



THE FIRST WORD

News from the First United Methodist Church
of South Bend, Indiana

In the heart of the city since 1831

January 11, 2012

Issue #450

NEW BEGINNINGS

I listened to the fireworks that excited neighbors shot off at (and well beyond) midnight on January 1, and found myself wondering how old they were. I remember being very excited about the New Year when it felt new – now, at the advanced old age of 57, I do my best to sleep through the celebrations.

Ecclesiastes – sometimes called the Book of Wisdom – reminds us that there is nothing new under the sun, and the nostrums in Chapter 3 sound quite modern today.

We can mark new beginnings in any number of ways – the calendar, a noted date (birthdays, anyone?), a change in jobs or in our families. New births are obvious – everything seems to shift and change with a new baby!

The scriptures at the beginning of the year mark *newness*. Light coming into the world, the creation beginning, Jesus' visit from the three sages, the baptism of Christ by John – where everything really gets going in the big story.

In Revelation, God says, "*Behold, I make all things new*" – and for our more dubious and cynical listeners, reminds us that "*these words are trustworthy and true.*"

Tired of the same old, same old? Sleeping through other people's celebrations? Let's wake up together and party hearty – celebrate the new things in our lives, the new things God is doing in our church, the new direction God is pushing us toward.

It's a new year. Who knows what it holds? Let's enter it, as Simeon and Anna did the day they met Jesus, with "*joyful expectation*".

It may just be fun!

Mary L. Hubbard

Worship Schedule

Worship, Chapel
9:00 a.m.

Sunday School
10:00 a.m.

Worship, Sanctuary
11:00 a.m.

Church Office Hours
Monday - Thursday
7:00 a.m. - Noon
12:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Friday: 7:00 a.m. - Noon
Phone: (574) 233-9463
Fax: (574) 233-9478

First Staff

Mary L. Hubbard
Senior Pastor
Robert Lewis
Associate Pastor
Marsha Dollar
Administrative Assistant
Wishart Bell
Director of Music
Leora Nauta
Organist
Lou Anne Wilson
Financial Manager
David Frey
Coordinator of Youth Ministries
Ben Noell
Building Manager
John Jung-Zimmerman
Upper Room Director

**HAVE YOU REMEMBERED
FIRST CHURCH IN YOUR
WILL?**

THANK YOU

The staff wishes to thank all of you for our very generous Christmas Gifts. We appreciate it more than you will know.

Bob

Lou Anne

Marsha

Mary

Wishart

Leora

Ben

John

Dave

HERE IS WHAT WE THINK OF YOU

Stewardship is not just a financial matter; it is a spiritual matter. As someone suggested we should pray after we dedicate the offering during our worship services, “Lord, no matter what we say or do, here is what we think of you.” [Stewardship Facts, National Council of Churches]

I’m not sure we would want to use that in morning worship next week, but it states a profound truth.

DECEMBER 2011 MISSION TALLIES

Food Pantry: For the month of December, the Food Pantry served 502 families, representing 1,942 individuals. 26% of those served were new for the month of December.

Soup Kitchen: 752 people were served and 572 carry-out bags were given away for a total of 2,860 cups of soup and 1,896 meals given out in December.

Upper Room: 13 residents at the end of December (13 men and 0 women).

Join Vesper Chorale for a world premier performance: *Stabat Mater* by Spanish composer Jorge Muñiz

As part of its Diverse Journeys Concert Series, Vesper Chorale extends an invitation to choral singers of Spanish language, who have experience in large choral works to join them in presenting this oratorio.

Concerts will take place Saturday and Sunday, March 24 and 25, 2012. Rehearsals begin in January.

For more information, visit
www.MusicalArtsIndiana.org.





PRAYER LIST



Following is a prayer list. Please remember to include these people in your regular prayers:

Brandon Berger - Deployed to Afghanistan	Mary Lou Gordon - Health concerns
Jonathan Mayers - In military service	Ron Florey - Health concerns
Michael Pershell - In military service	Marilyn Prue - Health concerns
Stephen Gramza - In military service	Carol Goodhew - Health concerns
Jeremy Martin - Special needs	Mary Jo Beemer - Health concerns
Jack Woolridge & family - Loss	Betty Barnes - Health concerns
Tom Byers & family - Loss	David Easterbrook - Eye Problems
Alfred Levy & family - Loss	Will Johnston - Health concerns
Jim Pickens - Health concerns	Beverly Torres (Stone Soup) - Health concerns
Willa Pickens - Health concerns	
Thorin Grey Yeager (Deb Mayers' Grandson) - Health concerns	

Also remember to pray for our members in long-term care, assisted living, and independent living:

Martha Abernethy	Mary Jo Beemer	Margaret Grant	Ruth Garen
Virginia O'Hair	Rich Daniels	JoAnn Ballard	Clem Gramza
Hannah Messersmith	Jo Perkey	Betty Barnes	Thair Best
Hugh Warren	Jim Borden	Margaret Wickizer	Jeanette Koehler
Melvena Stenger			

Additionally pray for:

Our Bishop Mike	Our Church	Our Pastor Mary
Our District Superintendent, Cindy	Our Church Staff	Our Pastor Bob

LOST

A few weeks ago, Betty Shumaker's coat came up missing at the church. She thinks someone may have picked it up by accident thinking it was theirs. If you find an extra navy blue raincoat (the underside of the collar is green) lying around your house, please let the office know. Thanks!

REMINDER

This Sunday (January 15) we will be taking up a special collection for Humans Relations Day. Among many projects, this offering is helping students at Philander Smith College engage in ministries that advocate for solutions to injustice, hunger, homelessness and other social ills. So please give generously!



NEW MEMBERS

Please welcome our newest members:

Rod Parker, Karen Parker, and June Supko
joined our church on December 11, 2011.

Be sure to shake their hand, introduce your-
self, and welcome them into our congregation.



**Pledge Envelopes for 2012 are available on the
windowsill in the main hallway.**

Please pick yours up today.

Thank you !

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Check out the website:

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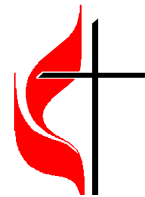
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

A GREETING FROM THE CELTIC MUSICIANS



*For each petal on the shamrock
this brings a wish your way,
good health, good luck, and happiness
for today and every day.*

**Join us for Worship Sundays at 9:00 a.m.
and hear the Celtic Musicians play.**



The People of The United Methodist Church

- Help people in their community
- Accept you for who you are
- Offer a place to belong
- Care for and support each other
- Show respect for other religions
- Support people facing difficulty
- Welcome diverse opinions and beliefs
- Guide others to find deeper meaning