

Bear Fax

A monthly publication of Bear Creek United Methodist Church

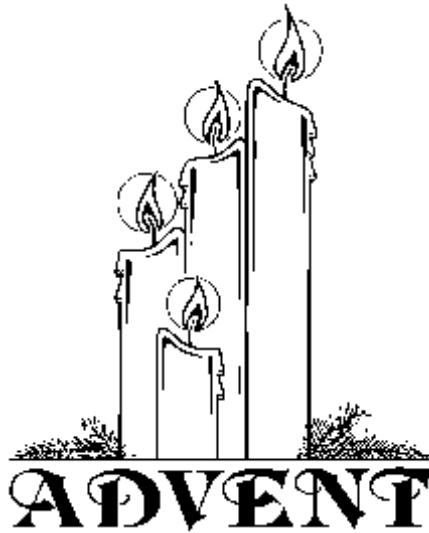
Advent festivities start the season with goodwill

An enjoyable evening was had by all who attended the BCUMC Advent Festival on December 2. We hope you enjoyed the atmosphere of fellowship, fun, food, and festivities. Thank you to all who came to participate in the festivities, as well as a big thank you to all those who helped to make it happen.

Jim and Jeannie Morris greeted us at the door; Mona Charlton supplied us with the Stock Pot soups as well as a variety of breads; David Diehl was our **Santa's helper**; and many of you baked delicious Christmas cookies.

Thanks to those of you on the Fellowship Committee and other wonderful folks for preparing crafts as well as those working in the booths, working in the kitchen, donating crock pots, setting up, and cleaning up. We couldn't have done it without you!

Ellen Boyer coordinated our Advent Devotional booklet and Tracy Daugherty coordinated the College Care Packages for our youth away from home. So many of you participated in assisting and socializing with others. We were blessed with many helpful angels in our midst and the evening was eventful!



We all appreciated Connie Gagnon bringing in her Production Company for the "Hooray for Christmas" extravaganza. It was all very entertaining as we prepare happily and spiritually for this special Advent and Christmas season.

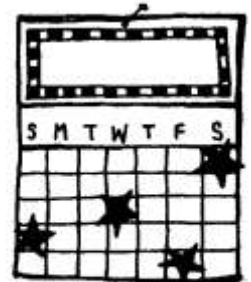
Sonya Garrett
Connie Gagnon
Co-chairs, Fellowship Committee



January, 2008

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Pastor's Message | 2 |
| Worship in January | 2 |
| Prayer Sharing | 3 |
| Care Packages | 3 |
| Missions | 4 |
| Prayer Concerns | 4 |
| More Missions | 5 |
| Emergency Preparedness | 6 |
| Survey Results | 7 |



DATES TO REMEMBER

Saturday, January 5
Leadership Retreat

Sunday, January 6
Financial Peace
University preview

Wednesday, January 9
Financial Peace
University

Tuesday, January 15
Community Blood Drive
(Wooden Cross Pres.)

Saturday, January 19
Emergency Preparedness

PASTOR'S MUMBLINGS

Dear Bearcreekians,
Happy New Year!! I learned some things in 2007 and I hope for some things in 2008. First, things I learned:

Most recently I learned that when you have a cold, it is best to take care of it early before it becomes bronchitis and makes you really sick.

Having a granddaughter is the best! OR God woke me again to unmeasured love.

Having a granddaughter is the best! OR Grace comes in small, growing, wiggling, transforming packages.

Having a granddaughter is the best! OR An undeserved smile always wins.

Having a granddaughter is the best! OR I knew practicing servant love warmed my soul, but I never knew being a slave could be so much fun.

And things I hope and pray for:

That if you get sick (body, mind, relationship or spirit), you act early and get well quickly.

That each of you awakes daily **to the gifts of God's** unmeasured love.

That the small packages of transforming grace continue to visit Bear Creek as we grow in discipleship (worship, study, service).

That grace and peace comes to the suffering people and places so we know the joy of undeserved mercies.

The health and strength of every grandchild OR **The Shalom of all God's children.**

Shalom,
Dave O

WORSHIP CORNER

January 6—Epiphany of the Lord

"Larry Walters and the Magi"

Matthew 2: 1-12

Sunday Vespers

Isaiah 60: 1-6

January 13—Baptism of the Lord

"Baptism and Life"

Matthew 3: 13-17

Sunday Vespers

Isaiah 42: 1-9

January 20—Human Relations Day (offering)
Ecumenical Sunday

"That Dirty Word (Evangelism)"

Matthew 3: 13-17

Sunday Vespers

Isaiah 49: 1-7

January 27—3rd Sunday after the Epiphany

"Does Anyone Know Where We Are Going?"

Matthew 4: 12-23

Sunday Vespers

Isaiah 9: 1-4

Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m.

Sunday Vespers 8:00 p.m.



WORSHIP

Tips for prayer sharing during worship

The best way to talk to someone important to you is directly—face-to-face, one-on-one, heart-to-heart. Talking with God is also like that—as personal and intimate as a chat with an old friend, or as exuberant and loud as a birthday celebration.

During worship, we create many opportunities to converse with God—through music, spoken prayer, listening, and silence. Sometimes we are loud together in our praise and adoration; sometimes we listen quietly for God to speak in our hearts. All of these can be called prayer. Prayer is simply a conversation with God, a give and take, encompassing both talking and listening.

Just as in the rest of our lives, some people are eloquent speakers in large groups, and others find their hearts racing at the thought of talking loud enough for someone two chairs down the row

to hear. During our Sunday morning prayer sharing times, not everyone feels able to raise their hand for a microphone. Whether you speak your prayer out loud in worship is not important to God. Your heart-to-heart silent prayer is heard just as loudly as any spoken prayer.

But when you feel the need to speak up, here are a few pointers. Raise your hand high so an usher can easily see you. Keep your hand open for the microphone to be placed in it. Pray directly into the microphone and ignore crackles or fade-outs. Remember that **God doesn't need the microphone** to hear you. Start with a greeting, like "Dear God." Tell God your concern and ask for guidance, support, healing, or peace for the person or situation. End by simply saying "Amen."

If you still aren't comfortable talking to God out loud in church,

there are other ways to be connected to our church family in prayer. Find a small group to join. As you get to know people, you can ask for prayers within the group. Call the church office, or go to the BCUMC.org website which has a prayer request area. These prayers are forwarded to the Prayer Chain, a group of folks who receive daily prayer requests and pray for those people and concerns.

If you are unable to be at worship, ask a friend to pray for you. As a last resort, write down your prayer request and give it to a worship team member. This includes any usher, band member, the sound booth team or Pastor Dave. They will pray with you also.

Sara Lambert
Worship Coordinator

Advent care packages sent far and wide!

Bear Creek youth are out in the world but never far from our hearts. At this year's Advent Festival, the congregation came together to brighten final exam week for 27 of our college students, including one who is serving in the Marines in Indonesia.

Boxes of treats and your good wishes were sent to 10 different Washington colleges as well as

schools in every corner of America—Oregon, California, Arizona, Montana, South Dakota, Wisconsin, New York, plus Quebec and Sweden!

Thank you, parents, for again providing a wide assortment of goodies for each box and to the young gentlemen who helped distribute them.

Thanks, also, for contributing to the postage costs, and very special thanks to those who took time to express your thoughts about our students on paper. Each child's drawing, simple note or heartfelt letter filled the box with our pride and love.

Flood-victim Cleanup Project

If you would like to help with a weekend cleanup project to help the victims of the recent flooding in the Chehalis/Centralia area, please contact Marny Livingston at 425.881.5698.

Missions – Around
A sneak peek at upcoming

The Corner

Mission events

January

- TC4 Dinner – Monday Jan 7th, 6 p.m. Holy Spirit Lutheran

February

- Souper Bowl of Caring Sunday Feb. 3rd. Bring \$1 and/or canned good items

- TC4 Dinner – Monday Feb 18th, 6 p.m. – location TBD

March

- Eastside Baby Corner – collecting all items related to kids from newborn to 14 years old.

- TC4 Dinner – Monday March 17th, 6 p.m. – location TBD

Please keep the following people and their families in your prayers:

Garland Bellamy, who is recuperating from emergency gall bladder surgery.

Ted Rupley and Christina Rupley, who are recuperating from nose and hip surgery, respectively.

Kathy Robson, who suffered from a severe case of bronchitis.

Steve Stroh, who is doing very well but can use your prayers until he gets a completely clean bill of health!

Vickie Orendorff, who will be having arthroscopic knee surgery in January.

*our
Thoughts
and
Prayers
are with
You...*

Christian One-Liners

Don't let your worries get the best of you; remember, Moses started out as a basket case.

Some people are kind, polite and sweet-spirited until you try to sit in their pews.

Many folks want to serve God, but only as advisors.

It is easier to write 10 sermons than it is to live one.

The good Lord didn't create anything without a purpose, but mosquitoes come close.

People are funny—they want the front of the bus, the middle of the road and the back of the church.

I don't know why some people change churches; what difference does it make which one you stay home from?

Don't wait for six strong men to take you to church!

MISSIONS

What impact does caring have on others?



Local actions can have profound national impact. Since the Souper Bowl of Caring's conception in 1990, both service event participants and the receiving charities have benefited from local efforts. Great things are being accomplished collecting one dollar and one canned good at a time. In 2007 one week of Souper Bowl of Caring events resulted in the collection of more than eight million dollars in donations and non-perishable food.

The most vulnerable of our society get help through charitable organizations that the Souper Bowl of Caring participants choose to support. Individual groups decide who in their community will benefit and give 100% of their collections to that charity.

The young person who is a part of a volunteering group at a food bank or soup kitchen realizes the impact he can make by taking one action on one day. Volunteers develop a sense of community and an understanding for the real-life circumstances of those in need. The Souper Bowl of Caring can be as simple as a single effort of holding a collection pot at a church service or collecting cans at school events. It can also be a new-found commitment to helping the hungry and poor in local communities.

The power of the Souper Bowl of Caring comes from those involved and the total of their collections. Everyone can see how small efforts add up and impact the lives of the less fortunate, while also providing inspiration for participating youth.

Super Bowl Sunday (February 3), known for the celebration and revelry during the most watched sporting event in the U.S. each year, is now becoming a celebration of one of the largest youth-led service movements in the country.



Results of Alternative Giving

Here are the results of the two Sundays of Alternative Giving:

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| Country Doc | \$595 |
| Habitat for Humanity EKC | 520 |
| Matthew House | 405 |
| UMCOR Disaster Relief | 540 |
| Heifer International | 1,295 |
| Sponsor a Child | 195 |
| HIV/AIDS | <u>215</u> |
| TOTAL | \$4,345 |

These moneys have been received by the "counters." There is an additional \$450 to come in.

Last year, including gifts totaling \$10,000 on the Sunday before Christmas, for a grand total of \$13,185. *Thanks to all of you for reaching out to others throughout the community and the world.*

2007 Offering Report

| | | |
|--------------------|-----------|--------|
| 2007 Budget | \$332,260 | |
| 2007 offerings | \$351,335 | 105.7% |
| YTD Ahead/(Behind) | \$19,075 | 5.7% |
| Impact to budget | \$1,319 | |



Emergency Preparedness

**Saturday, January 19
10 am – 2 pm**

Mark your calendar!

3 Days, 3 Ways, Are You Ready? is a public motivation campaign urging you, your family, and the community to prepare for emergencies and disasters.

3 Days, 3 Ways is more than a campaign; it's a message relying on the participation and action steps each of us takes today.

The message is simple—be ready to survive on your own for a minimum of 3 Days following a disaster. For large disasters, you may not receive any government assistance for up to 7 Days.

Become prepared in 3 Ways – *make a plan, build a kit, and get involved.* Any step we take today will put us in a greater position for resiliency, whether from a major earthquake, a winter storm, a terrorist act or a pandemic flu outbreak.

What the Bible says about debt

- *Having more stuff should mean showing more gratitude. (Deuteronomy 8: 10-18).*
- *"What good will it be for me if I gain the whole world, yet forfeit my soul?" (Matthew 16: 26)*
- *Jesus does not condemn material goods but says much about their use and personal responsibility (Luke 12: 13-34).*
- *If you have two coats, share with someone who has none. If you have food, do likewise.*
- *Collect no more tax than you're due.*
- *Be content with your wages.*

United Methodist founder John Wesley was also something of a financial counselor, advising followers to "earn what you can, save all you can, give all you can."

Rodney Quainton, a seminary instructor, says, "It's all about attitude. What is enough? A million dollars may not be enough, or having nearly nothing may be enough.

If you believe in abundance,

you want to share. If you believe in scarcity, you are afraid to give anything away."

The latter amounts to hoarding, even covetousness, which may be at the root of our consumer obsessions and the anxiety that follows.

Quainton suggests learning to recognize the difference between human economics—the allocation of scarce resources—and God's economics, the allocation of abundant resources. It really depends on whether you believe there's enough to go around," Quainton says.

I don't think we trust God, but we trust ourselves. People have become increasingly fearful they can't depend on community," he adds. "It's a form of security."

Do we need everything we want?

One step toward controlling debt and reducing financial anxiety is learning the difference between wants and needs, Quainton says. "We are never satisfied."

Tony Walter, author of *Need: The New Religion*, agrees. "In

everyday language, people say their car needs washing, the housework needs doing...[so that what are really preferences] carry more weight."

The apostle Paul teaches mastering needs and wants by living "by the Spirit" (Galatians 5:16-26). The Old Testament (1 Kings 1-11, for example) is full of stories of communities wracked by consumerism but healed by God.

The Gospel of Luke deals explicitly with how to live in society and speaks specifically [about] money and possessions.

"Looking at the way we deal with our money can be a wonderful way of exploring our faith and the spiritual parts of our lives," Sonderberg says.

"Jesus says, 'Blessed are the poor.' The blessing comes when we can look at being poor and seek some help. That's got a spiritual component.

"As Christians, we are called to have that attitude. [Our possessions, money and land are] not ours; [they are] for God and God's purposes."

Steve Scott, Editor
St. Paul Pioneer Press

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*A family place of
belonging*

**We're on the
Web!**
bcumc.org



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On the Horizon



Saturday, February 2
Amazing Grace Seminar

Sunday, February 24
Sweetheart Dinner

Wednesday, February 6
Ash Wednesday Pancake
Supper and Worship Service

Sunday, February 10
Interfaith Choir Festival

Sunday, February 24
Sweetheart Dinner

Sunday Worship
9:30 a.m.

Sunday School
11:00 a.m.

Sunday Vespers
8:00 p.m.

All are welcome!

Office hours
9:00-3:00
Monday-Thursday
Closed Fridays

The mission of Bear Creek United Methodist Church is to create a diverse family place of belonging for all people and to reach out and make disciples of Christ.