

The Witness

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God Loves the World... and God Loves YOU!

The most concise and best-known summary of the Bible message is certainly John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." We've heard it, read it, committed it to memory, and we set it at the center of our faith. Without a doubt, followers of Jesus believe that our God is a God of Love – with a love that reaches out to encircle the entire human race.

Alongside this central message of our faith is another truth, but one that we sometimes have difficulty embracing: God Loves YOU. That the same God who cast the stars into space and loves the whole world, also knows you and loves you as an individual.

The love God has for you as an individual – and for every single person on earth - is made clear to us when we remember that God knows us by name. Since the beginning of time, when God called out to Adam in the Garden of Eden, it remains that way today. We matter to God, as children matter to loving parents, and God will not rest until each and every one of us has heard our name whispered by the wind of His Spirit.

One of the challenges many of us face is remembering names. We can recall faces, but matching those faces up with names is not always so easy. Not so with God. God sees no crowds and knows no strangers. To God every face is a special child with a special name. So, we find God's word testifying, "I have written your name on the palms of my hands." (Isaiah 49:16). It's an amazing thought: God knows you by name – and will never forget you!

The God of heaven and earth has inscribed your name on his hands. You may have seen your name inscribed on a trophy, a diploma, or a certificate. You may have heard your name spoken by a coach, a teacher, or a friend. But nothing compares to God calling your name!

It's a scene that replays over and over in Scripture... "Adam, where are you?" "Moses! Moses! Take off your sandals." "Saul, Saul! Why are you persecuting me?" The very thing that opened the tear-filled eyes of Mary Magdalene to her resurrected Lord was when he spoke the single word, "Mary!" Our lives, as their lives, are never the same when we hear God call us by name.

Isaiah tells us that it would be harder for God to forget you than for a woman to forget the offspring of her womb, or the child nursing at her breast. Your name is written in the palm of God's hand. Like a Good Shepherd who knows the flock, God calls the sheep by name and leads them through the gate. We have but to listen to the Voice.

When you get right down to it, that's what makes the Gospel message the Good News – that God loves the world, and God loves YOU! Sometimes God calls from a burning bush, or from the twinkling stars of heaven. Other times we hear God's voice through the smile of a child, the touch of a loving hand or the still and quiet of the day. However we hear God speak, it's a voice we'll never forget!

Set aside time each day to listen for God's voice and always remember that God knows who you are and loves you with an everlasting love!

Rev. Bob

Update to "Shares" in Ministry to Youth, Young Adults, and Young Families

(Gifts made to this fund will be used exclusively for salary support of the Director of Youth, Young Adult, & Young Families)

- 1 share given by Janelle Carrier Hutchinson in memory of Dewey Carrier.
- 1 share given by Dr. & Mrs. O.P. Waldrep, Jr., in memory of Willie McMurray.
- 1 share given by Dr. & Mrs. O.P. Waldrep, Jr., in memory of Steve Thompson & Jo Roberts.
- 1 share given by Greg & Dorothy Doggette in honor of Ashley Doggette.

YOUTH BACK-TO-SCHOOL RETREAT August 13-15, 2010

- Who:** Youth & Friends of FUMC, Denham Springs
When: August 13-15. We will leave at 5:00 p.m. Friday by means of the church van & will return Sunday at noon.
Where: Tommy Sullivan's hunting cabins just north of St. Francisville. There are two cabins; so boys & girls will be separated.
Cost: No charge! All that is needed is a signed permission slip by the guardian.
Why:
1. To escape from the many distractions & fast-paced ways of the world.
 2. To learn to live in the rhythm of the Holy Spirit.
 3. To unite as a Body.
 4. To be sent as lights into the schools.

We will need chaperones to go on this trip; at least two male and two female. Please contact Tony arangel81@gmail.com or 305-8600 if you want to be a chaperone.

Donations of food requested for retreat

We are asking that individuals donate the food for the retreat. Below is a list of the items needed:

hot dogs (60)	hot-dog buns (60)
Coat hangers (30)	orange juice (3 gallons)
Eggs (60)	biscuits (45)
Milk (4 gal. of 2%)	sausage (5 small rolls)
Bread (5 loaves)	peanut butter (1 jar)
Jelly (1 jar)	sliced meat (5/1-lb. pkgs)
Sliced cheese (5/24-slice pkgs)	
Lettuce (3 heads)	chips (4 bags)
fruit (apples, oranges, bananas)	
lemonade (2 powder containers)	
fruit juice (6 frozen containers)	
ground beef (10 lbs.)	potato salad (to serve 30)
baked beans (to serve 30)	
cereal (6 boxes)	muffins (pre-made)
graham crackers (3 boxes)	
marshmallows (big-sized) (3 bags)	
Hershey chocolate bars (10 bars)	
Cookies	M&M's
Red licorice	gummy bears

Please call the church office (665-8995) to let us know what food item you plan to donate. **Please drop off your food item(s) at the church office on August 11th & 12th.**

A Record of Our Faithfulness – July 18, 2010

Operating Account	2009 YTD	\$227,024.72
Operating Account	2010 YTD	\$210,683.29
Budget amount needed to date 2010 YTD		\$262,278.32
Building fund Contributions	2010 YTD	\$112,377.00
Total funds available for construction		\$2,753,182.78

Coming in August...

- **Sunday, August 8th** – Promotion Sunday & Blessing of the Backpacks at both worship services
- **August 13th-15th** – Youth Back-to-School Retreat
- **August 21st** – Churchwide Family Camp Fun Day at Camp Istrouma – 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

CHURCHWIDE BLOOD DRIVE
Sunday, July 25, 2010

Prayer Concerns:

New this week:

Larry Craig, lung cancer

Matthew & Janel Allen & 5 children, Matthew suddenly unemployed

Sandra Komendanchik, injuries received working out on exercise equipment

Hospitalized:

Mike Hardin, at LTAC, leg affected by circulatory problems, Janice Azlin's son

Margie Martin, BR General BB, Mattie Cook's sister

Gene Davis, colon surgery; also caregiver for his wife who has Alzheimer's & Parkinson's, Diane Boso's brother

Recovery:

Martin McArthur, hip replacement surgery, Katie Ellis' stepfather

Jo Schultz, at home recuperating from hip replacement surgery

Joyce Annison, home after knee replacement surgery

Tammy Earles, cancer surgery, Sherry Powell's sister

Jordyn Wesley, at home after back surgery in Dallas

Ima Jean Roberts, Myra Taylor's grandmother

Jessica Hollier, recuperating from open-heart surgery, Lisa Comeaux's niece

Percy Chiasson, recovering from back surgery

Cancer Patients:

Mikel Walker, bone cancer

Sherry Leonardo, lung cancer, friend of Ginny Allen

Bobby Tallo, cancer, friend of Heather Williams

Helen Allen, cancer treatment, friend of Ginny Allen

Margaret Alito, recurrence of cancer, sister of Cary Neal's co-worker

Nelson Ducote (78) cancer, Jody Lachney's uncle in Willis, TX

Donnie Brown, cancer treatment, Bill & Marie Brown's son (1st Baptist)

Other Continuing Concerns:

George Smith

Hilda Neal

Norma Fox, Richard's mother

John Page, Sr., Alzheimer's, Wesley's dad

Mae Matthews, Terresa Ellis' mother

Gerald & Julie (34) Futch, lost everything in house fire on 7/4 (4-H Club Rd.)

Kambry Maddox, cousin of Holli Smith

Abner & Mattie Cook

Jana Orillion, test on crystals in ear 7/20

Jerry Gremillion, bacterial meningitis, Lana Kiker's former co-worker

Mike Picou, awaiting heart transplant, friend of Jenny Barclay

In Nursing Homes:

Connie Brown

Stella Jones

Wendy Gibson's aunt

Opal Bradley, Sue Ballard's mother

In LaPlantation:

Wally Waldrup

Prayers for Comfort:

Lisa Cox & Richard Fox, at the accidental death of Lisa's son, **Kyle Comeaux** (19 yrs-old), (Richard's nephew)

Luci Page & family, death of her mother

Judy Nelson, at the death of her mother, **Mae Sue Thompson Edwards**

Amanda & Allen Brian, stillborn daughter

Doris McNease & family, at the death of **Homer McNease**

Joanie Shoptaugh & family, at the death of **Jim Shoptaugh**

Military Service & Families:

Sam Allen: Spangdahlem USAF Base Germany

Ongoing Concerns:

Tony & Sarah's first baby, a girl, due in late July

Thank You

I want to thank the members of FUMC for the cards, thoughts and prayers as we dealt with the loss of my mother. We are blessed to be part of this wonderful and supportive church.

Luci Page and Family

Special Gifts

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

In Memory of:

- **Jo Roberts** by Agape II Circle; John & Carol Murray; Al & Mary Ann Guitrau; Bob & Barbara Hill; Josephine Schultz; Janelle Carrier Hutchinson; Mrs. D. C. Cameron; Mrs. Lisa Comeaux; Mrs. Jean Hotchkiss; Mr. & Mrs. W. C. Shrewsberry.
- **Jim Shoptaugh** by Claud & Dot Davis; Bob & Barbara Hill
- **Fay Kling** by EHSS class of Cypress Baptist Church, Benton, LA; Melanie Coleman; Stewart T. Gordon.

In Honor of:

- **Joyce Annison & Jeannette Prestridge** by Mrs. Minnie Allen

COMBINED FALL ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL BASIC BELIEFS

We aren't just building a church building. Beginning in September, we will lay a solid foundation of our spiritual church by meeting in the Sanctuary for Combined Adult Sunday School 9:45 - 10:45 a.m. Classes will be taught by laity and clergy covering our basic beliefs:

Christianity	FUMC-DS church history
Church History	Symbols
Methodism	Sacraments
Bible	Worship
Prayer	God's Plan
Discipleship	Christian Living

The Trinity and each facet's function
Administrative structure
Beliefs unique to Methodism
Personal commitment to Christ
Renewal of Commitment to Christ and His Church

This will be a joyful time of inter-generational sharing, learning and growing together. A secondary benefit will be saving the cost of Sunday School curriculum and opening up needed space for children, youth and young adult classrooms.

We will get a count of anyone who opts out to purchase curriculum and have a teacher.