



The Central Connection

MESSAGES & OPPORTUNITIES FROM CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH TO YOU!

February 2011



God's Heart and Ours

We usually associate February with Valentine's Day, a day for sweethearts or just a time to say "I love you" to someone we care about. When I was little, I used to cut red hearts out of construction paper and decorate them for my Mom. In our culture, the heart symbol is widely used for all kinds of love, and we see bumper stickers with "I ♡ (heart) _____". With the heart symbol, we can convey our affections for dogs, pizza, trees, football, hiking, spouses and children--just about anything.

It's interesting to note that in Jesus' time the heart was associated with more than love or affection. In the Bible "heart" refers to personality or the inner life, and is the seat or source of emotional states of consciousness, intellectual activities, motives and will. Jesus emphasized the importance of right states of heart. For example, sin is first committed in the heart; out of the heart proceed evil thoughts and acts; forgiveness must come from the heart; we must love God with all our hearts. No wonder the Psalmist prayed, "create in me a clean (pure) heart, O God, and renew a right (steadfast) spirit within me" (Ps. 51:10).

It is the pure in heart who will see God. God searches our hearts, shines the light of the knowledge of his glory into our hearts, and pours out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. We are to live out of hearts aligned and in love with God.

There are several "heart prayers" in our hymnal: one, "For Holiness of Heart" by Howard Thurman, (#401), and then two on "Finding Rest in God" (#423): Augustine's reminder that our hearts are restless until they find their rest in God, and Singh's reminder that the huge world cannot satisfy our hearts: only God can do that. Then, "Prayer for a New Heart" by Dag Hammerskjold (#392):

"Thou who art over us,
thou who art one of us, thou who art:
Give me a pure heart, that I may see thee;
a humble heart, that I may hear thee;
a heart of love, that I may serve thee;
a heart of faith, that I may abide in thee."

A three-and-a-half-year-old girl once asked Henri Nouwen (a Roman Catholic teacher, writer and spiritual mentor): "How big is God?" Henri replied, "God is as big as your heart." She asked another question: "And how big is that?" Henri smiled and gestured with his hands, "Your heart is big enough to contain the whole world."

Let us pray that our hearts may be one with God's heart.

"O Jesus, blest Redeemer,
sent from the heart of God,
hold us who wait before thee
near to the heart of God" (#472).

I "heart" you.

Pastor Stephanie



What do United Methodists Believe?

- Are you interested in finding out more about United Methodist beliefs?
- Do you have questions about Baptism, Communion, or Christianity in general?
- Or, how do the different denominations differ?
- Please consider coming to an introductory class which will be starting in March. This class is for all who are considering membership--or just plain curious--and will offer lots of time for your questions.

Please call Pastor Stephanie (886-3441) during early February, so we can pick a day and time that is best for those involved.

*Child care can be arranged if we receive advance notice.

FLOWER CALENDAR

Placing flowers on the altar for our worship service can be done:

- ◆ in honor of a loved one
- ◆ in memory of a loved one
- ◆ in appreciation of a person or persons
- ◆ just because you desire to honor God



If you would like to add to the beauty and significance of our worship service, you will find a flower calendar in the South Narthex. Please choose any available Sunday and write your name and phone number on the line. You will be contacted by Sandra Clemmer. Or you may call Sandra (885-5453) or the Church Office.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

2011 CALENDAR

Finding Peace



CIRCLE MEETINGS

January 11	(July -No Meeting)
February 8	(August- No Meeting)
March 8	September 13
April 12	October 11
May 10	November 8
June 14	December 13

UNIT EVENTS / ACTIVITIES

March 16	Lenten Lunch
(TBA)	Augusta Free Clinic Dinner
(TBA)	Unit Meetings
(TBA)	UMW Sunday
(TBA)	Church Advent Lunch

UMW DISTRICT EVENTS

March 26	Prayer Breakfast Main Street UMC, Waynesboro
April 30	Day Apart/Spiritual Life Retreat Burnsville UMC
September 17	Annual Meeting Granbery UMC, Covington
December 3	Advent Breakfast, Jollivue UMC

UMW CONFERENCE EVENTS

February 3	UMW Day at General Assembly Richmond
May 13-15	Spiritual Life Retreat VUMAC, Blackstone
June 4	UMW Day at Ferrum College
June 14-19	Virginia UMC Annual Conference Roanoke
June 18	UMW Breakfast,. Roanoke
July 21-24	Weekend School of Christian Mission, VUMAC, Blackstone
July 25-28	Weekday School of Christian Mission, VUMAC, Blackstone
Sept. 24-25	Young Women's Event---Leesburg
Oct. 29-30	39 th UMW Annual Meeting VUMAC, Blackstone



With Gratitude

The United Methodist Women would like to express their appreciation to Deborah Reed for her exemplary support. She has given much time and support in carrying out the UMW PURPOSE. We are very grateful for her leadership and mission service to our church and community. Deborah is ending her term as a Circle Leader due to other responsibilities.

Members of the Elizabeth Circle are invited to join either of the other circles which meet the second Tuesday of each month:

Rebekah Circle
Esther Mabry, Leader
10:00 a.m.
Fellowship Hall

Susannah Wesley Circle
Caroline Jones, Leader
6:30 p.m. (Covered-dish)
Usually meets in member's home

Both circles extend an open invitation to all women to join them in fellowship and service.

Be sure to check the listing of UMW events and opportunities listed elsewhere in this newsletter!

SIGNS SEEN OUTSIDE CHURCHES:

*Pray is a four-letter word
you can say anywhere.*

*A church is a gift from God.
Assembly required.*

*Aspire to inspire
before you expire.*

THANK YOU



Breakfast Meeting

Saturday, February 5

8:30 a.m.
Mrs. Rowe's Restaurant

The UMMen February meeting has traditionally been the time when the men bring their spouses or other guests.

Meetings are open to all men of the church; and the February meeting would be a great opportunity for someone to attend the first time. A breakfast buffet will be served—and the UMM will pay for first time guests!

NEW OFFICERS



Our Leadership for 2011 listing was included in the December *Central Connection*. At the January 25 Church Council meeting, three additions and one change to that listing were approved.

Education Ministry Team
Emily Stumb, Chairperson

Nurture Ministry Team
Luz de Tablan, Chairperson

Endowment Fund Committee
Eleanor Andrews, Member

Endowment Fund Committee
Doug Noland, Chairperson

Note: Tom Davis, former Chairperson of the Endowment Fund Committee, resigned the position, since the committee appointed him to be Investment Manager.



Central UMC Endowment Fund

God's work through the ministry at Central United Methodist Church is accomplished through many means. One of those means is the financial support provided to the Church through our weekly offerings, special offerings, and special gifts frequently under Wills to the Church to support special areas or special projects or sometimes just to set up a "rainy day" fund.

Homeowners sometimes need a "rainy day" fund to cover things like a roof replacement; gifts made to the Church through a person's Will are handled by the trustees as a "rainy day" fund. The trustees can choose to use the earnings off the fund for projects around the Church or they can choose to use the principal in support of those projects.

Last year, the Church established a permanent Endowment Fund Committee. The purpose of this Endowment Fund basically is to provide a vehicle for gifts to be made to the Church which are administered by the Endowment Committee to provide long-term support generally or for some specific area of our ministry. The concept is that the fund would be invested and a percentage of return would be available to the Church each year to be used either for general Church purposes or for a specific area if the donor of the gift has specified a specific area.

Recently, the trustees transferred \$500,000 which they had received from estates to the Endowment Committee. Of that amount, \$450,000 was designated as "general, unrestricted" gifts and \$50,000 was designated to be used for mission work.

The Church Council, at its meeting on Tuesday, January 25, approved the investment policy of the Endowment Committee which permitted it to proceed with the investments for those gifts. The Committee will compute an annual return, presently at 4% of the value of each fund and have that return available to be used by the Finance Committee for the general unrestricted gifts and for the Mission Committee for its funds.

The endowment arrangement provides the members with a vehicle to continue gifts on a periodic basis while preserving the principal of the gift for the long term benefit of Central United Methodist Church.

This is an exciting development for our Church and for its long-range health. If you have any questions about the endowment, then any member of the Committee, including me, will be happy to either provide answers or find the answers for you.

Doug Noland, Chairman
Endowment Committee

FEBRUARY IS HEART HAVENS MONTH!

Heart Havens provides residential services for men and women with intellectual disabilities through the development and operation of group homes across Virginia. With your help, we are able to support 55 adults in 12 Christ-centered homes; offering individuals supported independence and providing their families with peace of mind.

Your financial gift, or a gift of your time, talent or service at one of our homes, can make a profound difference in the life of your neighbor living in a Heart Havens home.



The Bonnie Home in
Stuarts Draft, a Heart
Havens Home

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!

5TH ANNUAL LAITY BANQUET

FRIDAY, MARCH 4, 2011

6:00 p.m.

Virginia Horse Center, Lexington



STAUNTON DISTRICT REVIVAL

APRIL 14 & 15

FISHERSVILLE UMC

Special Speaker:
Rev. Ross Vance

Those who attended Annual Conference will remember this very special speaker. Rev. Vance is Deputy Secretary of the General Board of Discipleship.



UPCOMING MISSION TRIP OPPORTUNITIES

- Marilyn Blagg, UMW President, is heading up a trip to Guatemala the last week of July. Estimated cost \$1,500.
- Jimmy Allen, Calvary UMC is heading up a team going to Brazil to serve the Shade and Fresh Water Project in Manaus. Dates June 20-July 1. Estimated cost: \$2,500. They are a few openings.
- District Mission Trip being planned for this fall 2011.

Please contact the District Office for more information if you are interested in any of these missions (540-932-1055).



CAMP OVERLOOK WISH LIST

- Industrial Carpet Extractor for maintaining carpets at Blessings Lodge
- CD Boom Box, 25-100 watts
- Used cast iron skillets and Dutch Ovens for Path Finders
- Foam sofa cushions (24x15x6 or larger) to recycle for Swank crate furniture
- Garden rakes & shovels
- Hammers & other hand tools
- Full-size mattress
- Telescope for Star Gazing

Please contact the Church Office or Camp Overlook if you have items you would like to donate. Camp Overlook: (540) 2MY-CAMP or CampOverlook@gmail.com

NEWS FROM DONNA (& STEVE) HUFFER

This is the concluding article in a series written by Donna in October. She and Steve had taken several sightseeing trips before they were scheduled to come home in September—only to find out afterward that they would stay in Singapore for another year.

Cambodia. The only knowledge I had of Cambodia before going was the images I saw during the Vietnam War. Jungles. Scary soldiers in black. When we flew into Siem Reap, the major city where Angkor Wat is located, we were surprised at the small airport. It reminded me of Weyers Cave. Cambodia is a very poor country with few paved roads. We traveled along the only highway "Number 6" that was built by the Koreans. You see, Cambodia is a beggar state. There are no exports. They consume everything they grow and make. All buildings and infrastructure are sponsored by foreign countries. Since the Koreans wanted to open the markets there, they built the highway. They also built most of the hotels and ran most of the touring companies. Everywhere we went, there would be a sign, "Built by France" or some other country. At the capital, our guide told us the Chinese were upset with how poor the government building was where they were meeting that they built another one—with air conditioning and running water.

Our guide took us to the "tourist traps" where we were shown how to make silk from silk worms, how to carve wood, how to work with stone (and they are masters!) and various other crafts. The poor children of the villages come and live there to learn a trade, then return to their villages to start small businesses (although many stay in the city and refuse to go back).

We had a Cambodian lunch—fish served in a coconut, watermelon, and some other foods that I can't say for sure that I knew what they were. We always ordered canned cokes with no ice and paid a dollar for them. By the way, we always paid in US dollars. No one used Cambodian currency. They wouldn't even give it to me in Singapore. They said it was worthless.

That night we ate at a Chinese buffet. I saw many different kinds of foods there—snake, eel, snails,



Thatched Huts

many kinds of fish, and of course rice. I was leary of eating, however, because the food was room temperature. They didn't keep things hot. I mentioned this to my guide who seemed to think it was a great restaurant. It was full of tourists, one of the best in town.

We didn't have hot water in the hotel or any of the hotels we stayed in. Later I learned that hot water was only available in the afternoon. I took a shower in the morning. The next day we went to the Angkor Wat complex which is miles and miles long. We, and a million other tourists, climbed through the rocks, took pictures, and thoroughly enjoyed the ruins. It was amazing to actually see something that old—9th century AD—a dream come true for me.

It was the beginning of the wet season, and every afternoon the clouds gathered to rain. We had brought ponchos and were prepared when the downpour came at the temple. All around me naked children ran and dived into the moats around the temple, braving the water snakes, which raised their heads out of the water, and the leeches. We were approached several times by children selling things. They would cling to your arm and try to get into the car with you. I never carried any money (after my Bali experience) and told the children this. No matter how small, they would reply, in perfect English, "Ask your husband, he has money!" With some education, these children could have been doctors, lawyers, or keen business people. Instead, they begged for a living. Cambodia exports more women as prostitutes than any country in the world. Prostitution is legal there, and I saw night clubs

(Continued on next page)

News from Donna, continued

where chairs line the walls for rows of women to sit and wait for buyers. I was very saddened by this, but my guide thought it was not unseemly. He told me that they had recently passed a law that forbid prostitutes to break up a marriage. Cambodians were interested in keeping families together! No mistresses allowed

After touring Angkor Wat, we ate at another buffet place that sported traditional dancing. This was nice. Again, I had the same complaint about the food. Too cold—nothing was kept at a safe temperature. That night Steve got sick with vomiting and diarrhea and ran a fever of 104. Now I began to panic. Here I was in a foreign land with little or no medical facilities. Our guide offered to take him to a clinic but he refused. Instead we boarded a bus for the capital Phom Phen on Highway 6. It took six hours for us to get there to Naga Hotel, a Thai hotel with a casino. Steve got worse. We had already paid for the tour so I left him in the hotel and finished touring the capital. I saw the king's palace, the prison where millions were locked up by Pol Pot, and other landmarks. We passed the Killing Fields on the bus. I ate by myself in a restaurant with my guides. The food was cooked in front of me in a steamboat so I thought it was safe. The lights went out once and the guide explained that they didn't have electricity all the time. Black outs were common. They just turned on the generator and everything was back to normal.

Steve was getting worse. I called the hotel desk and asked for a physician. They did have a hotel doctor for their employees which they led us to in the wee hours of the morning. This was a big, flashy hotel. When we went through the doors to the back, it was as different as night and day. The carpet disappeared and cracked and chipped cement appeared. The walls were dirty, trash was on the floor, and the chairs were cracked and broken. We were taken to a small, dirty room where the clinic was. It had posters on the wall about spreading the flu. The man there gave Steve some antibiotics, charcoal tablets, and pills for nausea. These he couldn't keep down. We had a scale in the room and I could see that Steve was down 25 pounds already. Now it became a race to get back to Singapore.

He got on the plane that afternoon but could barely walk. I later learned that I was lucky the stewardess let him on board. They are supposed to stop anyone who is sick and keep them from boarding in order to keep the flu and other diseases from being brought back to Singapore. They did notice he was sick, but it was too late. He was in the air. He barely made it out of the airport and only wanted to go to the apartment. I pleaded with him to go straight to the hospital but he wouldn't. Early the next morning, I called the taxi. I threatened to call an ambulance, so he came along quietly and was admitted to the hospital immediately. I was so relieved to see the IVs! He was down thirty pounds, kidneys not working properly, and had an irregular heartbeat. They gave him a private room and kept him for four days. Even then he never went back to work before he came home to Virginia. He was just too weak. They told us it was salmonella. I reported this to the tour company but I don't think they changed anything on their tour. Steve was the first to get sick, they told me. I find that hard to believe!

Anyway, it wasn't all bad. I found the people there warm and generous. Crime was unheard of. At one point we were on a boat in the Siem Reap River and Lake where masses of boat houses floated. It seemed so unreal until I saw the TV antennas coming out of the thatch. Portable generators make everything possible! They are connected to the modern world. I even saw a floating Catholic Church. Remember, the gospel will be preached to all corners of the world. There was living proof.

Editor's Note: It was good to have Steve and Donna home for Christmas! We hope they'll be able to really "come home" by this fall!

OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF GOD'S KIDS

"What I don't get about angels is why, when someone is in love, they shoot arrows at them."

Lizzie, age 6



LECTIONARY READINGS

February 6

Isaiah 58:1-9a (9b-12)
Psalm 112:1-10 (UMH 833)
1 Corinthians 2:1-12 (13-16)
Matthew 5:13-20

February 13

Deuteronomy 30:15-20
Psalm 119:1-8 (UMH 840)
1 Corinthians 3:1-9
Matthew 5:21-37

February 20

Leviticus 19:1, 2, 9-18
Psalm 119:33-40 (UMH 840)
1 Corinthians 3:10-11, 16-23
Matthew 5:38-48

February 27

Isaiah 49:8-16a
Psalm 62:5-12 (UMH 787)
1 Corinthians 4:1-5
Matthew 6:24-34

SMALL CHANGE CAN MAKE A BIG CHANGE.



Thank you to all the children (young and old) who contributed to mission by placing loose change (and a few bills) in the change jars. Sometimes those few extra coins, especially pennies, are considered unimportant when they lie in the bottom of our purses or turn up in the laundry. But, when put all together it's amazing what can be accomplished. When the counters tallied up the coins, we had \$143.00! This will be used to help purchase food for the food pantry and to help provide food for our special dinner on February 20. (see article on the dinner elsewhere)

MLK FOOD GIFTS



We're very pleased to announce that the food drive conducted at the Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration benefitted the Food Pantry with 112 pounds of food. We deeply appreciate all those in our community who contributed to this special offering, as well as to the cash offering of approximately \$364 which benefitted the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank.

Staunton Music Festival

presents



Workshop:

**Exploring the
Late Beethoven**

Sunday, February 13, 2:30 p.m.

Central UMC, Sanctuary

Musicologist Jason Stell and pianist Carsten Schmidt discuss and demonstrate the meaning and influence of Beethoven's final creative phase.

Tickets: General \$20; Senior, \$18; Student, \$ 8
Order tickets at stauntonmusicfestival.com or call (540)569-0267 for more information.

WHAT CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP ENTAILS

Christian fellowship, without service and proclamation, will soon degenerate into the camaraderie of a religious country club.

Christian service, without fellowship and proclamation, will inevitably turn into patronizing humanitarian activities.

Proclamation, without service and the fellowship of the Christian community, is like the sound of a string that has been detached from a violin.

—Hans-Ruedi Weber
in Salty Christians



Central United Methodist Church

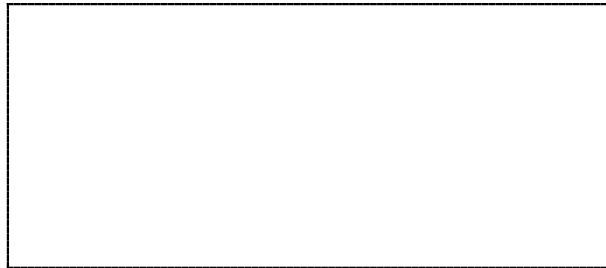
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**“...when you give a banquet,
invite the poor, the crippled,
the lame and the blind.
And you will be blessed,
because they cannot repay you.”**

Luke 14:13-14a

Sharing God's Love Together

On Sunday, February 20, at 4:00 p.m. we will be celebrating God's love together with the clients and families of the Food Pantry by offering a free supper.

If you have not already volunteered to participate, there are several ways to join in: making desserts, giving gifts of money to buy food and supplies, helping set up, cook or clean up.

We also will need people to sit at the tables with our guests to help them feel welcome and to answer questions about Central.

Please make this a matter of prayer, and let Caroline Jones (943-8927) or Pastor Stephanie (886-341) know how you would like to help.