

The United Endeavor

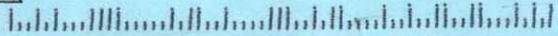
PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT No. 6326
BALTIMORE, MD.

United Evangelical Church
United Church of Christ
3200 Dillon Street
Baltimore, MD 21224

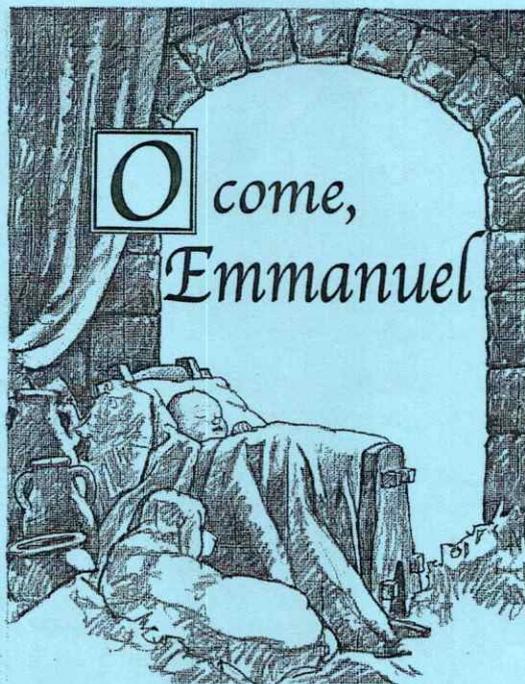
Dated Material

Rev. Catherine J. Oatman
██████████ Road
Churchville, MD ██████████

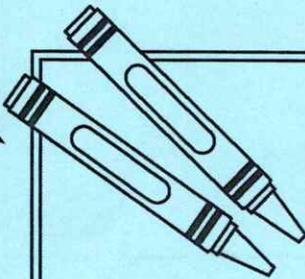
2102831804 R002



The United Endeavor



Kids Only!!



Just for **KIDS**

Luke 2:1-20

In Luke 2:1-20, we read the familiar story of Jesus' birth. The scrambled words and names in the list below are a part of that story. Unscramble them and circle them in the puzzle.

You will find them → ↓ ↗ ← ↑ ↘

- | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| eaCrsa _____ | aMyr _____ | zaNhtare _____ |
| gnamre _____ | opesJh _____ | uutuAsgs _____ |
| laiGele _____ | auedJ _____ | rephsehds _____ |
| nso _____ | csenus _____ | teeBhhelm _____ |
| hritb _____ | ilfeds _____ | enagl _____ |
| adfari _____ | daviD _____ | tginh _____ |
| oylgr _____ | oyj _____ | robn _____ |
| athre _____ | isbotrfrn _____ | ecrdee _____ |
| eecpa _____ | nin _____ | |



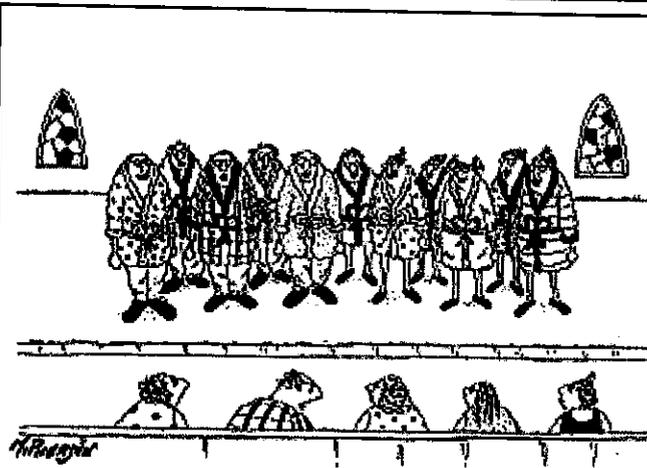
B C A E S A R M E A R T H
 D E C R E E E Y R U A G B
 F N T R B I R T H G F A O
 I S Y H S O N N I U R L R
 R U O Y L E G N A S A I N
 S S J G P E A C E T I L M
 T J O S E P H C J U D E A
 B S D R E H P E H S A E N
 O M A R Y H R I M S V T G
 R F I E L D S T H G I N E
 N A Z A R E T H M A D S R



There will be 14 uncircled letters. Write them in order from top to bottom on the lines. They will spell a special message to you.

Merry Christmas
 Caesar, Manger, Gallie, Son, Birth, Atraid, Glory, Earth, Peace, Mary, Joseph, Judea,
 Census, Fields, David, Joy, Firstborn, Inn, Nazareth, Augustus, Shepherds, Bethlehem,
 Angel, Night, Born, Decree

Comics Corner



"I think it's time we all pitched in and bought the choir some classier-looking robes."

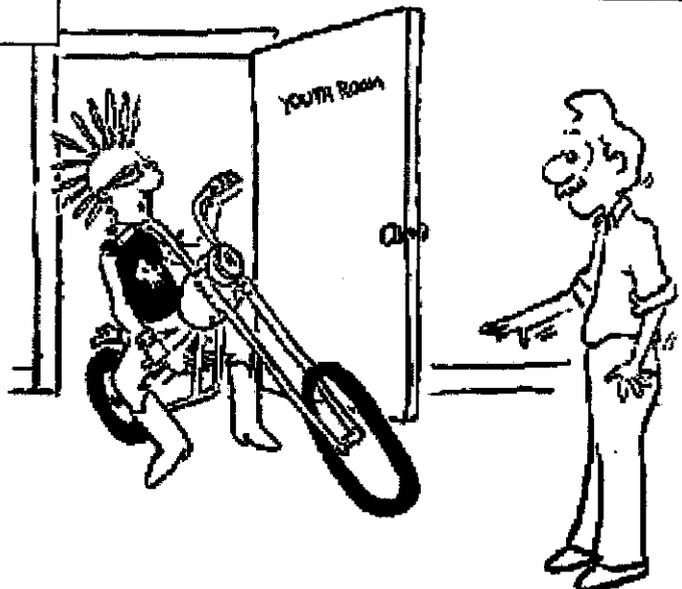


"I thought I'd surprise you with something different this morning...John the Baptist Oatmeal! I've wanted to make it for some time, but you wouldn't believe how



Campbell

"Do you have anything with moral fiber?"



"My parents gave me \$20 to come. For \$35, I'll go back home."



Wired & Dangerous!!

The preacher was wired for sound with a lapel mike, and as he preached, he moved briskly about the platform, jerking the mike cord as he went. Then he moved to one side, getting wound up in the cord and nearly tripping before jerking it again. After several circles and jerks, a little girl in the third pew leaned toward her mother and whispered, "If he gets loose, will he hurt us?"



A Christmas Blessing



May you have the Spirit of Christmas,
which is Peace,

The Gladness of Christmas, which is Hope,

The Heart of Christmas, which is Love,

The Gift of Christmas, which is Christ.

—Ada Hendricks



United Evangelical Church

Pastor

Rev. Catherine J. Oatman
cjoatman@msn.com
cell phone: 410-428-1482

Church Office

e-mail:
website:

410-276-0393
uecucc@verizon.net
www.unitedevangelicalucc.org

Hours

Tuesday - Friday
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Secretary

Dava Sentz

Custodian

Paul Polasky

Director of Music

Robert Gundlach
robert.gundlach@verizon.net

Newsletter Editor

Barbara Matthew
barbmattthew@verizon.net



A "Hunger Site at the U.N" on the Internet

All you have to do is click a button and somewhere in the world some hungry person gets a meal to eat at no cost to you. Corporate sponsors pay for the food. Just go to the site listed below and click.

No gimmicks, no tricks.

You are only allowed one click per day, so spread the word to others.

The site is: www.hungersite.com

General Mills Boxtops for Education



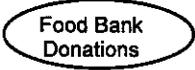
*Just a
Reminder...*

Don't forget to bring in your General Mills Box tops for Education and leave them in the display in the Narthex.

UEC January 2009 Calendar of Events

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Rev. Cathy on vacation from Dec. 29 thru Jan. 5				1	2	3
				Resolution Run for Earl's Place		
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Communion Sunday <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; margin: 10px 0;">Food Bank Donations</div> 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Worship Service 9:15 a.m. Bible Study Youth Group Laser Tag @ Laser Nation Eastpoint Mall 12:30 p.m.	Swing Dance Lessons UEC gymnasium 7:30 p.m.		Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Confirmation Class 6:00 p.m.	Choir Practice 7:30 p.m.		
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Worship Service 9:15 a.m. Bible Study	Swing Dance Lessons UEC gymnasium 7:30 p.m.	Church Council Meeting 7:00 p.m.	Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Confirmation Class 6:00 p.m.	Choir Practice 7:30 p.m.	UEC Family Fun Bingo Night Fellowship Hall 5:30 p.m.	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Worship Service 9:15 a.m. Bible Study Youth Group Souper Bowl Strategy Meeting 12:30 p.m.	Swing Dance Lessons UEC gymnasium 7:30 p.m.	Christian Education Meeting 6:30 p.m.	Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Confirmation Class 6:00 p.m.	Choir Practice 7:30 p.m.		
25	26	27	28	29		
8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Worship Service 9:15 a.m. Bible Study Congregational Annual Meeting Following the 10:30 a.m. service	Swing Dance Lessons UEC gymnasium 7:30 p.m.	Canton Community Association Meeting 6:30 p.m.	Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Confirmation Class 6:00 p.m.	Choir Practice 7:30 p.m.		

UEC December 2008 Calendar of Events

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Swing Dance Lessons UEC gymnasium 7:30 p.m.	2	3 Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Confirmation Class 6:00 p.m.	4 Choir Practice 7:30 p.m.	5	6 Youth Lock In & Overnight Cookie Bake 3:30 p.m.
7 <i>Communion Sunday</i>  8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Worship Service 9:15 a.m. Bible Study	8 Swing Dance Lessons UEC gymnasium 7:30 p.m.	9 Church Council Meeting 7:00 p.m.	10 Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Confirmation Class 6:00 p.m.	11 Choir Practice 7:30 p.m.	12	13
14 <i>Tinsel Sunday</i>  10:30 a.m. Worship Service Only	15 Swing Dance Lessons UEC gymnasium 7:30 p.m.	16 Christian Education Meeting 6:30 p.m.	17 Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Ladies Org. Christmas Party Riverwatch Restaurant 12 noon—3:00 p.m. Confirmation Class 6:00 p.m.	18 Choir Practice 7:30 p.m.	19	20
21 <i>Olde Time Christmas</i> 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Worship Service 9:15 a.m. Bible Study Youth Group Christmas Caroling Party (following 10:30 worship)	22 Swing Dance Lessons will resume January 5th	23	24 Christmas Eve Worship 7:30 p.m. 	25 Christmas Day 	26	27
28 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Worship Service 9:15 a.m. Bible Study	29 Swing Dance Lessons will resume January 5th	30	31	 <i>December</i>		
Rev. Cathy on vacation from Dec. 29 thru Jan. 5						

Issues & Initiatives at the UCC

In an effort to provide information on the issues and initiatives currently before the UCC, the Endeavor will include relevant news from the UCC website to keep our United Evangelical readers aware of developments within our wider church.

Poverty and Children

Although the number of children on the welfare rolls has diminished by 1.5 million in the past decade following welfare reform, today thirteen million children, 18 percent of all children in the United States, continue to live in poverty. Twenty percent of children in the United States under six years of age are poor. Over two-thirds of America's poor children live in working families, where parents work at low-paying jobs that do not produce enough income to lift the family above the federal poverty level. According to UNICEF, the United States ranks 20th among the world's wealthy democracies in child well-being. Across the United States growing income segregation compounds the injustices of racial segregation.

Poor children are too often hungry, and they too frequently lack access to primary medical care. Poor children in America are isolated by lack of access to transportation; by segregated housing patterns; by lack of quality child care and early education; and by isolation in under-funded, segregated and highly stressed schools. Poor children are exposed too frequently to violence. Too many poor children drop out of school and end up in jail instead of in college. Many experts worry that children born poor in America today have less opportunity to escape poverty than have earlier generations of Americans.

God Is Still Speaking About Children, a short UCC Children's Table resource, lifts up child poverty among other children's justice concerns.

Here are a few of the excellent resources available to prepare your congregation to advocate for the elimination of child poverty.

- The *Kids Count Data Book* of the Annie E. Casey Foundation tracks child poverty data state-by-state.
- The mission of the Center for Law and Social Policy is to strengthen policy for low income families.
- The Children's Defense Fund works to eradicate child poverty.
- The Poverty and Income Support page of the National Women's Law Center is an excellent source of data.
- The Child Welfare Page of Voices for America's Children posts excellent resources on family support.

Mission Moments

Mission Moments is a way of highlighting our congregation's connection to the wider church. Our church is a vital part of the United Church of Christ, and it is not alone! Each Mission Moment will help inform members of what they make possible through their gifts to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM).

Mission Moment

Here we are, in the midst of the holiday season . . . but also in the midst of a serious economic downturn. Advent is a season of expectation . . . but many of our hopes and expectations are having to be revised or relinquished right now. Christmas is a season of joy and celebration . . . but we might need to search our souls a little harder this year for reason to celebrate.

We all know that we have much to be grateful for and plenty to celebrate—most significantly, the birth of the Savior. But this year we might need some help to keep all this in mind as we struggle with financial anxieties. You can find some help with this by going to “Tough Economic Times: Pastoral Perspectives,” on the web at www.ucc.org/stewardship.

You'll find brief reflections by UCC pastors and others, offering “perspective” we all need this year. And who knows, this Advent and Christmas season, while different, might turn out to be one of the best you've known.

December, 2008

God is still speaking,

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



Just What is OCWM?

Just what is it and how is it different from OGHS (One Great Hour of Sharing)?

OCWM **(Our Church's** **Wider Mission)**

Right now, Our Church's Wider Mission is bringing the UCC message to more and more people:

*No matter who you are
or where you are on
life's journey...you're
welcome here.*

Without OCWM, there would be no United Church of Christ. OCWM is who we are.

OGHS **(One Great Hour** **of Sharing)**

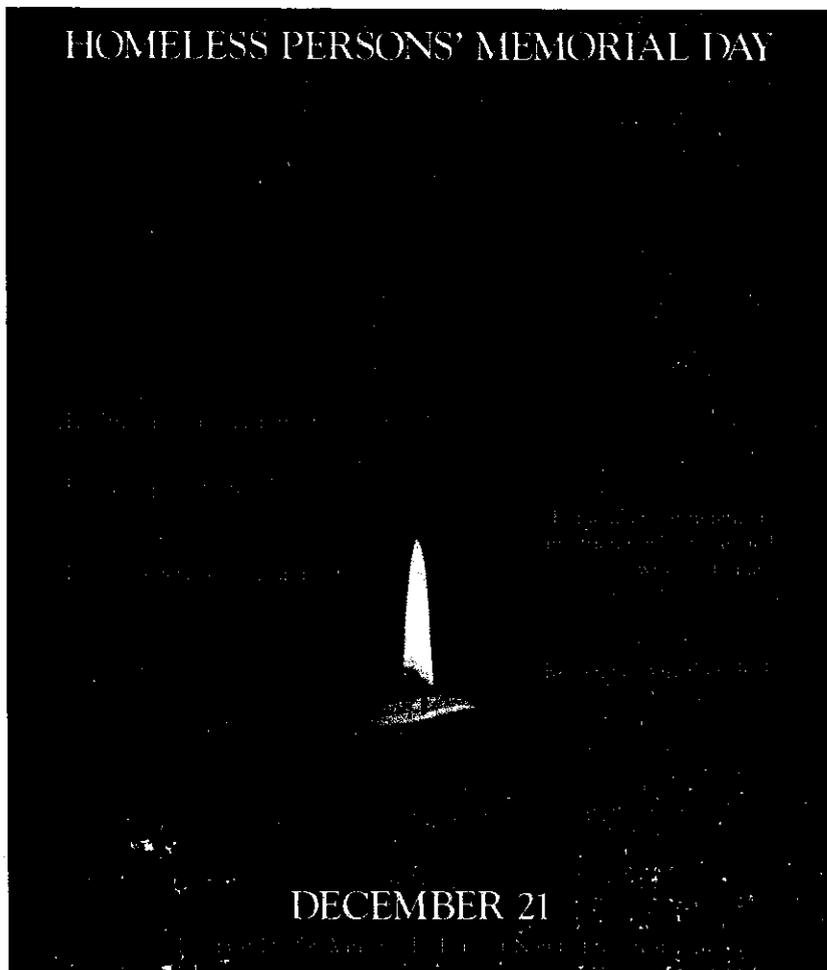
OGHS works with international partners to provide sources of clean water and food, education and health care, emergency relief, and resettlement aid for refugees. OGHS also supports domestic and international ministries for disaster response and relief.

Homeless Persons Memorial Day - December 21

Baltimore Homeless Persons Memorial Service—December 21

Disaffiliation does not cause homelessness, but rather is the most universal characteristic of the homeless. Poor people who have family ties, teenaged mothers who have support systems, mentally ill individuals who are able to maintain social and family relationships, alcoholics who are still connected to their friends and jobs, even drug addicts who manage to remain part of their community do not become homeless. Homelessness occurs when people no longer have relationships; they have drifted into isolation, often running away from the support networks they could count on in the past.

We can raise awareness year after year by designating one day out of the calendar year to lend a helping hand to those who are in need. A simple, yet revolutionary step.



It is estimated that on any given night in Baltimore City between 3,000 and 4,000 people are looking for shelter.

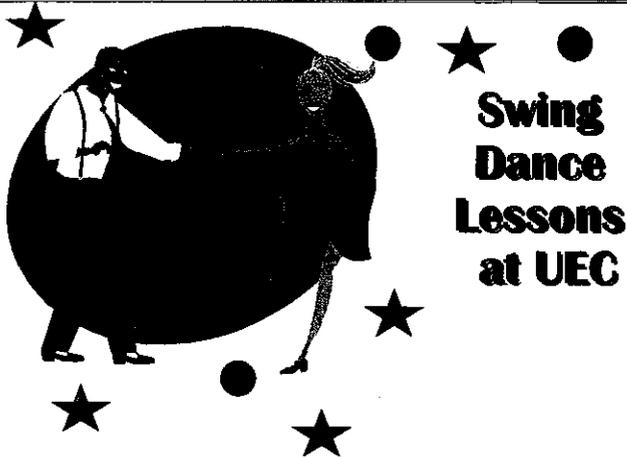
The 2006 Office of Transitional Services Annual Report on Homelessness reported that 77 percent of the homeless in Baltimore City were individuals and of the total homeless served 76 percent were men.

2008 Homeless Persons Memorial Service @ Baltimore City Hall

Sunday, December 21, 2008

The First Day of Winter - The Longest Night of the Year

Fun Nights at UEC



Swing Dance Lessons at UEC

Every Monday evening at 7:30 p.m.
beginning December 1"

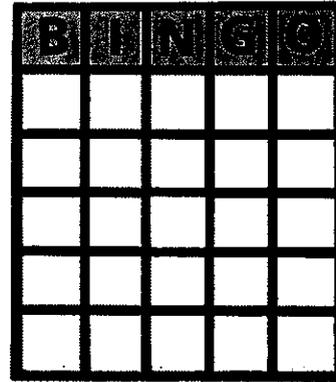
**Put on your dancin' shoes and join
swing and ballroom dance classes at
United Evangelical Church
with instructor John Butler**

**Classes will be held in the
United Evangelical School Building in
the 900 block of S. East Avenue
Come to the double red doors**

**Cost: \$ 5.00 per person each lesson
plus one non-perishable food item
for the Canton Food Bank**

Dance Instructor: John Butler

**For more information call 410-276-0393
Monday evenings at 7:30 p.m.
United Evangelical Church in Canton
Don't Miss It!**



Family Fun Bingo Night
Friday, January 16

Doors open at 5:30 p.m.
Games begin promptly at 6:00 p.m.

Food, Fun, Prizes !!!

We are in need of bingo prizes.
Prizes must be new and valued at
\$ 15.00 or more. If you are
interested in contributing a bingo
prize, it would be much appreciated!

See Cissy Funk
for additional details
Come out and play!!!!

Places to Go, People to See, Things to Do...

Ladies Organization Trips & Events

Upcoming Events



Arlene Pate
410-327-3211

Millie Wirsing
410-675-3904

Dec. 11th, Thursday
Matinee Show
\$ 41.10 per person
(money due by 11/30)

Holiday Show at
Toby's Dinner Theatre
Baltimore Travel Plaza
Doors open 10:30 a.m.

Come join the Ladies Organization,
we would love to see you!!

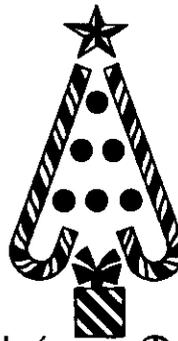
New members are always welcome!
Dues are \$ 10.00 per year



Upcoming Ladies
Organization Meetings
All Meetings Begin at 12 noon
(unless otherwise noted)

Dec 3rd No meeting

Jan 7th Brown Bag Lunch
Annual Dues



Christmas Party

December 17th,
12 noon—3 p.m.

The Riverwatch Restaurant
\$ 25.00 per person

Christmas Party

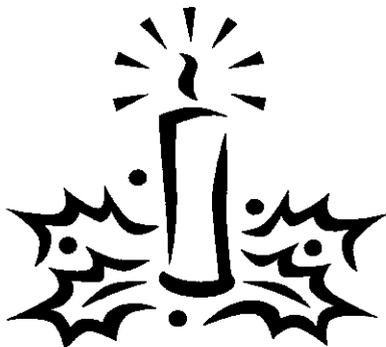
Come and join the Holiday party—bring your
spouses, bring your friends.
Everyone is welcome!!

Important Notice—All trips MUST HAVE DEPOSIT TO HOLD SEATS

If you must cancel your seat you need to find someone to take your seat to receive your money back.

Persons to contact:

Arlene Pate 410-327-3211 or Millie Wirsing 410-675-3904



Pray for Peace on Earth

The UEC Youth Booth



Attention All Youth – Ages 12 and up

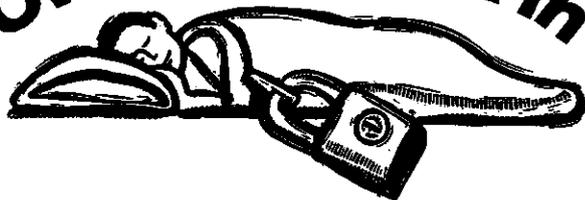
Our Church Youth Group invites you and all your friends to come, hang out, have fun and live your faith.

Upcoming Youth Group meetings are listed below:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Event</u>
December 6-7	beginning 3:30 on 12/6	UEC	Overnight Lock-In and Cookie Bake
December 21	12:30 p.m.	UEC	Christmas Party with Christmas Caroling at Future Care
January 4	12:30 p.m.	Laser Nation at Eastpoint Mall	Laser Tag
January 18	12:30 p.m.	UEC	Souper Bowl Strategy

Youth Group All Night Cookie Fest!!! - December 6-7

Overnight Lock-in



From 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, December 6th through Sunday, December 7th, our Youth Group will participate in a youth lock-in at the church. They will be baking up cookies for their fund raiser followed by Evening Vespers. Movies, games and snacks will be provided all night.

On Sunday morning, our Youth Group will host coffee hour.

Don't forget to bring bedding, pajamas, clothes for church and personal hygiene items.

Sounds like fun!!!

Christmas Cookies



Upcoming Highlights-January

January



January 1

Resolution Run to benefit Earl's Place
Register at 12:30 p.m. @ St. Elizabeth of Hungary
2638 E. Baltimore Street
Race begins at 2:00 p.m. at Patterson Park

Church Hall



Those not running can volunteer at the race or bake cookies to be delivered to Earl's Place before hand. Each church is asked to provide some cookies so we need volunteers for that.

January 4

Wow! Laser Tag

Laser Tag at Laser Nation –Eastpoint Mall
beginning at 12:30 p.m.

See Cathy Fifield or Diane Pachilis for additional info.

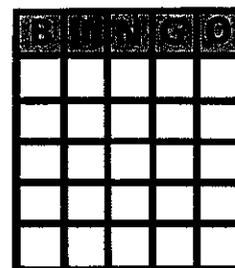
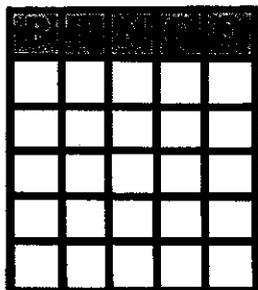


January 16

Family Fun Bingo!

Doors open at 5:30 p.m.

Games begin promptly at 6:00 p.m.
Food, fun, great prizes
Additional details are available later
in this issue of The Endeavor



Upcoming Highlights—December



Holiday
Crafts



Tinsel Sunday December 14 (following 10:30 am. Worship)



Christmas
Carols

Come hear the children sing at the 10:30 a.m. worship service then enjoy a delicious dinner with friends in Fellowship Hall. After dinner there will be an Advent workshop, holiday craft session and finally carol and hymn singing.

Tickets must be purchased in advance from Cass Young or Ursula Jacob

Adults: \$ 5.00

Children under 18: Free

Hoffman Homes—Gifts for the Children

We will again be purchasing gifts for the children at Hoffman Homes. The gifts will be on display in the Narthex. Cash donations will be accepted to help with the expense. Please place your contribution in the offering plate and designate it for Hoffman Homes. For further details please see Cass Young



Caroling Party

Olde Time Christmas followed by Christmas Caroling Sunday, December 21

On Sunday, December 21, our 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. services will be dedicated to honor those on our caring and responsibility list. A small Christmas tree, The Tree of Blessing, will be placed on the altar. An angel tag, bearing the name of each person on our caring and responsibility list will be placed on the tree. Pastor Cathy's sermon will be dedicated to those on our list.

The Youth will be Christmas Caroling at Future Care Nursing Home on Boston St. at 2:00 p.m. If you would like to join with them, come to the church at 1:30 p.m. for practice.

Points to Ponder...

You Can Always Add a Blessing to Someone's Life

Once a poor man was refreshed by a wonderful tree. He was hungry and ate a juicy apple from the tree. Now he was tired and the tree helped keep him cool as he slept. When he woke up, he spoke to the tree. "I want to repay you in some way for helping me. But I have nothing! What can I do?" He thought for a moment and an idea floated into his mind. "I could give you a blessing! But you don't need long life, you couldn't be this big without having lived many, many years already. I can't bless you with juicy ripe fruit, as you have an abundance of that already. Wait, I have it. I bless you that all the seeds from you will find homes in the rich soil and grow into wonderful trees, just as splendid as you are!"

And so the man went on his way, feeling satisfied and happy. As he looked back he saw the tree gently waving to him and all was good!

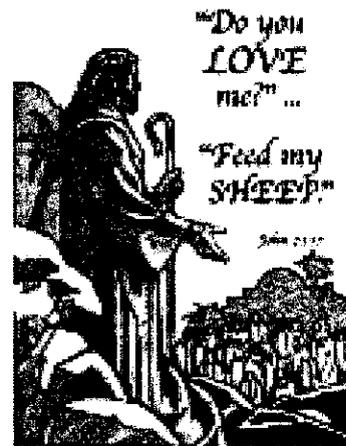
Yes, there is a recipe for enchantment in the above story. The recipe is simply to bless others, perhaps to thank them, perhaps just to warm their hearts. Your words can give hope and encouragement. You don't formally need to use the word blessing to do just that! For instance: 'May you do well on your job interviews!' 'May you get a good report from the doctor.' 'Have a great vacation and come back refreshed.' 'I'm looking forward to a great report on your dinner party. Your food always tastes so good.'

For this recipe to really simmer all month, keep stirring the pot by adding in one new blessing a day! A blessing gets to be added in once you have said it to someone.

May your pot fill to the top with good feelings, warmth and delight! Take full servings often as you can easily fill the pot back up--you know the SECRET (blessings).

The story was loosely adapted from a tale, Say Thank You With A Blessing. p. 103, from the book, The Bird of Paradise and Other Sabbath Stories by Steven M. Rosman, UAHC Press, New York, New York.

From *Gateways to Happiness*,
by Dr. Barbara Becker Holstein



Points to Ponder...

Our Heart's Desire

As his parents labored on a foreign mission field, their young son attended school in America. When Christmas Day came, the school's headmaster tried to cheer up the boy. The headmaster asked what he most wanted for Christmas.

For the boy, the answer came easily. He pointed to a framed picture of his father and said, "I would like most of all for my father to step out of that frame." (No doubt he felt the same way about his mother.)

The deepest meaning of Christmas is about God's stepping out of the "frame" of the universe, out of heaven, and revealing the greatest love ever seen among men.

John's account of this Good News sums it up: "And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14, NRSV).

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.



John 1:14

What's So Amazing About Christmas?

Consider this: God loved the world so much that he came visiting. God slipped into the world as a helpless baby, without fanfare or heraldry.

Think of it: The baby, born of humble parents, the man a carpenter, the woman still in her teens, scholars say. Jesus was born in a backwater town called Bethlehem, in a stable reeking with animal smells.

It took years before people fully comprehended God's self-revelation. Even John the Baptist, sitting in Herod's prison, sent a message to Jesus asking, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" (Matthew 11:3, NRSV). Jesus then explained that he was working miracles and bringing good news to the poor.

That became even more clear when Peter concluded that Jesus was "the Messiah, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16, NRSV).

What's amazing about Christmas is that it began in a manger. And today more than 2 billion people around the world celebrate Jesus' birth.

Church Council



Any concerns regarding the janitorial maintenance of the church or school building should be directed to Dale Sanders. With Dale acting as the liaison between the congregation and the custodian, any concerns can be quickly addressed.

Dale can be reached at 443-922-9470.

The United Evangelical Church of Baltimore, MD

Treasurer's Report

Operating Revenue and Expenses 1/01/08 through 10/31/08

Revenue: Proceeds from Donations, Rent & Interest	\$ 135,951.00
<u>Operating Expenses</u>	<u>166,527.00</u>
Amount under (deficit)	\$ -30,576.00

Operating, Investment & Endowment Funds Balance 10/31/08

Operating Funds on Hand (Includes Window Funds)	\$ 32,549.00
<u>Investment & Endowment Funds on Hand</u>	<u>182,542.00</u>
Total All Funds	\$ 215,091.00

Stained Glass Window Report as of 10/31/08

Amount Received to Date	\$ 59,190.00
Amount Paid for 10 Windows	-44,879.00
<u>Amount Paid to Date for Front Windows Restoration Project</u>	<u>- 4,488.00</u>
Funds Available for Donor Plaques and Improvements	\$ 9,823.00

135th Anniversary Events as of 10/31/08

Received from Picnic, Dinner/Dance, Oktoberfest	\$ 11,384.00
<u>Expenses</u>	<u>-8,350.00</u>
Total 135 th Anniversary to Operating Funds	\$ 3,034.00

Church Council



Canton Community Association Meetings

NEIGHBORHOOD Association

The Canton Community Association meets at our church on a bi-monthly basis. The meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary with free dinner beginning at 6:30 p.m. in Friendship Hall. These meetings are a wonderful way to meet new neighbors and stay informed about the concerns of our community. It also shows that our church thinks being involved in its community is important. Put the meetings on your calendar and come show our neighbors how important our community is to us as a church.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 27th at 6:30 p.m.

Important Altar News



We all have seen cost increases everywhere, the gas pump, the grocery store, etc. Well, these increases have reached the florist. The church has received a letter from Seifert Florist telling us that they will have to start charging us more for our altar flowers. The new price will be \$18 per vase instead of \$15. I think that this is still a very reasonable price if one compares it with the cost of an arrangement that one can buy at most florists. This cost will go into effect starting November 1st. If you have signed up for flowers after that date and you have decided to retract your order, please just strike out your name on the flower chart so that I will not order them.

Ursula Jacob

Altar Committee

Parish Relations Committee

An active Parish Relations/Pastoral Relations Committee continues to exist at United. Are you asking yourself - What is a Parish/Pastoral Relations Committee? The Parish/Pastoral Relations Committee seeks to support and maintain an open and healthy relationship between the pastor and members of the congregation. The group serves as an advisory group to the pastor and as a support group for the pastor's leadership. The group is concerned with all church staff members' well-being. Constructive and caring communication in an atmosphere of confidentiality and trust is essential to the work of this committee.

The committee meets quarterly and reports any questions or concerns to the Council. Committee members consist of:

Rev. Cathy

Carol Rowell

Marge Hurd

Bob Osburne

Lynn Sanders

Please feel free to approach any committee member with questions, comments or areas of concern. Thank you & God Bless.



Church Council

Council President's Message—cont'd

The mailing included a sheet in the form of a checkoff questionnaire titled "A Place for You !- My Promise of My Time and Abilities". It has been said that to copy is a form of flattery, so possibly we can empower our congregation's stewardship by circulating a similar type letter and questionnaire. Webster's dictionary defines 'stewardship' as "the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care". We of "The United Evangelical Church of Baltimore, Maryland" established in 1873, have an awesome responsibility entrusted to us, the careful and responsible management and preservation of our glorious church, not only for our current members, but for future generations.

Harvey


T I M E
Talents 
TREASURE



UEC Holiday & Worship Schedule

December 14

(following worship)

Tinsel Sunday

Note: There will be only one
service on December 14th
at 10:30 a.m.

December 24

7:30 p.m.

Communion &

Candlelight Service

"Jesus the Savior" Pageant



December 28

A Service of Light

8:00 & 10:30 a.m.

*(A special service of hymns and scrip-
ture readings)*

Church Council

Council President's Message

Several days ago I asked myself a question. One that I found I didn't have a simple and ready answer for. The question was : "Why do I go to church"? I found myself trying to analyze why it is that I get up at 6:30am on Sunday mornings, the earliest I rise of any other day of the week, and drive the 18 miles to the city to attend church. Several answers came to mind immediately, such as : I like to go to the 8:00am service because then I can go back home and still have the rest of the day to do what I want. I get to participate in and listen to some good music. I want to hear what the Pastor has come up with in the way of a sermon for this Sunday. Maybe I will learn something. I can see some of the friends I have made over the years of

going to our church. I can tell people, "I am a Christian, because I go to church every Sunday". As I thought about

this, I found that none of these reasons were a very good reason as to why I *really* go to church every Sunday. I decided to delve a little deeper into this subject and see if I can figure out why is it that people do go to church and maybe discover some more about my own motivations for regularly attending church. In doing a little research, I found there are many reasons people go to church, everything from just going to be entertained to some deeply spiritual reasons such as personally communing with God. I found a list of 13 reasons to go to church, another of 5 reasons the writer goes to church. Much of it very thought provoking. There is not a shortage of information available. I have decided of all the good reasons out there on why one should go to church, it comes down to each individual knowing in their own mind why they are there. I do feel that it is a question that one should reflect upon now and then.

...sharing one's training, talents and abilities with their church is also stewardship.

The exercise in thinking about why I go to church has brought me to deciding on several factors that have me showing up Sunday after Sunday. One is that it enables me to learn more about a subject that has always held my interest, religion and the bible, along with a group of people I really care about. Another is knowing that the words attributed to Jesus in Matthew 18:20 where he says: "*Where two or three are gathered in my name there I am in the midst of them*" have a significant meaning for me.

Finally, though it may not make a whole lot of sense, An important reason I continue to attend church is the feeling that my life is good and maybe someone is looking out for me after

all. As President and past Treasurer of the church council I have

even told people that if they attend church regularly for at least 6 months, I would guarantee that their life would be better. If not, I would refund all the money they donated. So far, no one has taken me up on it.

Perhaps related to the subject of attending church regularly is what is commonly called "stewardship." I think that



many of us, myself included until recently, are inclined to believe that church stewardship means supporting the

church financially through our weekly offering. A mailing Pastor Cathy recently received from her family's home church in Olmsted Falls, Ohio, that she shared with me, made me realize that sharing one's training, talents and abilities with their church is also stewardship.

Pastor's Message

The Emerging Church movement is attracting people in their 20's and 30's. In a quick search I have found that there are three emerging churches within a stone's throw of United, each with a handful of people from these younger generations. I plan to immerse myself in these gatherings with questions about why this movement works for them, what they are finding, and how it differs from other church experiences, to learn as much as I can about attracting young adults.

I also plan to visit an urban UCC church in Philadelphia that has been successful in its revitalization from a nearly dead church to a thriving community. Also included in my focus on church vitality I will be spending time doing advanced worship preparation and design. While my reading list is not yet compiled, I look forward to spending many a summer afternoon under a tree reading.

The rest part of my sabbatical will be found in a work week that contains no late night meetings or weekends. While that might not sound like much of a rest, it is a step back from my typical 50-60 hour week. To fill up some of that spare time I plan to take a woodworking class and learn more about a hobby that feeds my soul.

The travel part of my sabbatical includes a trip to the UCC General Synod which will be in Grand Rapids, MI. I have never attended a Synod and am looking forward to the experience. On my way back from General

Synod I will stop in Ohio and see family over the 4th of July weekend.

While I am still in the process of finalizing plans, one of the most important aspects of any sabbatical is spiritual renewal. Wendy Wright speaks of the renewal that comes from sabbatical in these terms, "To be truly

restorative, Sabbath rest time must participate in a deep contemplative awareness of the

sacred quality of the life and world we inhabit. In other words, it is not enough simply to take time off from work. Too often our recreation time is as frantic, competitive, and unrestorative as our labor. And too often, when we attempt Sabbath time in the form of retreats or daily prayer, we turn it into an arduous chore." She talks about the importance of fallow time, time "graciously empty" where space is opened within us to notice the presence of God.

I have so many thoughts and ideas running through my head for this time away. I am very excited about the possibilities and opportunities for growth. I am also very grateful for the support of the church, and I hope everyone recognizes that a sabbatical can also be restorative for congregations. I pray that while I am away, the church will recognize and take advantage of its own opportunities for growth and learning that will be possible, so that together we will be enriched by our time of Sabbath.

In Christ's love
Rev. Cathy

the importance of fallow time, time "graciously empty" where space is opened within us to notice the presence of God.

The United Endeavor

United Methodist Evangelical Church



Christmas & New Year's Edition



Pastor's Message

Recently I attended a boundary awareness training which is required by our denomination. While I didn't learn anything new, it was a worthwhile event as I was reminded of some very important commitments which the profession of ministry requires. One of these commitments to ministry, which is found within the UCC Ordained Minister's Code, states, "I will seek to grow in faith, knowledge, and the practice of ministry through intentional continuing education, study, and devotional life."

Of all the commitments to professional ministry, I find this one the most challenging. The training event reminded me that the health of one's ministry will be directly related to the degree to which they keep pace with their commitment to prayer and study.

I know that every working person grapples with the struggle between the constraints of time and the list of things to do. However, sometimes the church measures a

minister not by the number of hours they spend in prayer or whether they are current in their reading, but rather by the number of people visited or the number of new members who join the church. These unwritten expectations create pressure upon ministers to forego the unseen essentials such as reading and study, in order to produce tangibles.

In recognition of the need for the continuing development of ministry, the council has agreed to grant me a three month sabbatical over the summer of 2009. In an earlier Endeavor article I explained that a sabbatical is a three month hiatus from a normal work routine to be devoted instead to intentional study, rest, or travel. My sabbatical will contain all three of these elements.

The study part of my sabbatical will be a focus on church vitalization and growth. As part of that focus I will spend a week at Lancaster Theological Seminary's summer academy learning about "Emerging Christianity."

(continued)