

# Briarwood United Methodist Church Newsletter

## December, 2009

### Pastor's Corner

There is a twinkle in the eyes of most children this time of year. The sense of expectancy and anticipation is almost palpable. Thanksgiving is over, Christmas is on its way. The Macy's Day Parade marked its beginning. Santa Claus has already been sighted. Christmas trees are going up, lights are being strung, gifts are being bought. And every child old enough to do so is already dreaming of what he or she will get from good ol' St. Nick when that magical day arrives.

Waiting is always the hardest part about Christmas. The anticipation gets the better of us all. No matter how old we get we still feel a bit of it. Only, as we get older, what we are expectant for begins to change a bit. I suspect most of us are less worried about what is in those presents under the tree than we are about true "Peace on Earth." Somehow, in our turbulent world, that has more of a pull on us than new trinkets or toys. But, all the same, we are expectant.

It's the way it was that first Christmas as well. For centuries, people had been waiting, hoping, praying for the Messiah to come. They'd been dreaming of that day when God really would bring peace to earth, when God would reconcile with humanity and give us salvation from our sin.

Prophets had foreseen it, holy men and women had prayed ardently for it, yet all to no avail. Still, it tarried. Year after year, nothing seemed to happen. And people began to wonder: Would God ever move? Would His salvation ever come? Would Christmas ever really get here?

It's how we often feel at times about God's Second Coming. Some years, things seem to get worse and worse. The war in Iraq wears on, the economy is still struggling, gas prices are going up. Then there's the moral decline of western society. Can you believe they can really say that word on TV? Can they show that picture?

Something in us instinctively cries out: Come, Lord Jesus, come! Come soon! When will God step in and intervene? When will God bring an end to all of this? When will there truly be "Peace on Earth" at Christmas? Like people of old, we wait and hope and pray. We are expectant. When will He come?

Waiting is always the hardest part. Yet, no matter how hard it is to wait, He will come. Just as Jesus came that first Christmas, so He will come again. We don't know when or even exactly how, but we know He will come. May God give us patience as we continue to wait expectantly to see Jesus not only this Christmas, but even one day soon when He at last comes back for good to give us true, everlasting peace.

See you Sunday,  
Lauren

### Services in December

December 6 – **Choir Christmas Program**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent

December 13 – *Mary's Yes* – Luke 1:26-38  
3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent

December 20 – *Seeing the Savior* – Luke 2:22-35  
4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

December 24 – Christmas Eve – 5-6 p.m.  
Come & Go Communion

### December Anniversaries

Dec. 4	Jim & Dot McElroy
Dec. 10	Charlie & Diane Dickens
Dec. 18	B. J. & Lona Johnson

### Shut-ins of Briarwood

**At home:** Dan Williams  
Olive Windels  
Gloria Davis  
Jones & Shirley Robertson  
Barbara & Jeep Clark  
Wayne Milsted  
Ruth Paine

### Manhattan Nursing

Julia (Bill) Heflin  
(Martha Cowser's sister)  
Don Hickman

### St. Catherine's

Bob Gibson  
S 126, Sienna Hall

### Wisteria Gardens

Louise Luper (Jo Finch's friend)

### Come Celebrate Christmas!

The Sanctuary Choir will present their annual Christmas Celebration this Sunday, December 6. Come worship with us! Bring a friend! - *Dennis*

## December Honorees

Dec. 6	Annie Ruth Taylor
Dec. 13	Jerry & Martie Taylor
Dec. 20	Hazel Thornton
Dec. 27	Nell Ward

## November Family Night Supper

The Awards Night supper was a smashing success.

The lucky winners of the awards are as follows:

BUM Preacher	Lauren Porter
BUM Organist	Julia Cranford
BUM Lay Leader	Mike Knight
Eliza Doolittle	Ann Day
Energizer Bunny	Jeff Conly
Walter Cronkite	Tinye Bradshaw
Come All Ye Faithful	Hazel Thornton
Perseverance	Don Hickman
Sanctuary Angel	Tori Senate
One-of-a-Kind	Jared Letson
“Has Been”(of the Year)	Mary McKee
Isaiah Award	Jo Finch
John Wesley Award	Virginia McGrane
John Wesley	Barbara Renton
Pete Cowsert	John Nall
Pete Cowsert	Doug & Jeanette Godfrey

## Poinsettias

It's time for placing orders for poinsettias in the sanctuary for Christmas. The choir Christmas program will be early this year. It will be the first Sunday in December. So we will need to get the orders in before that time. They will still be \$8.00 and the deadline for ordering will be Wednesday, Dec. 2, 2009. Forms are available in the church office.

## Congratulations

Congratulations to Jana & Matt Shephard on the birth of a daughter, Julia Isabella, born on November 8, 2009.

Joe and Linda Anglin are proud great-grandparents of their third “Grand”. Wright Davis Taylor was born on Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup> to Michelle and Billy Taylor of Madison. Wright's grandmother, Cheri, was “raised” here at Briarwood.

## John Nall Won the Quilt!!!

Nov. 1 was the date that all the suspense was over. Many of us were sure that we would win the State Flower Quilt made by the Prayer/Quilters. The proceeds from ticket sales went to the Emergency Fund in our church office to assist those who come to our church in need of help. The amount of money raised was almost \$300.00. Thank you for your assistance in this project.

## Outreach and Witness

The congregation's support and encouragement in remodeling the Hut was greatly appreciated. It could not have been done without you. Thank you, thank you.

The first meeting in the Wilson Hut will be 12/2 at 5:15 PM. Please join the committee in prayer that the Wilson Hut will be a blessing to the AA community and that lives (even if it is just a few lives) will be changed.

If you have not had a chance to contribute to the remodeling of the Hut, you still have a chance to do so. While many donations have been received to date, still more are needed. So, if you feel led to contribute to the cost of remodeling the Hut, please contact Tommy Dyson. We also need a vacuum cleaner for the Hut, and a fund has already been started for this purpose. If you would like to contribute for this purchase, please contact Virginia McGrane.

Jen Macy & Virginia McGrane

## Prayer/Quilters Doings

We have been busy designing and making a wall hanging quilt for the Wilson Hut. It is by far the most challenging activity to date. Who knows what the future holds? Could be more challenges! Look for the quilt to be up soon.

We have some prayer quilts completed. We will be delivering one soon. Jacquetta Purvis donated some partially-made quilts that her mother had started and did not get to finish. We have plans to finish the quilts, and they will be on the altar for your prayers and blessings.

We, the Quilters, would like to take this opportunity to wish you and yours a very happy, healthy, and holy holiday time. We appreciate your help and support of our activities. It is hard to believe that our group is two years old and starting our 3<sup>rd</sup> year. Drop by and visit with us on Friday mornings. You are always welcome.

## From your Finance Committee

It has been our tradition to leave gifts at the altar when we come to communion on the First Sunday of each month. These are designated “Emergency Aid” funds. If you have seen our financial statement, you know we are in need of some gifts for this fund. Thanks for remembering this need!

## Change of Address

Ann Holland has changed her address. The new address is:

106 Pine Lake Place  
Brandon, MS. 39047

## UMW News

The UMW will have its annual Christmas luncheon on Dec. 8, 2009, at 11:30 AM. The UMC Men's Club members are also invited to come.

## Library Notes

Jen Macy recently donated a DVD from her brother John Maxwell's Fish Tale Group, The Healing of the Blind Man. This is a delightful presentation taken from the 9<sup>th</sup> Chapter of John (1-39) and is staged as if the event had just happened. It is not surprising that John Maxwell is so talented since he is the son of Mignonne Maxwell.

Mary McKee gave a new book to the library (C.2009) by Matthew Hagee/Shaken, not Shattered. A quote from the Foreword says, this "is an amazing book that will challenge you to believe that with God on your side, there are no boundaries--just possibilities, for your life". Another quote in the book: "If good things come to those who wait, then great things are in store for those who are willing to persevere". Mary says this book is full of inspiration and Godly instruction. Thank you, Mary, for this book. Many of us will enjoy this walk with God.

## Memorials

We have received many memorials for Jim Ray, who died on Oct. 29. Among his services to Briarwood was as long-time Sunday School Secretary. Even more appreciated was Jim's many years of helping as on-call handyman. We will miss this servant of God.

We are still receiving memorials for Katherine Alker. In a recent thank-you letter from her son, he wrote "Paul's church had a special place in her heart, and she loved the people there." Katherine herself often said this. We are so glad that our church was such a loving part of her life.

## Methodist Student Day

On November 22 we recognized members of our congregation who are students in college. Special attention was directed toward the Fred Ighoavodha family. Daughter Onome is working on a higher degree in Information Management Systems at Rutgers University. Orowo is at Jackson State University in the Industrial Arts Department with a concentration in Manufacturing Design. This spring Oghale completed Engineering School at Columbia University. Now mother Miriam is in a Ph.D. program in Environmental Science. It is easy to see that Fred, a professor at Jackson State University, believes in education.

## Men's Club

The Men's Club will host their Christmas Breakfast on December 20<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 AM. Ladies are invited.

## Thanksgiving Service

Five churches joined together for the Briarwood Community Thanksgiving Service on Tuesday, November 24, at 6:30 P.M. The First Christian Church, led by Rev. Mona Lisa Garrett, hosted the meeting. Other churches participating were: Briarwood Drive Baptist Church, Briarwood Presbyterian Church, Community of Christ, and Briarwood United Methodist Church. The members brought canned foods for Stewpot and children's gifts for Toys for Tots.

## Charge Conference

Charge Conference was held Thursday, Nov. 19. Rev. Henderson Raspberry, our district superintendent, presided over the gathering. At the meeting, church officers for 2010 were elected and the pastor's salary was set. Also, twenty-six names were duly removed from our church roles by Charge Conference action.

## Operation Christmas Child

Thank you to everyone who put together Shoe Box Gifts for Operation Christmas Child this year. We delivered 15 shoe boxes to the gathering station here in Jackson on Nov. 19. Thank you again for all your generous support.

## Thank You

I would like to thank the members of Briarwood for their love, support, letters and prayers in my absence. It is very much appreciated. Thanks, Gary Platt

## Last Note

Let us know of any suggestions you might have to make the Newsletter, E-Mails, etc., better for you. Don't be shy, we really mean it.

## Report of Givings for November

Budget Received	\$12,554.80
Budget Needed Weekly	\$3,808.00
Total Budget Received	\$170,783.55