



News From Holland

Holland First United Methodist Church

December 2012

Dr. Phil Shuler, Pastor

Web Site: www.hollandum.org

FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN

Sometimes, when I find it difficult to sleep, I go out back to look at the stars/clouds. When I open the door, I often hear the soft sound of wind chimes as a wind blows the metal tubes we have hanging in the patio. When this happens, my eyes become unglazed and my spirits brighten as several thoughts flash through my mind. First, both the Greek and the Hebrew languages use one word – the same word – to refer to both “wind” and “spirit” (Greek, *pneuma*: Hebrew, *ruach*). For me, at this early hour of the morning, it is no longer “wind” that is causing the chimes to play beautifully, but the “spirit:” i.e., God’s spirit. I think: “in a world fraught with war and conflict, hatred and resentment, meaningless death and dying, God is once again making himself known in a quiet moment by means of a cool refreshing breeze.”

My second thought is that this is exactly what was happening many years ago when God entered the world in the form of a baby. His Son – his gift of love and life – entered the world in the most humble and unassuming way. It could have been in the form of an early morning breeze.

I trust this is the kind of experience for which we are preparing during Advent. Amid a world confused by irrational thoughts and actions, God not only entered the world as a baby long ago, he continues to enter it again and again through the gentle breezes of life. The point of Advent (that preparation season of the church year) is to prepare for HIS COMING AGAIN in our lives by whatever humble and quiet way He chooses.

This means it is also a season of anticipation as we prepare to receive His Spirit once again in our lives. That’s why the church color is purple, because the one who is coming is of royal lineage: he is the King who inaugurates and personifies the Kingdom of God and His reign.

We have a number of special celebration events during this Christmas season. Just take a look at our seasonal schedule:

December 2, 9, 16, 23 Advent Sunday Observances 9:00 am

December 17 COWBOY CHRISTMAS at the Hegar Farm on Monday 6:00 pm

December 23 CHRISTMAS CAROLS AND CANDLES Community Service at our church Sunday 6:00 pm

I hope you will have a wonderful Advent and Christmas season this year. And I pray that this Christmas will be one in which God again enter your life. So, join in the preparations and receive the gift of His SON this Christmas!

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year in Christ! See you in church, Sunday.

Philip L. Shuler, Pastor

Community Breakfast

The January 6th free Pancake Breakfast will be held at the Kuhlmann Center 7:30-9:00am. Regular church service will follow at 9:00 am. Come and enjoy the food and fellowship!

Granger Community Food Pantry

We did it, by the Grace of God, we did it! Seventy three (73) families came through for food for Thanksgiving! Wow! We serve an Awesome God! Thank you, thank you to all of those who support this mission financially and with staples. We couldn't have done it without you! Now we take a deep breath and get ready preparing for Christmas. Next Food Pantry will be **December 20th**.

I was asked by Conference to do a story about our mission; how it is helping. Here are two brief ones: One lady has four in her family. When she came yesterday, she had one can of peas left. Tears in her eyes she stated, "Just couldn't make it without your generosity. My family will have a Thanksgiving meal."

One elderly lady, who lives on \$600 a month, said she just couldn't make it without our help. Bills for electricity and water practically eat up that check.

We serve families from 1 to 9 in a family. We opened at 12:00 – 50 families were there already waiting, getting their number to go through.

We have a prayer request at the end of the line, and every month it grows and grows. We had four pages full. We pray for each of them before the day is through and our prayer partners take them home and pray for them every day. One lady came through saying, "Thank you for your prayers. They are working. For the first time, my son went to church. Thank you!"

God works in so many ways through this ministry. May you see by these stories a mission in action!

Beth Moore's Bible Study on the Book of Revelation

We are half way through the study. It is a blessing and we all are enjoying not only the study but the fellowship.

UMM

The United Methodist Men will meet on January 12th at 8:00 am in the Fellowship Hall. Come join the fellowship and worship.

UMW

Our annual Christmas Luncheon will be held on Tuesday the 11th at the home of Kathy & Henry Hegar. Soups and salads will be served. The next meeting will be held on January 16th at 1:00pm in the Fellowship Hall. This is our planning meeting and everyone is welcome to attend.

Cowboy Church

It was a great night indeed. The James Gang was music to the ears, playing so many of the "oldies but goodies." I have been asked to be sure and have them back! Pastor Don Johnson did a great job as well! Mike has a way of delivering his message to the children and young adults. Soups were delicious as well as the desserts. All in all, as Henry would say, "We hit a Home-run!"

December is our Cowboy Christmas. It is going to be held on **Monday**, the 17th at 6:00 pm. This is always a favorite one for all. Mark your calendars, make a soup, and come join us!