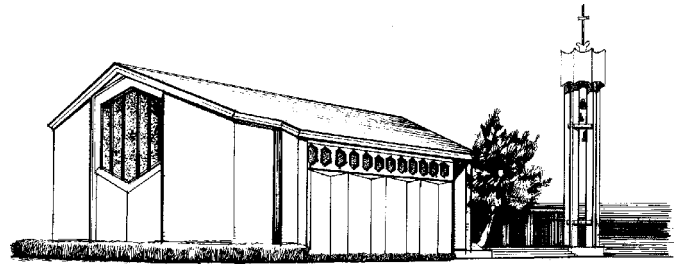


Behold!

Spring Valley United Methodist Church / Dallas, Texas



Vol. 9, No. 41 December 8, 2003

Will we be ready?

I've been thinking about this subject a lot - particularly since the children will be singing "Will You Be Ready?" in their musical on December 21. One particular section of the song continues to catch my attention: "How would we know if the light came today? Would we take time to watch? Would we stop to listen? Or would we just be too busy to notice?" Too busy to notice...too busy to listen...makes a person think, doesn't it?

I am afraid that my Christmas question is more likely to be: "Will I be ready?" And by ready, I am really asking: Will the house be ready; will the presents be ready; will the Christmas cards go out on time; will everything that I have written on my "to-do" list be ready? Will our Christmas dinner be delicious; and every family member, ecstatic over their gifts, every day of Advent orchestrated with tasks that must be done, all with the goal of creating the perfect Christmas? However, when I am honest, I know that I cannot create a perfect Christmas. Only God was able to create the perfect Christmas with the birth of a son - our Savior. And when I am completely honest, I know that things need to be simpler - much simpler...that this experience of Jesus as Savior does not require any material thing - just my faith, which is not available for purchase in any store and which cannot be scheduled for creation on any "to do" list. My Lord and Savior was not born among a myriad of presents, nor during a great feast - not even, really, in a clean house. I realize that if I am not careful, I will lose Christmas - I will lose sight of the joy and peace offered to me and lose the sense of gratitude for all that I have received...too busy to hear, and too busy to see.

So how about watching with me; and instead of creating "to do" lists, let's create a "not-to-do" list. Let's commit to not rushing and to not being overwhelmed or stressed, to not thinking that there is any perfect material gift - so that our hearts, minds, and ears will be open and anticipating the birth of a Savior. Let's commit to watching and waiting for the one true gift - Jesus.

Paula Huffaker

Children's Musical, "Light of the World," Sunday, December 21 at 6:30pm

You are invited to join with our Spring Valley Children's Choirs and their families as we celebrate the beautiful Christmas story through music. Our children's singing choirs are working hard on their musical, "Light of the World," and our ringers will be sharing wonderful Christmas music as well. Join us on Sunday evening, December 21st, in Wesley Hall at 6:30pm.



You are cordially invited to
Christmas Open House

at the home of

Larry and Mickey George

7123 Winterwood Lane, Dallas

Sunday December 21 2-5pm

We live only five minutes from Spring Valley, two blocks south of Arapaho and three houses east of Hillcrest on Winterwood. We'd love to see you and thank you for your love and support throughout the year.

D Magazine, December 2003, gives SVUMC Preschool top rating!

Our own SVUMC preschool has been named as one of the top 112 preschools in the entire Metroplex. In fact, not only are we in the top 112, ours is one of only 36 "Recommended" preschools!



D Magazine states, "We contacted the heads of area private elementary and exemplary-rated public elementary schools, asking which preschools they would recommend. We figure they are the best judges because they see the result of what that preschool has done."

Carrilaine Schneckner, Director, says "It's wonderful to hear that our area public and private elementary schools consider us to be top-notch. In fact, (and I am tooting our own horn), Parish Day School and we are the only preschools in the area who are on the list. We're so proud we're about to pop!"

Dimes-a-Day collection, December 21

Your mission dollars DO make a difference. Each dime you leave at the chancel rail on the third Sunday does make a huge difference when put together with your fellow congregants!

As you write your check or designate "quiet money" for missions, think of the many blessings we take absolutely for granted. Our lives are not threatened in the same way as millions of others around the world. We can make choices in our lives; many must put their full efforts toward surviving in their world of starvation, illness, homelessness, or the threat of human aggression.

Spring Valley's mission budget doesn't begin to cover the important needs. Thank goodness for this second mile offering to support our missionaries, United Methodist Committee on Relief, Habitat for Humanity, Richardson NET, and others.

Maybe you could give a Christmas gift in honor of someone special who "already has everything." Be part of this outreach mission.



Noteworthy news

Last day to order Christmas Poinsettias



December 14 is the last Sunday that the Youth Singers will be selling poinsettias for \$10 for placement in the sanctuary and Wesley Hall on Sunday, December 21, and Christmas Eve. The plants may purchased in memory or in honor of a loved one or given simply to the glory of God.

Old City Park concert, December 13

Carillon Ringers will play at Old City Park on Saturday, December 13, from 7-8pm. Come, enjoy the music and show your support!

Sunday, December 14

8:30 Ladies Ensemble,

The Snow Lay on the Ground

11:00 Carillon Ringers,

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming and An English Carol

11:00 Chancel Choir, *Ring Out, Christmas Bells*

8:30 & 11:00, Jeanne Larrañaga, *Gesu Bambino*

Christmas Eve pre-service concert by Carillon Ringers, 10:30pm

White Christmas

Jingle Bells

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

Sing We Now of Christmas

Go Tell It on the Mountain

Christmas Suite

Advent Carol

An English Carol

Advent daily Bible readings

Week Four - December 21

Sunday John 3:16-21

Monday John 5:30-47

Tuesday Luke 1:26-38

Wednesday Luke 2:1-20

Thursday John 1:1-14

Friday Luke 1:57-66

Saturday Luke 1:67-80



Week Three - December 14

Sunday John 3:22-30

Monday Luke 22:39-53

Tuesday Luke 22:54-69

Wednesday Mark 1:1-8

Thursday Matthew 3:1-12

Friday Matthew 11:2-15

Saturday Luke 3:1-9

Family Advent Workshop a huge success!

Special thanks to all who helped make it happen. We want especially to thank Gail & Layton Pettigrew who served a wonderful dinner to all our guests. Thanks again to all the volunteers for your hard work. We also appreciate all of the families who came out for the fun & festivities.

Melody Reese & Jan Hudgins



Elaine and Tessa Winters enjoy making a project at this year's Family Advent Workshop on December 7.

Please remember...

to lock your car doors, and not leave any valuables in your car. We recently experienced a theft at the church during the day, while a large group of people were coming in and out of the building. Keep valuables out of sight!

A big "thank you..."

to the telephone volunteers, regular and substitutes, for the many hours you have provided this past year. Your dependable service is greatly appreciated. Best wishes and happy holidays!

Sue Cummings,

volunteer coordinator for the telephone desk

What's up for YOUTH...

Sunday, December 14, 2003

9:30am Youth Sunday School

11:00 Worship

3:30pm Youth Ringers

4:30pm Youth Singers

6:00pm Youth Family Christmas Dinner in Wesley Hall

The time has come: All youth and each member of his/her family are invited to share fun and fellowship at our Youth Family Christmas Dinner at 6pm this Sunday evening in Wesley Hall. Bring parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins. There is no charge for this event; but for planning purposes, we ask you to RSVP to the youth office as soon as possible. The number to RSVP is 972-233-7671, ext. 18.

All Youth are invited and encouraged to attend Sunday school each week. In Sunday school, we learn about God's grace and love, our spiritual lives, and how God is working in our lives right now.

Christmas Holiday notice: The youth room will be open and available for anybody who needs a break from the hectic pace of Christmas shopping. There are games, comfy sofas, movies, music, and more. Tired of the pace? Come to our place!

Mark Your Calendars:

Sunday, Dec. 14, 6pm Youth Family Christmas Dinner, Wesley Hall

February 6-8, 2004 Mixed Mid-winter Retreat, All-conference event, \$68

Mardi Gras Madness brainstorming party, December 13

This is a reminder for those wanting to help choose the "live auction items" for the February 'Mardi Gras Madness' fundraiser. The party is at the Gene Hoffmanns' house, 6950 Midcrest Dr. (2 blks so. of Beltline & 1/2 blk. east of Hillcrest), 4pm, on Saturday, December 13. You are guaranteed to be out by 5:30pm. Refreshments will be served. This is an "advise & consent" session, NOT a recruitment party, although on-going volunteers will be welcome.

MGM funds our youth missions to help on construction projects in the poverty regions of Appalachia, to assist children with birth defects at the Colorado Easter Seals Camp, and to offer a music ministry in Mississippi, Georgia and Florida.

Do you have a Chrismon?

Did you take a Chrismon kit last year and haven't been able to complete it? Just return it to the church office, and we'll get it finished for you. Thank you!

Spring Valley Travelers trips, 2003

December 31-January 1 - Branson New Year's Celebration \$159

August 31, 2004 - Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, 23 days \$3,478

September 26, 2004 - Leisurely National Parks, 8 days \$1,699

Call Chris Parton for details at 972-239-3369.



December 14, last day for Dobie Elementary toy drive

Please bring new, unwrapped, educational toys and games for ages 4-6 to place



in the hallway collection boxes. Cash donations are also welcome.

Games: Candyland, Chutes and Ladders, memory games, matching games, dominos

Simple toys: Mr. Potato Head, trucks, dolls, stuffed animals, small balls (basketballs, nerf balls, football or soccer in size 3 or 4)

Basic art supplies: crayons, markers, tablets, and easy kindergarten-level workbooks

Please, no weapon-type toys.

Questions? Contact Betsy Willis, 972-380-8555.

Faith class has Advent study

"All I Want For Christmas: An Advent Study for Adults" by James A. Harnish is being used for the study. Contact Betsy Willis, 972-380-8555, or willisbf@yahoo.com, or just join us at 9:45am.

Aldersgate class

December 14 - Rosemary Rumbley, a master storyteller of life, will be our speaker. She is a lecturer, author, columnist, experienced actress, and teacher! Please join us for this "Christmas in Texas" presentation.

December 21 - "The News of Christmas" – How would Christmas be reported if CNN, Fox, PBS and MSNBC covered the story? An original, costumed interpretation will be presented by Cynthia and Herb Lee. Visitors are welcome!

Seekers class

December 14 - Jeannie Larrañaga sings songs of Christmas.

December 21 - Rev. Scott Somers brings a Christmas message.

December 28 - Our annual Seekers' brunch!

Delicious tamales!

The Hispanic ministry is selling their pork and chicken tamales for \$8 a dozen! Call Carlos, 972-239-9440, or the church office, 972-233-7671, to order. Pick-up every Monday, from 10am-4pm.

Joys and concerns

Call Alice Cromwell, 972-239-7332, or email her at dallasal@swbell.net for any prayer concerns. These concerns will stay on the list for two weeks unless otherwise requested.

Hospitals

Nancy Troth

Georgie Ann Davis

Jack and Joanne Browns' nephew, Dan Webster

SVUMC Church Family

Pauline Greenwell

Homebound members

Marlyn Redd, former member

Beth Copeland

Extended Church Family

Amy Garrow's mother

Norma Booth

Ron Amberg's nephew-in-law,

Tony Holiday's mother

Gene Mundy

Richard Turner

Marty Yancy's father

Wanda Bettis

Susan Haney's mother, Yvonne Russell

Those with ongoing concerns

Oliver Axtell

Betty Hopper's friend, Jo Kay Gary

Our Missionaries, the Savutos

Margaret Gilmore

Stephanie Canales, Ray and Edna

Slany United Methodist Church

Stephanie Cronenberg

Hennighs' daughter

Deepest sympathy to:

Susan Kasten

Jim and Rachel Edwards' daughter, Erin Dial

Tommi and Levon Ezell and family

Bob McGuire

The LaFranos' niece, Stephanie, and her
premature baby, Parker Charles Scruggs

in the death of her sister-in-law

Bobbie and Ralph Detwiler in the

death of his brother, Virgil

Please note that the church officially closes at noon on Friday and Saturday. Please plan around these hours.