



News From Holland

Holland First United Methodist Church

February 2011

Dr Phil Shuler, Pastor

Web Site: www.hollandum.org

FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN

February is the month of love. At least, that's what I always thought of when February rolled around. It is the month of Valentine's Day. On this day, expressions of love and appreciation are both appropriate and welcomed!

I confess that it wasn't always a good day for me. Memory takes me back to the time I was in the third grade (at Valley Mills grade school). Excitement was in the air with the coming of Valentine's Day, but I didn't think much about it at that age. I remember Mother asking if I wanted to get some Valentines for my friends, but I didn't think it was all that important. The day arrived and my desk was covered with Valentine cards from every single student in the class. I was embarrassed because I hadn't handed any to my friends, not a single one. I soon forgot about the event and the year passed. I was now in the fourth grade; and, as with the year before, Christmas came and went followed by a new year. February was at hand and Valentine's Day was fast approaching. I had decided that this year was going to be different. I wasn't going to make the same mistake again. So, I purchased a Valentine card for every student in my class. The day arrived and I carried my cards with pride. Once again, the class passed out their Valentines and desks were piled with cards...with one single exception, mine. I did not receive a single card from any of my "friends." The worst thing about this event was that while walking home with my best friend, he offered me one that had been given to him because he felt sorry that I hadn't received any! Our family moved that summer and I don't know if I would have received Valentines the next year or not. The lesson I learned somewhat painfully (for a fourth grader) that day was that if you want to receive love, you must give love.

God demonstrated that lesson many centuries ago. The Old Testament is filled with stories of how God gave love in the hopes of receiving love from His people. In the New Testament, that gift was in the form of His son, Jesus Christ. He gave His love in this way in the hopes of receiving love from His people, you and me!

It is important to note that "receiving" is not the reason for "giving." Love is the reason for giving, and the beauty of it is that one receives when one gives. "For God so loved...that He gave..." (John 3:16) This point is also made in the very well-known Prayer of St Francis of Assisi: "Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love. O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much see.....to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive. Amen."

Giving and receiving love is not for the weak of heart. In a tribute to the late Sergeant Shriver, Bono (lead singer in the band U2) wrote: "He was not Robert or Bob, he was Sarge, and for all the love in him, he knew that love was a tough word. Easy to say, tough to see it through! Love, yes, and peace, too ... He and his beautiful bride, Eunice Kennedy Shriver, would go to Mass every day — as much an act of rebellion against brutal modernity as it was an act of worship. Love, yes, but love as a brave act, a bold act, requiring toughness and sacrifice."

So — this February 14th — I wish you a HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY! May you give and receive tough and sacrificial love. Let's begin by giving God that kind of LOVE!

See you in church, Sunday!

Phil Shuler, Pastor

Cowboy Church

Our January date was cancelled due to all the rain. We will not reschedule this date but have rescheduled Pastor Don Johnson and Noel for April. Invite everyone to come in **February on the 20th at 5pm**. Music will be provided by Jerry Donica and his pastor, Sam Callaway will bring the message. Both are from Anchor of Hope Fellowship Church in Temple.

Community Breakfast

The February event is being held the 6th at the Kuhlmann Center 7-8:30 am. We are trying to get the word out earlier about this event. The Spanish church has received an invitation and the Baptists have been notified. Rob was going to try to get the sign up earlier as well. Be in prayer for this ministry. It has great potential. Call Rob Fagner if you have questions.

Judy's News

Granger Community Food Pantry

It was a very cold day this month. A lot of our patrons walk so our numbers were down. We filled 43 families with groceries. It was still a blessed day. We started all over again with new forms to make sure our information is up to date. I look forward to see what God will do this year. Thank you for all you do to help us make this possible.

5th Sunday Community Service

This service will be held at St. Love All Baptist Church at 6:00 on January 30th. Rev. Roy Woolridge from Bartlett has been installed as Pastor there.

5th Sunday Singing will take place at Granger at our regular service. Ed Stockton and his friends are going to bring our music through their music. Everyone always enjoys this.

UMW

Call to Prayer and Self-Denial is the topic of our February 2011 program when we meet on Wednesday Feb 16 at 1:00 pm at the Fellowship Hall. Join us as Judy Gotcher leads this inspirational program. See you there!

UMM/UMME

The United Methodist Men will meet on **Feb 12th at 8:00 am** the fellowship hall and breakfast will be served

Loss of a Dear Friend

We received notice that JoAnn Smith passed away on January 26th and the funeral service was held on January 29th. JoAnn was the mother of Susan Smith and the wife of Walter. They are members of St Paul's UMC in Temple. Those of us involved in UMW knew JoAnn very well and will miss her. Send up your prayers for the Smith family as well as her church family and friends. She will be missed.