Please don't put it on the desk in the office as important papers can get lost this time of the year with all the busy paperwork being done. We don't want your memorial declaration to be lost!)

In memory of _____

In honor of _____

Given by _____

What's Dishin' with Missions

Potato Drop Update

On November 19th at 7:00 a.m., a truck loaded with 42,000 pounds of potatoes unloaded 13,100 pounds of them in the back parking lot of our church. Fifteen different entities arrived to get their pre-designated amount of potatoes. The deliveries ranged from 100 to 5800 pounds. The two largest recipients were Greg Stacy of Our Church Community Church, north of Trenton, Iowa receiving 2,500 pounds and Melisa Bracht-Wagner, Director of the Fellowship Cup, receiving 5,800 pounds. These potatoes arrived just in time to be distributed for Thanksgiving. This project, which was spearheaded by our church's Missions Committee, is a project of the Society of St. Andrew. The Society of St. Andrew is a nationwide program which salvages potatoes, vegetables and other fresh produce for distribution nationwide to relieve hunger.



Show You Care This Christmas



In the back of the Sanctuary is a Christmas Tree in which UMW will collect mittens, hats, scarves, socks and underwear for the Mount Pleasant Community school nurse to distribute to children throughout the winter.

Also, on the same tree, are tags with items needed for Christmas that will be distributed through the Fellowship Cup as a part of the Family Connection and the school social worker. These tags will be in place of the Angel Tree tags from years past. Please take one or several tags and return them to the church by December 12th with the tag taped to your purchase. United Methodist Women will see that your gifts are delivered.

A Visit from Our Missionaries

December 10th and 11th medical missionaries, Lynn and Sharon Fogleman will be visiting 1st UMC. It is a rare opportunity for us to host the missionaries we support. They will be sharing an inspirational message during each worship service. Sunday morning during Sunday School, a brunch will be served while Lynn and Sharon share with us more specifically about the situation in South Sudan and what their ministry there will look like. Please join us the weekend of December 10th and 11th to meet, greet, and encourage the Foglemans as they undertake their new assignment. There will be an opportunity at the brunch for you to contribute a love gift for the Foglemans. Our gift will help ease their relocation expenses.

Thank You

Jane and George LaMore wish to thank church friends and Pastor Shafer for kindnesses while Jane was in Mercy Hospital of Iowa City getting a pacemaker. Methodist prayers in a Catholic hospital are extravagant.

Thank You

Thank you for all the cards, support and words of comfort in the passing of my mother, Marie Dovenspike. Special thanks go to Pastor Shafer for the visits, kind words and blessings.
God's blessings to all of you.

~Steve Dovenspike

Thank You

Thank you for the use of your Fellowship Hall. It works perfectly for host the Mount Pleasant Community High School band breakfast. We appreciate your support! Thanks again!

~Mount Pleasant Music Boosters

Grace Circle Holiday Gathering

Where: Jan Shafer's home 401 N. Broadway Street

When: December 1st, 2011

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Come and enjoy our study and stay from soup and dessert. This is the ideal time to bring a friend who may be interested in joining our circle.

RSVP: 385-9506

Hope you see you there!



1st—Thursday
10:00 a.m.—Grace Circle at Jan Shafer’s house

2nd—Friday
5:00 p.m.—Boy Scouts Lock-In

3rd—Saturday
8:00 a.m.—Men’s Bible Study
1:00 p.m.—Lessons and Carols Rehearsal
5:30 p.m.—Saturday Night Praise and Fellowship

4th—Sunday
9:00 a.m.—Classic service in the Sanctuary
10:00 a.m.—Tech Training in the Balcony
10:15 a.m.—Sunday School and Adult classes
11:15 a.m.—Praise and Worship in the Sanctuary
7:00 p.m.—Lessons and Carols Service in Sanctuary

5th—Monday
11:00 a.m.—Staff Meeting

6th—Tuesday
3:30 p.m.—Girl Scouts
5:00 p.m.—SPRC

7th—Wednesday
8:30 a.m.—Knots of Love
5:30 p.m.—Bell Choir
6:30 p.m.—Chancel Choir
- AWANA
- Middle School Youth
- Men’s Fraternity
- Women’s Study

8th—Thursday
1:30 p.m.—Love Circle
3:00 p.m.—District Parish Development
5:15 p.m.—Friendship Circle at Marilyn Young’s

10th—Saturday
8:00 a.m.—Men’s Bible Study

9:30 a.m.—DCOM Meetings
1:30 p.m.—Girl Scouts in Fellowship Hall
3:00 p.m.—Messiah Sing! At IWC Chapel
5:30 p.m.—Saturday Night Praise and Fellowship
(Foglemans visit!)

11th—Sunday
9:00 a.m.—Classic Service in the Sanctuary
10:15 a.m.—Sunday School and Adult Classes
- Foglemans speak during brunch in Fellowship Hall
11:15 a.m.—Praise and Worship in the Sanctuary

12th—Monday
11:00 a.m.—Staff Meeting
4:30 p.m.—Stephen’s Ministry in the Library

13th—Tuesday
3:30 p.m.—Girl Scouts
5:00 p.m.—SPRC
5:30 p.m. - Missions Committee
6:00 p.m.—Worship Committee
6:30 p.m.—Trustees Committee
7:30 p.m.—Finance Committee

14th—Wednesday
6:30 p.m.—Chancel Choir
- AWANA
- Middle School Youth
- Men’s Fraternity
- Women’s Study

16th—Friday
11:30 a.m.—Staff Christmas Lunch

17th—Saturday
8:00 a.m.—Men’s Bible Study
9:00 a.m.—Breakfast with Santa in Fellowship Hall
- Patience Circle

10:00 a.m.—Christmas play rehearsal
5:30 p.m.—Saturday Night Praise and Fellowship



- No Youth

31st—Saturday
8:00 a.m.—Men’s Bible Study

Happy New Year!
1st—Sunday
11:15 a.m.—One Service in the Sanctuary
NO SUNDAY SCHOOL

18th—Sunday
9:00 a.m.—Classic Service in the Sanctuary
10:15 a.m.—Sunday School and Adult Classes
10:45 a.m.— ‘Love Finds a Way’ Christmas play in the Sanctuary
11:15 a.m.—Christmas Luncheon hosted by youth
11:15 a.m.—Praise and Worship in the Sanctuary

19th—Monday
11:00 a.m.—Staff Meeting

20th—Tuesday
6:30 p.m.—Christian Education Committee

21st—Wednesday
8:30 a.m.—Knots of Love
6:30 p.m.—Chancel Choir
- NO AWANA
- Middle School Youth
- Men’s Fraternity
- Women’s Study
7:30 p.m.—Ad Council

23rd—Friday
Office Closed

24th—Saturday Christmas Eve
5:30 p.m.—Family Christmas Service
10:00 p.m.—Candlelight Communion Service

25th—Sunday Merry Christmas!
9:00 a.m.—One Service in the Sanctuary
NO SUNDAY SCHOOL

26th—Monday
Office Closed

28th—Wednesday
6:30 p.m.—No Chancel Choir
- No AWANA





Wanted: Youth Small Group Leaders

Skills Needed: A love of youth, a willingness to share your faith, a desire to grow and help others grow in love and relationship with Jesus Christ.

Job Responsibilities: Weekly attendance with your small group, weekly attendance at worship, knowledge in use of appropriate discipline.

Benefits: Jewels in your crown in Heaven, good feeling of bringing others to meet Jesus, growth in your personal faith.

If interested, contact Pastor Dave.



Angel Tree Shopping

December 7th, the Middle School Youth will go shopping for the Angel Tree. Meet at the church at 6:30 p.m. to depart for Wal-Mart in Mt. Pleasant.



Children's Christmas Play



On Sunday, December 18th at 10:45 a.m., the Sunday School children will be performing their annual Christmas program. This year, the program is called *Love Finds a Way* and is about a children's choir who learns about having faith that God will truly provide.

Please join us on this wonderful event! The children have been working very hard (they're even learning German!) and are excited about presenting this program to the congregation which will both touch your heart and make you smile with its humorous moments. Parents, if you have children ages two through fifth grade, they are involved in the program. Make sure to let grandparents, aunts, uncles and other family members know. They won't want to miss this!

Following the program, there will be a luncheon hosted by 1st UMC youth in the Fellowship Hall. Please join us for this special occasion!



Play Rehearsal!

On Saturday, December 17th at 10:00 a.m., there will be a final dress rehearsal for *Love Finds a Way* in the Sanctuary. If you are in Celebration Choir or a junior high student with a speaking part, make sure you are present. The rehearsal will run about forty-five minutes.



Greetings,

Throughout the Advent season, the youth are continuing to look at faith in the context of family and community. They are using a video series called *Teens vs. Parents*. In the videos and small group discussion, it is being reinforced to the youth that their parents are their strongest ally and that good communication, telling parents what they are thinking and what is going on in their lives, is key to a strong family team.

As we enter this season and prepare for the coming of the Christ child, we are bombarded with commercials and ads telling us what to buy and from where to buy it. I would encourage all families to set aside some time to just be a family and share how you are preparing for Christ's coming. Because family time is important to us, we will not be having youth over the Christmas break. Take the time that would be spent at youth and use that to read the Christmas story as a family, watch a movie together, or play a game. May your Christmas season be a blessing and may you feel the presence of Christ in your lives each day.

Be bold, be strong,

Pastor Dave

Upcoming Events



Every Wednesday Night = Middle School Youth Night! 6:30—8:00 p.m.
Every other Sunday Night = Sr. High 5:30 p.m. (Meal Included)

December 7th Middle School Youth

December 11th Sr. High Youth

December 14th Middle School Youth

December 18th Youth Luncheon 11:15 a.m.

December 21st Middle School Youth

December 24th Christmas Eve Service
5:30 p.m. Family Service
10:00 p.m. Candlelight Communion Service

December 25th Christmas Morning Service
One service at 9:00 a.m.
No Sunday School/No Sr. High Youth

December 28th No Middle School Youth