

THE CHIMES

DIXBORO UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH
NEWSLETTER

October, 2005

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

by Rev. John Clair Ferris

If you have attended Dixboro Church in the past 2 weeks (possibly 3, depending on how long it has taken THE CHIMES to reach you) you are well aware that the Sanctuary Renovation Project is off and running. You have seen the posters proclaiming, "Honoring the Past... Assuring the Future". You have been handed printed materials detailing the scope of the project and expressing why it is so important that we undertake it at this time. Maybe you have already filled out the Gift Commitment Contract and returned it.

If all of the above is true, you are excused from reading this and can skip down to the next section.

If someone on the Renovation Project Committee has not yet contacted you, or if you are undecided about how to respond, I urge you to read the following:

Approximately every new generation has seen a major building improvement in the life of Dixboro Church. The church basement was dug (by hand as I understand it) circa 1920. The two-story "church house" was built (largely by volunteer labor) in 1950-51. The Fellowship Hall unit was constructed in 1969. Now, (not to belittle any of the projects and improvements we've accomplished in the last few years) it has been 36 years since we have undertaken a major building campaign – and that is the longest time gap since 1920.

As Joe Coffey has said so often in the course of planning for this capital fund drive, "It's Our Turn".

It is indeed. Yes, I know that there are active Dixboro-ites whose lifespan reaches back before that basement project. We are proud of our many long-term members who have already taken their turn many times.

But it is our turn.

It is our turn to renovate and improve our historic sanctuary in order to ensure that Dixboro Church will be standing in this community and witnessing to God and serving God's people for another generation. It is our turn to support the Sanctuary Renovation Project with our financial gifts and with our volunteer labor of time and talent. (Remember, no gift is too small. And 'sweat equity' will be welcome.) It is our turn to Honor the Past and Assure the Future.

Let each of us now take our turn.

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SMALL GROUP OPPORTUNITIES

Mega-churches like Willow Creek have learned that the secret of retaining their members is small groups. Exciting worship experiences may attract large numbers but the “glue” that holds the congregation together is the small group where people feel spiritually nurtured and share a strong sense of loyalty to each other.

Dixboro Church may be a long way from a mega-church but we can still learn from them. We have at Dixboro an informal network of small groups that provide us with “spiritual glue” – the United Methodist Women, the Men’s Club, the “Busy Hands” group, the Discoverers Class, the Thursday morning Bible Study, and to some extent, the Choir and the Joyful Noise Praise Band. There are probably others I neglected to mention (my apologies).

And for the last year and a half, Dixboro has sponsored a pilot program for

launching a more formalized small group ministry here. OK, so we didn’t get off to an auspicious start. We stumbled around looking for a focus and a format. We all felt varying degrees of frustration and some members dropped out. We then asked for assistance from one of our neighboring United Methodist congregations (Plymouth First) and we took their advice to work our way through the training manual designed for and used by the Willow Creek Church. As of September 29, we have completed the training.

The next step is to launch three new groups. Would you be interested in being part of a small group experience? What might you be looking for in a small group? (Personal spiritual growth? Opportunities to serve? Fellowship?) Talk to me or to Betty and/or Bob DeWolf, Cathy and/or Tom Freeman, Marla and/or Michael Johnston.

OCTOBER BIBLE READINGS

Oct. 2

Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9,
12-20
Psalm 19
Philippians 3:4b-14
Matthew 21:33-46

Oct. 9

Exodus 32:1-14
Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23
Philippians 4:1-9
Matthew 22:1-14

Oct. 16

Exodus 33:12-23
Psalm 99
I Thessalonians 1:1-10
Matthew 22:15-22

Oct. 23

Deuteronomy 34:1-12
Psalm 90:1-6; 13-17
I Thessalonians 2:1-8
Matthew 22:34-46

Oct. 30

Joshua 3:7-17
Psalm 107:1-7; 33-37
I Thessalonians 2:9-13
Matthew 23:1-12

THE HEART OF CHRISTIANITY

Speaking of small groups, I will be starting a new one myself built around Marcus Borg’s new book, The Heart of Christianity. The study will take place on Thursday evenings, 7:30, starting Oct. 6th.

In last month’s CHIMES I shared some of Marcus Borg’s spiritual journey that led him to write this provocative and hope-filled volume. This time let me share a brief excerpt.

“On a recent plane trip, the woman sitting next to me said, ‘I’m much more interested in Buddhism and Sufism than I am in Christianity’. When I asked why, she said, ‘Because they are about a way of life and Christianity is all about believing’. She continued, ‘I don’t think beliefs matter nearly as much as having a spiritual path and following a way’.

“I understood her comment, even as I silently disagreed with part of it. To begin with the disagreement, Christianity is

about a way of life, a path, and it has been from its very beginning...

“Yet her statement reflects the most common understanding of the word ‘faith’ in modern Western Christianity: that faith means holding a certain set of ‘beliefs’...

“This preoccupation with ‘believing’ and ‘beliefs’ has a crucially important effect: it turns Christian faith into a ‘head matter’. Faith becomes primarily a matter of the beliefs in your head...

“In the bible and the Christian tradition, the ‘heart’ is a metaphor for a deep level of the self, a level below our thinking, feeling, and willing over intellect, emotions, and volition... Faith is the way of the heart,”

I hope this whets your appetite and that you will join me for the next several Thursday evenings. Copies of the book are available in my office.

Shalom, John

MUSIC NOTES

The Chancel Choir has begun rehearsing for a very busy season. On October 9 we will be participating in "A Choral Festival" at Hill Auditorium, conducted by Prof. Jerry Blackstone, Director of Choirs and Chair of the Conducting Department at the U of M's School of Music. We hope many of you will come. It will be an exciting time of music making – hymns and anthems accompanied by brass and Hill's mighty organ. Time: 4:00 pm. No charge!

The anthem commissioned by Dixboro U.M.C. has been completed and you will hear the world premiere at services on November 13. The composer is Mark Buckles, a talented young musician who graduated from the School of Music last spring, and is now beginning a Master's Degree in Choral Conducting at Boston University.

CHURCH OPEN HOUSE – OCTOBER 9 & 16

"Random Acts of Kindness"

The theme for the 2005 Dixboro UMC Open House is "Random Acts of Kindness". The Congregational Development Committee, chaired by Angela Charnetski, wishes to recognize people who have in some small way spread love and kindness. We are soliciting nominations from the Dixboro congregation: pick up the form on the Ministries Table in Fellowship Hall. All nominees will be invited to attend worship on October 16 and be recognized for their particular act of kindness, then stay for brunch following both services. As the purpose of the open house is to invite un-churched persons into our fellowship, it is hoped that nominations will not be limited to church members.

Last year Mark assisted our Praise Band at their weekly rehearsals.

Mark chose verses from particular Psalms which the choir had suggested, and he has written music which amplifies the meaning of the words, using choir, piano, and oboe. We're finding this brand new anthem challenging, satisfying, and ultimately exciting.

The Cherub Choir (a part of Sunday School for 4- and 5-year olds, 1st and 2nd graders) has a new schedule this fall. We will sing at both services on October 16 and on December 4. More information will be sent home with the children nearer to these dates.

Janice Clark, Director of Music



OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Larry Martin
- 3 Ann Lutzeier
Emily Anderson
- 5 Jan Brandon
Tyler Sanford
- 6 Dawn Anderson
- 8 Leon Short
- 8 William Fishbeck
- 9 Timothy Sherman
- 10 Katheryn Johnston
- 11 Barbara Gale
- 12 Barbara Pinard
James Cochran
- 13 Cara Sherman
- 14 Eileen Bauer
Rachael Zaracki
- 15 Donna Zeeb
Fred Fragner
- 18 Mel Carter
Paul Stentzel
- 22 Heidi Sanford
- 23 Michael Stentzel
- 24 Jessie Thomas
- 25 Christopher
Fragner
Jason Morris
Merita Judson
- 26 Mark Mees
- 28 Bernice Hyne
Scott DeWolf
Tom LaLonde
- 29 Elaine Hawks
Sanford
Will Smith
- 30 Carol Huey

Education News

October 9th is bring a friend to church & Sunday School Sunday. Please encourage your child to bring someone - the more the merrier!

We need another teacher for the Middle School class.... this is a great group of kids. Won't you please volunteer to teach



them! Contact Stephanie for more details.

The Children's Christmas Program is scheduled for December 18th at 4:30pm. We will have pizza, salad and dessert after. I promise there will be enough pizza to go around this year!:) Thanks,

*Stephanie Cloutier,
Director of Education*



AMERICAN RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE Monday October 24

Dixboro
has collected over
700 units of blood!

Dixboro UMC held its first blood drive in August 1985, twenty years ago. During this period of time we have collected over 700 units of blood! This is just another way our church has touched the lives of many, many people.

Please help support this on-going tradition of love and helping others with a GREAT "Random Act of Kindness" on Monday, October 24 from 2:00 to 8:00 pm. A sign-up sheet is on the Ministries Table in Fellowship Hall. *Thank you!*

Harriet Rash, Coordinator

SHARING GOD'S GIFTS OF TIME & TALENT WITHIN THE CHURCH...



We continue to recognize donations of time and talent that are important for the church but are given "behind the scenes" and might go unnoticed or perhaps taken for granted. This month we shine the spotlight on ...

Jack Snedecker for giving Dick Leslie a ride to and from church each week from Glacier Hills.

Becky and Bill Horvath for providing June Hutchings (a neighbor) transportation to and from church each week.

Janice Clark for giving Hee Jeong Kim (our organist) a ride to choir practices and church services over the past year and then giving her a great deal on her car when she got a new one!

Hilda and Jim Newbound for enabling John Haas to come to church regularly by giving him a ride from his Hillside Terrace residence. They've been doing this for several years! This summer, when Newbounds were gone, **Laurel and**

Max Marken nicely stepped in and gave John rides. **Claudia and Rollie Billings** also have been backup drivers for John when they are in town.

Bill Judson for trimming the church's trees (which was when he fell off the ladder and shattered his elbow)!

Bob DeWolf for all his behind the scenes work—several people noticed him touching up the schoolhouse hand railings so they would look nice for the fair.

Do you know of other donations of "behind the scenes" time and talent that should be recognized? Please contact anyone on the Nurture Committee (Wendy Harter, 668-6349; waharter@sbcglobal.net or Joanne in the office (665-5632).

Wendy Harter, Nurture Chair

SUPERIOR TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPT. OPEN HOUSE

Date: Sunday, October 9

Time: 1:00 to 5:00 pm

Place: Corner of Prospect & Ford Roads
You are invited to enjoy a tour of the new

fire station and look over our equipment.

Bring a camera and take a picture of your children on the fire trucks. It will be necessary to park along both Prospect Rd. and Ford Rd. *Please use caution as you walk along these roadways.*

Garvin Smith

