

Handley Happenings

January 9, 2012

RAIN

I am sitting in my office today, occasionally glancing out the window at the strange sight of rain. Every time I have looked, I have found myself surprised that it is still raining. Why am I so surprised? After all, I have experienced weeks with so much rain that my backyard was flooding and I prayed for it to stop. But not this past year. “I will give you your rains in their season. . . .” is a promise from God found in Leviticus 26:4. But it has been a long dry season. Its been so long that when the clouds do roll in, I am bracing myself for the disappointment of no rain. You see I had lost, not all but most of my hope that clouds in the sky heralded rain.

In the past five years, Handley has experienced about a 50% drop in worship attendance. Programs have been closed. Rooms have gone empty. It is like a big drought. And maybe some of us have lost hope that Handley UMC will continue. For some, the memories of what this church “used to be” are painful and hence stay away from our current reality. But I want to remind us all that God promises rain, life giving, puddle-splashing liquid, pouring-from-the-sky rain, in its season.

We are not alone and have never been alone. Before Jesus Christ ascended to heaven, he told his disciples, “Look, I myself will be with you every day until the end of this present age.”

Matt 28:20b. God is with us right now and is giving us everything we need to serve him in this world. Yes, in some ways, Handley is and will change. This community is a part of the body of Christ; that means it’s alive. And, to continue to live it must grow, i.e. change. Now, I am not going to pretend that I know how God is working to refresh and invigorate this community. But I have faith that he is and I am praying every day to be connected to God’s

OPEN HEARTS OPEN MINDS OPEN DOORS
The People of the United Methodist Church

OUR
Journey
 OF
 FAITH

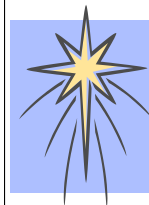


Our Gifts & Presence

Sunday, January 9, 2012
 Total Worship.....98
 Total Sunday School.....75
 Praise.....23
 Budget.....\$5494

Spirit and his will for Handley UMC. is my hope that you too will be in prayer for God’s call upon us as individuals and as a community. I am planning to have dates, times, and places of meetings posted on line and in the newsletter next week. Be sure to sign up and attend one of these meetings. In the meantime, come join us for worship. Last Sunday we spent time on the God the Creator. Next Sunday, it is all about our beloved Jesus, God the Son. Hope to see you there.

Blessings,
 Decee



**ARISE AND SHINE FOR YOUR LIGHT
 HAS COME**

Isaiah 60:1

SUNDAY’S SERMON:

Let’s Talk Theology About God
 2nd in series: “Everything Made New”

**From the Finance
 Committee**



Our **Stewardship Campaign** for 2012 will run from December 2011 until **January 15**. Please give prayerful consideration to this and turn in your pledge card this week if you have not already done so!

If you have any questions, please see Mike Williams. Thank you very much!!

Bruce's Bible Study

This week, after all the holiday celebrations, I want us to continue our mini-study of *Romans*. I give you my word I won't write about fasting or dieting! Remember, "diet" is a four-letter word, or, as Garfield put it, "'Diet' is 'die' with a t added!" I think we can sympathize. We were right in the middle of *Romans* 12 when all the holiday celebrations started, so let's resume there. Remember, the first 8 chapters of *Romans* are about how desperately the human race needs a savior, and how God has stepped in through Christ to provide one, since we can't save ourselves. The idea is that Christ died for our sins, and when we commit ourselves to Him and ask Him to come into our lives, He does--and with His own power for us to rely on, since ours isn't good enough! Chapters 9-11 deal with the troubling issue of Israel's large-scale rejection of Jesus as Messiah (largely the fault of the leaders, who did their best to poison the minds of the lay people). Paul makes it clear that God hasn't rejected His people--it's the other way around! The way through Christ is still open to them, if they'll take it. "Israel" is now all the people of God, made up of Jews and Christians who have committed themselves to Christ as Savior. Chapter 12 is what we might call the beginning of Paul's "lab session." He talks about how to apply our faith, and he says from the outset that Christians should not follow every whim and fashion of the world. I love J.B. Phillips' paraphrase of 12:2--"Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold." That's powerful, and it captures well what Paul means. As he goes on, we see that Paul intimates in a straightforward manner that, "It's not all about me!" We're members of a body of believers, and just as the members of our body take care of the whole organism, we should make sure that our eyes are on others and their needs.

This week, let's start at v. 9: Paul says that love should be genuine. He doesn't mean that we'll have to induce "warm fuzzies" into our lives by artificial manners, but rather that we should always be on the lookout for the other person's "best good"--and if we are commissioned to love them, it means that there shouldn't be much griping, or (especially) talking behind

the other person's back, running them down. This doesn't mean that we always have to like a person, but it means that we should always be concerned to do what we perceive as their best interest. Likewise, Paul says that we should hate evil and hold fast to what is good. There is to be **no compromise** with what we know to be wrong. This doesn't mean that we have to be prudes, because we do have to relate with people in this world who are involved in bad things--but we are to keep ourselves clean in our mixing with them. V. 10 also has a great idea when Paul tells us to "outdo one another in showing honor." When another person gets a compliment, or something good happens to them, do we *add to* the praise, or do we try to dilute it with some negative remarks (probably because *we* didn't get the honor!)? I like to compliment people on things well done. Any compliment you get from me will be genuine, however; I don't believe in dishonest flattery. But with all the grief and griping in our world, I think that when we get the chance to compliment someone honestly, we should. Some of the old-timers were always afraid of "carnal pride" and didn't like to compliment for fear that the recipient would fall into "vanity." Well, that's their problem; I think that we need to give credit where it is due. In v. 11, Paul says that we should "never flag in zeal." We should keep an eye on that. This doesn't mean that we should live in a state of emotional fizziness, but it does mean that we should always live with Christ as our prime interest, and always be ready to say a good word in His favor, especially when people in our world bad-mouth Him. Thomas Jefferson, speaking politically, said, "The price of liberty is eternal vigilance." We can apply that spiritually, too. I once heard Pearl Bailey say, "If you used to feel close to God, and you don't now, guess who moved?" Paul also says we should be "aglow with the Spirit;" when we are, that'll be largely unconscious, but people should be aware that we belong to Christ and march to the beat of a different drum.

There's a lot here; I think we'd best stop till next week!

Bruce

United Methodist Women

From Wanda Spracklen

Great News!! Our new books for the Reading Program are in the UMW library and waiting for you. Please follow the directions for checking out the books and returning them.

We believe we have a good selection of books and hope they will inspire and motivate each of you on your faith journey.

“Despite the church’s place of prominence in U.S. cultures and the ever-present church in every American town, misconceptions about the faith of Jesus Christ run rampant. Christians are known more for exclusivity than for love, more for potlucks than for solving world hunger. Is it time for churches to get over the cruise ship mentality of being a program provider and reconnect with the true message and missions of Jesus?”

Read: “Change the World: Recovering the Message and Mission of Jesus.”
by Mike Slaughter

Children & Youth

Wow!! It was great to have the children back. We had a very large group. We followed up with Reverend Decee's message from the week before. Yes, kids, there were more than three wise men! Thanks to Mike and Annie for some de-lic-ious snacks.

Thanks to Wade for raising the height of our tables. Our kids are growing. And it is great to have helpers: Clint, Heather, and Shaun. See all of you and more next week!



In Memory of:

Mary Davis
(sister of Faye Denton)

LaRue Hulsey

Harold Hill
LaRue Hulsey

New Horizons Class

We continued our study of the book of James. James speaks to the Jewish Christians about the personal problems they were having. God knows that there will be trials, but overcoming those trials will make you stronger. God will give you wisdom if you just ask, but when you ask you must believe. The Book discusses the poor and the rich and how God values each. Charles asks, "Does God value us because of our achievements - do you love a grown son who is successful more than one who is less successful?" Does God love us all the same?

Verse 17 states that "Every good and perfect gift comes down from God the Father. God wants you to be happy, to be blessed. Remember the hand that made the heavens also made you.

All of you who have heard Charles Whittle teach know how difficult it is to say in a very few sentences what he taught in one session. We appreciate our teacher and the great lessons he brings each week.

Genesis Class

The Genesis class is glad to welcome the young adult class.

Please say happy birthday to Linda and Lynn on January 9th, then to Cloud on January 13th. Keep in your prayers Dub, Margie & Nancy.

Bruce led us in a lesson on many lessons. We discussed Luke 15 - the 'lost' chapter. Our heavenly Father is always there and never far away, so no matter how 'lost' or far away we get, we are always welcomed home. In Matthew 18: Since God forgives us always, we should also forgive! Then in the Christmas carol 'O Little Town of Bethlehem' we find out God is a God of surprises. He sends us Christ, the Light of the world. In I Peter 1, Angels have no way of forgiveness, but we do. So, be careful what you do - you never know when God is using you!
Excellent lesson, Bruce.

On a Church sign:
'A stable baby for an unstable world.'

See you Sunday!!

Handley Happenings

January 9, 2012

2929 Forest Ave
Ft. Worth, Texas 76112

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Handley Happenings

Church Office: 817-451-4321

Church Fax: 817-446-4013

January
2012

Meeting Schedule

January 11

Backpack Buddies
Bruce's Bible Study (please confirm)
& Wonderful Wednesday

January 12

Cut-Ups
English as a Second Language Class

January 14

UMM Workday

January 16

Office Closed

January 17

Trustees Meeting (dated changed!)

January 18

FWISD in 2 Classrooms
Backpack Buddies
Bruce's Bible Study
& Wonderful Wednesday

January 19

Cut-Ups

Foodbank Volunteers

English as a Second Language Class

January 23

NOW Committees Meeting

Friendship Circle

January 24

Grace Circle

January 25

Backpack Buddies

Bruce's Bible Study (please confirm)
& Wonderful Wednesday

January 26

Cut-ups

English as a Second Language Class

January 29

5th Sunday Lunch

FEBRUARY

Meeting Schedule

February 5

1st Sunday Breakfast
Hosted by UMM

www.handleyumc.org

After hours: 817-269-3342

Sunday's Sermon:

Let's Talk Theology About God
2nd in series:
"Everything Made New"

Children's Sermon

01/15—Cloud Kurtin
01/22—Wade Walker
01/29—Apyrl Westbrooks
02/05—Sally Norris

Cherub Church Earth Angels:

01/15—Shaun & Shannon Burns
01/22—Elvie Walker
01/29—Heather & Clint Taber