



# News From Holland

Holland First United Methodist Church

January 2009

Dr Phil Shuler, Pastor

Web Site: [www.hollandum.org](http://www.hollandum.org)

## FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN

Christmas has once again come and gone. At least, that's what society says. No doubt, the Christmas tree is down or soon will be, decorations are being stored for next year, and we're all trying to figure out how we will pay for this year's "conservative" celebration. It was a joyful time, though, wasn't it!

As we reflect on Christmas and the coming New Year (2009), how would we describe the spiritual experience we celebrated? Christ came into our lives once more. Jesus Christ was born. Christ has come and we live with him. All statements are correct (for me), but seems not to capture the event.

I've always felt the Greek language captured the real dynamic of what has happened to us. Are you ready for a grammar lesson? When people wrote down their stories and testimonies about Jesus in the First Century A.D., they had a choice of using one of two "past" tenses. They could use the tense that expressed "completed" action: i.e., Jesus *came* to earth. Here the meaning would focus on the event that took place, the birth of a child. On the other hand, they could use the "perfect" tense in Greek, Jesus *is* come. This tense literally expresses a "present condition based on a past action." By using this tense, one would say something similar to "Christ *is* come to earth." I know it sounds strange to our English-speaking ears, but the meaning is that Christ *is* on earth (present condition) because He *was born* (at a specific time in the past which we just celebrated). Therefore, I want to use the Greek perfect tense when referring to our Christmas celebration: "Christ *is* born" thereby stating that he was indeed born at a certain point in the past, AND HE STILL LIVES! Enough of the grammar!

This is the proclamation that emerges from our Christmas celebrations that we can take in to the New Year, 2009, with all of its possibilities. Hopefully, it will be a year of less conflict and death, if not total peace. Hopefully our churches will be filled with people offering joyful praise and thanksgiving to God. Hopefully our families will be strengthened with the bonds of love and joy, and our children will grow in faith, health, and love. All of this is possible, because **Christ is born!** We only recently celebrated his birth once again, and we will continue to celebrate His living presence throughout 2009 and beyond. I encourage you to BELIEVE this to be true.

I hope you had a wonderful Christmas, and that you look forward to this New Year with hopeful, prayerful anticipation.

Your Pastor in Christ,

Phil

AND HIS PEN

## UMM/UMME

The newly formed United Methodist Men will meet on the second Saturday of each month at 8:30 am at the Fellowship Hall of the church. They will meet in conjunction with the United Methodist Motorcycle Enthusiasts each month. A ride will follow for anyone that wants to participate.

## UMW

**The Holland UMW met on Dec. 3rd at the beautifully decorated home of Kathy Hegar. Every one enjoyed a wonderful luncheon and the fellowship that followed. The next meeting will be a planning meeting for 2009 and will be held at the fellowship hall @ 1:00 pm on Jan 21st. Everyone is welcome to attend.**

### PASTOR SAYS “Thank You!”

Phil and Anita want to say “thank you so very much” for the generous Christmas gift that was presented Sunday. It was more than deserved, but will come in handy as we “journey” to Baltimore. Thank you for your love and support as we minister to one another in Christ.

Another BIG thanks to all who provided delicious refreshments for our wonderfully exceptional Candlelight Service on December 21<sup>st</sup>. It was truly a very effective and well received “community” service. Thank you, Judy, for organizing the service content, and thank you ladies (and gentlemen) for providing the “goodies” for the fellowship time afterwards. AND to those of you who made sure the candles were there and ready, and to you who provided the communion elements of the bread and juice.

Finally, thanks go once more to the ladies (and gentlemen) who provided the soup/cookies/drinks for our Christmas Cowboy Service on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Providing for two services one day after another surely tested both endurance and faith! It was wonderful and very well attended. The singing was great, as was the “time with the children.” Once again, Judy, Brian, and Brandon provided their usual, exceptional leadership skills (though perhaps a little weak on the Spanish!); This has been one of the more enjoyable and impacting Christmas experiences in my ministering years. THANKS TO ALL!

## Judy’s News

### **New Calling –Granger UMC**

Granger had a successful Candlelight Service that had 50-60 people in attendance. Five Granger churches and two Holland churches had members that attended. The food bank continues to flourish. Support this cause as you can!

### **Monthly Luncheons**

Our luncheon will be held on Jan 28<sup>th</sup> @ 11:45 am at Applebee’s. Everyone is welcome!

## Cowboy Church

Our next Cowboy Church will be held at the Hegar Farm on January 18<sup>th</sup> @ 5:00 pm. Steve Nance will bring the message and Diana Hobbs and Bill Moon will provide the music.

### Future Dates to Remember

Date	Time	Location	Event
Jan 18 <sup>th</sup>	5:00 pm	Hegar Farm	Cowboy Church
Jan 28	11:45 am	Applebee’s	Monthly Luncheon