

Forest Hills
United Methodist
Church

THE EDGE

December
2011

DECEMBER UPCOMING EVENTS

PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Outside the Box: The Gift that Can't Be Contained!

As we get "outside the box" this Christmas, here are some questions and quotes to prompt us each week:

Dec. 6	6.30pm United Methodist Women (UMW) Christmas Party at Key's Café.
Dec. 10	6.00pm Adult Fellowship
Dec. 14	11.30am ROMEO's (Retired Old Men Eating Out)
Dec. 16	Community Care set-up
Dec. 17	Community Care 12.00pm Christmas Caroling & Flash Mob
Dec. 24	3pm Passport to Bethlehem. An Interactive family activity 2-4pm Petting Zoo 11pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
Dec. 25	Christmas Day! 11.30am Teen Challenge Christmas party/dinner
Dec. 28	No Wed. night activities

Week 1: Open Up...Expectation!

What is your greatest expectation this Christmas?

"Uncertainty and expectation are the joys of life." -William Congreve

Scriptures: Mark 13:32-37 and Luke 1:26-38

Getting ready for Christmas is a whole lot different than getting ready for Christ. One may leave you depleted, the other fulfilled. How can you do both?

"We can do no great things, only small things with great love." -Mother Teresa

Week 2: Open Up...acceptance!

When something is out of your control, how do you cope with it? Who do you turn to?

"Things of the spirit differ from things material in that the more you give the more you have." -Christopher Morley

Scriptures: Isaiah 40:1-6a and Matthew 1: 18-25

None of us have experienced this Christmas season before. What new things are you planning that are "outside the box?"

"Dare to reach out your hand into the darkness, to pull another hand into the light." -Norman B. Rice

Week 3: Open Up...family!

When you think of the word "family," who is included? Is it just "blood" relatives? How can we expand the concept of family?

"What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us; what we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal." -Albert Pike

Scriptures: Isaiah 61:1-4 and Luke 2:8-20

If you're lonely this season, think about someone else who may be even lonelier. How will you form new community?

"The greatest good you can do for another is not just to share your riches but to reveal to him his own." -Benjamin Disraeli

Week 4: Open Up...Yourself!

Out of all the things that you will take out of the box this season, God is the most important. What are some new discoveries you've had? What are your struggles?

"God has not called us to see through each other, but to see each other through." -Anon.

Scripture: 2 Samuel 7:1-3 and Luke 2:7

Some think that they have to be "shined up" before they can go to church or be accepted by God. God simply asks that we give what we have and who we are. Where have you seen transformation this Christmas season?

"Do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do." -John Wooden

Merry Christmas! ~Pastor David

WORSHIP'S WORD

How Babies are Born

- Step 1: A pregnant woman is driven to the hospital by a concerned man.
 Step 2: Concerned man holds pregnant woman's hand while doctors assist her in giving birth.
 Step 3: A baby enters the world.
 Step 4: Concerned man is now happy father. The baby looks like him.
 Step 5: Pregnant woman is now happy mother. The baby is healthy.
 Step 6: Family and friends come to celebrate and bring gifts.
 Step 7: Baby assumes same economic status as happy father and happy mother.
 Step 8: Baby isn't aware of his/her purpose in life until many years later.

How Jesus was Born

- Step 1: A poor, pregnant virgin, accompanied by concerned man, rides on donkey into a populated city.
 Step 2: With no medical help available, concerned man holds pregnant woman's hand while she gives birth in a barn.
 Step 3: A baby enters the world.
 Step 4: Concerned man already knows the baby won't look like him.
 Step 5: Pregnant woman knows her baby is a king.
 Step 6: Strangers stop by to bring gifts because angels told them about the baby being born.
 Step 7: The baby's real economic status is way above his parents.
 Step 8: At a young age, baby knows that his purpose in life is to save the world.

God is so brilliant. Jesus' birth looked a lot like ours, but yet shattered every cliché of that decade as well as today. Jesus' birth was outside of the box. He was a present that didn't come packaged as expected! This is why our worship for this season centers on this very ancient idea of "Outside the Box." Jesus used this method to reach people who were hungry for something new and some kind of change in their lives. That sure sounds like a Merry Christmas to me!

Higher up and deeper in,
 ~Julie Graham- Director of Music and Worship

NURTURE NEWS

I pray everyone had a wonderful and blessed Thanksgiving. A time to give thanks as well as a time to be with family and friends. Thanksgiving can be a wonderful time when we allow it to be, as well as a restful time, a time to slow down from our fast paced lives. We have to decide how we want each holiday to be and let God guide us in these times.

Now we are moving closer and closer to the church's most celebrated time of the year where we can all celebrate the gift God has given each of us. I pray we can each remind ourselves what Christmas is really all about, instead of what the world perceives it to be about.

I feel God has truly blessed our church in so many ways and we need to thank him each and every day for these blessings. I thank God for all of the ministries that He has given us here at Forest Hills and pray He helps strengthen us in the areas we need help.

The experience many of us had with the new group called "Action Pack" was truly awesome. We had the opportunity to serve 6 families a meal which was put together by Nancy Daschel, Ann Klinner and Mary Halvorson. We also had the opportunity to be hosts to the families which many in the group took part of on different evenings and a couple of us had the opportunity to be overnight hosts as well. Pathways has a great program in Chisago County and it was a blessing to be a part of the program at Wyoming Methodist Church. This was a great opportunity to put our faith into action. For anyone that has not signed up for this small group program and would be interested please contact Bob Rosenbaum or Steve Ruter. There will be a variety of many different activities in the community to be a part of.

God Bless,
 Steve Ruter- Nurture Director

OUTREACH CORNER

Have you ever considered being a mentor to a youth? Granted, it's probably not something that's at the top of your to do list. And I'm sure your schedule is too full to talk with kids about, well-kids stuff, I suppose. Well, here's the real scoop. Mentoring only requires about two hours a month. And if you can be a positive role model, want to connect with youth in the community, are patient and willing to listen, and love to have fun, there is a youth waiting to meet you. Here are a couple of programs in the area that could use your help.

Youth Service Bureau (YSB) has a need for mentors, especially male mentors at this time. As a mentor, you will meet with your youth one to two times a month for a minimum of six months according to a schedule determined by the mentor/mentee. You meet at the YSB on Lake Street and begin to make a positive impact for a youth looking for guidance. You do not need to be a social worker. Just someone with a caring and open heart. You do need to pass a criminal background check and attend a two hour training session. If this sounds like something you are interested in, call YSB at 651-464-3685.

Fairview Lakes Medical Center has a program called **Friends Make A Difference**. It is a school-based program that is recruiting volunteers for the Chicago, Forest Lake and North Branch school districts. Once again, no special skills are required, just a desire to make a difference in the life of a child. This program also has a couple of hours a month format and you meet with a student at an area school for lunch. Because it is based on the school year, most of the mentors start in the fall and a year commitment is requested. We will be bringing Kathy Bystrom in for an informational meeting sometime in February. She did say that if you would like to try to start in January you can call her at 651-257-8439 and she would work with you to try and get you qualified in time. There is also an application, interview, reference and background check followed by an orientation and training.

--Wayne Buehner

How We are "Out of the Boxing" this Christmas...

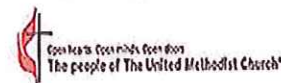
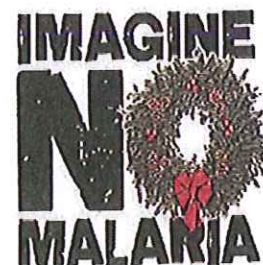
Community Flash Mob

This year, we'll be taking our Christmas concert outside the walls of Forest Hills and bringing it into the community. On December 17th, at various places in our community, we'll be engaging in "rehearsed spontaneity" (more commonly known as a Flash Mob). Band and choir members from Forest Hills will be breaking into song at a specified time, giving harried shoppers a few moments to stop what they are doing and join in on the merriment of the season. Watch for details!

Christmas Caroling in the Community!

Spread some love and good cheer to our friends at Meadows at Fairview! Meet at church on Dec. 17th at 12:00pm or at Meadows at Fairview at 12:30pm for some good old-fashioned caroling!

This year the funds from **The Giving Tree** will be given to Imagine No Malaria. Malaria is the #1 cause of death for children in Africa. You can make a difference! Information will be shared throughout the month of December. You may also find more details at ImagineNoMalaria.org. With your help we will win the fight against malaria.



Teen Challenge Christmas Party: Let's Show the True Meaning of Christmas!

On Christmas Day, we are inviting about two dozen women from Teen Challenge to join us at church. These are women who will not be going home for Christmas because they have not been in the program very long. That means that they also haven't developed a testimony yet or are ready to sing as a choir. So we invited them to come and just "be" in worship. Afterwards, we are hosting a Christmas dinner and party in the fellowship hall. We are inviting anyone to would like to be a part of this to stay after worship for the meal and party.

Would you be willing to help? Here's what you can do:

- 1) Attend! Stay and eat with the women, talk, make them feel loved and valuable. Please sign up in the lobby.
- 2) Help provide food. The menu is ham, scalloped potatoes, corn, bread, pickles/relishes, eggnog, and cider. Connect with Pastor David with what you might be willing to provide.
- 3) Provide Christmas cookies/treats for the party. We need about 12 people to each provide a dozen assorted Christmas treats. Sign up if you are willing!
- 4) Provide cash donations toward \$10 presents for the women. We want each woman to receive a gift.
- 5) Help coordinate the party. Games, songs, fun! Contact Judy Huntosh if you can help.
- 6) Pray. Even if you can't attend, provide "prayer cover" for the women. This is the most important gift of all!