

Downs UMC NEWSLETTER

December 2006
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Just Another Christmas Story

By Pastor Ron & Kathy

Miss Thompson was a fifth grade teacher. This conscientious woman sought to treat all the children in her class equally. However, there was one boy who she found it very difficult to like. His name was Teddy Stallard. Teddy didn't seem interested in school. He was not an attractive child. His school work was horrendous, and his attitude was little better. In short, there was nothing very lovable about Teddy. Indeed for some strange reason, Miss Thompson felt a great deal of resentment toward this boy. There was something about him that rubbed her the wrong way.

She knew his academic background. In first grade he showed promise, but had problems at school. In second grade his mother fell seriously ill and Teddy started falling behind. In the third grade, his mother died. Teddy was tabbed as a slow learner. In the fourth grade he was far behind. His teacher noted that his father had no interest in Teddy's progress; he was never there for any parent-teacher conference. Even knowing all this, Miss Thompson still resented him dragging the class down, and being a discipline problem.

Christmas time came, and the boys and girls in Miss Thompson's class brought her gifts. To her surprise, among those gifts was a very crudely wrapped present from Teddy. Opening it in front of the class she discovered a rhinestone bracelet with half the stones missing, and a bottle of cheap perfume. Sensing that the other children were beginning to smirk and giggle at his simple gifts, she had the presence of mind to put on the bracelet and open the perfume. She put some of the scent on her wrist and invited the children to smell. "Isn't this bracelet beautiful? And doesn't this perfume smell lovely?"

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At the end of the school day, Teddy came timidly to her desk and said, "Miss Thompson, you smell just like my mother. And the bracelet looks real pretty on you, too. I'm glad you liked the present." When Teddy left, Miss Thompson broke down in tears and asked God for forgiveness for her attitude toward Teddy, and gave thanks for the presence of mind not to make fun of his gift. From that day forward, Miss Thompson became a new teacher, and Teddy Stallard became a new pupil. Both his attitude and grades improved dramatically.

Eight years later Miss Thompson received a letter from Teddy telling her he would be graduating from High School 2nd in a class of 900, and signed it, "Love, Teddy Stallard." Four years after that she received another letter from him. Teddy was graduating from college, 1st in his class. Several more years went by and she received a third letter from that little boy who once presented her with a gaudy bracelet with half the rhinestones missing, and a cheap bottle of perfume. The letter was signed, "Theodore Stallard MD." He was getting married. Since his father was dead he wanted to know, would Miss Thompson be willing to sit where his mother would've sat for the wedding, if she were alive? "You are the closest I have to family left now."

Miss Thompson sat proudly in her seat on that wedding day. It all began with a moment 16


years earlier, with her willingness to receive a young boy's gift, a gift that she didn't need or necessarily want. But by her ministry of receiving an act of kindness, she became the most life-changing teacher in that little boy's life. ~ Author unknown

If we are to become people who give of ourselves sacrificially, then we first must learn what it is to receive. God has thrown a birthday party. It is called Christmas. Everyone who comes will be offered the Greatest Gift. It is wrapped in love. It will change your life. It will last forever.

Merry Christmas from our family to yours!

*12th Annual Cookie Walk
Saturday, December 9th
9:00am till sold out*

Proceeds go to missions. What a great time to see friends and get some great looking goodies for your family or to give to friends.



UMW Breakfast Out
Sunday, December 10th
7:15am at Shannon's

All women of the church are welcome to attend. Please notify Donna Kleinlein at 378-3661 or 378-2552 to make your reservation! What a great time for Sisters in Christ to share! Hope to see you there!



CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE

Stop in for a cup of Christmas Cheer!

**Sunday, December 17th
4:00-6:00pm**

Never seen the parsonage? Not met Pastor Ron & Kathy personally? Here is a great opportunity!

Thank you, Thank you and Thank you for all of those that helped to decorate for the lighting of Dooley Park, the Sanctuary of the church, and the front of the church. We fortunate to have so many willing to help.

December Birthdays

- 2 Donna Kleinlein
- 4 Brad Dahms
- 5 Jordan Whitted
- 7 Kari Cooperider
- 9 Andy McNaught
- 11 Kristyn Cobstill
- 12 Lucas Hammer
- 13 Ron Berry
- 13 Mike Halloran
- 13 Darla Lanchester
- 16 Brent Ward
- 18 Sally Wagner
- 20 Ashlynn Solvie
- 21 Kristen Owens
- 22 DeAnne Prochnow
- 23 John Forbes
- 24 Robb Erlenbush
- 26 Tom Coulon
- 26 Jill Wilsey
- 29 Michele Forbes
- 31 Bridget Caldwell



Days to Celebrate!

December Anniversaries

- 3 John & Sherry Reed
- 8 Chuck and Lori Rogers
- 16 Dennis & Cathy Owens
- 23 Pastor Ron & Kathy George
- 27 Dale & Betty Harvey
- 27 Brent & Jamie Ward



December 2006 Mission Minutes by Ginger Campbell

We received \$214.54 in our November mission buckets to be used for our Thanksgiving Gift Certificates. We added to this amount and gifted **\$300** in Certificates for 6 families.

In addition to this and since the last newsletter, we have given out the following monies:

Samaritan's Purse Project **\$408.00** (this was in addition to the previous \$300 given for the shipping of the boxes)

Teen Mania Ministeries **\$400.00** Beth Wilsey is attending this program in Texas.)
Rent **\$200.00**

This gives us a total of gifting for November of **\$1,308**.

The Samaritan's Purse project was AWESOME, wasn't it! Thanks to all who contributed. I know you received a blessing!

Blessings to all of you for your generosity to our Outreach Ministry. It is such a joy to reach out and pass the blessing along to others!

Trustees Meeting Minutes Downs United Methodist Church November 6, 2006

Present: Jon Spelde, Darla Lanchester, Craig Solvie, Ron George, Mac Fuller, Suzann Erlenbush, Ken Garling

Ron opened with prayer.

Old Business:

↑ **Approval of Meeting Minutes:** Mac made a motion to approve the October 2, 2006, meeting minutes. Ken seconded the motion. Motion carried.

New Business:

↑ **Sign for New Property:** Discussed the need to get a sign erected on the new property. Craig will contact Dave Bach, who has the old sign, and get the sign put up. Mac and Ron offered to help.

↑ **Culvert on New Property:** As part of the Route 150 construction, our existing culvert has been removed. We can have it replaced with a 35' culvert, but we need to decide where this should go. We decided it would be best to keep it in the same place the culvert is today, in case we put the church building on the 10 acres on the east side of the property.

↑ **Property Purchased:** Jon and Darla, as trustees acting on behalf of the church, signed the papers for the land purchase on Friday, with Mr. Bethel's attorney and our attorney, Michael Grosso, present at the title company. Ron said they received the deed through the mail.

↑ **Positioning of Building on New Property:** We'll meet next Monday and try to position our existing building plan on our new property and plan for parking and the position of the culvert.

↑ **Next step:** We need to form a building committee, which will report to the Ad Council. Some Trustees will be part of this committee.

↑ **Possible Gas Leak:** Ken Jones fixed the rusty vent pipes and cut vent holes in the door. Darla purchased a new water heater and Ron installed it. Everything seems to be working well.

↑ **Renting New Property:** Janice and Jon have the name of two individuals who are interested in farming our new property until we have the capital to build on it. Rental fees were discussed.

↑ **Work Orders:**

Communion Cup Holders for Pews: Keith Campbell is checking into making these.

Ron's Computer: Ron has a new computer. Someone in the congregation donated this.

Septic Vent at Parsonage: Holt Excavating took care of moving the vent.

Evergreen at Parsonage: This has been replaced.

Basement Dehumidifier: This has been replaced. Jon purchased a new one, which seems to be working well.

↑ Darla made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mac seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Holiday Tour of Homes 2006

December 1-3

This tour of homes benefits Homes of Hope, Inc. Homes of Hope has three residential homes in McLean County for persons with developmental disabilities. The waiting list is long and more homes are needed! They need everyone's help! Over 250 volunteers are utilized as tour guides during the three day event. Tickets are available at: Casey's Garden Shop, Coffee Hound, Country Gingham, The Garlic Press, The Mole Hole, & Tour Homes (on days of event).



Holiday Spectacular

December 8, 9, & 10th

ISU's Braden auditorium in the bone student center

Tickets available at Braden Box Office, all Ticketmaster outlets

www.ticketmaster.com or by phone at 309-438-5444

We have people from our church that are a part of this program.

Operation Christmas Child Update by Rhonda Nalley

A big **THANK YOU**, from the bottom of my heart, to everyone who contributed in any way to our Operation Christmas Child project. I originally hoped that we could collect or fill 50 shoeboxes. God had much bigger plans for us. Through your generosity **106** gift boxes will bring joy to children who may have never received a Christmas present and introduce them to the greatest gift of all – Jesus Christ. As the gifts are distributed, local Christians will also offer colorful storybooks about Jesus to the children in their own language.

Even though several of you included notes with your address in your boxes we also put stickers inside the lids telling the children that Jesus loves them and so does the Downs United Methodist Church, along with the church address. If we receive any letters from children I will share them in future newsletters.

Thank you again, and I know God will bless you.



Thank you to some anonymous donors that have provided Pastor Ron's office with a new computer and a new laptop for the Audio/Visual in the Sanctuary. The new technology has been and will be very helpful in using the video clips in the service. This will allow us to use the projectors in the sanctuary to a greater potential. Thank you for allowing God to work through you!



An Old Fashioned Christmas Eve

Sunday, December 24th, 7:00pm

Dress casually (bring your children in their pajamas if you wish) and come for a delightful and meaningful time of Christmas joy and praise including carols and special music, poems, readings, skits, prayers, a tribute honoring the soldiers in our families serving around the globe, The Christmas Story, Silent Night by candlelight, treats for the kids and more.

Come to just relax and enjoy, or those who wish are invited to bring gifts to the Christ Child in the form of singing a special, playing an instrument, offering a Christmas reading, poem or other. Please call the Downs UMC office at 378-2651 or Rev. Ron George at 378-2650 before Wednesday, December 20th if you have a special gift you will be willing to share for Christ so we can fully prepare for the evening.



Help decorate the sanctuary for Christmas with Poinsettias.

Poinsettias can be ordered through the church at \$8.00 each. They can be in honor of someone, in memory of someone, or just to have at the church. Order deadline is December 10th. See order forms at church, or call the church office at 378-2651. The Poinsettias will be at church on the 17th and 24th and available for pickup after the Christmas Eve Service.

"Away From the Manger"



A humorous look at those who avoided the Nativity will be presented Sunday, December 10th in both services by the Downs UMC Players.

Don't miss this thought provoking performance.

December Volunteers, You are appreciated!!

AUDIO/VISUAL OPERATORS

8:00 am Service 10:30 am Service

3	Rhonda Nalley	Robb Erlenbush
10	Sue Colclasure	Tom Coulon
17	Rhonda Nalley	Laura Walters
24	John Fisher	Jean Riordan
31	Volunteer Needed Both Services	

GREETERS 10:30 am Service

3	Betty Harvey/Madelyne Gelsthorpe/Mikki Lishka
10	Dave & Darcie Jones/Kathy Bustle
17	Kay Hull/Jody Simpson/Marcia Adams
24	Mabel Courtney/Michelle Forbes/ Diane Scherr
31	Jean & Colby Riordan/Sherry Reed

NURSERY SCHEDULE

10:30am Service

3	<i>Help Needed</i>
10	Brian & Janelle Zachow
17	Dawn Ramirez
24	Karyn Spelde
31	Jamie Ward

Are you the one?



We know you are out there. Has the Holy Spirit been nudging you? Have you been thinking about something you can do to serve in the church? You will be blessed if you step forward!

We are currently seeking a teacher for the Adult Sunday School Class. Pray about it and see where you are led.

Downs UMC

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Pastor Ron

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Secretary:

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Hours:

Wednesday-Thursday

8:30 am - 10:30 am

**Tuesday and Wednesday
Afternoons**

2006 Official Role (Positions being Served)

Ad Board Chairperson: Tim Mikel
 Recording Secretary: Lyn Edwards
 Finance Chairperson: John Werner
 Lay Leadership Secretary: Jamie Ward
 PPRC Chairperson: Brent Ward
 Lay Leader: Dave Caldwell
 Lay Member to Confer.: John Werner
 Treasurer: Janice Cuba
 Financial Secretary: Rhonda Nalley
 Nurture Chairperson: Sherry Reed
 Outreach Chairperson: Ginger Campbell
 Witness Chairperson: Etta Whitted
 UMW President: Donna Clark
 Youth Director: Peggy Stark
 Camping Coordinator:
 Church Secretary: Janice Cuba
 Trustee Chairperson: Jon Spelde

FINANCE:

Rhonda Nalley, Larry Stark,
Donna Kleinlein, Janice Cuba,
John Werner, Trustee, Bill
Erlenbush, Dave Caldwell

TRUSTEES:

Andre McNaught, Darla
Lanchester, Jon Spelde, Mac
Fuller, Craig Solvie, Ken
Garling, Suzann Erlenbush

PPRC:

Tim Riley, Glenda Walsh, Larry
Stark, Brent Ward, Becky
Duncan, Jean Riordan

NOMINATIONS:

Jamie Ward, Ed Clark, Jan
Holmes, Glenda Fike, Sherry
Riley

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.downsumc.org

**There will be NO Family
Night Activities on
December 20th and 27th and
January 3rd. All activities
will resume on January 10th.
Enjoy your family this
Christmas season.**



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