

Asbury United Methodist Church
300 East Basin Road
New Castle, DE 19720

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The Messenger
A Monthly Newsletter of Asbury United Methodist Church
November 2009 Edition
Newsletter Editors: Kim Berkey and Merle Ciesielski

November 2009



Asbury United Methodist Church
300 East Basin Road, New Castle, DE 19720
302-328-5649

- Bishop Peggy Johnson, Philadelphia Area Bishop
- Rev. Dr. William Fitzhugh, District Superintendent
- Rev. Dr. Thomas Donnachie, Pastor
- Mrs. Betty Ann Short, Administrative Assistant
- Mrs. Evelyn Crispin, Finance Secretary
- Mr. Gary Hostetler, 8:45 Organist, Choir Director
- Ms. Winnie Travers, Sound and Media Coordinator
- Mrs. Dale Ringler, Substitute Organist
- Mr. Steve Banaszak, Custodian
- Mrs. Angela Kirkley, Day Care Director

Two Sunday Worship Services
8:45 a.m., Traditional and 10:30 a.m. Contemporary
10 a.m., Fellowship Time with Refreshments



“Yes, We Can!”
Saying “Yes” for Today
and for Tomorrow

Our Lifestyle Stewardship Program has already begun with a first letter and response card mailed to our members and friends.

Do you remember the vows (promises) you made upon joining the church? You promised to support your church with your prayers, presence (attendance), gifts (tithes and offerings), and service (helping).

Each week, beginning Sunday, October 25, we will begin recommitting ourselves to these promises which are vital to fruitful and obedient church members.

The question we will all face is: How well am I keeping the promises (vows) made before God, family and friends?

--How often do I attend worship? One a week, month, year, or never?

--How faithful am I in financially supporting the church’s ministries? Do I tithe, give to the best of my ability, or offer no support?

--Do I pray for my church? Every day, occasionally, or not any longer?

These and other questions will be asked on each of the four commitment Sundays, October 25, November 1, 8, and 16. It is our hope and prayer that each church member, and especially those who have “drifted” away will renew their commitment to the Lord and His church.

Together, as committed, dedicated Christians, and believing that with God “all things are possible”, we can and will make disciples for Jesus Christ. Please join us in saying, **“Yes, We Can!”**

November Fellowship Events. . .

“Amazing Grace” . . . the movie, Sunday evening, November 1, beginning at 6 p.m. in the church sanctuary.

This is the award winning film about William Wilberforce and his stand against tyranny, dedicating his life to the abolition of slavery. His story continues to inspire millions today.

This event is open to the community at no cost.

Advent/Christmas Concert. . . The Peniel Community Band, Sunday evening, November 29, beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the church sanctuary.

Under the direction of Mr. Carroll Humphrey, the 50 piece band will perform Christmas selections that will be sure to get you into the Christmas season.

A covered dish dinner will precede the concert. The dinner will begin at 5:00 p.m. in the fellowship hall. Please bring a meat, vegetable or salad to share with others; enough to feed 10 persons (the band members and their families will be our guests.)

This event is open to the community. A love offering will be received for the band.

Calling Seniors to Volleyball

If you are around age 60 and would like to play some volleyball, during the middle of the week, during the daytime, please give Pastor Tom a call (328-5649). This would be a time for recreation and fun (not too serious). Invitations will be sent to our nearby United Methodist churches to see if any of their folks are interested in playing.

Sunday School News. . . Pajama Sunday will be Nov. 8th

Sunday School participated in the UNICEF trick or treat boxes - these boxes are due November 8th. We are going to be practicing our Christmas musical each Sunday starting at 9:30 a.m. Any children that would like to participate are welcome to join us in Room 10. Our lesson on the 22nd will be about "Giving Thanks". We will not have any Sunday School on Sunday, November 29.

Looking ahead...

December 6 - Pajama Sunday
December 14 - The Christmas Musical



Happy Thanksgiving

**Wednesday, Nov. 4 6:30 p.m.
Renew! Holy Communion**

**Sunday, Nov. 8 8:45 & 10:30 a.m.
“Yes, We Can!” – (Gifts)**

**Wednesday, Nov. 11 6:30 p.m.
Christian Comedy**

**Sunday, Nov. 15 - 8:45 & 10:30 a.m.
“Yes, We Can!” – (Service)
Recognition of 50 Year Members
Testimonies**

**Wednesday, Nov. 18 6:30 p.m.
Renew! Guest Speaker**

**Sunday, Nov. 22 8:45 & 10:30 a.m.
Consecration of 2010 pledges of
Prayers, Presence, Gifts & Service**

**Monday, Nov. 23 7 p.m.
Community Thanksgiving Service
At Asbury**

**Wednesday, November 25
NO Renew! Service**

**Sunday, Nov. 29 8:45 & 10:30 a.m.
First Sunday in Advent**

To Contact Us:

www.asburyumcde.org

Church Office Hours:

9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri.

Church phone: 302-328-5649

Church fax: 302-328-4175

Email address:

Asburymethodist@verizon.net

Rev. Donnachie:

Cell Phone: 302-650-4231

pastortomdonnachie@verizon.net

tomdonnachie@hotmail.com

Rev. Fitzhugh

Office: 302-571-1471

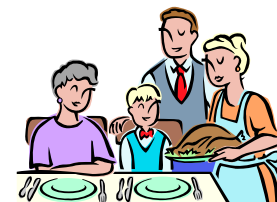
Bishop Johnson

Office: 1-800-828-9093

**Dial Daily Devotions
302-328-4141**

November Worship Services

**Sunday, Nov. 1 - 8:45 and 10:30 a.m.
Holy Communion – All Saints’
“Yes, We Can!” – (Presence)**



Save the Date...

Final 2009 Administrative Council Meeting – **Tuesday, December 1** 7 p.m. , in Friendship Lounge.

Items to be presented include:

- future ministries
- adoption of 2010 budget
- adoption of 2010 Lay Leadership Team
- welcoming of new Pastor of Visitation
- review of Advent-Christmas services and events

Military Ministry



Please continue to keep our deployed soldiers in your prayers as we continue to support them as individuals, and as a church, until they arrive home safely next Spring:

“As those of us who are blessed to be with our families celebrate and give thanks, let us remember in our prayers the homes that have an empty chair at the table and offer a special prayer of thanksgiving and ask God’s blessings for the brave men and women of our armed forces, who service and sacrifice will, we further pray, make the world a better and safer place. Amen.”

As we continue to support our soldiers, please continue to support our magnet/Christmas ornament sale. The ornaments make great gifts for family, friends, neighbors. . .and don’t forget your favorite receptionists, teachers and bus drivers too; anyone who would love a chance to show their support for our troops by having one of our ornaments hanging from their Christmas tree. The new magnets can show their support everywhere they go!

Proceeds from this sale will be used to offset the shipping costs of our care packages. Donations toward shipping are also welcome. Please contact a member of our Military Ministry for more information or to help with this ministry.

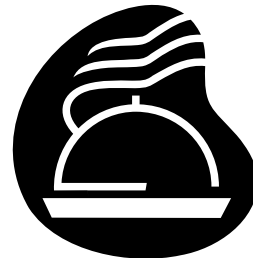
An Invitation to Lunch for Seniors

If you are retired or age 55 plus, then this invitation to fun, fellowship and food is for you.

The first Thursday of the month Peniel United Methodist Church in Newport hosts a luncheon and special program for its senior members and friends. They call themselves the “Silver Saints”. Not only do their members attend, but folks from other churches are also joining them. So, why not us from Asbury?

We are invited to share in this “senior” ministry, beginning Thursday, November 5, at 12 noon. Please bring a meat, vegetable or salad dish to share with others.

If you would like a ride, or to carpool, please phone the church office at 328-5649.



From the Nurse “Procrastination, thy name is Beverly”

Have you ever known you had something to do and you put it off. . . and off. . . and off? That seems to be me this month. I see what I have to do, know that there may be a deadline to get it done and I still can’t motivate myself to push onward to complete my tasks. I allow distractions to alter my focus and then never get back to what I should have been doing.

So why am I telling you all this? Because the holiday season is rapidly approaching and we all need to focus on the real “reason for the season”. There are going to be many people and things that will try to fracture your concentration as the month progresses. Holiday sales, pressure to find that perfect gift, family commitments that you feel you just have to fulfill.

I pray that you are able to take a moment of your busy day to stop and thank the One who really made the holiday possible. No, not Santa – Jesus Christ. Remember that He is the one who came to cancel all our sins. He is the one who remained focused on the final commitment—giving His life so that we may live eternally. He didn’t have a problem with distractions and procrastinations. He kept His focus on His Father and saved us from ourselves.

As the holiday season ramps up, please take the time to reflect on God, his Son and the Holy Spirit and their place in your life. Are they afterthoughts? Are they an integral part of your day, thanking God for His presence in your life? Asking for help and guidance in every aspect of your life? Are you willing to forego some of the usual holiday anxiety for the peace of knowing that what you are doing is pleasant in God’s eyes? It’s not easy, but God has lots of patience and is always there to help you.

I look forward to every holiday season, but ever since I came to feel the love of God more fully, I enjoy each holiday season even more. I pray that Asbury Church and each of you will be able to feel His love, focus on His gift and see beyond the media hype. Remember the real reason for the season and don’t put off accepting God’s gifts to you.

Staying focused,
Beverly Barker

Asbury becomes part of the 50 Churches/50 Children Initiative

In November, Asbury is going to participate with other churches in the second annual “50 Churches/50 Children” initiative, a coalition partnered with Bethany Christian Services. For five Sundays in November (National Adoption Month) we will tell the story of orphan children in the hopes that they will be adopted. Last year, 27 churches joined to tell the stories of 50 children in need and, as a result, 20 of these children are in the process of being adopted or have already been adopted! This year, Asbury is new to the program and will join the goal of 50 churches to lift up 50 more children who are waiting for “forever families”. These children are all orphans, thirty of which are available for adoption in Delaware’s foster care system and twenty of which are children from around the world.

Asbury’s tentative November plans are to put this information in the newsletter (Week One). Watch a three minute promotional video during worship (Week Two), discuss the children to be adopted and to pray for the world’s orphans with our Sunday School children (Week Three), hear a “God’s Heart for the Orphan” sermon based on James 1:27 (Week Four), and watch a seven minute testimony video during worship (Week Five). When our November program is complete, we will have a special offering for our adoption mission on the first Sunday in December. We also hope to make a bulletin board display that shows the information about our church’s children, so be on the lookout for it!

Asbury’s children for this program are:

Mahogany (age 10), Adriene (age 9), and Brittany (age 6) – sisters
to be adopted together

Job (age 11)

Na`Heim (age 8)

Yu Tonghui (age 11 – a girl living in Asia)

Yevgeniy (age 1 – a boy from Eastern Europe)

How can you help?

Here is a list of things YOU can do to help with the

50 Churches/50 Children Initiative

- ♥ Pray for the children and the program itself.
- ♥ Search your heart in how you can help these children become part of forever families.
- ♥ If you have further questions, contact Kim Berkey (836-8767) or Bethany Christian Services at (1-800-215-0702).
- ♥ Be willing to take part in our special offering for adoption during the first Sunday in December.
- ♥ Pray around the verse James 1:27 – *“Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.”*

Special Worship Services Remember Deceased And Honor 50 Year Members

On Sunday, November 1, at both morning worship services, we will take time to remember and give thanks for those members who have gone on to the Church Triumphant during this past year. During this All Saints’ remembrance, each person will be named, a bell will be rung with a moment of silence, and a lighted candle will be placed on the altar.

On Sunday, November 15, at both morning worship services, we will honor our 50 year members. During the service, we will recognize their faithfulness to Asbury UMC. We will also hear some testimonies from some of the members, highlighting some of their fondest moments as members of the church.

“Magnolias” Something to Think About. . .

I spent the week before my daughter’s June wedding running last-minute trips to the caterer, florist, tuxedo shop, and the church – about forty miles away.

As happy as I was that Patsy was marrying a good Christian young man, I felt laden with responsibilities as I watched my budget dwindle.

So many details, so many bills, and so little time. My son, Jack, was away at college, but he said he would be there to walk his younger sister down the aisle, taking the place of his dad who had died a few years before. He teased Patsy, saying he’d wanted to give her away since she was about three years old!

To save money, I gathered blossoms from several friends who had large magnolia trees. Their luscious, creamy-white blooms and slick green leaves would make beautiful arrangements against the rich dark wood inside the church.

After the rehearsal dinner, the night before the wedding, we banked the podium area and the choir loft with magnolias. As we left, just before midnight, I felt tired but satisfied. This would be the best wedding any bride had ever had! The music, the ceremony, the reception – and especially the flowers – would be remembered for years.



The big day arrived – the busiest day of my life – and while her bridesmaids helped Patsy to dress, her fiancé, Tim, walked with me to the sanctuary to do a final check. When we opened the door and felt a rush of hot air, I almost fainted; and then I saw them – all the beautiful white flowers were black. *Funeral black*. An electrical storm during the night had knocked out the air conditioning system, and on that hot summer day, the flowers had wilted and died.

I panicked, knowing I didn’t have time to drive back to our hometown, gather more flowers, and return in time for the wedding. Tim turned to me. “Can you get more flowers?” I’ll throw away these dead ones and put fresh flowers in these arrangements.”

I mumbled, “Sure.” As he be-bopped down the hall to put on his cuff links.

Alone in the large sanctuary, I looked up at the dark wooden beams in the arched ceiling. “Lord,” I prayed, “please help me. I don’t know anyone in this town. Help me find someone willing to give me flowers – in a hurry” I scurried out, praying for four things: the blessing of white magnolias, courage to find them in an unfamiliar yard, safety from any dog that may bite my leg, and a nice person who would not get out a shotgun when I asked to cut his tree to shreds.

As I left the church, I saw magnolia trees in the distance. I approached a house. No dog in sight. I knocked on the door and an older man answered. So far so good. When I stated my plea, the man beamed, “I’d be happy to!”

He climbed a stepladder and cut large boughs and handed them down to me. Minutes later, as I lifted the last armload into my car trunk, I said, “Sir, you’ve made the mother a bride happy today.”

“No, Ma’am,” he said. “You don’t understand what’s happening here.”

“What?” I asked.

“You see, my wife of sixty-seven years died on Monday. On Tuesday I received friends at the funeral home, and on Wednesday . . . (He paused) I saw tears welling up in his eyes. “On Wednesday, I buried her.” (He looked away.) On Thursday most of my out-of-town relatives went back home, and on Friday- yesterday – my children left.”

I nodded.

“This morning,” he continued, “I was sitting in my den crying out loud. I miss her so much. For the last sixteen years, as her health got worse, she needed me. But now nobody needs me. This morning I cried, “Who needs and eighty-six year old worn-out man? Nobody! I began to cry louder. ‘Nobody needs me!’ About that time, you knocked and said, “Sir, I need you...”

I stood with my mouth open.

He asked, “Are you an angel? The way the light shone around your head into my dark living room...”

I assured him I was no angel.

He smiled. “Do you know what I was thinking when I handed you those magnolias? I decided I *am* needed. My flowers are needed. Why, I might have a flower ministry! I could give them to everyone! Some caskets at the funeral home have no flowers. People need flowers at times like that and I have lots of them. They’re all over the

backyard! I can give them to hospitals, churches – all sorts of places. You know what I'm going to do? I'm going to serve the Lord until the day He calls me home!"

I drove back to the church, filled with wonder. On Patsy's wedding day, if anyone had asked me to encourage someone who was hurting, I would have said, "Forget it! It's my only daughter's wedding day! There is no way I can minister to anyone today." *But God found a way. Through dead flowers.*

(Editor's note. I do not know the author of this story. The story was given to me by a friend. I hope you have enjoyed it. I also hope it will inspire us to think about the ways in which each of us are needed. MEC)