

The Witness

Volume 11, Issue 1

January 7, 2010



Thank you to all of you who worked to make our Fall Build so successful. Snow was on the ground and roofs at the dedication of the Dunn home on December 5th. Our BR District Superintendent, Dr. Ralph Ford led the dedication service.

Sylvia Dunn, her granddaughter Raven, and son Robert, will be moving in January at completion of subcontractor work and paperwork. Landscaping will be done after move in so that the Master Gardeners can instruct the homeowners and so they are present to water plants.

Sixteen of our District churches participated – Broadmoor, Baker, Camphor, **Denham Springs**, Ethyl, Faith Crossing, First, Grand River, Ingleside, Jefferson, New Song, St. Andrew’s, St. John’s, SU Wesley Foundation (rained out), University, Zachary – in workdays and providing lunches. I hope your experience was enjoyable in whatever capacity you served.

"Silver Hammers": Bill Farmer and Clay Smiley were on site on both Saturdays and Wednesdays to make sure things ran smoothly for Tom Pruyn. We are grateful for their dedication. Please share our gratitude with your Sunday Schools and other groups that worked or provided lunches. It was also special to have our ministers work together on the framing of this house – they can speak from their 1st hand experience. Ginny, I want to especially thank you for organizing Denham Springs this year. First Denham has wanted to participate again, but just needed someone to get it moving. Thank you.

We thank:

DD Ellender - leading framing again. He and the Zachary UMC have been working on a Habitat home in Zachary as well.
Freda Montgomery - coordinated lunches (all wonderful and generous)
Danny Brouillette - donated roofing labor
Bob Leitner - donated electrical supplies.

Several of you have voiced interest in working in the spring. Lynn Clark, Habitat Executive Director, tells me that we will be able to work again on a UM Build in the spring. Habitat has received a grant for the costs and needs volunteer groups to work on additional homes on Chinn Street. This will allow funding to go to our UM Fall Build.

We hope you will serve with us again at that time. It is rewarding to see our churches working together to provide affordable housing in our East Baton Rouge District.

Gratefully,
Lynn Bradley, UM Build Coordinator

Thank You

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Louisiana Methodist Children’s Home Angel Tree program. Our congregation donated 20 gifts, as well as several items from the Home’s “wish list”. I received a thank you note from Doug Hall of the Home thanking the entire congregation for our generous gifts. What a great blessing our church family is to these children! **Michelle Jochim**

Bid Opening Extended

Charge Conference Postponed

Upon receiving feedback from our selected general contractors, and in consultation with our architects and our Contractor Selection Subcommittee, the decision was made to grant an extension for our bid opening. The feedback we received indicated that due to the holidays (and deer hunting season), very few bids had been received on several key and critical subcontractor-related areas. This lack of information, in the opinion of those consulted, could lead to a potential increase in the total bid by as much as 10 to 15 percent.

It is the opinion of the Building Selection Subcommittee that an extension of nine days would not be significant, given the fact that we have waited for two years. The new bid opening date has been set for Thursday, January 14.

Due to the above developments, the charge conference scheduled for January 10 has been postponed.

We believe this to be in the best interest of the congregation.

Please be in prayer that we continue to be sensitive to the needs of our congregation and the guidance of God’s Spirit.

Pray also for the outcome of the building process to be a blessing to the present and future church and its mission and ministry.

In God’s grace,
Rev. Bob Deich

LEAD ME LORD

Baton Rouge District Leadership Training 2010

“Lead me Lord” is a District-wide training event designed to equip congregational leaders with tools to be effective in the area they have been called to serve.

January 23rd, 2010 at BR First United Methodist Church; (Convention Exit Left off I-110 making U-turn on frontage road, crossing North Blvd at light and parking behind church.) 930 North Blvd.; Baton Rouge, LA 70802.

SCHEDULE

8:30 Gathering for coffee and fellowship
9:00 “Leaders Who Make a Difference: Church Council”
Larry O’Dell
9:45 Break
10:00 Breakout Workshops (Choose one from below.)
10:45 Break
11:00 “Fighting Fair: Conflict Resolution” - Craig Gilliam

BREAKOUT WORKSHOP SELECTION (Choose one)

“Connecting the Congregation and the Staff”
(Rev. Ralph Ford, District Superintendent)
“So I’m a Lay Leader...What Now?”
(Grant Schroeck & Betty Blackman, Laity FUMC Denham Springs)
“Strengthening Your Adult Sunday School Class”
(Rev. Lee McKenzie, Minister of Education at Broadmoor UMC, BR)
“Strengthening Your Children’s Sunday School Class”
(Becky Poor, Children’s Minister FUMC BR)
“Strengthening Your Youth Sunday School Class”
(Myranda Eisworth, Youth Minister Broadmoor UMC BR)
“Shut the Back Door: Keeping New Members”
(Presenter TBA)
“Care for the Leader”
(Liz Wyatt)

REGISTRATION

For registration, email Becky Poor <becky@firstmethodist.org>
Please include which breakout session you are interested in attending.
No registration fee. No limitations on number of leaders representing each church.

United Methodist Men/Letters From Dad

Greetings and Happy New Year to All:

Just a note to inform you that our regular monthly UMM meeting will be held in conjunction with our Letters From Dad program, as we did in December. We'll meet at **7:30 a.m. on Saturday, Jan. 16, at the Mattie Street House**, have some breakfast, skim over our UMM business and begin the LFD session. All are encouraged to take part in LFD, whether you've been participating or not.

To our intrepid LFD pilgrims: If this program has been a blessing to you, invite someone you think may benefit. We have three sessions left. This time we'll focus on creating a letter of love and blessing to our children, set for Valentine's Day delivery. I've found from going through the exercise that this particular venture can get a little tricky to navigate. Adult-to-adult communication is one thing, parent-to-child communication is something else. But bring your materials, a game spirit, and we'll help each other through it.

Now, according to my casualty report, we left about half our men in the field last time. I'm hoping those MIAs unaccounted for are still in the fight somewhere in the dense jungle and didn't get fragged in the formidable holiday crush!

I'm looking forward to sharing battlefield tales with those who did complete the last mission. See you then.

Let me know if you have any questions, comments or suggestions before we meet. Grace and Peace to you!

Billy Gibson

YOUNG AT HEART PROGRAM

Activities for Young at Heart will begin at the church sanctuary at 10:30 a.m., on Wednesday, January 20, 2010, with a luncheon to follow at Mike Anderson's Restaurant.

Please arrive at the church early so we can begin on time. The program will consist of our regular business meeting, special music by Carol Sue Parker, and a devotional by Rev. Bob.

We will leave the church and carpool to the restaurant. The cost of the meal is \$10.00 and will be collected at the restaurant. When you are called, you will select an entrée from the following: **Fried Catfish; Fried Shrimp; Marinated Chicken Breast; Fried Fish topped with Crawfish Etouffee**

We will need a count and choice of entrée by those wishing to make a reservation by Sunday January 17th.

We give thanks to God with . . .

Our Prayers:

Members in Nursing Homes: Connie Brown; Stella Jones; Fay Kling; Keith Hotchkiss

Members in Hospital: OLOL – Jo Roberts; **Neuromedical Center** – Wally Waldrup

Other Concerns:

Bill Benton Hilda Neal Shirley Callender
Josephine Schultz George Smith John Blackman
Loretta Schultz, in Lafayette hospital, Jo Schultz' daughter-in-law
Joe Melilli, grandfather of Erin Sandefur
Melvin Myers, brain tumor, friend of Robbie Lamm
Hazel Creamer, cancer, Shirley Callender's sister-in-law
Gabe Hilliard, Hodgkins Lymphoma, son of Jeff & Jeanie Hilliard
Bonnie Bishop, Bob Blum's sister
Sue Rupert, Shannon Arnold's grandmother
* * *

A Record of Our Faithfulness – December 31, 2009

Operating Account	
2008 YTD	\$425,427.09
2009 YTD	\$424,042.48
Building Fund Contributions	
Received 2009 year-to-date	\$268,085.87
Total funds available for construction	\$2,437,114.99

Altar Flowers – Sunday, January 3, 2010

The Church Office apologizes for the omission of the following announcement from the January 3rd Sunday bulletin:

“Flowers on the altar today were given in honor of Fred and Alex Drake in celebration of their wedding December 19, 2009 by Margery, Bill, and Elizabeth.”

Acolytes for Sunday, January 10, 2010:

8:30 a.m. – Kellie & Lauren Price
11:00 a.m. – Justin Sumrall & Nathan Landry

Special Gifts

The following special gifts have been made to First United Methodist Church:

In Memory of:

-Marilyn Lobell by Denham Springs High School Graduating Class of 1957.

-Ray Davis by Jenny Davis

Wanda Nettles by Richard Nettles

In Honor of Joyce W. Annison by Jackie Strickland