



News From Holland

Holland First United Methodist Church

January 2010

Dr Phil Shuler, Pastor

Web Site: www.hollandum.org

FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN

I was intrigued recently by an online advertisement for a new Christmas magazine. The ad read: “’Tis the season to be jolly’ and here is the perfect site to begin your holiday celebrations as well as preparations...’Christmas! A word filled with anticipation for children, a word full of memories for grownups. We remember the long, dark evenings during December. The house filled with aromas only enjoyed during winter.”

What intrigued me was the reference to the memories of Christmases past. I guess this time of year IS a time of memory, which means it’s also a time for reflection. It certainly has been for me. I remember the Christmases I experienced as a child and those I celebrated with my family and children. We all have memories in common.

But, the Church-year “Christmas” season begins on December 25 (tomorrow) and continues through Epiphany, January 6. The time of reflection and memory extends through the period of the new year: in our case, the beginning of 2010 on January 1. This means that we will once again have a “new beginning” both as individuals and as a nation. God has given us the chance to reflect and remember not only our Christmas experiences of the past, but our experiences throughout the past year(s). This is crucially important, because it gives us a chance to look at our lives as individuals and as a people, to evaluate the decisions and directions we have taken, and to either enthusiastically continue in those directions OR to change them. In other words, God gives us a part in determining the course of our lives in the future!

I encourage all of us to take advantage of this opportunity. Let’s think about the path on which we have chosen to walk. Let’s think about our involvements in our families, our church, and our community. Let’s think about the directions we are taking as a nation...as a people who live in a country that celebrates freedom and individual responsibility. If you’re like me in any way, there will be decisions involving change that all of us need to make. God, in his creative wisdom, has planted this time of the year as an opportunity for us. Let’s really make Christmas/New year meaningful by responding to God’s word to each one of us respectively.

My prayer for each one of us during this time of the year is that we will find fulfillment in our lives. It’s not to late! If we need to change direction, LET’S DO IT! If we need to proceed more enthusiastically or in a more committed way, then let’s do it. Let’s love more, forgive more, interact more, and be more grateful! Our lives will be the better for it!

I hope you have a blessed Christmas season AND a Happy New Year! See you in Church...
In Christ,
Phil Shuler, Pastor

Cowboy Church

Cowboy Church – December 22, 2009

What a night indeed! Thank you to everyone who helped to make this possible. The singing, the testimonies, Pastor's "short" devotional, children's time, and the soups, cornbread, and goodies made it truly special. The attendance was great! There is just something about an old wooden cross and a baby in manger! God bless you all.

Judy's News

Granger

Community Food Bank –Granger UMC

We fed 34 families at Christmas with five of them new families. They were truly grateful for receiving the food and the spirit of Christmas was truly in the air. Next one will be January 21, 2010!

Granger Community Candlelight Service – December 21, 2009

The attendance was slightly down; however, it was a glorious night. Kristen and Brandon did such a beautiful job of playing and leading the singing. Pastor Lee Reese from Judea Missionary Church helped me with scripture. The Pajestka family and Jill Minor and her children filled the church with special music. Jesus' birth was truly glorified!

5th Sunday Granger Community Service

This will be held on January 31st at the Brethren Church. Everyone is welcome to attend. The participation from all the churches in Granger is wonderful and the music is great!

UMW

The Holland UWM will meet at the Fellowship Hall of the Church on January 20th at 1:00 pm. Anyone interested in joining the group if welcome to attend. This will be the planning meeting for our 2010 year.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

Date	Time	Event	Location
Jan 6 th	5:30 pm	Youth Bible Study	Cearley's
Jan 9 th	8:30 am	UMM/UMME	Fellowship Hall
Jan 20 th	1:00 pm	UMW Planning Meeting	Fellowship Hall
Jan 20 th	5:30 pm	Youth Bible Study	Cearley's

If you have any events to add, please give the information to Betty Jett.