



# News From Holland

Holland First United Methodist Church

March 2012

Dr Phil Shuler, Pastor

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

## FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN

Life is full of surprises! I think that's why I thank God so much for His precious gift of life to all of us. Just think: snow on Sunday afternoon the 12<sup>th</sup>? Not the largest flakes I've ever seen, but big flakes nevertheless! Of course the snow didn't stick; after all, it was just *circa* 40 degrees out. I couldn't help but think of what they say about Texas weather: "If you don't like the weather, just wait a few hours, days..." At least, that's what I remember.

I was in for another surprise this past week. I've always enjoyed pets and we have two wonderful dogs that have been in our family for 15 years. Even so, I've never liked dogs enough to watch the Westminster Dog Show, which is the biggest dog event of the year for serious breeders/owners. I came home on Tuesday night to find the TV on the channel that featured this event. I was surprised that I actually was enjoying the show and the various breeds that were being judged for their skill and excellence. Then it happened! A new breed was introduced into the competition. I think it was in the "Toy Dog" group, but I'm not sure. What struck me was the commentary that accompanied this segment of the show. This breed was new to the Westminster Dog Show, but is actually one of the oldest breeds in existence: the Xoloitcuintli breed, or "Xolo" for short (pronounced "Sho-lo"). I had never heard of the breed before, although my wife had. In fact, the Xolo is commonly associated with Mexico and Latin America and dates back some 3,000 years to the Aztec, Toltec, and Mayan cultures. Threatened by extinction several times during its existence, here was one of these "hairless Mexican dogs" actually placing in its particular category (though not 1<sup>st</sup> place) in the prestigious Westminster Dog Show. What makes this story even more amazing is the fact that this Xolo was "rescued" from Craig's list some eight months before the Westminster competition. The man who rescued it – its current owner – immediately showered it with affection and training to the point it had won a couple of other dog shows that provided the qualification for its entrance into the Westminster competition. Funny, when I looked up the Xolo on the Internet, I found that another dog of the same breed had won the distinction of "Ugliest Dog" by one of the canine magazines for the fourth year in a row! Somehow, I find all of this to be an AMAZING story!

Upon reflection, I don't know why I was so amazed by all of this. Life is full of such stories. The one I'm most familiar with is my own. I was blessed with having been born in America, I was reared in a Christian family, and I am blessed with a wonderful family. I read so often about all of the crime, violence, sin that seems so characteristic of us as humans. And yet, I read of a story of the Ultimate Being who looks beyond all of the shallow surface and ugliness of humanity and has "rescued" us through his Son. It is the story of selfless, undeserved love that enables us to appreciate all of the surprises of life!

We are currently in the season of the Church year that focuses upon this story of love and self-sacrifice: LENT! Many of us are trying to decide what to "give up" for Lent. May I suggest that we concentrate on what we can "give" for Lent; namely, love to those near to us AND to the different, the outcast, the ugly, the unlovable. See you in Church! Let's celebrate God's gift of life, love, and surprise together!

Phil Shuler, Pastor

## Judy's News

### Granger Community Food Pantry

For some reason our turn out was down for February. We only had 50 families come through. I will be putting out the schedule this week in Granger for the next 4 months. Usually that brings more.

### Ash Wednesday

We had eight in attendance for the service. It is just a great reminder of our Lent season. Kristi brought Rivers and Hagen. Rivers looks so good. His scars are healing nicely. God is good.

## Cowboy Church

Cowboy church will be on March 18<sup>th</sup> with Doc Lynn from Bartlett singing and Pastor Don Johnson bringing the message. – 5:00 P.M.

April's has been changed to April 29<sup>th</sup> – Fifth Sunday. Brian Smith is bringing the music and this has been affirmed by him. Once again – 5 P.M.

May 20<sup>th</sup> is our last date for the year. Jerry Donica and his Pastor Sam Callaway have agreed to come since we cancelled with them this month. I look forward to all of them and pray you do too.

### Man of the Year

I wasn't surprised Henry received this honor. It was long overdue! However, I was amazed at his speaking ability – not his humor – it is always there. **Congratulations Henry from all of us at Holland 1<sup>st</sup> UMC and Cowboy Church.** The dinner was great (food excellent) a good speaker, and three very deserving honorees. ...Hats off to the Chamber of Commerce....Our hats are tipped to you, Henry Hegar----Well Done!

**Written by J Gotcher**

## Calendar of Events

Date & Time	Event	Location	Comments
3/4/12 @ 7:30 am	Community Pancake Breakfast/Church Service	Kuhlmann Center	Church Service @ 9:00am
3/7/12 @ 6:30 pm	Bible Study	Fellowship Hall	
3/10/12 @ 8:00 am	UMM Meeting	Fellowship Hall	
3/14/12 @ 6:30 pm	Bible Study	Fellowship Hall	
3/18/12 @ 5 pm	Cowboy Church	Hegar Farm	Bring cookies & ?
3/21/12 @ 12:30 pm-Bus Mtg 1:00 pm-Program	UMW Meeting	Fellowship Hall	Pastor Phil-Program UMW units from St Paul's, Bartlett and Rogers have been invited to attend.
3/21/12 @ 6:30 pm	Bible Study	Fellowship Hall	
3/28/12 @ 6:30 pm	Bible Study	Fellowship Hall	