

News From Holland

Holland First United Methodist Church

March 2011

Dr Phil Shuler, Pastor

Web Site: www.hollandum.org

FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN

I grew up hearing about the “March winds.” I really don’t know whether or not the winds are greater or fiercer during March, but this is the month that has been most associated with wind – at least from folklore. Having spent most of the last quarter century in West Texas (Abilene), I can vouch for the prevailing presence of wind in just about every month including March.

The power of wind is evident throughout the scriptures. The Hebrew word for “wind,” was *ruach*. This is the term that was associated with God’s breath. In Genesis, God blew His breath into the human thereby giving him life. In other words, it was God’s “wind” that was/is the source of our lives, even now. This word, *ruach*, is also the term that is used with respect to God’s “spirit.” This means that it was God’s “breath,” His “wind”, “spirit” that led His people through the Exodus that called the prophets to declare His Word. His presence gave His people life during the Exile and after. It’s his wind!

The same understanding carries over into the New Testament with the use of the Greek word, *pneuma*. This word also carries the meanings of “wind,” “spirit,” and breathe. The significance of this phenomenon of language cannot be minimized. When we speak of the prevailing presence of God’s spirit, we include the life-giving power of His breath. His life-giving presence is as common as the winds that circle the globe and pervade the universe.

Funny thing about wind: you can’t see it. Really! No one ever sees the wind. One only sees the effects of the wind. I can see the broom weeds that have been blown against the fences along the highways. I can also see all those plastic grocery bags that are carried by the winds, some even into trees. How well I remember returning from Lubbock riding a two-wheeler when I saw a HUGH swell of red stuff bearing down on me. I was unable to outrace it, and its density blinded me and its force brought bike and rider to the pavement. I had been “unsaddled” by one of those West Texas sand storms. I couldn’t SEE the wind itself, but I sure did see what it carried and felt its force!

Notice the wisdom of the ancients when they employed *ruach* and *pneuma* when referring to life and God’s presence. One simply can’t live without “breath.” Harnessing the power of the winds has long been the goal of humankind. Untold destruction has resulted from its stormy furor. Ships have been carried across oceans to their destinations by the wind caught in the sails. Unseen – yet, powerful beyond measure. God’s spirit is as powerful and pervasive as the wind, life-giving as breath, and is as much a guide to the journey of our lives as the truest compass used to guide us to our destinations. [I’m sorry! I should have used the letters, “GPS,” instead of “compass.” Too old fashion!]

So, here we are at the beginning of March, the third month of 2011. No doubt the month will bring winds, perhaps even winds of change in one way or another. I invite you to capture the wind in your personal lives. Make this a month in which you allow God to breathe life into you by his pervasive Spirit. Be receptive: it can and will happen!

See you in church, Sunday.

Your Pastor in Christ, Phil

Community Breakfast

The Pancake Breakfast for **March** is being held the 6th at the Kuhlmann Center 7-8:30 am. Our church service will follow at 9:00 am. Come and enjoy the food and fellowship! Call Rob Fagner if you have questions.

Cowboy Church

If you weren't there, you missed a good one. With between 100-150 in attendance, the barn (shed) was filled with wonderful music and a great message. Jerry and Pastor Sam brought a great number from their congregation and Jerry's friends from bowling. Pastor Sam could sing as well as preach. The barbecue sandwiches and cookies were a big hit and the night was filled with fellowship. Thank you again to all who work so hard to make it the success it is.- truly a blessing!

The next Cowboy Church will be in March on the 20th at 5pm.

Judy's News

Granger Community Food Pantry

What a blessed day we had. First we went to the SS Cyril Methodiaus School to pick up food items the children had collected. They formed a chain from the Principal's office where the food was to the bed of the pick-up. One by one the food items were passed down child by child to be loaded. The children were grades Pre-School 3 to 6th grade. They had collected 250 items.

We had 51 families come through to get food. They received a choice of chicken or hamburger, and everyone got hot dogs. The staples were numerous and the bags were loaded. How thankful they are to have such a mission in their own town.

The day ended with a representative from Gemini Corporation, based in Minnesota, but who have offices in Taylor. Bruce Hinze presented us with a check for \$1,000 from Gemini. He had heard about our Food Pantry through the Taylor paper and after talking with me, selected us to be a recipient of their generous donations. How blessed we are!

5th Sunday Community Service

Our Services in the morning and at night were wonderful. Next ones will be on May 29th. We are having the morning service in the park and the evening service will be at our church. What an exciting time for all of us!

UMW

Due to scheduling conflicts we met on February 23 at the Fellowship Hall. Please join us on March 9th at 1:00 pm at the Fellowship Hall for our next meeting. We will begin the study for this year which is being lead by Pastor Phil.

UMM/UMME

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