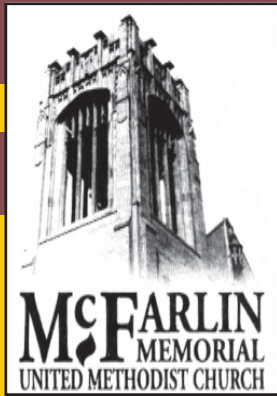


McFarlin Alive



VOLUME 156 ISSUE 23

November 20, 2009

Advent Festival – Sunday, November 29 Crafts, Caroling, Jazz: Fun for All!

McFarlin's Advent Festival has been a tradition on the first Sunday of Advent since 1978. Some of the best-loved aspects of the day are continued each year while the theme, crafts, family gifts and other details change. Crafts are designed for four different age levels from 3 year olds to adults. Children in child care will also have opportunities to make simple crafts. Even though age levels are designated for each area, everyone can choose to make the items that interest them with the level of challenge and coordination they are comfortable with.

"It Came Upon a Midnight Clear" is the 2009 theme. The opening is from 3-3:30 PM in Fenn Hall and will feature carol singing. Each family will receive their family gift at that time. Family gifts this year are plaques made from sections of the old cedar tree that was cut down last year and served as McFarlin's first Christmas tree. Be sure to be present to claim your piece of McFarlin history.

A jazz combo organized by Mary Sallee will entertain from 4-6 PM in the Atrium as usual. Some come just to enjoy the music and skip making crafts altogether. Refreshments are available all afternoon and you can decorate a gingerbread person in the Atrium kitchen area. A family supper will be served from 5-6:30 PM. The menu includes hot dogs (plain or chili dogs) and chili (plain or Frito chili pies). Dessert will be brownies a la mode. The price is \$5 per person or \$15 maximum per family.

This year's navy long and short-sleeve advent T-shirts will be on sale at the festival as well as on Sunday mornings. Prices are \$12 for short sleeve and \$15 for long sleeve. Devotional books, children's Christmas books and cookie dough by the youth ministries will all be available in the Fenn Hall lobby. Come enjoy Advent Festival and bring friends and neighbors for this special time!



*Responding
to God's call,
we seek to
live lives
shaped by
Christ,
to reach
people for
Christ,
and to
develop
deeply
committed
Christians.*

Program Council Becomes Growth and Vision Ministry Team

At their November meeting, Program Council finalized their self-examination with a new name: Growth and Vision Ministry Team. The group clarified their purpose as *the place where staff and congregational leaders of various ministry teams (formerly committees and commissions) will collaborate on new ministry initiatives, especially across ministry areas, determine fundraisers, and allocate the budget among the various ministry areas.* Bob Staples, the chair, led the successful process of clarification. Proposals for new ministry initiatives and fundraisers should be given to Daphne Fix, church secretary, in order to be included on the next agenda.

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Ministry Updates



Every once in a while I come across an article I really like. The following appeared in the Oklahoma Conference newspaper recently.

Why Go to Church? By Bishop Robert Hayes Jr.

Why do you go to church on Sunday? Why? Have you thought about that? Is there an overpowering need or drive that pushes you? Are you in search of something?

Some people go out of habit or tradition. Others go because of curiosity. Still others go due to guilt. Some go because there are deep and abiding friendships at church, connections that have been nurtured over a long period of time. Those physically unable to be present at a church tune in to broadcast services.

Take a closer look at why you go. This question and, more importantly, the answer you give will say a lot about you.

Asking, seeking. When I go to church on Sunday, I am in search of something. I go seeking guidance, strength, and spiritual nourishment for the week. The unknown days before me are filled with too much uncertainty for me to try and go it alone in my life.

In the words of an elderly woman who found herself at the altar: "I don't know the way, so I need to be in touch with someone who does."

There at church, I am listening for God to speak to me through the Scriptures, the sermon, the music, the Communion, and a host of other ways. I am waiting and listening for God to talk to me individually!

I have come to understand that the message is not talk about God, but an opportunity for God to talk to me. I am there in church to affect a meeting between God and me, so we may talk in a personal way. I am there so God can probe me, challenge me, call on me for a decision, and offer holy help to me.

Through the mediums of Scripture, homily, and music, God claims me, measures me, forgives me, and commissions me.

In short, I go to church to be in the presence of God. I go to learn of God's love for me as evidenced through Jesus Christ, and how that love can redeem and save me from a hard and cruel world.

However, before I go to church, there are two very important things I must do.

1. Go in the right frame of mind. The foremost reason some people don't get more out of their encounters with God in worship is because they don't go in the right frame of mind. You must make the necessary preparations, just as though you are going to meet a well-loved friend. You are! You are going to meet the greatest Friend!

But perhaps your thoughts remain crowded with the issues from the previous week. Before you go, put aside that argument from the previous night; let go of your hang-ups and disappointments; reconcile with that neighbor or family member.

Resolve in advance to be on time. There is no way you can enjoy church when you rush frantically, hurrying out of the house and down the road—only to arrive disgruntled. Being on time for church is just as easy as being on time for your job—or whatever it is you must do with some measure of punctuality.

There is a warm, refreshing atmosphere waiting for you at church, whether your Sunday morning there begins with Sunday school or worship service. The fellowship of interesting people at church school and the beauty and peace of the sanctuary just before worship begins afford ideal moments to remind yourself God is there for you.

2. Go to celebrate and participate. Going to church in the right frame of mind is important. Being an active part of the services through celebration and participation is a must! All of us should be eager to proclaim God's goodness because we all receive special blessings that are uniquely ours throughout each week.

If you and I don't shout it out, who will?

Let the Bible become your spiritual homeland. Take the time to inhabit and live in this dwelling. The main reason that people claim they get no benefit from the services is because the Scriptures are foreign to them. Get into the Word of God and, I assure you, God's Word will get into you!

After you've shared in the beautiful music, the comforting Scriptures, and the witness to the Word, what comes next? It is time for you to go out and share God's goodness!

You must carry God's invitation out from the sanctuary and into the world. Others are longing to hear God speak to them, too.

I began by asking the question: Why do you go to church?

Only you know the answer to that. If you truly ask God for the answer and seek God in the place where He is waiting to meet you, then chances are you will find Him!

Ministry Updates

Youth Works...

I spend a lot of time contemplating the “what if’s” of life. You know, what if we could get just 15 more people to go to Mexico so an additional family could have a house; what if we tweaked things a little on Sunday nights, maybe even more kids would show up; what if money weren’t an issue, how would that change the way we do ministry?

As I look on the horizon and see the Christmas season, I am doing a lot of “what if-ing.” As you know, the Student Ministries takes on the annual *Operation Santa Claus* where adult Sunday school classes and other groups sponsor families in need by providing gifts and food baskets. In 16 years at McFarlin I can already tell this Christmas brings the greatest need in our community. We receive most of the names from the Salvation Army, but in recent years we have also worked with Crossroad Youth and Family Head Start and Madison Elementary. In recent weeks I have received phone calls from 4 other organizations asking for help. And the Salvation Army had to stop taking names of families in need because so many requested help.

So, here is the “what-if”: what if we, as a church, step up to the plate and commit to doing all that we can to help those in need this holiday season. Maybe that means buying one less present for each family member and in turn buying gifts for children in need. Maybe that means taking an hour and ringing Salvation Army Bells at a local store (you can sign up outside Fenn Hall or the Sanctuary for the dates McFarlin has committed to, or call 579-5442 to sign up through the Salvation Army). Or maybe you increase your grocery list and buy a few items for the church food pantry.

What if we all focused on the true meaning of love, serving, sacrifice, and giving this Christmas? Contact me (smeier@mcfarlinumc.org or 819-4363) if you need ideas about helping this Christmas season.

Scott Meier

Music Notes

The McFarlin Music Department is extremely excited to welcome our new Director of Children’s Music and Handbells, Libby Waldenville. Libby has been a member of McFarlin for many years and has been involved with music at McFarlin for all of that time. In addition to her service to music, she has served on most of our leadership committees including the SPRC and currently the Board of Trustees.

Libby brings a wealth of musical knowledge and educational experience. She has served on many boards in the state and has been teacher of the year at Jackson Elementary numerous times in her more than twenty years as their music teacher. Additionally, she has been the mentor of many music teachers who have had her tutelage while they were student teaching.

Libby will assume all of her duties after her retirement from Norman Public Schools after the 2009/2010 school year. In the interim, Tracey Gregg-Boothby will maintain her roles with the Wesley Choir and numerous handbell groups. Marci Corey will work with the Wesley I Handbell Choir in addition to her duties as the director of the Carillon Handbell Choir and director of music at Blanchard First United Methodist Church. Daphne Fix will take additional responsibility with the 2nd - 5th grade children. We appreciate all their commitments to McFarlin and work during our transition. Libby will take a very active role in the organization and administrative responsibilities for children’s music and handbells during this time.

We appreciate the many opportunities you give us to work with your children and youth and thank you for your support during our time of change. With Libby on board I am confident our ministry will be as strong as ever.

Boyd Hamilton
Interim Coordinator of Music

Deacon’s Corner

Service is essential for spiritual growth. God is continually at work in the believer’s life, transforming his character into the image of Christ (Romans 8:29). A major hindrance in this process is self-centeredness. Serving others is one of the tools that God uses to set us free from the slavery of selfishness. James Bryan Smith, in his book *The Good And Beautiful God*, shares this word about transformation: “However, even though we have become new people spiritually, we still live in our old self’s *body*, which contains the remnants of old narratives, old memories, and our old habits. We still live in a world that stands diametrically opposed to the truth of God. This is why we struggle with sin even after we’re regenerated (*made new*). The Bible describes this as a conflict of the Spirit against the flesh. The word flesh (Greek *sarx*) refers **to living apart from God**. *Sarx* is what I produce when I am disconnected to God and running on my own.” Wow! This really explains why I fail when I try to change by my own will. Transformation requires the Holy Spirit and my willingness to yield to that Spirit’s working in my life; it requires lowering yourself to the level of a servant. Ask God every morning for opportunities that will give you a chance to serve someone. Take your place alongside Christ, who was the ultimate servant of all, and be transformed!

Grace and Peace,
Harriette Leigh Kemp

Ministry Updates

Senior Adult

Our December Bonus Years Program will be McFarlin's talented Boyd Hamilton presenting a musical program for us. This will be on Wednesday, December 2 at 10:30 AM in Fenn Hall (the very first Wednesday after Thanksgiving). We turn in our reservations for our meal the Thursday before our meeting. However, since that day is Thanksgiving, none of you would be thinking about that reservation and no one would be at the church to accept it. My request is to ask you to sign up today or this coming Sunday. There are sign-up sheets outside my office and at the receptionist's desk.

Our December trip is to OCU's Christmas program is on Saturday, December 12. We are taking two church buses and one church van. We are in need of three qualified drivers. The drivers will receive free tickets and a free dinner, so what three want to sign up first?

In 2010 we are considering adding some events to our program. Several have suggested that we have a day to play cards and dominoes. Other suggestions have been to take one day a month to eat out. In January we will discuss some options and the surveys you filled out earlier this year. I would love to see a calling list to check on other senior members of our church. So put your thinking caps on and let's see what brilliant ideas we can come up with.

I received the following as being in a church bulletin, "Don't let worry kill you off – let the church help."

So be sure to keep smiling!
Carol Dean Schreiner

Care Ministries

Thanksgiving was wrought with a time of sickness, death and conflict when the pilgrims first settled in America. Fortunately for the pilgrims, the Native Americans indigenous to that area provided beneficial planting methods and, in 1621, a harvest was celebrated with a feast for all. Thanksgiving was given for the blessings from God.

Nearly four hundred years later, we still make giving thanks the central theme in our Thanksgiving holiday. However, gratitude or the art of being thankful should be a part of our daily lives, not just something that is reserved for special occasions. Actually, there is some scientific fact that being thankful does make us feel better, mentally, physically, and spiritually. It has been found that people who count their blessings report feeling more optimistic, more satisfied with their lives, have less physical complaints, are more likely to exercise and sleep better. When we are grateful for life's blessings on a daily basis our mindset changes, our attitude changes, and we become focused on the things that matter most.

"God gave you a gift of 86,400 seconds today. Have you used one to say thank you?" – Clarence E. Hodges

Serving with you,
Jane Cook, Congregational
Care Coordinator

CHILDREN'S CHURCH-HOUSE

Rollin', Rollin' Rollin', Get Those Babies Strollin'! Outside That Is!

Due to our overwhelming success in the Children's Day Out program, we have exceeded our stroller limit and we would like to purchase another 6-passenger stroller.

Please consider a donation to our Strollin' Babies Fund. We understand the importance of fresh air and the beautiful outdoors and hope you will help us reach our goal.

Children's Day Out is a program offered to families Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9 AM – 2 PM. Contact Gaye Sayers at 615-0285 with any questions or donations.

Help Needed

The Children's Ministry Team is looking for help. We need a shopper for weekly supplies, a greeter coordinator for the nursery, a Sunday nursery worker, and office help. Please contact Kristy Varva for more information at 321-3484, ext. 111 or kvarva@mcfarlinumc.org.

United Methodist Women December Unit Meeting December 1 at 6:30 PM in Fenn Hall

It is becoming a tradition at McFarlin to make this joyous occasion our opportunity to welcome as guests all McFarlin women who are not members of UMW, whether that means being new to the church or being here for years, but not knowing about UMW. Spouses are also invited. An effort has been made to send invitations to all women who have joined the church this year. Knowing that names sometimes get missed, please do call and plan to come whether you receive an invitation or not.

Ministry Updates

Give a Coffee Basket for the Holidays

The missions coffee fundraiser is in the Atrium each Sunday November 22 - December 13. Coffee, tea, chocolate bars, cocoa mix and baking cocoa plus beautiful gift baskets with these products will be sold before and after Sunday school in the Atrium. Products can be exchanged in the baskets so you can have just the items you think the recipient will enjoy. Baskets come in different price ranges. Proceeds help support our missionaries, send international mission teams and finance local projects. Many McFarlinites enjoy the convenience of a subscription for monthly coffee deliveries for the six months.

Volunteers Needed

Volunteer receptionists are needed for one Sunday morning a month in the office area. Times are from about 9 AM - 10:50 AM. If you might be able to help, please see Howard Zimmerman or George Shepherd on Sundays or contact George during the week at 321-3484, extension 109 or gshpherd@mcfarlinumc.org.

Holiday Blood Drive

Between soldiers at Ft. Hood, neighbors recovering from an accident or family members undergoing medical treatment we all have personal reasons for donating blood. Mark your calendar now for McFarlin's Holiday Blood Drive on Sunday, December 13 from 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM. The bloodmobile will be parked outside Fenn Hall. To give the gift of life, sign up to donate on the lists outside worship on Sundays starting next week or e-mail George Shepherd for an appointment at gshpherd@mcfarlinumc.org.

Kenyan Couple to Speak Sunday, November 29 from 10 - 10:40 AM in Fenn Hall

The Oklahoma Conference brought Stanley and Mary Imunya, a couple from Kenya, to Oklahoma about 20 years ago to attend nursing school at OCU. They will share with adult and youth classes about the ministry of Maua Methodist Hospital near Mt. Kenya (north central part of the country) and the community outreach clinics that operate in the vicinity. The area has suffered a three year drought and many continue to suffer from HIV/AIDS. They are receiving a distinguished alumni award from the OCU School of Nursing. Come learn about ministries of the Methodist Church in Kenya from this Christian couple.



85 Years....and Counting!

Sunday, December 6 will be a special day for McFarlin Church. "85 Years....and Counting" will be the theme for the church's anniversary in honor of the anniversary of the official dedication on December 7, 1924. There will be several special features for the anniversary celebration. A display case that will hold the early artifacts of the church will be placed in the education wing and will be unveiled and dedicated that day. Pictures of Mr. and Mrs. McFarlin as well as that of the Sunday school class members who purchased the original lots on which the church was built will be included, as well as other mementos. There also will be special music that day, as well as other anniversary observances. This will be a great day of remembering our history and preparing for our future.

United Methodist Women December Unit Meeting December 1 at 6:30 PM in Fenn Hall

Continued from Page 4

Dinner will be served at 6:30 PM, followed by the program which is a one-act play "The Littlest Angel." Cast members include both UMW members and other men and women from the congregation. Marles Bradley, who is a frequent participant in Sooner Theater presentations, will direct the play.

Hostess for the meeting is UMW Circle 5. Cost of the dinner for members and spouses is \$7. There is no charge for non-UMW members and spouses. Please call McFarlin at 321-3484 by Tuesday, November 24 to reserve your place for the catered dinner. Child care is available by advance reservation only.

McFarlin News

What Adult Sunday School Classes Are Studying As of December 2009

McFarlin's adult classes invite you to join them. Current study topics or general categories are listed below along with classrooms and other information about classes.

Bible Study	Jesus and the Relationship to John the Baptist – mixed couples, singles - middle & older	222
Close Ties	Advent study, singles & couples, 30's to 60's	405
College-Age	Students and others in early 20's	Step Brothers (east of McFarlin)
Commitments	Variety of topics, couples - 40ish	328-329
Crossroads	<i>Have a Little Faith</i> by Mitch Albom - happy empty-nesters with diverse perspectives	406
Faith Journeys	Board of Discipleship weekly worship readings, singles - 20's & 30's	325
Fellowship	<i>New Life: Acts and Ephesians</i> - older adults	Meyer Hall
Finding God	Books of the Bible and various studies, mixed group - middle adults	402
Focus	<i>100 Ways to Simplify Your Life</i> - single adults	404
Friendship	Variety of topics - mature adults	229
Genesis	Variety of topics, mainly singles - middle adults	210
GIFT	Books of the Bible - any age adults	227
Homebuilders	Variety of topics, mainly couples	226
Just Jesus	Acts - small class, singles & couples	Aldersgate House
New Beginnings	1 st Corinthians, Philippians - mature adults	327
New Horizons	Advent lessons, mainly couples - mature adults	403
New Life	A Year with Wesley / Methodist Values, mainly singles - older adults	200
New Roots	Advent Study - young couples with growing families	224
PALS	Variety of interesting/current topics, some book studies - middle adults	407
Promised Land	II Samuel, any age adults, couples and singles	401
Searchers	Books of the Bible, couples and singles - mainly mature adults	209
Two-in-One	Covenant Communities (Joshua, Judges, Ezra, Numbers, Mark 1st & 2nd Peter - retired older couples and singles	223
Upper Room	Variety of topics & lively discussion, mainly couples Mature, fun-loving adults	228
Upward	Bible study, mixed couples and singles - mixed ages	300
Young Career Fellowship	Book of Daniel - singles or couples in their 20's and early 30's	100
Young Families	Community: Living Faithfully with Others - couples with young children	326

College-Age Class

Our new College-Age Sunday School Class began meeting last week at Step Brother's across Webster Street east of the church. This enthusiastic group welcomes others who are students or in their early 20's.

Part-Time College and Young Adult Coordinator Needed

This individual will guide and develop small groups of people primarily in their 20's into a closer relationship with God. Please send resume to rwade@mcfarlinumc.org or PO Box 6390 Norman, OK 73070, Attention: Randy Wade.

McFarlin Family

Welcome McFarlin New Members: Bryan and Amber Nichols; Sean and Dana Rieger.

Baptized Into the Family of Faith: Bryan, Amber, and daughter Ashlyn McKenna Nichols; Clayton James, Travis Cole, and Grant Owen Rieger, sons of Sean and Dana Rieger.

Meetings & Activities

November 22nd - 28th

Sunday, November 22

	Family Camp	Canyon Camp
	H.S. Senior Surprise	Offsite
8:00AM	Men 2 Pray 4 Pastors	Room 200
8:30AM	Early Worship/Communion*	Sanctuary
9:40AM	Sunday School*	Various
10:55AM	LifeLine Worship*	Fenn Hall
10:55AM	Sanctuary Worship*/Communion	Sanctuary
1:15PM	Youth Praise Band Practice	Fenn Hall
4:00PM	Wesley II Bell Choir	Meyer Hall
4:00PM	Wesley III Bell Choir	Bell Room
4:30PM	Advent Preparation	Room 401
4:30PM	Chapel Choir	Choir Room
5:00PM	Wesley Choir	Meyer Hall
5:30PM	Singles Bible Study/Dinner	615 E. Boyd
5:40PM	Social Skills Group	Room 224
6:00PM	Agape Handbell Choir	Bell Room
6:00PM	Youth Fellowship Dinner	Fenn Hall
6:30PM	The Gathering	Fenn Hall
7:00PM	Zielinski Singers Performance	Sanctuary
7:00PM	Littlest Angel Rehearsal	Room 209

Monday, November 23

9:00AM	Children's Day Out	Room 102, 104
10:00AM	UMW #11	Offsite
4:00PM	Wesley I Bell Choir	Bell Room
6:30PM	Care Team Meeting	Room 227
7:00PM	Boy Scout Patrol Meeting	Room 329, 403
7:00PM	COSI	Room 222
7:00PM	Boy Scouts	Meyer Hall
8:00PM	HS Bible & Basketball	Fenn Hall

Tuesday, November 24

11:30AM	Prayers for Our Church	Church Offices
6:30PM	Celebrate Recovery	Meyer Hall
7:00PM	Disciple Bible Study III*	Room 226
7:00PM	Faith & Finance Committee	Room 209
7:00PM	Littlest Angel Rehearsal	Fenn Hall

Wednesday, November 25

6:00AM	Men's Prayer Breakfast	Fenn Hall
8:00AM	Church Offices Closed	Church Offices
6:30PM	Emmaus Reunion*	Room 227
8:00PM	Al-Anon	Room 227

Thursday, November 26

7:00AM	Day Care Closed	Day Care
8:00AM	Church Closed	Church

Friday, November 27

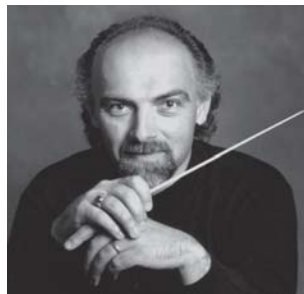
8:00AM	Church Offices Closed	Church Offices
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Saturday, November 28

8:30AM	Seniors Breakfast	Prairie Kitchen
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*Child care Available

McFarlin Welcomes the Richard Zielinski Singers



Sunday, November 22 at 7 PM in the Sanctuary
They will be singing a selection of American Choral works conducted by our own Dr. Richard Zielinski!

It's Time to Order Poinsettias!



If you would like to have a poinsettia on the altar Sunday, December 13 in memory or honor of someone special to you, please fill out a form found at the receptionist desk outside the offices and turn it in to Daphne Fix, church secretary. We will have poinsettias in the Sanctuary and LifeLine services. Poinsettias are \$8 this year and payment is appreciated at the time of order. All proceeds from poinsettia sales go to Meals on Wheels.

Small Directories Mailed



McFarlin Church members should receive the 2009 edition of McFarlin's "Guide Book and Directory" in the mail soon. Thanks to those who advertised in the books thus making the project free for the church.

Thanksgiving Day



Don't eat turkey by yourself! Join others on Thanksgiving Day at 615 E. Boyd at 1 PM. Bring your favorite side dish and the meat and rolls will be provided. Contact Dan or Harriette Kemp at 405-245-9874 for more information. All are welcome!

McFarlin News

McFarlin Memorial United Methodist Church



P.O. Box 6390
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www.mcfarlinumc.org

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Poinsettia Caretakers Needed! If you would be willing to help care for our beautiful poinsettias while they are in the building during the month of December, please contact Daphne Fix, church secretary at 321-3484, ext. 132 or dfix@mcfarlinumc.org.



McFarlin Hoodies Are Here!

McFarlin Hoodies (pullover or zipper front) are on sale on Sundays before and after Sunday school in the Atrium. Various colors in children to adult sizes are available for \$20 and \$25. Pick one up for yourself or for a Christmas gift!

Cleveland County Food Handler's License Training

There will be a food handler's license training session conducted by the Cleveland County Health Department on Thursday evening, December 3 in Fenn Hall. Registration starts at 5:45 PM and the training session will be conducted from 6-7 PM. Cost is \$5 per person and the session is open to all ages. If you prepare or serve food at the church or any other volunteer "for profit" organization, this message is for you. The session is open to anyone in the Norman community.



8:30 & 10:55
AM
Sanctuary
Traditional
Worship

10:55 AM
LifeLine
Contemporary
Worship