

# Big News

From

Littleton United Methodist Church



Pastor Rob Licht

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. While away on continuing education, I was reminded of both the diversity and sheer giftedness of the various congregations within the North Carolina Conference. A panel of four bishops (including our own) addressed the clergy on issues of pastoral and congregational effectiveness. We were reminded that, above all, excellence in ministry involves allowing the mind of Christ to be fashioned within us as we go out to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Disciple-making and faith formation involve tremendous risk. They move us beyond our comfort zones and unsettle our very settled existence. To be in ministry is to take risks, something hard for many of us, even in the most stable of times. When we are living in risky times, such as the one the whole world is undergoing at this moment, taking risks become almost unthinkable and yet this is precisely what Christ asks of us. The Church lives for "such a time as this" that it may reach out into a world whose fabric, financially and otherwise, has become frayed. The question becomes: "how do we prevent ourselves from becoming frayed,

from losing our selves into anxiety and fear?

First, we must remember those words found in Scripture, the very words which Jesus himself echoes in his life and ministry, and allow them to ring loud and true in our hearts as the command they are. "Do not be afraid!" The words were spoken by angels to some lowly shepherds on a Galilean hillside. They are the first notes in a glorious symphony that stretches across time. Jesus, himself, sings these notes as he prepares for his own death telling us "Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not let them be afraid." (John 14:27c). He reminds us of who we are and whose we are.

Second, we must stay rooted in the reality of our baptism, living into our baptismal vows. When we were baptized or confirmed in the church, we promised to support her through our prayers, our presence, our gifts and our service. To these four, we now add a fifth, our witness. The church covets our prayer, our ceaseless intercession, on her behalf that we may be Christ's body for the world. We need to ask ourselves about our prayer life and whether we are truly praying for the mission and ministry of the church.

We need to support the church by our presence. Presence does



Above: One of the many ways Mike Herman gives to the church is by reading Scripture. This particular Sunday his beautiful granddaughter, Claire, joined him.

not mean that we merely show up on Sunday to spend an hour or two socializing or day dreaming. Presence means "being present" in heart, mind and body to what God is doing in our midst and in this place. Being present means listening for God and being attentive to his voice as it addresses us from our scriptures, as it prods us through our prayers and hymns, as it sounds forth in the sermon. If you wish to become the person God intends you to be, then you must be present to God in all the ways that God make himself present to us. Being present also means being present to the life of the community. It is not enough to simply show up on Sunday, to make a customary appearance. When we are present to the life of the community than we involve ourselves in the day-to-day living of the gospel as God's people in this particular place. We must

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ask ourselves if we are being “as present” to God and to the community as we should be.

We support the church with our gifts. This is the baptismal vow that causes many of us consternation, particularly during these times of financial uncertainty. As those speaking for our stewardship campaign have noted, the scriptures have a lot to say about money. Jesus talks more about money and how we use it than he ever does about sex. Our wallets are our sacred cow, even if the cow is looking a little more thin than usual. The practical reality is that the church requires our gifts, the investment of our labor, which for many of us is money, in order to carry out the commands of Christ. That said, our gifts are not only financial but they can be the gift of ourselves in other ways, such as the gift of our time and the gift of our talent. Are we giving all we can of our life and our labor to the Christ who has saved us?

We also vow to the church our service. Note that the church does not vow to serve us, despite our tendency, at times, to think otherwise. The church exists solely for God. The church, to put it bluntly and even crassly, is not a Burger King where you can always “have it your way.” Instead, we are called to do things in the Jesus way and since Jesus’ way is the way of crucifixion then it shouldn’t surprise us when the church calls upon us to make sacrifices so that we can be in mission and ministry together. Let us ask ourselves in what ways we have sacrificed our interests and

desires for the good of the whole.

Finally, we vow to the church and to God, our witness. We offer to him our voices as we speak of his love for the world. Our witness, while involving an articulation of what God is doing in our lives as persons who have died and risen in Christ, is also about how we live and treat one another. The best sermons are those that involve no words at all. Are we being honest with each other? Are we offering forgiveness? When someone looks at my behavior or my attitudes, what does that say about me and about my own walk with the Lord? As we continue to ponder our vows and our rooted-ness in Christ, my prayer is that you will return to Jesus’ words about fear and allow him to give you the courage necessary to follow and to heed his voice which even now says “Rise, let us be on our way.”(John 14:31).

Yours in Christ,



Pastor Rob Licht

### **Josh Dillard Reports from the Mission Field**

Hello I’m Josh Dillard, Over the summer I went to El Salvador on a mission trip. About twenty five or so people went including Richard Sherman and Pastor Haley. Our days started about 6:50 for 7:00 breakfast. Then we left the motel about 8:30 to go to the work site, where we

had a devotion before going to the houses. We would do various jobs around the site until twelve or so then we waited for lunch, which was always about an hour late or so. We ate a different lunch everyday which always consisted of rice, tortillas, and almost always chicken. Around 1:30 – 1:45 we went back to work and started working again, until we left about 5:00. The people there were so nice and compassionate. They were so full of faith. Our mason’s name was Angel, and he was one of the nicest people I’ve ever met. He always had a smile on his face. I grew to like him and several other people there very much. They spoke little if any English, but I found that it was very easy to communicate with them. They are very inquisitive about learning English words. It astounded me. It was an experience that I will always remember. Thank you all for letting me go.



Above: Pastor Rob lends Josh Dillard his microphone so everyone can hear Josh report on what it was like for a teen to go on the trip. Josh gave his report during a Worship Service. More pictures from the trip are on the next page!



# Josh and Friends in El Salvador



*Thank You  
From Sue Beazley*

To the Choir and Congregation of Littleton United Methodist Church,

Thank you for the framed memories of our years of working together. I have it hanging in my home where it will be a reminder of our years of working together in harmony.

The beautiful reception and generous gift was an overwhelming show of your love and affection. I am humbled and grateful to have worked with you and for you.

It has been a "fatasmagorical" experience and I value the love and friendship you have expressed over the years.

en agape  
Sue Beazley

## **The Covenant Discipleship Group**

Helen Burtchell,  
Covenant Leader

The Covenant Discipleship Group now has six members and I'd like to reiterate, this is not a committee. This is a group of men and women who want to grow spiritually and learn from the Lord what their purpose is.

Together we will pray, read the bible and take communion when offered. We will do what we can for those in need. These are things that help us to grow spiritually.

The covenant that we make with each other will help us to remember our responsibility not only to each other but to Christ Himself.

If you would like to become part of the Covenant Disciple Group please call Helen Burtchell, 586-4682, or Pastor Rob Licht, 586-5385.

## **Community Thanksgiving Service**

Helen Burtchell,  
Outreach Chairperson



The 2008 Community Thanksgiving Service will be held on November 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00pm in our Fellowship Hall. We ask you to bring canned goods, box cereals, but please nothing that is out of date. The offering will be used to buy turkeys and perishables for families in need within our community.

Thank you ahead of time for your help in helping these people enjoy their holiday as much as you enjoy yours. Helen Burtchell 586-4682

## **Mission Committee**

Liz Solovieff, LUMC Operation Christmas Child Project Coordinator

Christmas is right around the corner, especially for our Operation Christmas Child. This is an outreach program developed by Billy Graham's Samaritan's

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Purse ministry. We have generously supported this in years past. Information on suggested gifts to contribute to a box, or to fill your own is available in the Chapel. Our cut off date to bring them to the collection site is November 19<sup>th</sup>. Very early, but remember these boxes go to hurting and needy children all over the world. What a joy it is to be used by our Creator to touch the life of a child thousands of miles away. Join the excitement, reach out with God's love, touch a child's life!

### Note from our Treasurer

Don Beazley

End  
-of-Year  
Giving

We have just closed the books on three quarters of the year 2008 and LUMC is seriously behind in meeting our financial obligations. We started 2008 with a deficit of \$4,768 and as of 9-30-2008 we are an additional \$13,797 behind for a total of \$18,565.

We are continuing to pay our salaries, apportionments and operating expenses by borrowing from our Dedicated Funds. The Dedicated Funds are those items given by members and friends for specific areas within the church. Examples are the Building Fund, Memorial Fund, and the Mission Fund. In order to be good stewards of God's money we need to make up this shortfall and prepare to start 2009 without any borrowing from the Dedicated Fund Account.

Each year pledges to the operating fund are significantly less than that needed to meet all of our budgeted needs. Many members and friends of LUMC traditionally make year end gifts to our church and I hope that you will prayerfully consider what you might be able to give to offset this financial shortfall. Whatever size your year end gift is, it is important for you to give it and your church to receive it.

### Community Thanksgiving Dinner

Missions Committee



Planning is underway for the upcoming FREE Community Thanksgiving Dinner. We anticipate the event to be even larger than last year due to the increased financial difficulty that some families may be experiencing.

If you would like to be involved, donating food, contributions, preparations, or volunteering in any capacity, please speak with Pastor Rob or Liz Solovieff. The free dinner will be served in our Fellowship Hall on Thanksgiving Day from noon until 2:00pm. The invitation is extended to our church family and their guests, and also the community.

Last year we served approximately 180 dinners, including delivery to two assisted living facilities for the elderly. A lunch was

prepared with the "leftovers" and served later in the week again, to the assisted living facilities. Nothing was wasted or thrown away. We impacted many lives by this mission which was made possible by 100% of your donation.

### Trustee Report

Shirley Anschutz, Chairperson

As always, the trustees have been busy. We are one step closer to getting permission for the sign in the Fellowship Hall parking lot. The town of Littleton has given permission. All of the permits are in hand and construction should begin soon.

The gutters and downspouts on the Education Building have been replaced. The cost was approximately \$1,100.

The outside metal door on the lower level of the church will soon be replaced due to rust damage. The cost will be approximately \$1,400 with the trustees doing some of the work.

One more item needing repair is the roof on the Education Building. It may start leaking in at least two places. Tim Townsend thinks he might be able to fix the problem.

We have a few smaller jobs on our list to do when the weather is cooler. Thank you to George Alston for cutting the grass at the church this summer!

Our Lawn Looks Great

Thanks George!



## News from the LUMC Finance Committee

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Your LUMC Finance Committee submitted a no growth budget to our Administrative Council for just under \$150,000.00. You should be receiving a letter, a copy of our budget, and a pledge card from Bob Workman, our LUMC Stewardship Chairperson, the week of 10/13. Please prayerfully consider your commitment to our Church and do all that you can do. These are turbulent times for us as individuals, our nation, and your Church. Please give this commitment fully to our "Lord, Jesus Christ" and listen for his divine message to you.

Thank you and as always, if you have any questions concerning your church finances, please ask anyone on your LUMC Finance Committee.

Peace and Blessings to All,

Mike Herman  
Chairperson, Finance Committee

## Message from the Administrative Council

Fellow members and friends of LUMC,

During these last four years as your Administrative Council Chairperson it has been very rewarding and informative learning how the United Methodist Church functions at our level, the Rocky Mount District level and at the North Carolina State level. The support that you all provided was fantastic, I've made many

friends, and we had many laughs, and tears but what will be remembered most was the support you have given me and the church.

We are truly a God serving church. God Bless you and all our friends of Littleton United Methodist Church.

I ask your continued support for all the Chairpersons and Richard Sherman as he starts as your Admin. Chairperson in the New Year. The following are the individual committees and the Chairpersons for 2009.

Ed Angel, Chairperson  
Administrative Council

## Missions Committee

Sherm Merchant

A big "Thank You" to all the volunteers that gathered together for the 2<sup>nd</sup> successful "Stop Hunger Now" event on Sept. 20<sup>th</sup> in our Fellowship Hall. This time we packaged 12,500 meals. Starting in 2009, we will have the event on an annual basis the Sat. after Easter. Like our first event our Fellowship Hall was filled with many excited volunteers from the community and our church. Please mark your calendar for the next rewarding event. You'll be glad if you get involved!

2009 Committees	Chairperson
Administrative Council	Richard Sherman
Discipleship	Helen Burtchell
Congregational Care	Jean Houston
Age Level & Family Ministries	TBA
Outreach Ministries	Helen Burtchell
Missions	Richard Sherman
Public Relations	Sherm Merchant
Worship	TBA
Finance	Mike Herman
Pastor-Parish Relations	Sherm Merchant
Lay Leader	Tim Townsend
Lay Member to Annual Conference	Ed Angel
Secretary of Administrative Council	Elected in 2009
Superintendent of Sunday School	Jean Jarvis
President of UMW	Helen Burtchell
Board of Trustees	Elected in 2009
Treasurer	Kaye Herman
Financial Secretary	Marie Fields
Assistant Financial Secretary	Kay Newsom
Shepherding	Liz Solovieff
Membership Secretary	Marj Prescott
Newsletter Editor	Susan Merchant
Kitchen	Marie Fields
Memorials	Matt Johnston
Scholarship	Marvin Newsom III



Nov Birthdays	Day
Carol Townsend	2
Brandon Batts	2
Jimmy Watson	5
Louise Owen	14
Erma Martin	15
Barb Reinhardt	21
Ethel Draper	22
Morgan Lamberson	27

Dec Birthdays	Day
Lois Weaver	1
Betsy Medlin	2
Marvin Newsom III	3
Suannah Sherman	7
Ashley Smith	23
Debbie Keeter	23
Murlean Boswell	24



Nov Anniversary	Day
Marj & Al Prescott	1
Martha & Bob Hayes	8
Darla & Ed Angel	19

Dec Anniversary	Day
Dorothy & Sam Eisenson	15
Shirley & Skip Anschutz	28

**If you are new to our church, or for whatever reason we missed acknowledging your birthday or anniversary, please give me your name and DOB (month and day only), and your anniversary date if you are married. (Sue) Email: susanmerchant@gmail.com 586-7866.**

## Age Level & Family Ministries Committee

Sherm Merchant

Our first Annual "The Great Pumpkin Caper" (formerly the Fall Festival) was a real success and much of that success goes to the willing volunteers that kept the 13 kids that attended very busy with all the fun games. The most popular was the water balloon toss. It was a joy to see them leave wearing a big smile and carrying their own pumpkin, sand art in a bottle, and one of the 40 gift bags put together by Darla Angel and Kaye Herman. They all sported either a blue, yellow, or red ribbon.



- Decorating Pumpkins
- Mummy Wrap
- Face Painting
- Sand Art
- Water Balloons
- Silly Costume Contest
- Bean Bag Toss



**Fun !**



- Surprise Gift Bag to take Home Filled with All Kinds of Goodies
- Each Child Took Home Their Pumpkin!!





## More Pics from the Great Pumpkin Caper, the Stop Hunger Now Event and the Blood Drive



### Address Changes:

The Reverend Samuel D. "Mack" McMillan, III  
3621 Sheffield Drive  
Rocky Mount, NC 27803

Also his email is: [smcmillan@ncumc.org](mailto:smcmillan@ncumc.org)

Rachael Ricks  
c/o Carolina House  
Claire Bridge Cottage Room 405  
2715 Dickenson Ave  
Greenville, NC 27834

Jean Jarvis email: [ejjarvis@embarqmail.com](mailto:ejjarvis@embarqmail.com)

Robert Waddell  
2771 Queensberry Dr  
Huntingtown, MD 20639-2321

### Newsletter Changes

Sherry Watson, Editor

This is my final production of the "Big News" newsletter. I have enjoyed serving as your Editor the last four years.

I am happy to tell you that Sue Merchant has accepted the Editor position, beginning with the next issue. Sue has been helping with the newsletter for several years. Sue's help made it possible for me to meet the deadline and get the newsletter to you on time. She does an excellent job with the newsletter and the LUMC website. Thank you Sue!!!

Now it's time for someone to step up and lend Sue a hand. If you would like to help with the Calendar & Schedule Page or help another way, please talk to Sue.

Blessings,

Sherry Watson

## Outreach

I would like to thank all of the Outreach Committee for the work they have done this year. This Committee fills needs in the community that sometimes are over looked. We were responsible for the blood bank, and now in January we will be doing the Life Screening. We did that a few years and it was very successful.

With me being out of commission with my shoulder surgery, the committee was, and always has been great at filling in when and where needed. I want to thank them for that. If not for the kind of people we have in this church we would not be able to do the things we do for others, and do it in the name of Jesus.

Christmas and Thanksgiving will soon be upon us. With that said we will be feeding more, giving more, and holding more people in our arms because they are alone and just plain empty inside. Holidays do that to people. We as representatives of Jesus can help fill that emptiness with His love.

Last Christmas we gave away food, gifts for children, trees with all the decorations, and all the love a heart could hold. I would like to see us do that again this year. That is God's work order for us. We can not let Him down.

In His service,

Helen Burtchell

Outreach Chairperson

## Lay Leader Report 2007 - 2008

Tim Townsend, Lay Leader

While only one carries the title, our church is full of Lay Leaders. We are fortunate in the fact that we have an abundance of men and women who not only come up with creative ideas but work hard to implement them. There is within our congregation a dedication to be diligent in both proclaiming the Word of God to our community and the world as well as living out the Spirit of Christ in ministering to others.

This was the first full year here for our pastor, Rev. Rob Licht. Any new leadership brings change. Some members have been uncomfortable with change and others have welcomed it. As Lay Leader I have worked to help bring understanding and patience to the transition. I have also been active as part of the Admin Council, Finance Committee, Trustees, Fellowship Hall chairman, Pastor/Parish Relations Committee, choir and Committee on Lay Leadership.

We have seen other changes as well. Sue Beazley, our Choir Director for over fifteen years resigned. We will miss her dedicated talent in music. We have enjoyed the use of our new parking lot and appreciate the trustees getting a new church sign. And how about those new chairs in the Chapel? Sermons are now available on the website, CD's, and in print on Sunday morning. A pictorial membership directory was published. Another first was the Thanksgiving dinner provided

free to the community.

Stop Hunger Now was a huge success, drawing in not just our members but scores of people from other churches and the community to prepare hundreds of meals for others.

Likewise, volunteers went regularly to the M.E.R.C.I. Center to prepare items for response to disaster situations. Operations Christmas Child (Samaritan's Purse) filled shoe boxes with items for ones in need. Through ZOE, blankets were sent to orphans in Zimbabwe.

And the list goes on. Breakfast was prepared for school teachers at McIver school. Nursing home residents were blessed with birthday parties. Books were collected for the high school. Food was delivered monthly to homes. Homes were built in El Salvador by our volunteers. The John 3:16 Center benefited by our support. Movie nights, VBS, the Santa breakfast, and the Fall Festival welcomed children. The Christmas Contata drew attendance from throughout the area. The Rocky Mount District clergy enjoyed a delicious dinner prepared by our ladies. New members have been welcomed into our church family.

We have become better servants of God through worship and Bible study on Sunday morning. The UMW led Bible studies on peace and music as well as providing a reading program and a community pancake breakfast. The Nurturing Ministries Council brought guidance in shepherding, discipleship and congregation care.

## A Pertinent Question

A pastor was trying to be creative in telling a group of children about the birth of Christ. He used little plastic dolls to represent the key characters. One symbolized Mary, another Joseph, another the innkeeper and still others the shepherds and the wise men. Apparently the pastor was stretching the story out far too long for one little boy. He raised his hand and when the pastor acknowledged him, he asked, "Why is the most important one left until last?"

He had a good point. Strange isn't it, that we focus so much on the peripherals of Christmas that we have a tendency to leave the most important one until last? There is the decorating, the shopping, the parties, the concerts, the hustle and bustle of cleaning, cooking, dressing for the next occasion and so on.

When do we get around to centering on the Guest of honor whose birthday we are celebrating? Aren't we in danger of getting so involved with trivia that we may overlook the great truth of the Incarnation?

Let's make this Christmas the most meaningful one ever. It can happen if we put the most important One first, not last.

## UMW

Helen Burtchell, Vice-Pres.

We are back to meeting the third Saturday of each month, unless it falls close to Thanksgiving or Christmas and then, move it to another week and notify everyone of the change.

Elaine Parks' term, as President, is coming to an end and we

would like to thank her for her service and dedication to our UMW unit the last two years. Being a president of a unit is not easy and requires a lot of paper work, so when you see Elaine say thank you for a job well done.

We now have two District Officers in our unit. Pat Ziesmann is District Program Resources Coordinator, which covers the reading program for the whole District. Beginning January first, I will be the District Vice President. 2009 Officers for our unit will remain as they were this year with these exceptions: Sue Merchant will be our Communications Coordinator, Pat Ziesmann will be Vice President, and I will be President.

We are trying to plan a year that will be different, exciting and hopefully encouraging to all women of the church. We are looking for ideas that are different and unique that we can try in our group. If you have any ideas and would like to share them, let Pat or myself know and we will talk about them at our first meeting in January.

The UMW Santa Breakfast is scheduled for the first Sat. in Dec. It is a marvelous outreach to the community. Through the Santa Breakfast we have been able to serve many children that would never have had a Christmas because no one knew their needs until the parents came to Santa Breakfast.

Each year this event gets bigger and bigger, and we hope this year is no exception. If you helped out with this event last year we will be calling on you again and hopefully and

prayerfully you will say yes.

We are also thinking ahead for a UMW Sunday which will be decided after the first of the year.

## News from the Financial Secretary

Marie Fields

How quickly the year has flown by—we are now in our final quarter and it's time to be thinking of closing out our financial year and starting a new one! You will soon be getting correspondence about the 2009 budget and with that you will receive a pledge card. Prayerfully consider your final 2008 contributions—are you up to date on those? How will you make changes in 2009? I would hope that you would "add a little" to your 2009 pledge—the church's expenses are certainly not going down. The finance committee has "tightened its belt" so as not to raise the budget any more than is necessary and your Ad-Min Council has been very careful in following that recommendation. As you pray about your pledge for 2009, please pray also for your church and its families in these uncertain times. Pray for our country that the financial uncertainty will calm down and we can have some sense of normalcy as we begin the new year. Politicians are speaking of change—how should our church change in 2009? How should WE all change to make God's work more effective? So as we are praying about our pledges of our funds, let's also pray about how God wants us all to use our time and talents for Him—will that require a major change? Love to you all...*Marie*



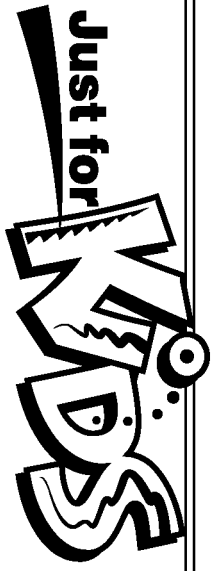
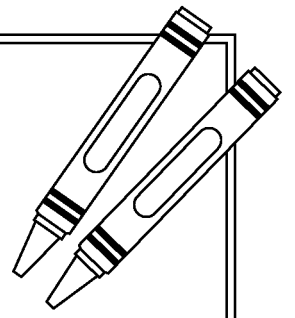
# Littleton United Methodist Church

P.O. Box 26  
Littleton, NC 27850

## Reminder About the Election

Please be reminded that Tuesday, November 4 is our national election day. It is our responsibility as citizens of the republic to cast our ballot and to participate in the election process. Please keep all the candidates in your prayers as you discern with God which candidates should be entrusted with the governance of the nation. The United

Methodist Church takes no position on any political contests.



## The Christmas Story

Each line below contains the letters to form a word that is part of the Christmas story. But each group of letters has 1 that is extra! Unscramble the words and write the extra letter on the lines at the bottom. What did we all receive at Christmas?

1	TGLBEHHEME	_____
2	NEAGLO	_____
3	NRMEDAG	_____
4	ODEKSNY	_____
5	AMGYR	_____
6	OHESJIP	_____
7	EFJSUS	_____
8	ITEENMSW	_____
9	SPHHDSREEO	_____
10	EMCFAL	_____
11	TLSRA	_____
12	GSSNUEO	_____
13	HEVSPE	_____
14	ENIN	_____
1	_____	_____
2	_____	_____
3	_____	_____
4	_____	_____
5	_____	_____
6	_____	_____
7	_____	_____
8	_____	_____

Gods gift of love

Bethlehem (C), Angel (O), Manger (D), Donkey (S), Mary (G), Joseph (I), Jesus (F),  
Wise men (T), Shepherds (O), Camel (F), Star (L), Census (O), Sheep (V), Inn (E)