

the trumpet



CROWN HEIGHTS
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

January 2010

Vol. 5 Issue 1

From Dianne's Desk

IN DYING ARE WE BORN

As I write we are in the waning hours of 2009. TV is full of retrospectives—the top ten news stories, the wonderful people who died this year, the most popular songs, the scandals, the economy—you name it. The reality is 2009 is coming to a close, and with it the recognition that we must let go of the past.

Our scriptures remind us that there is “a time to be born and a time to die” (Ecclesiastes 3). Such reflections seem very appropriate as we come to this annual mile-marker. But our faith also affirms that birth follows death. We are the resurrection people, the ones who follow the God who knows the way out of the tomb. Life is full of losses, little deaths that help us learn God always has the last word. As painful as deaths can be, hope springs eternal on the other side.

During the month of January, I invite you to take some time to reflect on your life with God. What have been the high points? When did God carry you through the night? What have you left behind in order to follow where Christ leads? And as you enter this new year, ask yourself this question:

What needs to die in me in order for a deeper faith to be born?

This is one of the toughest questions of the Christian life! Just when we think we have banished all selfishness from our hearts, we’re surprised by the way we respond to a reasonable request for help. After years of intentionally finding our security in God, we are rocked by a sudden financial loss. In those private moments when we look deep inside, we may be shocked to find that our “need to achieve,” no matter how we hurt, is still alive and well. This kind of spiritual inventory is so much more than making a list of New Year’s resolutions. This is a time to hold Christ’s hand and to look at ourselves more honestly than ever before. The Light of Christ brings all of our stumbling blocks out of the shadows, helping us to see them, name them, and then choose to leave them behind. What needs to die in you so

you can be born anew? What crutches do you need to throw away? What relationships have died that now need to be buried? What are you clinging to rather than taking the risk to go with God? That simple phrase, “let go and let God lead,” is easier said than done, but what a difference it makes! God is trustworthy and wants the best for each of us. God is reliable and strong enough for all our challenges. Even when it feels as though we’ve got one foot in the grave, we are not alone. Jesus knows how to get out of the grave. Resurrection is our promise and our hope. Happy birthday! New life begins today.

Blessings, Dianne



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THANK YOU FROM THE STAFF

Dear Crown Heights family,

Thank you so much for the thoughtful Christmas gifts! We are enjoying the Target gift cards, and have already enjoyed the delicious rum cakes and other Christmas goodies! We truly appreciate your generosity. Thank you for remembering us in this special season of love and light.

Cordially,

Dianne, Stacy, George, Mariann, Libby, Mario,
Jana, Kassie, Collin, Justin and Kelli

CROWN HEIGHTS PLANNING MEETING

Saturday, January 23

9:00-2:00

We have our strategic plan prepared -- now it's time to put it into action!

Members of all programming committees and the Administrative Council are encouraged to circle this day in red on your calendar! We'll provide lunch if you'll provide the people-power. Every person's contribution and support are critical to our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ. Child care will be available by reservation. Plan now to attend!

JANUARY SERMONS

- | | | |
|------------|--|---|
| January 3 | Epiphany Sunday
"Following the Light"
Even in a time of "thick darkness" the Light shines! Where will the star lead you in this new year? | Matthew 2:1-12 and Isaiah 60:1-6 |
| January 10 | Baptism of the Lord Sunday
"Baptized with Flames?"
John tells us that Jesus will baptize with "the Holy Spirit and fire," in addition to water. What does fire have to do with being claimed by God? | Luke 3:15-17, 21-22 and Isaiah 43:1-7 |
| January 17 | Second Sunday After the Epiphany
"Called by a New Name for the Common Good"
God rejoices over you and has blessed you with special gifts for the benefit of the whole community of faith. That might your new name be? How will you share your gifts with the world? | I Corinthians 12:1-11 and Isaiah 62:1-5 |
| January 24 | The Rev. Dr. Sharon Betsworth, Director of the Wimberly School of Religion at Oklahoma City University, will be our guest preacher. | |
| January 31 | Fourth Sunday after Epiphany
"God is at Work in You: Watch Out!"
Jeremiah hesitates to say "yes" to God's call; Jesus' experience in Nazareth helps us understand why. | Jeremiah 1:4-10 and Luke 4:21-30 |

FINANCE REPORT

Many thanks for everyone's extra effort to help with giving specifically for our United Methodist Apportionments in 2009! The final figures aren't in yet, but we have made progress in coming closer to paying our apportionments in full. We've had special gifts of people's spare change, giving toward specific ministries covered in apportionments, the Christmas offering and designated giving for all apportionments. Your giving IS making a difference in people's lives!

The Finance Committee is getting a little closer to being ready to propose a budget to the Administrative Council for the 2010 year. Every area of the church is working to help reduce expenses. The finance campaign for 2010 has wrapped up the pledge campaign. We have had several new

pledges added for which we are grateful, however, total income for 2010 is anticipated to be down approximately \$35,000 from the 2009 income. While many expense areas will decrease their budgets for 2010, the current 2010 budget draft is short approximately \$43,000.

The Administrative Council will be carefully reviewing the proposed budget at their meeting on January 11th. The Trustees are pursuing the possibility of working the wedding fairs in our area, in hopes of generating more income through wedding fees. We will continue to look for other creative ways to increase our income in the coming year. Your "second mile giving" will make all the difference! Thank you for caring so deeply about our ministries and missions at Crown Heights!

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL MEETINGS

Our newly elected Administrative Council members will be meeting on Monday evenings, beginning promptly at 6:15 p.m.

Here are the specific dates, designed to follow the second Sunday of the month:



- January 11
- February 15
- March 15
- April 12
- May 10
- June 14
- No meeting in July
- August 9
- September 13
- October 11
- November 15 (may change for Charge Conference date)
- December 13 (if needed)

Please mark your calendars now and we'll look forward to seeing you on Monday, January 11 at 6:15 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Child care will be available by reservation.

LOCAL CHURCH LEADERS WORKSHOP

Saturday, January 16
St. Luke's UMC

The Oklahoma City North and South districts are again combining forces to provide the local church leaders workshops at St. Luke's UMC, located at 15th and Robinson.

- Bishop Hayes will be giving the opening devotional at 8:30 a.m.
- District Conferences will be conducted at 9:00 a.m., followed by two workshop sessions, one at 9:45 and the second at 11:15.
- Session 2 will conclude by 12:30 a.m.
- The registration is \$10 per person with a deadline of January 8th.

Child care is available by calling the church at 232-1371.

A list of the workshops being offered is posted on our bulletin board by Stacy's office or you can view it on the web site at www.okumc.org/LCLWregistration. In case of inclement weather, call St. Luke's at 232-1371 or check the web site.

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS



JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES



CALLING ALL COOKS AND DRIVERS

Do you like to cook or drive? Could you spare a couple of hours a month?

Well we have the perfect job for you...
...Our Mobile Meals crew could use a little help. Call Stacy at the office (524-8428) if you'd like to help out one Monday per month by volunteering to cook for a small group of people that can't cook for themselves, or deliver a hot cooked meal to them.

What a wonderful way to start a new year!



ARTS ACADEMY by Janet Basler

ARTS ACADEMY RECITAL A HIT!!!

The fellowship hall was filled with music, great food, art and dancing during the first Arts Academy Recital on December 6th. Nine artists displayed their artwork, while 3 dancers and a speech student entertained the diners with some hip hop, and jazz numbers, and a precious monologue about a child's dog. The students are looking forward to more dance lessons, art lessons, speech lessons, and music lessons in a few months.

A big THANK YOU goes out to all who attended the recital to support our kids. Also to Joy Robison and Glen & Brigitte Gean for getting the meal together, Susie Wallace and Taffy Fellingham for transporting kids to their lessons each week, and Wayna Tyner for writing encouraging notes to the kids. This was a church family endeavor that has made an impact on children's lives.



ARTS ACADEMY NEEDS INSTRUMENTS FOR MUSIC LESSONS

The Arts Academy (a ministry of Crown Heights United Methodist Church) and students at Putnam Heights Elementary are looking forward to being able to take music lessons beginning in January. In order to do this we need instruments to take lessons on and to practice with. We need:

keyboards,
guitars,
clarinets,
violins, and
any other instruments you might find to donate.



Also if you know a group that has a newsletter, please ask if you can put an ad or article about the need for used instruments. We can give anyone who donates a tax exempt receipt. Call Janet Basler, 229-3041, if you have questions, or an instrument.

Let's get together and find the instruments we need to help these kids develop all their God-given creative abilities.



NOTHING BUT NETS FUNDRAISING NIGHT AT OCU JANUARY 23RD, 2010

Oklahoma City University vs. Oklahoma Baptist University
Women's Game at 6pm, Men's Game at 8pm

At the Freede Center on NW 27th and Florida on the OCU Campus

"Celebrity Free Throw Shoot Out" during halftime of the men's game
Churches: Half of your \$6 ticket price goes to Nothing But Nets*
Mention you are with the UMC when purchasing your tickets

Donate \$1 for a chance to win a Thunder Team Ball or other prizes
\$10 t-shirts available with all money going to Nothing But Nets.

**Nothing But Nets is an international campaign to provide insecticide-treated nets to protect families from malaria.*

COME TO LIBERIA AND HELP US!

by Evelyn Physter

During the night a vision appeared to Paul: a Macedonian man was standing and pleading with him, "Come to Macedonia and help us!" (Read Acts 16: 9-13)

Sometimes, there are certain scriptures that seem to travel with you for a long time. Such is the case with the scripture cited above. For some time, Rev. Priscilla Jaiah, our missionary friend and mission host, had asked me to come to Liberia and help her. In February of this year she was appointed principal at the Ganta United Methodist School (G.U.M.S.). The school is located north of Monrovia and is on the grounds of the Ganta Methodist Mission Station. The school has an enrollment of approximately one thousand (1,000) students in kindergarten through 12th grade. Although tuition is paid (avg. \$125.00/yr), only 30% of the students are able to cover the cost of their tuition. For the remaining 70%, sponsors or scholarships must be found. There are 33 teachers who are paid an average of \$100.00 per month.

Teachers use what is called the "chalk-and-talk method" meaning that teachers write their lessons on the chalkboard because students do not have assigned textbooks. When additional work is required students go to the school library where there are a few well-used text books that have been donated by various churches within our denomination. They did not even have a copy machine until I purchased one with funds donated by members of this conference, including donations from members of Crown Heights. There is a real shortage of current information from magazines, newspapers, maps, encyclopedias and dictionaries. There was not even a lab for teaching the advanced sciences. There was a total of 13 National Geographic Magazines; the only periodical in the library, and they were all from the 1970's, as was the only unabridged dictionary. The children's section held approximately 50-75 books for a student population of nearly 500 in the lower grades. None of these conditions deter students from using this library because it is the only one in the area.

When Priscilla said, "Come to Liberia and help me," I had this notion of going off to teach in some ideal setting. You would think after 15 years in foreign mission I would know that if the situation was ideal, she would not need help. September 1, 2009, I retired after over 22 years with the Oklahoma Tax Commission. On September 10, I left for Liberia to teach English at G.U.M.S. Although English is their official language and they know the rules, the challenge came with application of the rules. My first day, I had two 10th grade sections with over 60 students in each section; two 11th grade sections with over 50 students per section; and a 12th grade section with over 40 students and there was another 12th grade section to go. At this point, I threw up my hands and went screaming into the school yard. Although I am exaggerating about my reaction, we did agree on my teaching the 10th and 11th grade sections for half of my time there and the

12th grade composition sections for the second half. My time at G.U.M.S. ended on November 4, 2009. Since returning, I have often been asked, "What was it like?" As I tried to decide what to include in this article, I can tell you that I saw many signs of hope; the commitment of Rev. Jaiah and her staff to the students; the determination of many of the students to learn even without water, electricity, computers, textbooks, and many of the other "modern" teaching materials that our students and teachers readily expect and use daily; the interest and concern demonstrated by parents who attend PTA meetings, teacher conferences, and school programs to show their support for their children though financially they may not be able to provide those resources; the willingness of G.U.M.S. to share its scant donated supplies with other schools that have even less than the Ganta school and are without the support provided by our denomination to Ganta; and the volunteers who come to help them from many locations to let them know that they are not alone.

It was very difficult to condense nearly 100 pages of my journal and two months of experiences into this article, however, give me an opening and I will bend your ears. I have really been encouraged and deeply moved by the response to the appeal during the Beyond the Walls time for books and other written materials for the school library. They enjoy reading materials of all types, so if you would like to continue to support this mission just let me know. Operation Classroom, Inc., located in Colfax, Indiana, sends shipments (cargo containers by ship) twice a year. I am committed to sending at least one box of materials to Operation Classroom each month in 2010 so that they will be there for the next shipment. Rev Jaiah asked me to come to Liberia and help her. I did and it was one of the most challenging experiences that I have ever undertaken. Although not cited, Acts 16, verse 10, continues with the story after the vision. Paul and Timothy immediately made efforts to go to Macedonia, "concluding that God had called" them to this mission. I had the same feeling that I could not rest. My spirit would not rest until I went to help her. I thank God for giving me this opportunity.

On February 13, 2010, I will return to Liberia for the Liberia Annual Conference where Bishop Robert Hayes will be the Conference speaker. There are currently 8 members of this team. Please pray for our team so that we may fulfill the VIM purpose, to share the love of God in ways that make a Christian difference, and the tasks to which we are called.

Thanks be to God, Evelyn Physter



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CHURCH STAFF

Dianne Kovacs Peters, Senior Pastor

Stacy Gilbert Coombe	Administrative Assistant
Libby Campbell	Accounting Secretary
Mario Estrada	Custodian
George Massey	Director of Music
Mariann Searle	Organist
Kassie Carroll	Nursery Coordinator
Justin Larman	Nursery Assistant
Collin Andrulonis	Nursery Assistant
Kelli Cormack	Nursery Assistant
Jana Hogg	Youth Minister

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We're on the web! www.crownheightsumc.org

January 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 NEW YEARS DAY	2
3 Epiphany Sunday 4:00 pm Youth	4 9:00 am Mobile Meals 6:00 pm NA Meeting	5	6 6:00 pm Bible Study	7 2:45 pm Whiz Kids 6:30 pm NA Meeting	8 Canyon Youth	9 Camp Retreat
10 Baptism of Our Lord 4:00 pm Youth	11 9:00 am Mobile Meals 6:15 pm Ad Council 6:30 pm NA Meeting	12 Eat at Johnnies	13 6:00 pm Bible Study	14 2:45 pm Whiz Kids 6:30 pm NA Meeting	15	16 Local Church Leaders Workshop St. Luke's 8 - 12:30
17 2nd Sunday after Epiphany 4:00 pm Youth	18 9:00 am Mobile Meals 6:30 pm NA Meeting	19	20 6:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	21 2:45 pm Whiz Kids 6:30 pm NA Meeting	22	23 Planning Meeting 9:00 - 2:00
24 3rd Sunday after Epiphany 4:00 pm Youth	25 9:00 am Mobile Meals 6:00 pm NA Meeting	26	27 6:00 pm Bible Study	28 2:45 pm Whiz Kids 6:30 pm NA Meeting	29	30
31 4th Sunday after Epiphany						