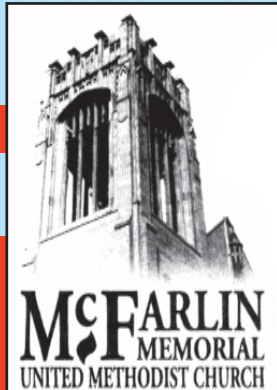


McFarlin Active



VOLUME 156 ISSUE 24

December 4, 2009

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

Christmas

VS.

CHRISTMESS



Please join us Sundays in December as we celebrate the Advent Season with our new sermon series Christmas vs. Christmess.

85 Years....and Counting!

P.O. Box 6390, 73070
419 S. University at Apache
Norman, Okla. 73069
PH 405-321-3484
www.mcfarlinumc.org

Sunday, December 6 will be a special and important day for McFarlin Church. "85 Years....and Counting" will be the theme for the church's anniversary in honor 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. This will be a great day of remembering our history and preparing for our future.

Volume 156,
Issue 24

Ministry Updates

From My House to Your House



This Sunday we will celebrate our church's 85th anniversary. While serving as senior pastor of McFarlin, I have become aware of our church's great heritage. On numerous occasions I have shown people around our building and have told them the story of how our church got its name and how it came to be. It is a remarkable story, one worth repeating. I have wondered what McFarlin will be like 75 or even 100 years from now. Will it be the vital church it is today, or will there just be a building? I believe we cannot just be content to talk about the past, or stay where we are as far as what we do as a congregation.

Recently we had a staff retreat where I talked about establishing goals for our church. I also talked about this at the recent All-Church Conversation and at our Charge Conference. I believe it is good to set goals, even if one does not always attain them. A numerical goal I would like to see is 1250 in worship and small groups (Sunday school, Disciple Bible Study, choirs, etc.) by the end of January 2012. Presently we are between 900 and 1000 in worship, and we are at 665 in the Sunday school classes alone.

Financially, I would like to see the average giving of our members increase. Over the years I have read that the average United Methodists' gift to the church is somewhere around 2% of one's income. As you would expect, I would love to see everyone tithe (10%), but if the average gift is 2% at McFarlin (I do not know what the percentage is at McFarlin) and we went to 3%, we could do so much more as a church with our ministries. I think this is a reasonable goal, one that could be made with just a little bit of effort.

Obviously, certain adjustments would need to be made in order for any of the above to occur. For one thing, there would have to be increased commitment on the part of our members. As a church, we would have to be committed to higher expectations. We would also have to increase our hospitality efforts, and we would have to do a better job of assimilating people into various small groups after they join. It is increasingly evident that connectivity is the key to retaining those who join the church.

We have been working to improve the worship experience here at McFarlin. This has been the major emphasis of our Strategic Plan Task Force. Even though our worship survey has been completed and given to the Worship Commission so that adjustments can be made, worship must continue to be a priority. We also need to emphasize other things as well. Crucial to any congregation is its care ministry. Not only our staff, but our entire membership must be about caring for those who have needs, concerns, etc., and we must always strive to do a better job of this.

Again, I am grateful for our church's great heritage, but we must be focused on the future. Lately someone came up with the idea of a new logo for our church. It was a tree with the tower of our church in the background with the words: "Deep Roots, New Life." It seems to me that's where we are at McFarlin. We have got the best of both worlds. We have got a great past and a great future if we claim the moment! It takes a lot of commitment to claim the moment, and we have to create a culture where growth can occur. It is not always easy, but it is possible and we must be about claiming the possible!

For deep roots and new life,

Dick House

Life Line



This year has been extra difficult on many families leaving more children than ever in danger of going without any presents for Christmas. Children having nothing to open on December 25 is unacceptable. Therefore, in LifeLine we are going to do something about this situation. Our goal is to "adopt" 100 local children to provide gifts for.

The children's names and needs are located in the Fenn Hall lobby. We had a great response last week with 39 children's names taken. That still leaves us 61 to go. Please stop by the LifeLine Angel Tree and pick up as many names as you can provide for.

Grace, Peace & Joy,
Randy Wade

Ministry Updates

Youth Works...

This past Sunday 39 names were taken from the LifeLine Angel Tree located outside Fenn Hall. Rev. Randy Wade made a challenge to LifeLine worshippers of sponsoring 100 children this Christmas with gifts. Others are certainly encouraged to take the challenge!

Operation Santa Claus is underway! Our adult Sunday school classes and others have signed up to help more than 25 families in the community. This is in addition to the LifeLine Angel Tree.

We continue to collect new and used shoes and new and used winter coats, hats, and gloves. There are 3 collection points in the building now: outside Fenn Hall, in the Atrium, and in the Student Ministries office (room 216). So far we have collected over 200 winter coats and over 300 pairs of shoes (is this a great church or what?).

Last week a group of youth and college students prepared and served dinner at an OKC Soup Kitchen. It was amazing and helped to open our eyes to the needs right here at home.

The youth are selling cookie dough in 2-lb blocks. Sugar is \$5 and chocolate chip is \$7 (the chocolate chip is Sharon Ray's recipe and is really good!).

According to the Wall Street Journal, spending on "Black Friday" on the internet was up significantly over last year. If you are doing any shopping on-line, consider linking to your favorite site through www.iGive.com. When you register to support the McFarlin Youth, a percentage of what you spend helps us out!

Kristin and I have a goal each week to put more in our recycle bin than we do in our garbage can. Another way we help the environment is to recycle our old cell phones and used printer ink cartridges. In doing so we help the Student Ministries raise much needed funds. Bring yours to the box outside the Student Ministries office (room 216).

Music Notes

With the Advent Season come many opportunities to worship Christ through music. As I reflect on Christmases past, many of my most meaningful moments were in the church. It is an important time for children to find grounding in their faith, to realize that being a Christian is more than an afterthought, more than a title. Through music and the lessons of the text and the discipline of the practice we can learn so much to help us with our faith. For children, the songs of the season remain with them throughout their lives, helping to guide them during their toughest times and reminding them to be humble during their mightiest triumphs.

Please join us Sundays during Advent as we worship and for the following special events:

December 6 at 7 PM: Handbell and Instrumental Concert

December 13 at 7 PM: Candlelight Carol Service

December 24 at 5 PM: Christmas Eve Family Service

December 24 at 7 PM: Lessons and Carols with Communion in the Sanctuary

December 24 at 7 PM: Lifeline Christmas Eve Service

December 24 at 11 PM: Christmas Eve Communion Service

Boyd Hamilton
Interim Coordinator of Music

Single Snippets

December...holly holidays and holy holidays...the Christmas season, for me, is an opportunity to keep the secular and the sacred in balance. During the "warp speed" days of December, I long for God to open the eyes of my heart to people who are hurting and lonely and I long to honor God in all of my scurrying, decorating, and celebrating. May I remember that God's mercies are new every day and that by trusting in God's Grace and the Holy Spirit we can keep Christ at the center of our Christmas celebrations.

Dan Kemp is sharing with the Focus Sunday school class during Advent Marcus Borg's new book (written with John Dominic Crossen) "The First Christmas." Join this group of singles in Room 404 at 9:45 AM each Sunday morning.

The Singles Christmas Dessert is on Friday, December 18, at 7 PM in the Atrium. Bring a dessert to share and \$10 to "adopt" either a child through World Vision or buy livestock through Heifer International. Bring a non-gag (generic) gift with which to play Dirty Santa. Dress in festive wear and come celebrate the season with eating, sharing, gift giving, and ministry. All in one place and time! We will also celebrate December birthdays: Irene Felkner, Brenda Keeling, Karen Standridge, and David Rawson. Bring cards for the birthday gang.

Other Christmas celebration opportunities: Thursday, December 3, Sharp Hall at 8 PM - OU Combined Choirs; Friday, December 11 at 8 PM our own John Schwandt will present Holiday Pipes at 8 PM in Sharp Hall. Cost for these concerts is \$8 for adults, and \$5 for seniors.

Let us open our eyes to the light that comes from God, and our ears to the voice from heaven that calls us every day to love, love, love. You think about that!

Grace and Peace,
Harriette Leigh Kemp

Ministry Updates

Senior Adult

Merry Christmas Everyone!

December should be our most joyous month, yet it is often the exact opposite. The commercials advertise anything and everything that should make us happy. However, these material items rarely do the trick of making us happy. Or maybe the happiness is short lived. We Christians know that the only true happiness is having Christ in our lives. But even Christians have sad time and down time. There is so much illness, sadness, loneliness, not enough money, lost jobs and families lost or divided that it is often hard to have or keep that Christmas spirit. Many children will not receive one gift. Many older adults won't even be remembered.

This Christmas season I am asking every member of our Bonus Years group to send one extra card to someone who might not receive one. Or call one person to see how they are doing. If you are making cookies, bread or cakes or even if you buy them to give away, take something to someone from whom you won't expect anything in return.

Christ said, "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25: 40.

People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.

Keep the Christmas spirit moving and keep smiling,
Carol Dean Schreiner



Care Ministries

The Christmas Season often brings unwelcome guests, stress and depression. And it's no surprise. In an effort to pull off a perfect holiday, you might find yourself facing a varied array of demands - shopping, cleaning, baking, and entertaining just to name a few. So where is the peace and joy? Try some of the following tips to minimize the stress and depression that often accompany the holidays.

- ❖ Be realistic about what to expect this Christmas season. Don't set yourself up for disappointment and sadness by comparing today with the "good old days" of the past. Try something new and celebrate in a new way.

- ❖ Pace yourself. Do not take on more responsibilities than you can handle. Make a list and prioritize the important activities. This can help make holiday tasks more manageable.

- ❖ Live "in the moment" and enjoy the present. Do not put all your energy into Christmas Day but spread the holiday cheer throughout the Christmas season.

- ❖ If you are lonely, try volunteering some of your time to help others.

- ❖ Spend time with supportive and caring people.

- ❖ Make time for yourself!

- ❖ Keep track of your holiday spending. Overspending can lead to depression when the bills arrive after the holidays are over. Find holiday activities that are free, such as looking at holiday decorations, going window-shopping without buying, and watching the winter weather, whether it's a snowflake or a raindrop (let it snow!).

Have a very Merry Christmas,
Jane Cook, Congregational Care Coordinator

CHILDREN'S CHURCH-HOUSE

So, have you finished your Christmas shopping yet? I just can't help but get excited about the anticipation of happy faces on Christmas morning, observable congratulations to Santa of work well done. So, I know you've heard it before, perhaps this time last year but it bears repeating: How do we get lost in the consumerism of the season? Why are we so focused on the gifts? Yes, the Magi brought gifts to Jesus. So we bring our gifts...but are they for the Savior?

I think I need to take a step back from the Lego aisle at Target and be sure to explain to my children the origin of giving gifts, not only those the Magi brought, but the greatest Gift that God gave to us in His Son. As families, let's make sure the focus in our homes is celebration of the Gift we received, the birth of our Savior and Love and Friend.

On Sunday, December 20, the children of McFarlin will celebrate our Birthday Party for Jesus. We ask you to pray that the Children's Ministry Team makes this a meaningful event that reminds our children why we rejoice. Let's prepare our children at home during this Advent season. Talk about the Christmas story and why Jesus was such a gift. Discuss the words to "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" so that Emmanuel's arrival will be the answer to a prayer, a long awaited event worthy of excitement and rejoicing. Ask your children, "What gifts will you bring to the King?" so that they anticipate delivering those gifts to Jesus at His birth.

Beth Carter and Kristy Varva
Children's Directors

Ministry Updates

1 Perspective

Several significant things have happened around McFarlin recently. Last Sunday it was particularly satisfying to introduce our Kenyan friends, Stanley and Mary Imunya to the congregation.

Advent Festival 2009: "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear" was a great event. Credit for much of its success goes to the co-chairs Suzanne Hodgson and Carol Warner. Thanks also to the coordinators of each craft room: Juanola Garriott, Sondra Shepherd, Julie Grissom, Lisa Bradley, Suzanne Hodgson, Vickie Trafford and Merry Voeller. Several other people had leadership roles: Mary Sallee arranged for the music, Alice Harrell accompanied the carol singing, Lalain Younkins and Breck Turkington prepared the meal. In addition, there were over 50 others who hosted craft tables, worked with the committee throughout the year and had special assignments during the Festival.

A big thanks also goes to all the adult class members who decorated the church and especially those who worked in the Sanctuary and Fenn Hall on Sunday afternoon.

Aren't we fortunate to have so many willing hands to make our observance of the season more meaningful?

Now we can look forward to all the other great music and worship occasions ahead during the season.

Waiting with you for the Christ child,
George Shepherd

Habitat Apostle's Build

Parents! Did your child come home from church recently with a Habitat for Humanity bank? We talked with them recently about McFarlin's part in the Apostle's Build. They saw pictures of people from several different churches working on the house as it is being built, and of the Baker family who will live there. There are two ways you and your child can participate in this project. Use the bank to collect money and return it to the church next Sunday. Our children's department is going to furnish and decorate 4 year-old Michael's room. Watch for details coming soon on how you can help.

Everyone! The Apostle's Build house we're building is handicap accessible (as both parents use wheelchairs) as well as energy efficient. These special features increase the cost of the house. Unfortunately we were unable to get 12 churches to participate in the build. Currently, we're about \$20,000 short of having the build fully funded by the faith community. If you would like to make a donation toward this \$20,000 shortfall, you may write a check to McFarlin and designate it to the Apostle's Build, or call George Shepherd at 321-3484, ext. 109 or Karen Tobey at 640-4353. For pictures and more information, check out the Cleveland County Habitat for Humanity's Facebook page.

Missions Coffee Fundraiser and Christmas Baskets

Would you like to purchase a quality product that's something you buy regularly, help your church's missions outreach and make sure small farmers on four continents get a fair price for their crop? All that is possible with the missions Equal Exchange fair trade fundraiser.

The choices of coffees are:

- ❖ Organic Colombian drip and whole bean
- ❖ Columbian decaf drip and whole bean
- ❖ Organic Breakfast Blend drip and whole bean
- ❖ Toffee Caramel
- ❖ Hazelnut Crème, regular and decaf

All coffees are \$9 for a 12 oz. package, comparable to specialty coffees in the grocery store. Coffee connoisseurs are encouraged to place a subscription order for a minimum of one package per month paid in advance for six months. The flavors listed above are available.

Other items offered are hot cocoa mix, baking cocoa and six flavors of tea. Candy choices in 3.5 oz. bars are very dark chocolate, dark chocolate with almonds and milk chocolate with a hint of hazelnuts. All of these products are also available in beautiful Christmas baskets for seasonal gift giving.

These products are part of the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) Coffee Project and are certified "Fair Trade" items. Fair Trade means farmers earn a fair price for their products, have access to affordable credit and gain a long-term trading partner they can trust. With your support, these communities invest in education, health care, and agricultural improvements.

Samples and sales continue through Sunday, December 13 in the Atrium from 9:30-10 AM and again from 10:40-11 AM. For more information, please contact George Shepherd at 321-3484, ext. 109 or gshepherd@mcfarlinumc.org.



McFarlin News

Hoodies on Sale Now

McFarlin Hoodies are on sale on Sundays in the Atrium before and after Sunday school and are available for \$20 and \$25. McFarlin Youth hoodies are also available for \$20. Pick one up for yourself or for a Christmas gift.

Parents' Night Out

Don't miss Parents' Night Out in December. What a great opportunity to take a break, shop, or wrap gifts, while your child/children have another opportunity to have fun at church! Join us Friday night, December 18 from 6-9 PM in the early childhood area for children 6 weeks to 5th grade. Deadline to register and pay (\$12 per child, \$30 max per family) is Wednesday, December 16, at 5 PM.

Donations Needed for the Habitat Apostle's Build

The Children's Ministry of McFarlin is collecting donations to furnish and decorate the 4 year old son's room (see the Habitat article on page 5). Please bring donations to Kristy and Beth outside rooms 211-212.

Help Needed

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

Meet Us For Lunch

A group of women from McFarlin meets the first Monday of the month at different restaurants around Norman to share time together. Our December meeting will be on the 7th at the Cracker Barrel at 820 N. Interstate Drive around noon. We would love for you to join us. For more information contact Heather Oelke at 590-3819 or heather.oelke@ihs.com.

New Member Luncheon/Class

Please join us for our last New Member Luncheon/Class of 2009! If you are interested in becoming a member of McFarlin or want to learn more about us, please join us for our luncheon/class on December 6 from 12:15-2:30 PM in room 209. Come meet the pastors, learn about the origins of Methodism and the history of McFarlin as well as take a tour! Free child care is provided. Please RSVP to Lynn Berry, Lay Involvement Coordinator at 321-3484 ext. 180 or lberry@mcfarlinumc.org.

Newsletter Mailing List

If you would like to receive your newsletter by e-mail or wish to be removed from the mailing list, please send an e-mail to thamilton@mcfarlinumc.org and include your home address so that it may be removed from the list.

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: Marilyn Thiessen; Maru Munoz.

Entered the Church Triumphant: Helen Cary-Gooden; Roselien Swrup, sister of Josephine James; Harold Dean "Jody" Taylor, father of Randy Taylor; Rebecca Richardson, sister of Pat Privett; Erma Jones, mother of Karen Dibrberg.

Meetings & Activities

December 6th - 12th

Sunday, December 6

8:00AM	Men 2 Pray 4 Pastors	Room 200
8:30AM	Early Sanctuary Worship*	Sanctuary
9:35AM	Communion after Worship*	Martin Chapel
10:55AM	Sanctuary Worship*	Sanctuary
10:55AM	LifeLine Worship/Communion*	Fenn Hall
12:00PM	Stephen Ministry Christmas Lunch	Aldersgate
12:05PM	Communion after Worship	Martin Chapel
12:15PM	New Member Class/Luncheon*	Room 209
3:30PM	Day Care Christmas Program	Fenn Hall
4:00PM	Wesley II Bell Choir	Meyer Hall
4:00PM	Wesley III Bell Choir	Bell Room
4:30PM	Chapel Choir	Choir Room
5:00PM	Wesley Choir Rehearsal	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
7:00PM	Handbell Christmas Concert	Sanctuary

Monday, December 7

9:00AM	Children's Day Out	Room 102, 104
10:00AM	Norman Newcomers Bridge Group	Room 226
2:00PM	Afternoon Shawl Circle	Room 320
6:00PM	FOP Christmas Party	Atrium
6:30PM	Care Team Meeting	Room 227
7:00PM	Boy Scout Patrol Meeting	Room 329, 403
7:00PM	Letters from Dad	Fenn Hall
7:00PM	Boy Scouts	Meyer Hall
7:30PM	Evening Shawl Circle	Room 401

Tuesday, December 8

9:15AM	UMW #6	Room 226
11:30AM	Prayers for Our Church	Church Office
6:30PM	Celebrate Recovery	Meyer Hall
7:00PM	Disciple Bible Study III*	Room 226
7:00PM	Trustees Meeting	Room 209
7:00PM	Student String Quartet Recital	Sanctuary

Wednesday, December 9

6:00AM	Men's Prayer Breakfast	Fenn Hall
9:00AM	Children's Day Out	Room 102, 104
9:30AM	UMW Circle # 5	Room 320
10:30AM	With-God Group	Room 404
2:00PM	Care Ministry Visitors	Room 210
3:00PM	Children's Choir/Discovery Time	Various
5:15PM	Festival Bell Rehearsal	Bell Room
6:00PM	Thimbles & Thistles	Room 328
6:15PM	Canticle Singers*	Choir Room
6:30PM	Emmaus Reunion*	Room 227
7:10PM	Women's Bible Study	Room 222
7:30PM	Wednesday Bible Study*	Room 401
7:30PM	Chancel Choir*	Choir Room
7:30PM	B.A.S.I.C.	Room 321
7:30PM	FISH Opening Worship	Sanctuary
8:00PM	Al-Anon	Room 227

Thursday, December 10

7:00AM	Middle School Boys' Bible Breakfast	Ozzies
8:30AM	Utilities Assistance	Room 209
9:00AM	Disciple Bible Study III*	Room 222
10:30AM	UMW #12	Room 224
11:45AM	Kiwanis Board Meeting	Room 227
1:00PM	Chancel Handbell Choir	Bell Room
5:30PM	Carillon Handbell Choir	Bell Room
7:00PM	Financial Peace University	Room 209
7:00PM	Sooner Toastmasters	Room 401
8:00PM	Youth Praise Band Practice	Fenn Hall

Friday, December 11

7:15AM	S.I.C.	Panera Bread
7:30AM	H.S. Freshman Bible & Breakfast	Ozzies
9:00AM	Children's Day Out	Room 102, 104
12:00PM	High School Pizza Friday	Room 320
6:00PM	Pack 241 Holiday Potluck	Fenn Hall

Saturday, December 12

8:30AM	Seniors Breakfast	Prairie Kitchen
9:00AM	Candlelight Carol Rehearsal	Sanctuary
1:00PM	Bonus Years Trip to OCU Christmas	Offsite

*Child care Available

Christmas Books

A few books are left from seasonal selections sold at Advent Festival. The *Upper Room Disciplines* is an annual book of daily devotions that is always popular. This year one week of devotions were written by Max Lucado. There are also a few Advent devotional books. The novel *One Im-Perfect Christmas*, by Myra Johnson, a Tulsa author, looks interesting. There is also a copy of *Immanuel: Praying the Names of God through the Christmas Season* and one children's book appropriate for middle elementary or older: *Celebrating the Spirit of Christmas*. If you are interested in any of these, please contact George Shepherd at 321-3484, ext. 109 or gshpherd@mcfarlinumc.org.

Holiday Blood Drive

McFarlin's Holiday Blood Drive is Sunday, December 13 from 8:30-12:30. The bloodmobile will be parked outside Fenn Hall. To give the gift of life, sign up to donate on the lists outside worship on Sunday or e-mail George Shepherd for an appointment at gshpherd@mcfarlinumc.org. Walk-ins are accepted but reservations help everyone have shorter waits.

McFarlin News

McFarlin Memorial United Methodist Church



P.O. Box 6390
Norman, OK 73070
405.321.3484
www.mcfarlinumc.org

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Park & Ride!

Please consider using Park & Ride to make room for our guests who attend the 10:55 worship services. The McFarlin vans run from McFarlin to the Boyd House lot and back again every Sunday. Times are: 9:30-9:55 AM, 10:40-11:05 AM and 12:00-12:25 PM. If you attend Sunday school and the 10:55 services, please consider using Park & Ride. If you would like to volunteer to help drive the vans, please contact Mike Hawley at mike@mikehawley.com.

Christmas Dinner

Please join us on Thursday, December 17 at 6:30 PM in Fenn Hall for McFarlin's annual Christmas Dinner sponsored by the Student Ministries. No need to bring anything except your family and friends!



8:30 & 10:55
AM
Sanctuary
Traditional
Worship

10:55 AM
LifeLine
Contemporary
Worship



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.