

First United Methodist Church, Murray, KY

FIRST WORDS

December 2011

This is a copy of my Report of the Pastor that I shared with our Annual Charge Conference, Tuesday – November 15, 2011.

Report of the Pastor

Dr. Rick C. Dye

Dr. Geary and members of this Charge Conference, it is a great privilege for me to give my first report as Senior Minister of this great church. Since my appointment earlier this year, I have found Murray First to be the warm, welcoming church I remembered from my tenure here in the 1980's. I consider it to be a great honor to help lead this congregation in our task of being faithful disciples for Jesus Christ.

Murray First has many strengths: our programming is excellent, our worship services are uplifting and our missions outreach is unmatched. I rejoice in all of these areas of excellence and feel the challenge of providing leadership. A major strength of this church has to be the wonderful staff that has come together to work for the benefit of all. Murray First is blessed to have a staff that cares and is dedicated to the tasks they have been assigned. I can honestly say that it is a joy to come to work each morning!

During the past few months, Murray First UMC has stepped up to meet some wonderful challenges. We continue to grow in our mission outreach, involving more and more of our congregation in this wonderful effort. Our Vacation Bible School was excellent and exciting as we reached over 150 children in our church and community. Our youth continue to make a major impact in the life of our church. Our Disciple Bible opportunities provide a wonderful foundation for discipleship. Our adults of all ages are engaged and active in so many ways. The UMW continues to give excellent leadership in our church. Our Community Kitchen is helping to feed the hungry of our community. There are also numerous "unseen" volunteers who work tirelessly to serve their Lord. Murray First UMC is blessed with believers who put their faith into action.

This past year has seen the death of sixteen saints. Our net increase for this year now stands at seven. Like all United Methodist churches, we are going to be fighting a major battle of matching an increasing death rate with new professions of faith if we hope to sustain our numbers. Murray First has embraced the Council of Bishop's "Call to Action" and will be working intentionally to be more evangelistic as we seek God's will in our mission and ministry.

Because of our financial faithfulness, we are on track to pay our 2011 Apportionments in full by next month. As of this date, we owe \$19,261 of a \$133,744 appointment. Murray First is a giving church that supports missions and ministry locally and around the world. It is a pleasure to pastor a genuine United Methodist Church.

All churches are facing unsettling times that will call for us to make changes that may seem uncomfortable at first, yet can lead to greater effectiveness for the Kingdom of God. We cannot hold on to the past and embrace the future at the same time! Our challenges will be better stewards of our financial resources, deepen our financial commitments, be more intentional in our invitations to participate in God's Kingdom and to seek a closer fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

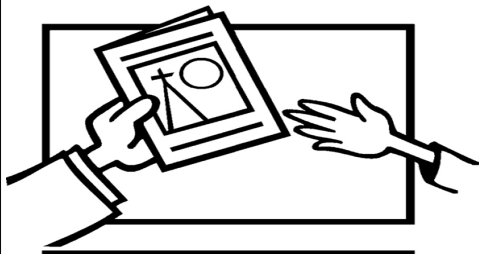
It is a joy to be your pastor, to greet you each Sunday morning and to preach to such an attentive congregation. The challenges of preparing each week and leading the church to a deeper level of commitment have been exciting and fulfilling. Simon Sinek has said, "The responsibility of leadership is not taken, it's given. Only when others choose to follow us can we truly lead." I do believe you are giving me that opportunity to lead.

I would be remiss if I did not express my appreciation for Vicki. She has proven to be a wonderful helpmate and feels the love and acceptance of this congregation. Our arrangement certainly isn't the norm, but it is working and we are both excited about the opportunity to serve this great church. We are both looking forward to another year of fruitful ministry here at Murray First. Thank you for letting us serve you!

*Grace & Peace,
Bro. Rick*

Love God...Serve Christ...Love Neighbors...Share Christ

USHERS



EARLY LIGHT

December 4: Joann Schroader Team

Beth Buchanan Patti Charlton

Vita Dalton Don Leet

December 11: Scott Sivills Team

Al Misker Chris Misker

Patricia Parrish Mike Wicker

December 18: Michael Bobo Team

Joe Dick Lois Keller

Donna Miller Tom Schwettman

John Wand Kay Wand

December 25: Tim Tidwell Team

Vicky Crafton Ron Foster

Karen Guthrie Dennis Sanders

Georgeann Sanders

TRADITIONAL

December 4 David Graham Team

Joe Ben Bogle Jim Green

Tony Page Ronnie Pool

Joe Ward

December 11: John Yates Team

Jennifer Bryson Jeanne Carroll

Everett Craig Hal Kemp

Dan McNutt Don Robertson

Gene Schanbacher Scott Watson

December 18: Jerry Gupton Team

December Sermons

DECEMBER 4
(2nd Sunday of Advent)

8:45 *CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION OF PRAISE*
11:00 *CHRISTMAS CANTATA*

DECEMBER 11

BEARING WITNESS

(3rd Sunday of Advent)

John 1:6-8, 19-28

DECEMBER 18
(4th Sunday of Advent)

CAN YOU BELIEVE?
Luke 1:26-38

DECEMBER 24
Christmas Eve
(Communion &
Candlelight Service)

A SAVIOR COMES
Luke 2:1-7

DECEMBER 25
Christmas Day

SHARING THE NEWS!
Luke 2:8-20

FINANCIAL REPORT as of 11/20/11

Receipts YTD: \$732,800.03

Average Receipts YTD (*previous 3 years*) : \$695,700.79

Budget YTD: \$717,457.50

The November Communion Offering received for Wesley Senior Ministries was \$1,141.35

The Hanging of the Green offering received for our H.E.L.P. Ministry was \$853.65.

Bus Ministry-Drivers for DECEMBER

December 4 Dennis Sanders & Margaret Fritts

December 11 Daryl & Dee Keezer

December 18 Mike & Kathie Pierce

December 25 Harold & Kelly Doran

The First United Methodist Church Bus Ministry is thankful to God for providing wonderful persons who pickup and drop off people who want to attend our Traditional Service. They give of their time to drive and



as- sist If you need transportation for the Sunday Worship services, contact Margaret Fritts at 759-3950.

Christian Sympathy

- With the family of Dale Smith, who died on November 11.
- With the family of "Mac" O.C. McLemore, Jr., who died on November 14.
- With the family of Don Bailey, who died on November 22.
- With the family of Mildred Guthrie, who died on November 26.
- With the family of Trina Allen, who died on November 28.

Current Concerns as of November 28

Hospital: Thelma Bailey, Betty Lowry
Spring Creek Rehab: "Popeye" Ross

Home From the Hospital: A.B. Crass (FL), Tom Parker

Special Prayers: Marilyn Burklow, Ella May Colister, Mary Jo Critfield (niece of Jill Anderson), Jennifer Embry (Freda Lovett's daughter), Jenny Engh (sister of Betsy Trevathan), Elaine Fox, Joan Hayman, Linda Hutson, Loretta Jobs, Katie & Henley Newman (Justin Newman's sister-in-law and niece), Betty Polak (Gloria Alverio's mother), Lucinda Ragland (Mona Bolin's sister), Katherine Robinson, Georgeann Sanders, Kendra Schwepker, Inez Shinstine, Linda Short, Virginia Smith (Amber Meadows' grandmother), Buel Stalls, Shelby Suiter (Craig Suiter's mother), Joetta Tibbits, Madison Ward (granddaughter of Janet Kirk)

Military Overseas: Dylan Fry, great grandson of Lubie & Reba Parrish (Iraq); Georgi Hernandez, brother of Pedro Alverio (USMC); Bryan Pierce, nephew of Gwen Lovett & cousin of Kathy Erwin (Afghanistan)

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Susie Bargo

Jesse Ordunez

Shannon Ordunez

End of the Year Giving

As we approach the end of the year, it is always good to take stock of where we are in our giving to the church. The reason that is often given is to take advantage of various tax breaks. While this may be a consideration, it should not be our primary reason. We need to give out of thankful hearts for all of the blessings of life we have enjoyed this past year. We aren't paying a debt in our giving, we are expressing our gratitude. Your faithful giving will allow the church to reach out to others and help make a difference in the lives of those who are hurting in our society. **Please know that noon Friday, December 30, will be the last day we will personally accept contributions toward your 2011 record of giving. Mailed contributions postmarked by December 31st are acceptable as 2011 contributions.**

UMKids Corner:

FIRST LOOK PRESCHOOL

Sunday School 9:50-10:40 and
Wednesday nights from 5-7PM

252 BASICS



Parent Supports:

www.orangeparents.org

www.studio252.tv

Smartphone App:

“Parent Cue”

www.murrayfirst.com

For Kindergarten-6th Grade

Sunday School, Sunday UMK 5-7:30PM,

Operation Christmas Child

Special thanks to everyone who
donated items and shoeboxes! Because
of your help, the children were able to

assemble 62 Christmas
presents for needy chil-
dren around the world!



UMK Christmas Party

Sunday, Dec. 11, 3:30-5:30PM

Universal Athletics

309 Solar Dr.

Preschool—6th invited!

YEAH! PARTY TIME!

“Cookin’ Up Christmas”

Wednesday, Dec. 7. 6PM

FUMC Sanctuary

Preschool UMK will
open the show with
“Christmas Bells”

All are welcome and
encouraged to
participate!



Planning Ahead:

Jan. 18: UMK Spring Semester
Kick Off

Jan. 22: Sunday UMK begins again





Each Tuesday, all youth are invited to join us for our Prayer Breakfast with Jesus (PB w/J). We will meet at 7:15 am for a time of breakfast, prayer, and devotion. You are responsible for the cost of your own breakfast.

December 6th: Sammons

December 13th: FUMC (Free!)

Going Once...

Going Twice...

SOLD!

December 4th, 2011

5:30-7:30 in CLC Gym @ FUMC

ALL Proceeds go to Youth Missions!

Dinner and Auction



Tickets are \$5 for adults and \$3 for children. \$20 max per family.



Sunday Night Schedule

4:00-5:30—Fusion (LTW/Praise Band)

5:30—Dinner in the CLC

6:00—Fellowship/games

6:20-7:15—Worship & program

iD Bible Study



Wednesday Night Schedule

5:00-6:00—HW/Hang out time/

Outreach group

6:00—Dinner in social hall

6:30—Worship



Angel Tree Shopping!

We are shopping for the Angel Tree on Wednesday, December 7th. Schedule for the night:

5pm— Meet at McDonalds to eat

6pm— Children's Christmas Musical



UMY Christmas Party!

Sunday, December 11th

2-5pm

Meet at the Betts' House! Bring a \$5 gag gift for the



Primetimers News & Notes

December Dinner and Outing ~ Friday, December 9

Join us for Christmas dinner at Miss Patti's on Friday, December 9, 2011. After dinner, we will go to the Badgett Playhouse for the **Christmas Spectacular**. We will leave the church parking lot at 3:45 PM and should be back at approximately 10:30 PM. The cost is \$20.00 plus your dinner at Miss Patti's. Please sign up in the church office by Tuesday, December 6, 2011.

LOOKING AHEAD

Mark your calendars now for our annual mission trip to **Reelfoot** on Tuesday, January 10, 2012. We will work in the food pantry and the thrift store. We'll need lots of workers! We will stop and eat at Boyett's on the way home. Start the year right— helping your neighbors.

On January 17, 2012 we will resume our **Pilates Yoga** at 10 AM in the CLC Gym. Join the fun!!! Sign up in the church office or call Beth at 293-3448 for more information.

DISCIPLE Bible Study Opportunities

DISCIPLE I – Becoming Disciples Through Bible Study

Monday Evenings 6:15pm to 8:15pm
Continuing the 34-week class that began in August, 2011
Beth Buchanan, Study Leader

DISCIPLE III – Remember Who You Are

Wednesday Evenings 6:15pm – 8:15pm
32-week study of the Old Testament
Prophets and The Letters of Paul

DISCIPLE I required for this study

January 4th – May 2nd (The Prophets)

No Class during summer months

Aug. 22nd – Dec. 19th (Letters of Paul)

Cost: \$34 (Study Manual)

Harold Finn, Study Leader

Invitation to the Old Testament

Thursday Evenings 5:00pm – 6:30pm
January 5th – March 1st Cost: \$13 (Study Manual)
Steve Kroehler, Study Leader

Sign-up sheets are located in the church office.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN**Regular meetings for United Methodist Women**

See a schedule of regular meetings below:

FRIENDSHIP-HANNAH CIRCLE

7 PM 3rd Monday in the Social Hall
Faye Rogers—753-7743

RUTH WILSON CIRCLE

1:30 PM 2nd Monday in CLC Con. Rm.
Norma Frank—753-1329

TUCKER-FROST CIRCLE

9:30 AM 2nd Tuesday in CLC Con. Rm.
Margaret Fritts—759-3950
m_fritts@bellsouth.net
Donna Toler—489-6232

WESLEYAN CIRCLE

9:30 AM 3rd Monday in CLC Con. Rm.
Carol Wimberley—759-3073
carognew@newwavecomm.net

Any woman, teenager and up is warmly welcome to UMW. We in United Methodist Women have a wonderful bond of love and friendship! Please join us!

UMW NEWS**WESLEYAN CIRCLE SELLING FUMC BALL CAPS**

To place an order for pickles, or to get a cap, speak with any Wesleyan Circle Member.

2011 OUTSTANDING UNITED METHODIST WOMAN

UMW is now taking nominations for the 2011 Outstanding United Methodist Woman. Confidential ballots are available in the Church office. Nominee does not need to be a UMW member. For questions, contact

Vicky Crafton – 753-0129 or crafton@murray-ky.net

UMW Ladies to Assemble 2012 Yearbooks Friday, Dec. 2

Ladies of the church are invited to help assemble UMW yearbooks Friday, December 2. We need some ladies at 10:00 a.m. to help copy and collate the pages, and another group at 1:00 p.m. to assemble the yearbooks. You do not need to be a UMW member to join us in this time of easy work and social interaction.

UMW Board Meeting Tuesday, December 6, 9:00 a.m.

All Board members please plan on being present.

UMW General Meeting, Tuesday, December 6, 11:00 a.m.

Ministry in Action

Special Events and Happenings in our Church Family

Upcoming Worship Schedule

Don't forget to attend the 8:45 "Christmas Celebration of Praise" and the 11:00 Christmas Cantata: "Tapestry of Light" on December 4.

On December 18, we will hold our "Celebration of Giving" where we give cloth diapers and tennis shoes to the mission effort to Nicaragua.

This year we will be celebrating our Christmas Eve Candle Light Communion Service at 6:00 PM, Dec. 24. After the service, we will continue to serve an "Open" Communion to those families and individuals who come to the church until 8:00 p.m.

On Christmas Day, we will have one worship service at 10:00 AM. There will not be any Sunday School or other meetings that day. We invite you to come and make this a special time in the life of your family as we celebrate the birth of Christ.

On New Year's Day, we will also have one worship service with an abbreviated Communion Service at 10:00 AM. All other church activities will not meet that day. The church office will be closed on Monday, January 2, 2012.

Combined Adult Sunday School Hour Opportunity

On Sunday, December 11, Lee Evans, gold medalist from the 1968 Olympics will be speaking to in the Social Hall to all adult Sunday School classes who would like to attend. Mr. Evans is a Christian with a dream to feed people in his home country of Kenya.

LIVE NATIVITY SCENE

This season, led by the experience of Coles Campground UMC, the combined United Methodist Churches of Calloway County are presenting the Christmas Story using live characters and live animals.

The Program will take place Friday, Dec. 2 and Saturday, Dec. 3, from 6-9 pm each night inside the MSU Expo Center, so no one will be out in the cold.

Thank you to Tracy Leslie, Ginny Richerson and Friendship-Hannah

The entire congregation wishes to express their thanks to Tracy and Ginny and everyone who worked so hard to make the Hanging of the Green Service so meaningful. Additional thanks go to the members of Friendship-Hannah for their hard work in providing such a delicious meal and their servant-like attitude in cleaning up after feeding almost 400 people.

CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTMAS CAROLING DECEMBER 14

Once again, we're going caroling during the Advent-Christmas season to many of our homebound members. This is a special time involving all ages. Children, youth, and adults can all be a part of this gift of song and joy to those who are not able to be with us in our regular worship services. Join us for this mission opportunity and chance to spread the "JOY TO THE WORLD".

COMMUNITY WARMING CENTER AT ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL

FUMC will be manning the Warming Center for one night on Christmas beginning at 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM and if people need to sleep over, we will need volunteers from 10:30 PM to 6:00 AM. Finally we will need volunteers to fix breakfast and clean up from 6:00 AM to 8:00 AM. We will also serve the Center during the week of January 8-15, 2012. To sign up call Gale Cornelison at 489-2526 or contact the church office at 753-3812..

First United Methodist Church
503 Maple Street
Murray, KY 42071

Worship Services: 8:45 AM & 11 AM

Sunday School: 9:40 AM

Church Office Hours: 8:30—4, M-F

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Visit us on the web: murrayfirst.com

4th Monday Book Club News

The 4th Monday Book Club will not meet in December. The next meeting will be at 5:00PM on Monday, January 23rd. Our new book selection is, *"The Book Thief"* by Markus Zusak.

"By her brother's graveside, Liesel Meminger's life is changed when she picks up a single object, partially hidden in the snow. It is *The Grave Diggers Handbook*, left there by accident, and it is her first act of book thievery. So begins a love affair with books and words, as Liesel, with the help of her accordion playing foster father, learns to read. Soon she is stealing books from Nazi book-burnings, the mayor's wife's library, wherever there are books to be found.

But these are dangerous times. When Liesel's foster family hides a Jew in their basement, Liesel's world is both opened up and closed down."

NOTE: This book is a longer selection than other books we have read (550 pages). You may want to allow a longer time to read it.