

December 8, 2010

Methogram

“The mission of First United Methodist Church of Silsbee is to bring glory to God, to go and share the Gospel with all, and to make disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”

The Methogram is a publication of:
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DAN'S DIVINITIES

Angels, angels, angels: That is what we are talking about this Advent and Christmas Season - those heavenly messengers who announce the Good News of the Christmas story. We talked about Gabriel's appearance to Zechariah announcing the coming birth of John the Baptist the first Sunday of Advent. Last week we talked about Gabriel's announcement to Mary of the Christ Child being conceived in her womb.

This Sunday, we will sing about angels during our Christmas Cantata by the Chancel choir, entitled *Winter's Grace*. We will also have the 9:00 a.m. Praise Service in McDonough Hall. There, I will be preaching on the Prologue to the Gospel of St. John, John 1:1-18. You may come to both services if you wish.

On the fourth Sunday of Advent, December 19, I will be preaching on the story of an angel appearing to Joseph in a dream, found in Matthew 1:18-25.

On Christmas Eve, it will be the angels announcing the birth of the Messiah to the shepherds who were tending their flocks by night. Nancy will preach at the 5:00 service, and I will preach at 7:00. This year Holy Communion will not be a part of our Christmas Candlelight Service on Christmas Eve, but we will offer it to anyone who wishes to receive it in the thirty minutes prior to each service at the altar rail.

After Christmas, I will preach on wise men (Matthew 2:1-12) on December 26, and on January 2 I will preach on the flight to Egypt after another appearance to Joseph by an angel (Matthew 2:13-23).

On behalf of myself, my family, and your church staff,

*May your Christmas celebration
be filled with warmth and joy,
and may you experience
the true meaning of Christmas!*
Pastor Dan



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Thank you for the beautiful basket of fruit. It is appreciated so much. The children are an inspiration and their signatures so sweet. I love the church and pray God will continue to bless. I get good care here. Look forward to seeing all of you again.

*Love in Christ,
Juanita Fuller*

*Dear UMC Children,
Thanks so much for the lovely surprise visit to my mother last Sunday. She enjoyed your sweet songs so much. You really cheered her up. You made my mother, me, and God smile! I know that she will enjoy the fruit and think of you all. Your thoughtfulness is really appreciated.*

*Love to all,
Kristi Sellers*



All Faiths Day School Silent Auction

All Faiths Day School will be hosting a silent auction. On Sunday, December 12, baskets will be set up in the day school hallway for bidding. If anyone

would like to place a bid, please visit these baskets before or after Sunday School that morning. All proceeds raised through this auction will go toward

the new fire alarm system.



As we celebrate Advent and prepare for Christmas and the New Year, there are many ways you can give extravagantly to those causes close to your heart – and often reap end-of-year tax benefits at the same time. While you must itemize to claim the deductions, tax savings may allow you to give even more! Let us know if we can help you with your end-of-year charitable giving. Among your options:

- * **Cash**-You can eliminate or reduce your tax liability up to one half of your adjusted gross income
- * **Securities**-You can generally donate stocks, bonds and mutual funds that you have owned at least a year and deduct their current value and eliminate the capital gains tax.
- * **Gift annuities and charitable trusts**-Such arrangements can provide you or others with increased income, current and future tax savings, and a future gift to your church or charities.
- * **Life Insurance**-Listing your church or charity as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy is as easy as updating a beneficiary form
- * **Deferred gifts**-The end of the year is a perfect time to take inventory of your life plans and create or update your will with gifts to church and charities.

Act today!

With careful planning, you can give more, more cost effectively, allowing you to make an even bigger difference for your church or charity. Remember that gifts must be made by Dec. 31 to qualify for 2010 tax benefits.

Heartspring Methodist Foundation is here to help. Email us at office@heartspringmethodist.org or call 713-533-3780 or 800-521-9817. for more information on giving, visit our web site www.heartspringmethodist.org and click on the Individuals/Planned Giving tabs.

Christmas Services and Activities

Friday, December 10

- * **Kids Night Out** – 6:00-10:00 pm
- All the children are invited to the church for a movie, crafts, and a Christmas Pageant rehearsal. While the children are busy, maybe the parents can get a little Christmas shopping done!



Sunday, December 12

- * **Christmas Cantata, A Winter's Grace** - 11:00 am. Our Chancel Choir is working hard to make this a memorable blessing to everyone. The 9:00 a.m. service will be held as normal at 9:00 a.m., so you can go to both services that day and have two completely different worship experiences.
- * **Children's Christmas Pageant** - 5:00 pm. Our children, assisted by some of our youth, will be bringing out the joy of the season through song and drama. Refreshments afterward, provided by the Victory class.

Friday, December 17

- * **Youth Christmas Party** - 6:00 pm. at Fred and Linda Miller's party barn.

Sunday, December 19

- * **Brass Choir** - 9:00 am and 11:00 am Worship Services. We are trying to put together a Brass Choir to horn in on Christmas!
- * **Sing for Your Supper** - 4:00 pm. Bring a pot of soup, put it in the kitchen, and then join a team as we go out and serenade some of our local citizens with Christmas Carols. Around 6:00 pm we will all come back to enjoy a meal together.

Friday, December 24, Christmas Eve

- * **Family Service** - 5:00 pm. Pastor Nancy preaching
- * **Candlelight Service** - 7:00 pm. Dr. Darby preaching



Our Advent Sermon series this year will be "Security in Insecure Times", each Sunday at 9:00 am in McDonough Hall (Praise Service) and 11:00 am in the Sanctuary (Traditional Service)



Marjorie Eldredge

Mr. & Mrs. Sam Tobey III
Ed & Sonia Cain

Carolyn Lee

Ed & Sonia Cain
Brook & Lanita Gilchrist

Barney Parks

Mr. & Mrs. Sam Tobey III

Jesse Sanchez

Ed & Sonia Cain

Gifts	
<u>November 28, 2010</u>	
\$3,345.43	
<u>December 5, 2010</u>	
\$7,762.00	
<u>Methodist Home-Waco</u>	
\$274.00	
Presence	
<u>Worship</u>	
11/28	139
12/05	149
<u>Sunday School</u>	
11/28	91
12/05	99

Finance and Stewardship Report by Pastor Darby

I have some good news to share with you about our church stewardship drive, and our church finances. So far, we have received 81 pledge cards, and of those 50 have increased their pledge! I would be surprised if 50 out of 81 are having an increase in income next year, so an awful lot of our church members are making real sacrifices to help our church. Praise the Lord! We also have two new families making pledges to the church for next year.

Those 81 persons have pledged to give \$249,360 to the church next year, and we estimate an income of \$105,462 from those who have not pledged, but have a pattern of regular giving. Adding those figures give us \$354,822 in expected donations from known sources.

Additionally, we expect to receive \$54,690 of income from various sources such loose plate offering, Sunday School offering, grants, interest, and building use fees from All Faith Day School, Gulf Coast Medical Clinic, WIC, and Hardin County Mediation Center.

That gives us a total expected income for the General Fund of \$409,512. Our budget for 2011 is \$438,490, so we could potentially have a budget deficit of \$28,978 next year. That sounds horrible, but it is a lot better than it could have been were it not for the generosity and sacrifices of our people!

It is the judgment of our Finance Committee that we do not need to make further cuts in our budget through lay-offs, salary reductions, or other cuts at this time. Our hope is that the church will continue to grow during the next year, which will increase our income. We will also be as conservative as possible in our spending, and hopefully come in a bit under budget. If we do have an income/expense deficit, we have the cash reserves to make up the difference.

So that is the good news about our stewardship drive: our people are giving generously, faithfully, and sacrificially, and although it will definitely be a tight year next year, we do not feel that further budget cuts are necessary at this time.

Now, for some good news about our current financial year: We have received a large gift from one of our members, and we have applied half of the gift to the General Fund of the church, upon which our church budget is based. The other half we have placed in reserve to replace all that we have taken out of reserves for the current year and, additionally, increase our balance in that fund. Our hope is that much of our reserves can eventually be moved to the Capital Fund, and we can use it as seed money for the remodeling of McDonough Hall, but, if needed, we can transfer it next year to the General Fund to meet budgetary needs if required.

At the end of October, our General Fund budgetary deficit was \$46,480.15. With addition of half of this large gift, plus the regular giving of our other members, our budget deficit has been reduced to \$27,955.03, at the end of November. Last year we had a huge amount of giving in December, with our income exceeding our expenses for the month by \$28,476.44. Exceptional giving has not happened so far this month, but if that does happen at the last minute again this year, we could possibly wipe out most of the remaining deficit. It is probably wishful thinking to end the year with more income than expenses, but that is what I am praying for!

We have again paid 100% of our apportionments and fair share goals, and have given generously to many mission causes supported both by our General Budget and by special offerings. All bills are current. Thank you for your support of our local church!



Trustees Report

The state fire marshal has ordered that McDonough Hall be equipped with an emergency lighting system and a fire detection and alarm system if All Faiths Day School is to continue to meet at our facility. The Trustees are currently soliciting bids for this upgrade to our facility. We are expecting to spend somewhere in the neighborhood of \$27,000 for these systems.

David Hartman, the Chief Executive Officer of Gulf Coast Medical Center, which leases our facility has informed the Trustees that he is making a long term commitment to keep the clinic open at its current location, and wants to expand the operation from one to two doctors. This expansion of services will necessitate changing some of the rooms from storage and records to exam rooms. He wants to invest \$15,000 of Gulf Coast money into making modifications and improvements to the building, which is owned by the church. In working with the contractor, however, he discovered that the ceiling of the facility needs to be replaced due to past water damage, probably from a leaky roof years ago. This is beyond his budget, so, he has requested that the church pay for that, an expense of \$7,700, plus repair a rusted drain pan on an air conditioner. The Trustees and Finance Committee have agreed to this proposal, sensing that this will be of long term benefit to the church.

Come and Go Communion of Christmas Eve

We will break from tradition this year and serve Holy Communion at the altar rail on a come and go basis during the 30 minutes prior to the worship services, which begin at 5:00 and 7:00 pm. Come by yourself, or bring your whole family down to the altar rail to receive communion and have a moment of prayer. The advan-

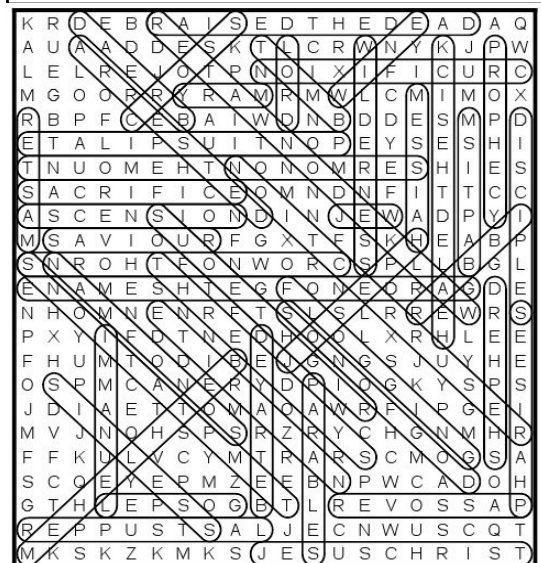
tages of doing it this way include a shorter worship service, being able to pray at the altar rail, not being rushed, and those who feel reticent to take Holy Communion are not compelled to receive the elements (we will have visitors who may not wish to take Communion).

Wesley Study Bibles Are In!



If you placed an order for a Wesley Study Bible, they have arrived! For those attending the first service, you can pick them up before or after the service at the back of the hall. For those attending the second service, you can pick them up before or after the service at the nursery side entrance to the sanctuary. Please bring your payment of \$24 at that time. Also, you can pick them up in the church office during any of our regular office hours throughout the week. If you have any questions, please feel free to call the church office at 385-5568.

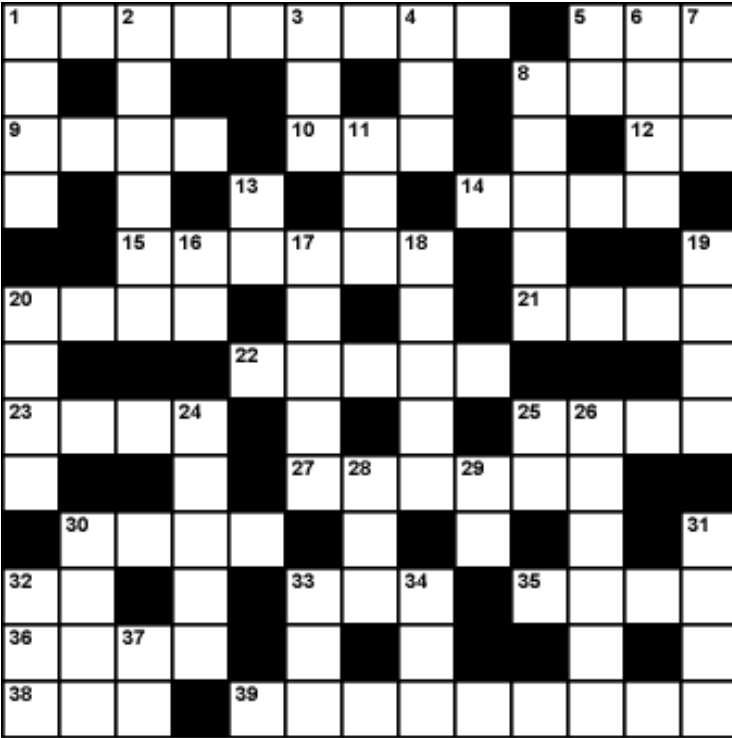
Answers to November 24, 2010 Puzzle



AFDS Fundraisers a Success!

All Faiths Day School recently had a bake sale and a split the pot raffle to raise money for the purchase of a new emergency lighting system and a new fire detection and alarm system. They have made a donation of \$1500 to the church for the cause.

Christmas Crossword



Across

- 1 Jesus' birthplace
- 5 Herod slew the children of this age and under
- 8 Peter quoted his words on the day of Pentecost
- 9 "A ___ shaken with the wind"
- 10 "Ye shall find ___ babe wrapped

- in swaddling clothes"
- 12 The year from Jesus' birth
- 14 Anna was of this tribe
- 15 "Behold, a ___ shall be with child"
- 20 "Fruits ___ for repentance"
- 21 The wise men came from here
- 22 "He shall reign of the house of ___ for ever"
- 23 A female ancestor of Jesus, as recorded in Matthew 1
- 25 The amount of manna to be gathered per person
- 27 He multiplied the widow's oil
- 30 "As soon as the voice of thy salvation sounded in mine ___"
- 32 An altar meaning witness
- 33 To increase
- 35 Malarial fever
- 36 To guide
- 38 There was no room here
- 39 These men went to see the baby Jesus
- 5 "Mary was espoused ___ Joseph"
- 6 "They that ___ soft clothing are in kings' houses"
- 7 Zacharias said, "I am an ___ man"
- 8 Grandson of 23
- 11 A place near Bethel
- 13 "A pair of turtledoves ___ two young pigeons"
- 16 "That ___ might be fulfilled"
- 17 "The ___ of God was upon him"
- 18 Mother-in-law of 23
- 19 This went before the wise men
- 20 The mother of Jesus
- 24 He was king at the time of Jesus' birth
- 25 "___ that one would hear me!"
- 26 Jesus was laid in this
- 28 The spirit did this to Jesus in the wilderness
- 29 Thus
- 30 The first garden
- 31 "Where is he that is born king of the ___?"
- 32 A priest in the time of Samuel
- 33 A tree of the olive family
- 34 To put into water
- 37 "___ angel of the Lord appeareth"

Down

- 1 "Mary, of whom was ___ Jesus"
- 2 Jesus' age when he was taken to Jerusalem
- 3 Jesus did not do this in the wilderness
- 4 Adam's wife

First United Methodist Church

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