



**Briarwood**  
United Methodist Church

**December 2011 Newsletter**

### *Pastor's Corner*

I had the misfortune of driving down County Line Road the other day. It was bumper to bumper. The crowds were thick. Lines were long. And people were just a tad impatient.

Still, there was an air of expectancy in the air everywhere I went. People are looking forward to Christmas. All of us are, I suspect.

And why not? There is so much to look forward to. The joy of getting together with family. The twinkle in a child's eye as they talk of Santa. The warm glow of a fire on a cold day.

Especially as Christians, we have so much to look forward to. At this time of year, I am always reminded of God's promise in Isaiah 7:14:

*Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and she will call him Immanuel.*

There is no greater expectancy than that for a child. Whenever a young couple are expecting their firstborn, you can feel the nervous energy. Already, we can envision Mary and Joseph, the nervous first-time parents awaiting Jesus' birth.

However, for us as Christians, the greater miracle here isn't the birth of a child, or even the miraculous way in which He was conceived. Rather, the most breathtaking part of this story is that last word in Isaiah: *Immanuel*.

Immanuel is supposed to be the child's name. But, in Hebrew, it literally means "God with us."

It's a statement of God's overall promise to His people: "I will be with you through this child." However, in Jesus that promise is fulfilled in a way we'd never have expected.

In Jesus, God is literally with us. He has stepped down from heaven to earth and slipped on our human form. The Son has wrapped Himself in human flesh. God has become man.

And why? To redeem us. To offer His life on our behalf. To be nailed to a Cross. But, even more, He has come to transform us in our flesh by being one of us.

Because God has become man through Jesus, now through our Savior we as humans become like our Lord not just through His death, but even His life.

It's an incredible thing God has done at Christmas. No wonder we get so excited about it. Don't miss the miracle. *God is with us!* Merry Christmas!

See you Sunday, Lauren

### **Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service**



**Saturday, December 24, at 4 pm**

### **December Anniversaries**

December 4	Jim & Dot McElroy
December 10	Charlie & Diane Dickens

### **Briarwood's Homebound Members**

Jim Alvis	Jim McElroy
Johnnie Beasley	Wayne Milsted
Barbara Clark	Ruth Paine
Janet Coleman	Shirley Robertson
Gloria Davis	Avanelle Stephens
Virginia Erwin	Dan Williams
Ella Dee Lamb	

### **December Honorees**

December 4	Leona Love
December 11	Jen Macy
December 18	Mignonne Maxwell
December 25	Jim & Dot McElroy

### **Last Men's Club Breakfast**

Men's Club will meet Sunday, December 18, at 8 a.m. in the fellowship hall.



Tommy and Pete will cook blueberry pancakes. ***All the women of the church are invited to attend.***

Also, this will be our last Men's Breakfast. The Men's Club has decided to discontinue it for the time being. So, come enjoy one last breakfast with us for old time's sake.

### **UMW Meetings**



**UMW Christmas Luncheon** will be Wednesday, December 14, at 11:30 am.

## Christmas Poinsettias



If you would like to place one or more poinsettias in the church as memorial or honor gifts, please fill out the order form and return it to the church office. (Order forms available in church office.)

The cutoff date for orders is Wednesday, Dec. 7, at 12 noon. The cost is \$8 each (tax included).

## Church Council

The Church Council will meet Sunday, January 22 at 3 pm in the Seeker's Class.

The Finance Committee will meet at 2:30 pm in the Conference Room.

## Mission Needs for Wingard House

The items needed for the Wingard House are: **Ramen noodles, mayonnaise, bleach, laundry detergent, toilet paper, and trash bags.**



This is a Christian home that reaches out to those in need – men, women, and children. Place the items in the kitchen across from the Fellowship Hall.

## Wesley Sunday School Class News

We will continue to deliver items to the Salvation Army! Thanks for your generous response and contributions. They are greatly appreciated.

## Do You Feel Called to Serve?

The Mississippi Annual Conference is conducting its self-nomination process for the 2012-2016 quadrennial committees and boards.

If you feel called to serve on one of these committees and would like to be considered, you may submit your desire for nomination in one of two ways: 1) Go to the Conference website at [www.mississippi-umc.org](http://www.mississippi-umc.org) and fill out the self-nomination form, or 2) contact Steve Casteel at the Office for Connectional Ministries by calling 601-354-0515.

Please prayerfully consider this opportunity. The deadline for nomination is December 31.

## Operation Christmas Child



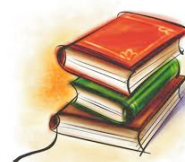
Thank You to All Who Helped Out!  
We Gathered **40 Shoebox Gifts** This Year!

## A Great Big THANK YOU!

Thank you to all who brought goodies with a little love tucked in that made our bake sale a success!

Many, many thanks,  
Wilma Ammons

## Library Notes



The Christmas materials (books, tapes, magazines, etc.) are on the library table waiting for you to come and take home to enjoy this blessed season. I will leave the materials on Jesus' ministry on the table for us to read through Easter and beyond.

Linda Anglin

## Wesley Tashiro Scholarship Fund

About a year ago Briarwood established the Tashiro Scholarship Fund at Wesley Biblical Seminary. Each semester a student preparing for the ministry receives a scholarship of \$500 from the fund to help meet their educational expenses.

Please keep this important ministry in your prayers. And thank you as always for your generous support.

## Record of our Faithfulness

Budget Received to Date	\$147,562.08
Budget Needed Weekly	\$3,237.60
Total Budget Needed to Date	\$155,272.20

Jesus  
is the  
Reason  
for the  
Season