

The Springs



Rev. Don Tabberer

December 19, 2012

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"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors." (Luke 2:14)

The Christmas season is always a time of mixed emotions for most of us. We spend a lot of time picking out that special gift for our family and friends. We often have parties to go to where we see people we haven't seen in a while. We get to sing our favorite Christmas carols for too many weeks, remembering when we first heard them and who we were with. It is an exciting time of year filled with anticipation and joy for most of us.

Then there are those other moments when we remember who is missing from our holiday scene. It really doesn't matter whether we have been without someone for twenty years or just a few weeks, Christmas tends to open our hearts to remembering those we are missing and washing our memories in a few tears. We also cannot help but notice others who are having these same moments and we want to reach out and hug them. Do not resist this instinct.

This is the season of the "Annual Christmas Letter" that so many of us write to re-cap the year just past and to look forward to the year about to begin. It is an appropriate time for this exercise as we celebrate new life born in a manger and a future filled with a promise made by God. Maybe it is these letters that help us to put things in perspective. We can always find someone whose life seems to be better or worse than ours; we can always read something that makes us smile; we can probably realize that we humans are a fascinating bunch and we're all in this together – doing the best we can with what we've got.

As I sit here today to write my annual Christmas letter to you, I can think of things that make me smile and others that make me sad. I remember the joyful times when new people have joined our fellowship and the difficult times we have said goodbye to those we love. There are those won-

derful moments when plans come together and things go just the way we want them to and then there are the frustrations when plans fall apart and we realize that we could have done so much better. Laughter, tears, joy, and sadness; satisfaction and frustration; assurance and uncertainty; these are some of the words that come to mind when I look back on 2012 and forward into 2013. So, here is my Christmas letter to you today:

Thank you! Thank you for your care and support. Thank you for your hard work and dedication to the mission of the church. Thank you for putting forth your very best every day to go where God leads you. I know that it is not always easy to "be the church." I admire your willingness to keep going even when it is challenging. I see the faces of our children and youth who benefit from your generosity. I have seen people's lives transformed because of mission projects you have worked on. I notice the light of understanding when somebody "gets it" because of a lesson you have taught in one of our classes. I rejoice when someone wants to be part of our church because you have welcomed them and made them part of our family. I thank God every day for bringing me to this wonderful community of faith and I am humbled to be your pastor.

This year Linda and I wish all of you a blessed and joyous Christmas and a wonderful New Year. We know that some of you will have a difficult holiday this year and we cry with you. We also know that the promise God makes is still true for all of us.

"The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." (John 1:5)

**Merry Christmas,
Pastor Don and Linda**

SOMEONE'S PRAYING, LORD....

People need the Lord. We feel that more and more each time a loved one is gone or a tragedy strikes. I'm remembering when my dad was dying from cancer and was getting too weak to be able to attend church. He loved his church and went as long as he possibly could. Even so that a comfortable chair was brought into the sanctuary for him to sit in. I watched as JoNan, Walter and Mel came to church as long as they possibly could because they felt drawn closer to God through worship and through the support of their fellow worshippers.

We all need God, and we all need each other. If you haven't been to church in a while, or if you are searching for just the right one to meet your needs, our prayer is that you will find God and your friends meeting you as you come into the door at SSUMC.

Let us pray together that churches will be filled with those needing to have that hole in their hearts filled that only God can fill. Let us pray that we will all come home to SSUMC, not only for our wonderful Christmas services, but all through the New Year.

I wish you a Blessed Christmas and New Year.
Virginia

Exodus House Resident Christmas List

Many of you have met Theresa Rosales and have learned about all of her great accomplishments since her move into the Exodus House. She has provided us with a Christmas list of the following:

Pair of size 7 1/2 women's work boots

A small DVD player

Cutting board

Dish Drying Rack

Egg Pan

PlayStation III (Dream list!)

If anyone is looking for a cat, she has 3 that she needs to be adopted, and two that need foster homes until her graduation from the Exodus House Program.

If you would like to give any of the items listed or Christmas Cards, please see Olivia Tackett. All items need to be wrapped and delivered to the church or to Olivia Tackett no later than December 22nd so they

can be delivered in time for Christmas. A tax receipt is available from Tracey with proof of purchase.

Music Ministry Musings

One of the most common and most challenging questions for those of us in music ministry is, "How do you choose what songs we sing in worship?" There are often strong emotions attached to this question because music is something that can touch us deeply in our souls.

The process of song selection is based on a number of considerations: the theme of the service, the scripture passage, the season of the church year, the role of the song at its particular point in the service, the "singability" of the song, and the familiarity of the song to the congregation. The primary goal is for the music to help express the message of the worship service, to provide an avenue for the congregation to enter into that message and actively participate in worshipping God.

It is an imperfect process. Not all of the songs will be "favorites." Some songs will move one person greatly and fall flat for the person next to them. Sometimes the choice simply doesn't work. But please know that much thought and prayer is always involved. I pray that as you join in singing in worship that you will listen closely for God's voice in every text and know that a song you may not care for may be speaking deeply to someone else in the room. Please pray that someone is being touched by all that we do.

May we all sing for God's glory!

Alan

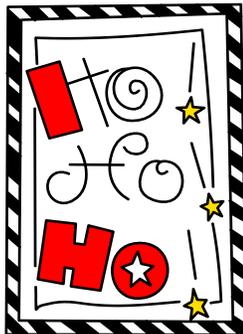
Lunch Bunch

The SSUMC Lunch Bunch will meet Sunday, January 6th at El Maguey's in Sand Springs. Arrive promptly after 2nd service. Contact Eldin Fisher for details and ALL ARE WELCOME!

THE Pitter- Patter OF LITTLE FEET

Mission Morsels

Our church is starting a winter clothing drive for **Child SHARE** which is a ministry focusing on foster care of children under Oklahoma United Methodist's Circle of Care. Child SHARE is in need of winter clothing for children ages 2-8 who are in foster care. Items needed include long-sleeved shirts, long pants, sweaters, and winter pajamas. Child SHARE has already received plenty of coats for the children and another church recently held an undergarments drive for them. So, the biggest needs remaining are shirts, pants, sweaters, and pjs. We will run this drive through the end of January. As items come in, Jami can take them over to Candace Morton at Child SHARE.



Restore Ho! Ho! Hope (another Oklahoma United Methodist ministry serving those in need) could use a few things for their kitchen also. They are getting low on tea towels, knives, and silverware. So, we will start a drive for them as well. This will also run through the end of January and we can send items with our fellow members who volunteer at Restore Hope as items come in.

If you could bring an item or two for these causes, it would be such a blessing! Look for boxes in the Narthex or in the hallway to Caleb House to deposit your contributions. As always, if you would rather make a cash contribution to either of these ministries, they would greatly appreciate that as well. Please contact Jami Warkentin with questions 918.246.0359 or gopokes93@gmail.com. Thanks!

Dear Project Transformation Supporters-

With the holiday season upon us have you ever asked yourself, where does all my money go? I know I have. Of course there are the things you need, there are gifts you need to purchase, then there are things you want for yourself. At the end of the day, there are many ways we can choose to spend our hard earned dollars. How will you decide what to spend your money on? This Christmas, we ask that you consider adding a donation to Project Transformation to your Christmas list or your shopping this year. Consider the following:

- \$5 can buy a new book for one of our libraries
- \$25 can provide two days of nutritious snacks at one site for our campers
- \$50 can provide art supplies for one week at one site church
- \$75 can sponsor a child for one week of camp
- \$100 can rent a school bus for a field trip
- \$500 can pay for summer housing for one of our interns
- \$1,000 can pay for an education award for one of our interns
- \$1,500 is what it costs each of our site churches in increased utility bills through the summer
- \$5,000 will support one site church for an entire summer

By donating today, together we can make a world where fewer children fall behind in school and more children have positive adult mentors, where children are not held back in life by inadequate reading skills, but have discovered the transformative power of reading. This program truly has the power to transform individuals, communities, and churches. But we can't do it without your help.

We realize that many organizations are currently facing lower levels of funding. However, we know that this program is so important for the under-served children of Oklahoma. Project Transformation statistics from 2012 show that 96% of enrolled campers sustained or improved their reading level during the summer program. We ask that you prayerfully consider making an end-of-year gift to Project Transformation or become a monthly donor. Project Transformation is largely dependent on the generosity of individual donors in order to meet our funding needs. Donations can be made in any amount and are all tax deductible. If you would like to make a donation to Project Transformation, please go to this website: <http://projecttransformation.org/oklahoma/how-you-can-help/donate/>

(Note: After clicking donate online, you will be given the option to donate to several different ministries. Please make sure to designate the donation to go to Project Transformation. Funds received will go into the general fund for Project Transformation.)

We thank you for your continued support. Your contributions of ideas, money, and—most importantly—time have affected the lives of thousands of children across Oklahoma.

With gratitude,
Lindsey Bryan, Executive Director

Sunday Lists

Sunday Volunteers December 23

Visitors Center & Coffee-Searchers
Head Usher-8:30 a.m.-Frank Johnston
Head Usher-11:00 a.m.-Eddy David
Lay Reader-8:30 a.m.-No Lay Reader
Lay Reader-11:00 a.m.-No Lay Reader
Young Disciples Lesson-8:30 a.m.-Marty David
Young Disciples Lesson-11:00 a.m.-Marty David
Child. Church-8:30 a.m.-Kingdom Kids 11:00 a.m.-
Katherine Reeves & Julie Ferguson
Counters-Janie Moore & Kent Warkentin
Youth Dinner for Wednesday-Dec. 19-No Dinner

Sunday Volunteers December 30

Visitors Center & Coffee-Searchers
Head Usher-8:30 a.m.-Frank Johnston
Head Usher-11:00 a.m.-Eddy David
Lay Reader-8:30 a.m.-No Lay Reader
Lay Reader-11:00 a.m.-No Lay Reader
Young Disciples Lesson-8:30 a.m.-Janet Parker
Young Disciples Lesson-11:00 a.-Janet Parker
Children's Church-8:30 a.m.-Kingdom Kids
11 a.m.-Debbie Schmidt
Counters-Diana Pond & Jack Vest
Youth Dinner for Wednesday-Dec. 26-No Dinner

Please Keep In Prayer

Martha Scudder, Wilbur & Jewel Williams, Ryder Herring, Ruth Weaver, Virginia Vice, Donna Woodruff, Mary Lea Forsythe, Phil Cearley, Cathy Hula, Mark Nicholson, Elizabeth Taylor, Destinee Tackett, Sylvia Johnson, William Scott, Catie McGoldrick, Gerrie Holladay, Clinton Wilson, Margaret Pyeatt, Irene Stogsdill, Jack-Howard Smith's cousin, Larry Fisher-Connie's brother, Carl Welch-Carrol Hamner's brother, Jason & Natalie Mickels

Acknowledgements

A Great BIG Thank You...

The 19th Annual Sand Springs Community Thanksgiving Dinner was again a HUGE success and all thanks to you! You, who cooked... You, who took postcards... You, who spread the word... You, who delivered, deboned, served... YOU make this a success every year! Thank you from the bottom of our hearts and to those you served-Thank You!!! Same time next year?!?

Merry Christmas!

The staff at SSUMC would like to wish you all a Very Merry Christmas & a Very Happy new Year!! We hope you have a wonderful and safe holiday!

Next Newsletter will be January 14th, 2013.

Crumbs From The Cracker

News:

the Awakening Vision:

"To Stretch the Church and to Redeem the un-Churched all to Glorify God"

Local Youth Missions!

I am so proud of all of our **students of "the Awakening" at SSUMC!** During the months of **November and December** we focused on missions both in the community and within our youth program. We had a number of service projects that our students took part in: "**Trunk or Treat**" where our students lead a small game carnival in the fellowship hall of our church, "**Operation Christmas Child**" where our students filled 46 shoe boxes full of toys, hygiene products, and school supplies, "**Thanksgiving Day Baskets @ Restore Hope**" where our students helped sort and pack thanksgiving day baskets for the community, "**Deboning Turkeys**" where our students helped prepare for our Thanksgiving day dinners, and our annual "**Christmas Card Mission**" where our students made over 100 Christmas cards for the residents of Oak Dale Manor. **I could not be more proud of our students and volunteers** who helped serve at all of our service projects! **The Awakening is working hard** at fulfilling its vision this year! **Keep up the great work students!**

Summer Youth Mission Trip 2013 Meeting

Spots are filling up quick for **students! Don't forget to sign up for the youth mission trip 2013!** We have **7 spots for parents** with a **\$25 dollar deposit you can reserve your spot!** Feel free to **bring your deposit** to the office or youth on Wednesday night! **Deposits are due January 7th!**

Youth Worship Band!

If you missed our Christmas Candlelight Carol Service, you missed a treat! Our youth worship team did a great job joining the rest of our musical talent at SSUMC by sharing two Christmas songs. So proud of our girls growing in faith and sharing their gifts of music! **Great job Anna, Raven, Lauren, Julie, and Jordan!** Thanks to **Alan Parker for his mentoring and teaching our ladies!**

Blue Devils Basketball Season!

Our first Blue Devil basketball game is January 5th
Our roster is set and we are ready for another great season! Please be in prayer for our boys, for an injury free season, as well as growth from a Spiritual side of fellowship! **Our boys playing this season are: Jason, Ben, Mack, Matt, Alan, Brent, Cody, Zach, Riley, and Chase.**

Youth Teachings:

Our youth have been going through a book on Sunday called "**Christian Atheist.**" It is a book that is really challenging our students faith and whether they "**believe in God, but live as though he doesn't exist.**" To start off the new year they will also be challenged with a **2-part series "Search & Rescue"** focused on them **sharing their faith** and really **reaching out** to those in their schools who may not know Jesus through **their testimony!**

Upcoming Dates:

- December 19th - Youth Go Christmas Caroling!
- December 24th - Christmas Eve Services 5pm & 9pm
- December 26th - No Youth
- January 2nd - No Youth

(If you are interested in being apart of any of these upcoming events please do not hesitate to call me at 918-245-5955, or email me at gcollett@sandspringsumc.org)

Fun Fact: The first Boy Scout Troop in the US was formed in Pawhuska in 1909.

Kidzone



We are very proud of our children for their participation in the Christmas musical at the church. They did a fantastic job. And thank you to Ms. Cathy, Ms. Debbie and Ms. Marty for all their hard work.

A big THANK YOU to the Harmony Class for inviting us into their class on Sunday to listen to the Christmas Story with them.

We hope each of you have a wonderful Christmas filled with peace and joy!!

See you Sunday!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

FLC-Family Life Center

Wednesday, December 19

7:30 a.m.-Men's Breakfast—Crescent Café
10:00 a.m.-Exercise to Music-FLC
6:30 p.m.-The Awakening Youth-FLC
6:00 p.m.-Praise Team Practice
7:00 p.m.-Chancel Choir

Thursday, December 20

4:15 & 5:30 p.m.-Weight Watchers— F. Hall
6:00 p.m.-Bells

Friday, December 21

12:00 p.m.-Weight Watchers-F. Hall

Saturday, December 22

F. Hall in use

Sunday, December 23

8:30 a.m.-Modern Worship
10:00 a.m.-Sunday School
11:00 a.m.-Classic Worship

Offices closed December 24-January 1

Monday, December 24

Offices Closed

10:00 a.m.-Exercise to Music-FLC
5:00 p.m.-Christmas Eve Service
9:00 p.m.-Christmas Eve Service

Tuesday, December 25

Offices Closed

Wednesday, December 26

Offices Closed

7:30 p.m.-Men's Breakfast-Crescent Café
10:00 a.m.-Exercise to Music-FLC

Thursday, December 27

Offices Closed

4:15 & 5:30 p.m.-Weight Watchers— F. Hall
6:00 p.m.-Chancel Bells

Friday, December 28

Offices Closed

12:00 p.m.-Weight Watchers-F. Hall

Sand Springs UMC

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Family Life Center: 918-245-3725

www.SandSpringsumc.org

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