



News From Holland

Holland First United Methodist Church
January 2008 **Rev. Victor Pena, Pastor**
Web Site: www.hollandum.org

FROM THE PASTOR

The Unused Gift

The excitement of Christmas is here! The stores are full of people carrying packages, listening to Christmas music. Houses are covered with bright Christmas lights. And gifts pile up around the Christmas tree. We can hardly wait to give the gifts we have spent so much time picking out. And we can hardly wait to open our own gifts!

I remember our Christmas tradition of spending Christmas Eve at Midnight Mass then the next morning we rushed the tree to tear open our gifts. I don't ever remember a single box being empty. There always something inside. Sometimes it was something I really, really wanted and my reactions showed it. Other times it wasn't something I had wanted, BUT I tried not to let my disappointment show. Because I knew my mother had put a lot of time and thought into that gift.

I think back on those times now and realize the financial hardship many families are in at this time of year and while they want to give their children something they desire. But it's not always possible.

As I have grown older I have watched many CHRISTmas' unfold and many different reactions from children. My heart is always saddened when I hear a child react to an unexpected unwanted gift in a negative way. I don't want that – take it back! I didn't ask for that. I don't want it!

Think about how you feel when you buy someone a gift and they obviously don't like it. Or perhaps they even return it. Now I want you to think about how God feels as He has given us the precious Gift of Jesus in order that we might receive him in our hearts and live a victorious abundant life. Something has to be done with that gift. It can't be put on the shelf. It must be opened and used.

Think about what you have done with your Gift from the heavenly Father. Do you put in a back room only to bring it out when others come around? Or is it in a central place in your life. Perhaps you set it aside because you didn't know how to use it. It comes with instructions the Holy word of God, but you must study them!

It comes with an owners manual – even though some assembly may be required –and in my case a lot of repair work had to take place first -- but it will work if you want to use it! Check out the instructions in Matt 22: 36 – 40. The instructions booklet is full of information about the Gift, the Giver and the recipient.

Having problems reading that instruction manual? Do you feel it is printed in a foreign language? There are many versions and translations available, but the best by far is to come together with other owners and discuss the instructions in depth.

So dust off that gift today. Dig out your owners manual. There is an unlimited supply of replacement manuals available. Don't be caught off guard when the Lord comes to visit and you forgot to get that gift out of the back room.

Merry Christmas
God Bless

Pastor Victor & Karen

Getting To Know You By Doris Severson

(Written by Tom McKague)

Tom McKague comes from a long line of thrifty Scotsmen that means “tight as the bark on a tree”. I was born and raised in Minnesota, where they have six months of winter and six months of bad sledding. I have worked as a printer’s devil (the helper who does all the dirty work), a draftsman (when I got the job I thought it had something to do with beer, it doesn’t), a toy designer for Tonka, a land developer, a real estate broker, a home builder, and raised horses. I have also remodeled old home, been a security guard at a casino and now a maintenance man. I am always looking for another home to fix.

I moved to Oregon in 1974, even took along my horse. For every snow flake in Minnesota there is a rain drop in Oregon, but no bugs. For nine months it drizzles, for three months it is partly cloudy. In 2000 I couldn’t stand the over-cast any more and moved to South Carolina. In 2003 I spent a year near Santa Fe but moved back to South Carolina. But I couldn’t buy a home so I checked my computer for reasonable home prices...Texas and Nashville were good. I picked Texas-more room!

The only things that I am proud of are my two sons, who married sisters. I couldn’t have done a better job at getting two fine daughter-in-laws if I picked them myself. I have four grandchildren, a boy and a girl for each couple. They live in Oregon. I also have a brother in Minnesota.

For the first time in my life I’m ready to put down roots! I have found the people (my friends) at Holland UMC to be very friendly, warm and caring.

For fun I make jewelry, do some sketching and ride my scooter. When I get a place in the country I’m sure I’ll find another horse.

I’ve left out all the stories of fast cars, bad horses and really dumb things I’ve done!

Cowboy Church

Our January Cowboy Church will be held on 1/20/08 at 5:00 pm at the Hegar’s. Judy is busy lining up the music and Frank will be working on the food. Please remember to bring cookies and your lawn chairs!

U M W News

Our Christmas Luncheon held on December 5th in the home of Henry and Kathy Hegar was attended by sixteen members and guests. The food and fellowship was delightful. The members brought toys for Open Arms in Temple and they were delivered by Karen Pena. Open Arms staff sends their thanks to our UMW!

Our next meeting will be held on January 16th at 1:00 pm in the home of Roberta Petrie. We will be planning programs for 2008. Please join us!

Judy's News

Outreach

Our Dec. 2nd the trip to Breckenridge was wonderful. Patrice did a beautiful job with her singing and really fired up the Music Director there. Everyone there was very welcoming. It is a beautiful church.

New Calling – New Church

As most of you know as a result of the Emmaus Walk I accepted an appointment to be the Supply Pastor of the 1st UMC of Granger. Their congregation is small but dynamic in their love for the Lord and their church (It will celebrate its 125th Anniversary in 2008)

On behalf of myself and my new family I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for supporting me with your love and presence at our 1st Church Service on Dec. 9th at our new time of 11:00 A.M.. When I looked out over the congregation, I felt so blessed by you. It was truly a service of Celebrating New Beginnings and to share it with you made it that more special. Thank you. A special thanks to Kristen for coming and playing the piano for us.

Adult Bible Study

Still have room for more! We are studying a book, “You Can Get Bitter or Better” by James Moore. Doris Severson has collected over \$400 for a needy family at Christmas! Amen! Besides growing in our faith, we are a mission too.

Monthly Luncheon

After taking a break in December we will meet on January 23, 2008 at 1:00 pm at Dynasty. They have a nice buffet with Chinese and American food choices. See you there!

**Holland First United Methodist Church
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