



News From Holland

Holland First United Methodist Church

December 2010

Dr Phil Shuler, Pastor

Web Site: www.hollandum.org

FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN

At this writing, Thanksgiving 2010 is over. I am guilty of overeating, and will no doubt do double time exercising in order to compensate. It has been a joyful and rewarding time! Our community Thanksgiving service followed by the traditional turkey/dressing with all of the trimmings was exceptional (even though I was unable to eat, I saw the food being brought in!). The spirit of the occasion was even better. And our Cowboy Church Thanksgiving service last Sunday was also wonderful!

One of the reasons I always enjoyed Thanksgiving was that Christmas follows soon thereafter! Stores are already preparing. I have already brought home an inexpensive poinsettia in ANTICIPATION of Christmas.

“Anticipation” is a very good word for us at this time. The Jewish community at the beginning of the Christian Era was filled with anticipation. Their prophets had proclaimed the coming of the Messiah and the initiation of God's reign. “See, my servant will prosper; he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted...so many nations will be amazed by him, and kings will shut their mouths because of him. For what they were not told, they will see, and what they have not heard, they will understand.” Isaiah 52:13-15. OR, “A virgin will conceive and bear a son, and will call him Immanuel.” Isaiah 7:14. With such prophecies, they awaited the coming of one who was to be their salvation.

I look around everyday and see people in need, our country in need of direction, and a world in need of divine intervention. Our scriptures give promise of salvation and of God's continued presence on all of life. We, too, have prophecies of hope and healing in every aspect of our lives. Like Christians of the first century, we live in a state of ANTICIPATION! –the anticipation of the coming of One who will bring healing fullness to life.

Simply put: this is what Advent is all about. Our church will celebrate four Sundays in anticipation of the birth once more of the Messiah who will be the personification of God's eternal love for each one of us. The key to this miracle of incarnation is “anticipation.” If we don't EXPECT it will happen, it won't! I remember a saying, the author of which escapes me, that goes something like this: “If you believe you can, you're right. If you believe you can't, you're also right.” I might add: “If you don't believe, you won't know the difference.”

Early Christians anticipated the coming of the Christ, and it happened! Those who did not live in anticipation did not experience His coming. This Christmas, the same will be true for you and me. If we expect to have a meaningful Christmas that includes His coming once again into our lives, then it will happen and He will come with his healing and redemptive presence. If we don't expect this to happen, then we'll probably miss out.

I hope that you will join me in taking advantage of our preparation for this Christmas season, and that Advent will be a time of hope and anticipation of God entering our lives once again. It can and will happen when we believe and expect that it will!

Join with me as we celebrate together. See you in church at Holland UMC during this Advent season. I remain yours in Christ,

Phil Shuler, Pastor

Community Breakfast

Dec 5th the UMM are hosting a Community Pancake Breakfast at the Kuhlmann Center at 7:00am and our worship service will also be held there at our usual time. All church members are urged to come early and help them make this monthly event a success. Call Rob Fagner if you have questions.

UMW

Christmas luncheon will be held on Dec 7th at Kathy and Henry Hegar's home at 11:30 am. Let Kathy know if you will be attending. Please bring an unwrapped gift for the children of the Open Arms Ministry.

UMM/UMME

The United Methodist Men will meet on **Dec 11th at 8:00 am** the fellowship hall and breakfast will be served

Cowboy Church

December 21st at 6:00 pm will have our Christmas Cowboy Church. This is always a very special service for us. Please bring soup, cornbread and don't forget those sweet goodies.

Judy's News

Granger Community Food Pantry

Our Thanksgiving offering to the people in need was a huge success. Sixty families came through to put food on their table. This is the most we have ever served! Through the generosity of everyone we were able to make sure no one went away empty handed. Now Christmas approaches and the number could be staggering. We will be preparing for 65 families, a number that shows the need for this mission in Granger. We appreciate your help. God bless you all as you have blessed His mission.

5th Sunday Service of Song – Church in the Park

Thirty four people attended the Church in the Park. It was a wonderful experience, and we are already planning another one for the Spring. In January we will hold it during our regular church service in our church.

Tuesday Night Bible Study

This has been cancelled until Spring. Our church is hard to heat and the weather is unpredictable.

Ministerial Alliance Community Thanksgiving Service

This service was held in our church and I brought the message. It was a beautiful service filled with song and even a skit. Patrice Haynes led our singing as well as sang a special. Chip Geil played the guitar for our music. Every church was represented and fellowship followed. What a wonderful way to come together as one and give our thanks.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

DECEMBER 19TH – HOLLAND COMMUNITY CANDELIGHT SERVICE – 6:00 P.M.

DECEMBER 20TH – GRANGER COMMUNITY CANDLELIGHT SERVICE – 6:00 P.M.

DECEMBER 21ST – COWBOY CHRISTMAS AT HEGAR'S – 6:00 P.M.