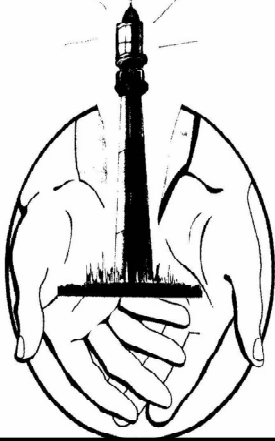


A BEACON OFFERING CHRIST TO ALL



A Publication of the First United Methodist Church of Rockport

The Rockport Beacon

"Let Your Light So Shine..." Matthew 5:16

Mission Statement

Offering Christ to all through worship, ministry, discipleship and fellowship to the glory of God.

Vol. 17, Number 12, December 2011

www.fumcrockport.org

Celebrate Advent

Advent is always a busy season of the church year. The first Sunday of Advent is November 27th. The second, third and fourth Sundays of Advent have many activities scheduled. Of course, included in the worship service is the lighting of the Advent candles. December 4th, the second Sunday of Advent will include the lighting of the second candle—peace, third Sunday, December 11th—Joy and 4th Sunday of Advent, December 18th the fourth candle—Love. The Christ Candle will be lit at the Christmas Eve Services. The Children's/Family Christmas Eve service will be at 5:00 p.m. and the Candle Lighting/Communion Services will be at 7:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. Also free Advent worship materials for children, teens and adults is available in the foyer.

Also available for purchase are large Christmas Poinsettia plants for \$11 each to be placed in the sanctuary Dec. 18th in honor or memory of someone as well as an opportunity to make a monetary donation of \$11 to the Good Samaritans. The poinsettias may be taken home by the donor after the Christmas Eve Services. Deadline to place your order is Dec. 12th.

On Sunday afternoon, December 4, at 2:30 p.m. everyone is invited to meet at the church



to go caroling. At 5:00 p.m. the carolers will meet back at the church for a lite supper.

December 18th at 9:00 a.m. will be the traditional Christmas brunch at the church. Breakfast casseroles, fruit and holiday breads will be

served. If you will provide one of these, please sign up on the sheet at the front desk in the foyer. At the 10:30 a.m. worship service the choir will present a Christmas Cantata.

A fun time for the children will be on Thursday evening, Dec. 13th at 5:30 p.m. It will be pictures and cookies with Santa Claus. The event sponsored by the First Learning Tree is inviting all children of the church to participate.

The Wednesday night Fellowship Meals and Worship will focus on special Advent programs. Sign up for the free meals Dec. 7, 14, 21 and join in the Advent Celebration.





**FROM THE
PASTOR**

2011 Celebration December

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ:

I suspect many of you do not know this about me - so if you are one of the curious read on. December is the month that has the best day of the year for me. NO, it is not Christmas Day or Christmas Eve. NO, it is not New Years Eve either. NO, while there are several great birthdays that month that is not it either. My favorite day is December 21st. As most of you know it is the shortest day of the year in terms of sun light. The part of the earth we live on and the sun are as far apart as they are going to get.

On that day our part of the world begins its journey back toward the sun and our days begin to get longer. Even though I have a wife who teaches science and can explain this thing in detail, exactly how God is able to pull this off is a mystery to me. For my entire 65 years God has commanded that this day is to be the one on which the sun begins its march northward. (Elaine says this has gone on for millions of years but the last 65 are the only ones I'm counting.) Besides the fact that I truly enjoy the

longer days of sunlight, this day does something truly remarkable for me. Annually it reminds me that God is a whole lot bigger and a whole lot greater than anything my mind can conceive of. When I think about what it takes to get the sun, the earth, the moon, the planets and the stars all working in harmony I almost get giddy. Me, Doug, one of about 7,000,000,000,000 people here on earth, am remembered and cared about by the one who did all this - WOW!

When I start worrying about life's speed bumps I stop and remind myself that my God is an awesome God - And that is something I truly celebrate. Doug

Choir Cantata Set for December 18

This year's Christmas Cantata: "I Hear the Prophet Callin'" will be performed during the 10:30 service, December 18th. From Pepper Choplin, author, "It is not our place to make something new of the Christmas story, but it is our place to tell the true story in a fresh way so the listener will hear it as if for the first time. It is my desire to offer to you a fresh way to experience and hear of Christ's birth." Come listen to the story; get ready, and prepare the way of the Lord!!

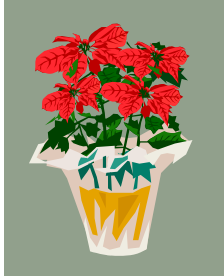
The Rockport Beacon

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Poinsettia or Mission Project Donation

The Church is decorated for Christmas and the poinsettias will be placed all around. If you would like to order a

Poinsettia or make a project donation, which will be forwarded to Good Samaritans, please do so by December 12. In either case, you may specify your gift to be "In Memory of" or In Honor of" someone. Forms are available at the volunteer desk in the Main Street foyer.

Poinsettias are \$11.00 each. Plans call for them to be displayed in the church beginning December 18th. If you wish, you may take yours home anytime after the 11:00 p.m. Candlelight Communion Service on Christmas Eve.

Mission Project donations of at least \$11.00 may also be made. The money will be given to the Good Samaritans.

Donations & information forms must be returned to Lesa Larsen by December 12th.

for the new year. The church will be providing fruit salad, coffee, tea, and orange juice.

Please bring either your favorite breakfast casserole or holiday bread to share. Realizing that many of our members have dietary concerns, if you bring something that is sugar free, low fat, or gluten free, please label it so folks can make good choices. To help make sure we have plenty for everyone, there is a sign-up sheet on the desk in the Narthex. Hope to see you there!

"COME TO THE MANGER"



Sat Dec 3 10am-3pm (Open to the public - enter from the Live Oak entrance!)

Sun Dec 4 9:30am-10:30am and 12noon-2pm (for our church family & guests!)

Come and experience this exciting and meaningful event to see how the joy of the blessed event of Jesus' birth has been represented over the years! A variety of different Nativity Scenes (crèches) will be on display in a special setting in the Fellowship Hall.

Many thanks to Maylene Moore and Patsy Phemister for organizing and setting up this wonderful event!



Christmas Brunch Scheduled for Sunday Morning Dec. 18th



Our church Christmas Brunch will be at 9:15 a.m. on the 18th of December. This would be a great opportunity to invite friends and neighbors to attend church with you! The brunch will be in place of Sunday School. Realizing that hunger knows no holidays, we are asking that you bring canned goods for Good Samaritan which will help them get off to a good start

Financially Faithful

Oct. 2011

Income - \$23,037.90
Castaways donation \$5,551.56
Total Income \$28,589.46
Expenses - \$32,156.71
Net Income (Loss) -(3,567.25)

Jan – Oct. 2011

Income - \$304,169(85%)
Budgeted- \$355,989
Expenses - \$282,202(79%)
Budgeted- \$355,989
Net Inc(Loss) - 21,967
Building Fund contrib.- \$5,519
Loan Balance - \$68,680

“Giving, not getting, is the way.
Generosity begets generosity”
Luke 6:38

**United Methodist Men Have Special
Work Day Project and Regular Meeting**

The UMM will be gathering at the home of Lila Ross at 516 N. Sixth Street in Fulton at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, December 3rd, for a work day. There is a sign up sheet on the Volunteer Desk or contact Steve Johnson for more information.

They also will be meeting for their regular breakfast on Wednesday, December 7th, at 7:00 am.

All men are invited.

**Missions Committee Asks
Your Help With Christmas
Gifts for Children & Coastal
Care Residents**

The Missions Committee has placed in both foyers the names, ages, and suggested gifts for the children under child protective services. Please take a name and return the gifts to the church no later than December 18th.

The Missions Committee has also accepted names of residents at Rockport Coastal Care and Oak Crest who do not have any family. The Center is asking for gifts for these residents for Christmas. A box with the names and suggested gift item is on the podium in the Main Street foyer.

Emmaus Gathering Dec. 1

Windswept Oaks Emmaus gathering will be held Dec. 1st at St. Stephens Lutheran Church in Portland at 6:00 p.m. We enjoy food and fellowship and invite anyone interested in going on the Walk to Emmaus to join us.

Please contact Steve Johnson for more information.

**January Newsletter
Deadline for Articles will
be Monday, December
12th.**

From the Christian Education Director

Education Happenings!

What a wonderful time of the year! Growing in expectation of our Lord & Savior Jesus, the Christ... How do you prepare?

Advent is a season of anticipation and hurriedness. We invite each of you to come to Sunday school to experience why God's gift of Christmas and the Coming of Christ is something to get excited about! Let's take this time to slow down for a few minutes and reflect on the season in joy...

All Sunday school classes meet at 9:15 am as follows:

Children & Tweens meet in the Annex
Adult classes meet in Fellowship Hall 1 (New Beginnings Class), FH 3 (Pastor's Study Group) and in the Church Office Break Room (Young at Heart).

Please be looking out for sign-up sheets for upcoming Bible Studies. These sheets will go up about Mid-December. Ladies, we will study Liz Curtis Higgs, "Bad Girls of the Bible" starting in January. The dates and times will be announced soon!

YOUTH: Mid-Winter camp will be January 20-22 in Kerrville at Mt. Wesley. Please mark your calendars and save your pennies!! We will meet at the regular time 4:30 on Dec 4 & 11, with the 18th to be our Christmas Party... Also, don't forget we will be helping Good Samaritans with the Christmas Baskets and I will let you know the date and time as soon as I know!

Blessings & Merry Christmas to all!

Susan Jamison
Director of Christian Education

First Learning Tree

T'was the night before Christmas and all the church not a creature was stirring... Well let me tell you one thing, that's a misconception!! We have all kinds of excitement and stirrings going on!

Our halls are overflowing with the sights and sounds of Christmas. Santa will visit; we will sing at the local retirement homes, collect food for Good Samaritans, sponsor CPS families that are less fortunate than us, host the "Santa Secret Shop" and have our "Cookies and Pictures with Santa". I wanted to add another event, but I'm afraid that the teachers may revolt on me! Sometimes, less is more and during this giving time of the year, I'm giving my staff a chance to slow and enjoy the season with their class.

Christmas should be a time of sharing and giving. At FLT we always try to instill in our children these simple acts. It teaches compassion and good will towards others. And what better way to learn than to observe it first hand. Extravagant giving... it comes in more shapes than one would realize. So give it a try. It is a great feeling!!

Merry Christmas to all.

Kathy

Rockport-Fulton Good Samaritans

Rockport-Fulton Good Samaritans

The Good Samaritan Center at 507 S. Ann helps members of the Aransas County low income community with short-term needs for food, clothing, shelter, utilities, medicines and transportation. In addition, with the help of our school counselors, our Kid Care program helps the homeless and needy students in the community with clothes, shoes, underwear, school supplies, lice kits and medical bills. Our church was instrumental in the development of Good Sam and continues to be one of the sponsoring churches.

Food is our centerpiece – we can help more people by providing a nutritionally balanced supply of food staples than any other way. It is our policy to give those in need enough food to feed each member of the family three meals a day for three days. During the first nine months of 2011, Good Sam has provided food to more than 6,000 individuals representing more than 1,400 families of our community.

Many times we are asked what food items are most needed at Good Samaritans. We are always in need of peanut butter, jelly, tuna and chili. There are designated collection boxes at both entrances of the church. Your cheerful generosity goes a long way in providing help to so many less fortunate families in our community.

Currently we are asking for specific items for our Christmas Baskets. We are asking for: variety of canned vegetables (16oz cans) of green beans, corn, sweet potatoes, pumpkin, pinto beans, etc.; variety of

canned fruit (16 oz. cans) of cranberry sauce, pineapple, etc.) and instant potatoes, Stovetop Stuffing, packages of gravy, brown sugar, mustard, Jello and candy canes. Cash donations will provide for ham, margarine, rolls, and fresh fruit.

A trained staff of volunteers operates the Good Sam Center each day and many more volunteers are needed in 3 areas—Pantry, Receptionist and Client Interviewers. If you are interested in volunteering or just learning more about Good Sam, contact Larry Moore at 790-8771 or Pat Speck at 790-9517.

Thank You For The Choir Room Platforms

The choir room platforms are finished!! What a difference they make! I would like to give a big “shout out” to the generosity of Bert Shoopman, Walter Abbott, and Daren Tackis for their donations of time, talents, and materials in getting this huge task accomplished. (Bert was quite the slave-driver, though, and never ask Walter to do any painting for you ! We scared Daren out of the country, too!) The effort was so worth it....the choir sounds so much better!

Thanks, Guys! From Linda Hamilton, Director of Music, Ruth Reagan, Choir Director and all the Choir.

Children’s Church Will “Follow the Star”

Follow the Star will be the Advent program starting November 27th for Children’s Church. We will be meeting in the Annex and working on a special project for Christmas Eve. All children including visitors 4-8 are invited to join us.

2011 December Sermons

12/04/11 Scripture: Isaiah 40: 1-4, 8-10

Title: What, me

worry?

Companion Scriptures: Psalm 85, 2 Peter 3: 8-15, Mark 1: 1-8, DOF 881

Focus vs. 10 "Do not fear for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will hold you with my righteous right hand."

Theme: When we think of the second coming some worry and some do not. I wonder why?

12/11/11 Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 6: 12-24

Title: Squirt

Gun

Companion Scriptures: Isaiah 61: 1-4, 8-11, Psalm 126, John 1: 6-8, 19-28

Focus vs. 23 "May God Himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Theme: Instructions sometimes seem impossible when taken at first blush.

12/18/11 Scripture: Luke 1: 46-55

Title: Sit And

Listen

Companion Scriptures: 2 Samuel: 7: 1-11, 16, Romans 16: 25-27, Luke 1: 26-38, Psalm 100

Focus vs. 47 "My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

Theme: As Mary's soul rejoices in the proclamation heaven and earth hold their breath and await.

12/24/11 Scripture: Luke 2: 1-20

Title: God Meant Now

Companion Scripture: Isaiah 9: 2-7, Psalm 96, Titus 2: 11-14

Focus vs. 1 "In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should

be taken of the entire Roman world."

Theme: This thing that happened raised a lot of questions

12/25/11 Scripture: Isaiah: 52: 7-10

Title: And It

Snowed

Companion Scripture: Psalm 98, Hebrews 1: 1-4, John 1: 1-14

Focus vs.10 "The Lord will lay bare his Holy Arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God"

Theme: There are some things you just won't miss.

FIRST LEARNING

TREE WILL BE

CLOSED DEC. 23RD

AND DECEMBER

26TH. CHURCH OF-

FICE WILL BE

CLOSED DECEM-

BER 26TH. BOTH

WILL BE CLOSED

DECEMBER 30TH

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 01—Marcia Baker | |
| 02—Clayton Black | 17—Graham Painter |
| 03—Holly James | 18—Greg Brou |
| 03—Richard Weber | 23—Joe Reagan |
| 05—Christine Brou | 25—Myrtle Deforest |
| 10—Charlene Morin | 25—Carole Miller |
| 10—Bill Phemister | 24—Tim Chapman |
| 12—Ruth Crough | 26—Ann Reimer |
| 13—Ann Schick | |
| 14—Linda Collins | 27—Bootsie Larsen |
| 14—Georgia Townsend | 28—Greg Burkhart |
| 16—Grant Brou | 30—Lila Ross |

**DECEMBER
ANNIVERSARIES**

- 16—Bill & Mary Jane Crabill
17—Bronson & Linda Hamilton
19—Jim & Carole Miller
23—Bert & Dixie Shoopman
28—Rob & Jeannie Coe
28—Will & Jeannie Larson



Vol. 17 No. 12

December, 2011 Douglas A. Hinchcliff, Pastor

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.

The people of The United Methodist Church™