

The Vision

The Primary Weekly Communication Instrument of
The United Baptist Church of Northern Virginia

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The United Baptist Church Vision is "to develop an intentional relationship with God, as in Jesus, so that our lives demonstrate the transforming effect and supreme importance of such a relationship for us, our society, and our world."

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Issue 51

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Thursday, December 24, 5 pm

The Sanctuary

Beginning with an

Organ/Piano Christmas Recital

Featuring Betty Hicks and Charles Potter

at 4:45 p.m.

Consider bringing an offering to be given when you come forward for communion, as an act of worship, even as the Magi brought their gifts to the One whose birth we celebrate.

Your church staff thanks you for every expression of love and wishes each of you the joy of Christ's presence this Christmas and the blessing of His presence throughout 2009.

J. Wayne Yawn
Gerald L. Young
Twyla Turner

Youth Delivering Christmas Cards to Raise Money for Hypothermia Program

Once again our youth are delivering Christmas cards. A box is set up near the Mission Nook or in the church office to receive your cards for delivery. You are then asked to make a donation to the fund they are using to help provide some meals for the Hypothermia Program which operates out of the Bailey's Crossroads Homeless Shelter. See Twyla's column for more details.

Charles Potter
Betty Hicks
Phil Carpenter
Twyla Turner
Angela Power

Unravelings...Wayne Yawn

One might say that last Sunday God in the form of nature suddenly changed ones social mores of attending worship on Sunday. 20" of snow! Last Sunday was the 4th Sunday in Advent. Prior to the scheduled cantata, I was going to say that the 4th thing this year's Advent texts teaches us to clean out our spiritual house (our Advent theme); things that will hurt, bad to eliminate, that they hurt like physical birth pang. But these things must be rejected in order to make room for Jesus' "way, truth and life" to be born in us. The text from Luke 1:39-45 (stop and read) teach that we humans are more qualified to decide that which makes us better, more pure, more correct, more socially acceptable, than that which God instructs make us socially acceptable to God and should to each other, namely, justice and mercy and assuming a humble human position with God being God, by walking humbly in relationship to God every day, as Micah 6:8, instructs. Specifically, from the text these things have to do with marriage prior to pregnancy, marriage guaranteeing pregnancy, certain ages in human life qualifying us for specific behavior and not for other behavior, and one gender or the other qualifying us for specific powers or gifts to transmit to one another, are some of those specific social mores.

Dr. Luke says that evidently God did not get the memo about marriage and then pregnancy with regard to Mary. So, Mary is in a hurry to get to Elizabeth who as far as she knows at the moment has been married for a long time without children and has endured social rejection for that. Elizabeth is like some other Hebrew heroines, too old (Abraham's Sarah), but when Mary arrives she finds Elizabeth is pregnant. Age seems not to be one of the limiting mores with God. Marriage seems not be a necessary prerequisite with God. That which seems more important to God, and to Dr. Luke in recording this, is Elizabeth's blessing of Mary, treating her with justice and mercy and affirming of her as, "Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished."(v.45) In other words, as Micah said, Mary is "walking with God." Elizabeth's husband is a priest, but he is not the invoker of the divine blessing! A woman is! And, Elizabeth's fetus (at birth to be called John, of eventual baptizing fame) leaps in his mother's womb at Mary's arrival, pregnant with Jesus, indicating Mary's baby to be of God and superior to him. Notice this is an older in age serving a younger in age. From this text, God seems to not value some human mores about marriage, gender and age appropriate behavior. And so we must clean these out of our spiritual houses as most important to avoid injustice and cruelty to one another. God seems to think that individual gifts or powers and how we apply those, with justice and mercy as God dictates, is more important for the quality of life Jesus would call his purpose: "abundant life." (John 10:10)

I say cleaning out; rejecting some "valued" things; making room, is hurtful, but freeing! I think it makes room for what Christmas means: the choice of Jesus' way of life! And you?

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday Bible Study – 9:30 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.

Worship Service – 10:55 a.m.

December

- 23 9:00 a.m. No Sandwich Ministry
10:30 a.m. Instrumentalist's Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
NO Evening Activities
- 24 Church Office Closed (Christmas Eve)
5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship
- 25 Church Office Closed (Christmas Day)
- 27 8:30 a.m. Prayer Group (Conference Room)
1:00 p.m. Children's Faith and Fun Day
- 30 NO Evening Activities
- 31 Church Office Closed (New Year's Eve)

January

- 1 Church Office Closed (New Year's Day)
- 3 8:30 a.m. Prayer Group (Conference Room)
10:55 a.m. Sanctuary Choir Christmas Cantata
Communion in Worship Service
12:15 p.m. January Birthdays Fellowship
- 4 11:00 a.m. Staff Meeting
- 6 9:00 a.m. Sandwich Ministry
10:30 a.m. Instrumentalists' Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
NO Evening Activities

CONSOLIDATED MISSION OFFERING BEING TAKEN

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's Global Missions Offering is our highlighted mission partner for the month of December. Global mission giving and the Christmas season have a long history among most of us. Consider a gift that will make a difference on this holiday season.

RECEIVED TO DATE:

Alma Hunt Virginia Mission	\$760.25
World Hunger - Baptist World Aid	1,043.25
NorthStar Church Network Missions	638.25
CBF Global Missions Offering	828.25

TOTAL RECEIVED TO DATE: \$3,272.00

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

There are several ways you can help the Hypothermia Prevention program this winter. A sheet with ways you can help is available on the table near the Mission Nook and outside the sanctuary. Pick one up and make a difference!

Youth News...Twyla Turner

There will be no Youth Missions on Dec. 23.

Don't miss our special **Christmas Eve Service** on Thursday, December 24, beginning with a musical presentation by Mrs. Hicks and Mr. Potter. Everything starts at 4:45 p.m. Start a family tradition by attending this time of worship with your family and bring your friends along.

CHRISTMAS CARD DELIVERY

Help our youth to help others during this holiday season by allowing them to personally deliver your Christmas greetings to friends and family in the congregation. The Youth will once again be delivering your Christmas cards throughout the Christmas season. **We will continue to deliver your greetings through the Christian season of Christmas, which ends January 6th with Epiphany.** Any cards not able to be delivered in person by January 3, will be mailed. The youth accept donations for this service which they will use for their winter project.

This winter project is unlike others we have done in the past. We will not be working with one or two families, but will instead work with the **Bailey's Crossroads Hypothermia Program** which operates out of the **Baileys Crossroads Homeless Shelter**. With the money that we raise from our Christmas card delivery, we will purchase food that can be used to make breakfasts and lunches. We would also like to purchase or collect donated personal items that are needed at the shelter. These items include towels, socks, aspirin, shaving cream, umbrellas, washcloths, deodorant, pens, pencils, toothbrushes, toothpaste, razors, and combs. Our goal is to collect enough money to provide breakfast and lunch (for 50 people) twice between now and March and also to donate some of the items listed that are needed in the shelter. We have also had some adults volunteer to help with preparing dinner, so we hope to be able to help in that way as well.

Please help us to be able to take on this project by allowing us to deliver your Christmas cards to other church members during the holiday season. If you do not see the box in which to drop your cards and donations on Sunday morning, ask Twyla.

Make some plans to spend some of your Christmas break from school with some of the special activities we will have planned for the week after Christmas. If you are interested in **a day in NYC, Youth Paintball and Kid's Club** contact Twyla by email immediately for all the details!!

Major Dec. Student Ministry Events---

- Today-Jan. 3--Christmas Card delivery
- Dec. 24--Christmas Eve Service -4:45 p.m.
- Dec. 27--Kid's Club
- Dec. 28 --a day in NYC!!
- Dec. 30-- Youth Paintball
- Date TBA--Youth Christmas Event at Meadow's

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

The end of the year always brings with it changes in our regular schedule as well as some important dates about which you need to be aware. Please make note of the following:

- Wednesday evening activities, including dinner and discipleship study, will not meet on December 23 or 30 or January 6, 2010. The full Wednesday schedule will resume on January 13.
- The church office will be closed on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, and New Year's Day.
- A reminder that, by law, only those gifts to UBC received (or postmarked if mailed) on or before December 31, 2009 can be credited to your Record of Contributions for 2009. And remember, the church office will be closed on December 31.
- There will be no issue of *The Vision* published next week. The next issue will be dated January 5, 2010 and will contain the financial reports for both of the next two Sundays.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

In the event that inclement weather forces us to cancel Sunday services, we will change the message on the answering machine at the church so that you may call after 7:30 a.m. on Sunday morning if you have any questions. If you get the normal message (no mention of services being canceled) it means that the services will be held as scheduled. If services are canceled or altered, there will be a message explaining the change. If we cancel a Wednesday evening or other events, we will make every effort to contact those we think would possibly be present, but we will also put a message on the answering machine. While your presence is always meaningful, the fact that we may be having worship services in inclement weather does **not** mean that *you* have to be here if it is not safe for you to do so. Please be wise – and safe!