

December 2013

New

Sermon

Series



Be The Gift

The Christmas season is upon us. Do you ever struggle buying Christmas gifts for people who seem to have everything? Sometimes it seems like we have to try

to create new gadgets, decorations, and toys, just so we can come up with something new to give to people who seem to already have it all.

I think most of us will agree that the idea of gift giving at Christmas time sometimes gets way out of control. Families sometimes empty their bank accounts, or go into great debt, in order to provide their children or loved ones with the kind of Christmas that they think they need to have. Don't get me wrong, I enjoy the gift giving aspect of Christmas as much as next guy, but sometimes I have to ask myself, is this the way that the Christ born on Christmas who we celebrate, would really choose to celebrate his birthday. I mean how many birthday parties have you gone to where everyone in the room gets presents, except for the one having the birthday?

Since it's Jesus' birthday and not yours or mine, that leads me to a thought provoking question. What would it look like for us to give Jesus the presents this year, instead of giving them to each other? I think that there are probably several ways to answer that question, but one way is to say that Jesus would want us to give the same gift to him that he gave us. What was that gift? It was the gift of himself! Jesus doesn't want our stuff, no matter how beautifully we wrap it. He wants you and he wants me to BE the gift. And he translates that, by having us be the gift to one another, because we show him how much we love him by how we share his love with each other.

So this Christmas, I'm encouraging us to do more than just try to come up with the next greatest Christmas present, but instead to pray about how we can be the gift to others. How can you be the gift to your marriage? How can you be the gift to your family? How can you be the gift to your community? Friends, God became a human being, so that he could "Be the Gift" for you and for me. Let's decide how we can sacrifice ourselves for the sake of others. That will be the closest gift to the original gift of Jesus that we can give.

"Be the Gift" is the title of our December message series. The theme verse for this series will be Proverbs 11:24-25, which says, "One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed." Friends, let this Christmas all be about how you can refresh others with the gift of yourself! In turn you will find yourself refreshed. The Christian faith is not as much about where we go when we die, as it is about how we live while we're alive. Don't show the ones you love how much you love them by how much you spend on their gifts this year, instead show them you love them by giving yourself as the gift. This year focus on giving your presence, not your presents!

In Christ's Love, Marc



Family Service at 4:00 & 6:00 PM

A community dinner will be served at 5:00 PM.
Everyone is welcome

A SUPER CHRISTMAS

We are SUPER excited about this year's children's program. In this play, a handful of beloved superheroes hear of the arrival of a new powerful player... God's Son! The threat of them losing their jobs might be too much to bear! Will the superheroes have any luck finding this new hero? Will Jesus actually take their jobs? How in the world will we work the nativity scene into a play like this? You'll have to show up to find out!

Be sure you don't miss out on all the action, Sunday, December 15th at 1:30pm. Also, the preschool will be performing songs in between acts. Cookies and punch will be provided after the program down in the multi-purpose room for the families and guests of our child stars.



110 shoeboxes were prepared and sent from Old Fort Church. What a blessing! Remember to pray for the child who will receive your shoebox. This is another ministry that will reach the world!



The UMW will meet for their Christmas luncheon at DaVinci's in Fremont on December 4, 2013 at 11:30 AM. Our donations of products for the Morrison House may include: laundry detergent, bathroom tissue, paper towels, table napkins, and personal health products, and cleaning supplies. In case of inclement weather, members will be called.



Prayer Shawl Ministry

The Prayer Shawl Ministry at Old Fort Church meets on the fourth Thursday of the month at 6:30 PM at the home of Betty

Casselman. **Their next meeting is**

Jan. 23, 2014.

Join a Weekly Prayer Group

Thursday morning at 6:45 AM at the church. Bring your Bible.

Sunday Morning Prayer

Sundays at 7:45 AM at the church. Join with Pastor Marc in praying for the presence and work of God throughout our church facility.



5TH SUNDAY OFFERING

December 29, 2013

Please consider giving \$5 on the 5th Sunday of the month to support the United Methodist Family Services.

CARE TEAM: Key members of the team, or contact people, have been established. If you know of a need, either the church office or the CARE team may be contacted.

HOSPITAL/EMERGENCY VISITATION

SHUT INS/SERVE COMMUNION

Nola Murray 419-992-4585

MEALS

Erica Snyder 567-220-6021

PRAYER CHAIN/EMAILS/PHONE

Lois Murray 419-334-2427

Ronda Krotzer 419-986-5279

FUNERAL DINNERS

Janet Keim 419-992-4433



UMCOR / Sager-Brown Mission

When: Sun Feb 9 to Fri Feb 14, plus travel

Itinerary (driving):

Sat, Feb 8, 2014 Depart Ohio in morning, stopping overnight at a hotel in Meridian, MS (~ 800 mi)

Sun Feb 9, 2014 breakfast at the hotel, drive a couple hours to Picayune, MS (~ 150 mi) for church; lunch in Picayune, then driving to the UMCOR / Sager-Brown facility in Baldwin, LA (~150 mi); (check-in is 3PM – 5PM, with a welcome meeting at 6 PM)

Fri Feb 14, 2014 Depart Sager-Brown after lunch (some will leave earlier) Friday; check out time is noon; stopping overnight at a hotel

Sat Feb 15, 2014 arriving at “home” in the afternoon / evening

Itinerary (flying): travel option – individually arranged

- The deposit and associated forms can be mailed to Bret Fry, 2091 Eagleville Rd, Fostoria, OH 44830-9781 or hand delivered
- The balance of payment is due Jan 19, 2013.
- Accident insurance is available and is recommended. (The forms will be provided).
- Towels and linens are included with lodging.
- Meal plan includes B / L / D on Mon, Tues, Thur; and B / L on Wed & Fri; As part of the meal plan, we will be assigned clean-up duty for some meals; those who volunteer will lead grace before the meal, eat first, wash dishes, and clean the dining hall.
- Each morning before breakfast, our group will gather for 15 minutes of devotions – **please consider leading devotions one of the days.**
- Wednesday afternoon is reserved for sightseeing, or your option of working (we like to encourage the “rookies” to take the afternoon off) – we will plan to eat out for dinner as a group on Wednesday night, typically at Randol’s Cajun restaurant in Lafayette
- Thursday evening there is a church service on campus, conducted by the volunteers – **please consider how you can be involved** with a reading, being in the choir, leading hymns, playing piano, or giving a message.



We will be meeting every Monday through December 16, 2013, in addition to the second Saturday of each month.

Our Christmas Party is scheduled for December 10, 2013. Please meet at the church at 5:45 PM. Remember to bring your stocking!

Meetings will resume in January 2014.

Come and join us! We sew, we fellowship, and of course, we eat!!

BLESSINGS TO ALL!!



THERE ARE HOMELESS PEOPLE IN TIFFIN

There is a new transitional homeless shelter in Tiffin named *The Morrison House*. It will provide a safe haven for homeless singles and families for a period of up to 120 days. Old Fort Church has adopted *The Morrison House* with financial assistance, as part of our missional giving. There are different ways you may become involved:

Financial, In-Kind Donations, and Volunteer assistance.

Anyone who is interested in participating in this worthwhile opportunity can contact Pat DeMonte at Tiffin-Seneca Co. United Way (419-448-0355), or Jim Boroff at 419-447-0134.



Opportunities to serve others — Liberty Center

Old Fort Church helps to serve meals at Liberty Center in Fremont on the 4th Sunday of each month. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Diane Sheets at 419-680-0042.

PRAYER CONCERNS:

Military: Darrell Hurlburt, Christopher

Tezlaf, Sgt. Chad Acton, Bill Young,

Nicholas Huffman, Chad Hollinger, Cliff Cleveland, John Hill, Paige (Humbert) Hill,
Bradley Wilton, PFC Coral Randolph

Our Prayers:

Jon & Vickie Finley, Patti Saam, Savannah Bisson, Terry Overmyer, Jen Randolph, Ralph & Edna Watson,
Nancy Recker Hill, Carl & Leona Murray, Chris & Doreen Gaietto and daughters Rita, Jenny & Jessica,
Family of Debbie Siebert, Dan & Candice Cranmore, Mike Sweet, Family of David Fisher



We can, and do, make a difference in the lives of those around us who just need a little help. If you know of anyone who needs help, contact

Linda Woodruff or Emily Kizer.

CHURCH FINANCIALS:

Building Campaign \$ 591,671.77

General Fund \$ 236,328.31

**Join the Lunch Bunch on the
third Wednesday
of the month at noon at Nature
Trails. Their next gathering is
December 18th.**

YOUTH ACTIVITIES



Our regular youth

meetings will be on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 PM
with devotions and activities to
follow. It is going to make for an awesome time. Any
questions feel free to contact

Willie Fultz at 419-992-4336, or

kids@oldfortchurch.com

Nursery



Here at Old Fort Church, we are looking for enthusiastic volunteers to assist with a reoccurring, yet wonderful, issue on Sunday mornings. We are bringing in younger and younger growing families, which is a beautiful dilemma. Our problem is we need a set team in place to receive babies and toddlers on a regular basis. When we don't have individuals in place, we're essentially telling folks that we don't care enough to have preparations for their children. That's the last thing we want people to think. There will be a sign up calendar in the overflow room for those interested in helping. For any questions or willingness to help, contact

Diane Dietz at 419-992-1029.



The Fort is our exciting new venture for children ages 3 years old to those in 6th grade. Those involved in the OFC Kids ministry want to create a thrilling environment where children are ecstatic about coming to church and are anxious to tell their friends. The Fort is a separate children's service that will take place during the 10:00 service. The set-up will look much like a tree fort, leaving room for imagination to roll. The children will be exposed to their own music, games, and a message catered to young minds. For any questions or willingness to help, contact Willie Fultz at 419-992-4336 or email at willie@oldfortchurch.com

Awana meets on Wednesday evenings.

Dinner is served at 6:00 PM with activities to follow at 6:30 PM.

The clubs are:

Puggles: 2 & 3 yr old boys and girls

Cubbies: 4 & 5 yr old boys and girls
(toilet trained)

Sparks: K-2nd grade boys and girls

Truth & Training (T&T): 3rd-5th grade boys and girls.

Hope to see everyone there!

For more information

or to inquire on ways to help,

contact Willie Fultz at 419-992-4336 or

kids@oldfortchurch.com



**Awana will meet through
December 18th. Then
resume on January 8,
2014.**

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

- 2 - Mike & Lindsay Sooy
- 2 - Rich & Denyce Weaver
- 9 - Ken & Jamie Reese
- 13 - Lonnie & Sharon Drown
- 17 - Steve & Karen Berlekamp
- 27 - Norm & Nola Murray
- 31 - Dave & Linda Woodruff

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- 3 - Vicki Hull
- 4 - Landon Carpenter
- 5 - Winnie Fultz
- 6 - Kerry Wilkinson
- 7 - Doug Stacy
- 8 - Beth Kummerer
- 8 - Douglas Terry
- 9 - Daniel Davenport
- 9 - Mike Sooy
- 10 - Jon Finley
- 11 - Jenna Kizer
- 11 - Terry Overmyer
- 14 - Bill Sheets
- 15 - Leona Murray
- 17 - Rita Terry
- 18 - Kortney Krotzer
- 19 - Jan Ferguson
- 21 - Phyllis Downing
- 21 - Anne Withrow
- 27 - Marah Overmyer
- 30 - Mikenzie Blunt
- 31 - Joe Hiestand
- 31 - Megan Shock



**Prayer Gathering
December 8, 2013
at 6:00 PM**



Next Pancake Breakfast
December 8, 2013
Served on the second
Sunday of the month,
with
serving times from
8:00—10:00 AM.

Quinter Christmas Open House!

We invite the whole Old Fort Church family join us at the parsonage for a Christmas gathering on Sunday, December 22, anytime between 3 PM and 6 PM. We will have some Christmas goodies to share, and look forward to sharing in sweet fellowship. The parsonage is located at 730 E. County Rd. 51. Please join us!

We wish everyone the merriest of Christmas', and pray that Jesus' birth in you will be refreshed in this season!

In Christ's Love,
Marc, Caroline,
Rebekah, Adeline,
Eli, and Jenna



A Christmas Wish!



The Old Fort Church Staff and our families want to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas! It is both a privilege and a blessing to serve our Lord with you in this wonderful place where God has joined us together. May Jesus capture your hearts in this season of joy and celebration!

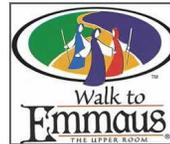
With much Love!

Janet, Pat, Keri, Teri, Willie, Mike, and Marc

Join the Lunch Bunch on the third
Wednesday of the month at noon at Nature Trails. Their next gathering is
December 18th.

THE WALK TO EMMAUS.....

MARY MAGDALENE



I've often wondered about Mary Magdalene; who she was and how she fit into the life of Jesus. It's interesting that she was the first to witness the power of Christ's Resurrection. Mary Magdalene, who though once possessed seven demons, was among the women who ministered to Jesus. (Luke 8:2-3). She was the last to leave the tomb on the day He died, and she returned there early the next morning (Matthew 27:61—28:1). Unlike Peter and John, who merely looked into the tomb and departed, she "lingered" and became the first to see the Risen Christ. Peter and John only saw the grave clothes.

With Advent upon us, we need to think about who Jesus is for us. A baby with a sweet story? Or, the Suffering Servant who gave up His life to set us free from sin and death? Or, is He the Lord of all creation who is coming back to bring His faithful people to heaven?

Can we, like Mary Magdalene "linger" in the scriptures until we see Jesus? May God Almighty open our eyes this season, so that we can see Jesus in a new way and be transformed by what we see. DeColoras and Merry Christmas!

Nola Murray

Next Women's Walk is Feb. 6-9, 2014, and the next Men's Walk is Mar. 13-16, 2014.

Contact Dave Miller or Nola Murray if interested.

OLD FORT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

LEAD TEAM MINUTES

NOVEMBER 12, 2013

7:00 PM

Present were: Pastor Marc, Tanya Wheatley, Lisa Randall, Bret Fry, Kevin Joseph, Sue Rohlf, Lavin Schwan, and Lois Murray.

Pastor Marc opened the meeting with scripture from I Chronicles 1:8-36. The LEAD Team discussed the various implications this passage brings to our gratitude to God. This was followed by prayer.

The Secretary's report was approved as printed . The Treasurer's Report shows a balance of \$10, 364.07 with all the bills paid to date.

It was accepted.

Lisa Randall asked about fund raising for the Pre-School. Neither Pastor Marc nor the Lead Team was opposed to the Pre-School doing the same kinds of fundraising as they have been doing. The fund raising projects are used to purchase needed supplies.

Pastor Marc's report:

Willie Fultz accepted the full-time position as leader of children and youth programs. The programs are growing and doing well at this time.

The Great Reveal for the new building program will be held on November 17 at approximately 11:30 after the second service.

Pastor Marc attended the Catalyst Conference at Willow Creek along with Willie Fultz and Mike Sooy on November 6.

He also attended the Boundary Training by the West Ohio Conference.

He introduced a document with Standards for Staff Conduct. It was backed by the Lead team with a motion made by Lisa Randall and seconded by Sue Rohlf. Motion carried.

The December sermon series will be titled "Be the Gift." It will look at how we can be the gift this Christmas, by being a gift to our marriages, family, and community.

The Staff/Lead Team Christmas party will be at the parsonage on December 13 at 6 PM. The team will bring appetizers and the staff will furnish desserts.

The pastor and family will host an open house for the entire congregation on December 22 from 3-6 PM.

Team members and officers were discussed for next year. Luke Riesen will maintain his membership and serve as chairperson. In the event of his absence, Bret Fry will serve as the facilitator. Lisa Randall volunteered for the position of secretary, but not at the present time. Lois Murray will continue the position until she is ready. New names are being sought to serve as Lead Team members in the future.

Trustee Sue Rohlf reported that maintenance work is being done at both the new and old parsonages. Also a new self propelled trimming mower is needed for the parsonage next summer. Lavin Schwan reported that the prayer sessions, which she leads during the Contemporary Worship, are progressing well. More participants are invited to be a part of that ministry. She also hopes to start a similar group for the first service.

Tanya Wheatley reported that the church has never knowingly been incorporated. As a non-profit organization, this must be done in order to take out loans. The process for this must start soon.

Some discussion was given to the Child Protection Act—and in these times we must be more aware of how to

protect our children in the church building.

A letter was presented from the UMCH Family Services (formerly the Children’s Home) asking for help with Christmas gifts for their foster children. Bret Fry made a motion, seconded by Lavin Schwan to send the UMCH Family Services \$500.00 toward this project. The money will be taken from the Missions fund.

Motion carried.

Kevin Joseph made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Tanya Wheatley. Prayer was offered by Lavin Schwan.

Respectfully submitted,
Lois Murray, Secretary .



The “**Warm Up America**” project continues to be very successful. The crocheted or knitted patches make very colorful blankets. In June, three blankets were completed, with one for Pastor John Alice and family, one for The Morrison House in Tiffin, and one to the Liberty Center in Fremont.

On Sunday, November 10th, Pastor Marc blessed seven more blankets in a short prayer. These will be taken to our mission in Toledo at The Friendly Center and the Cherry Street

Mission. Ten blankets in a year is quite an accomplishment. Whether you made one patch, or many, they all add up to the whole.

The project continues so keep your crochet hooks and knitting needles out and complete a 7 x 9 patch or many!

Most of the prayer shawls have been lovingly given where needed. So, whether it is “Warm Up America” patches, or a Prayer Shawl, we welcome your contributions.

Many thanks for all you have done.



CHRISTMAS BASKETS

The Old Fort Area Food Pantry is packing Christmas boxes for families in need. If you know of any family that could use assistance, please contact

Betty Casselman (419-992-4573), or

Crede Hiestand (419-992-4520) by

December 18th.

HISTORICALLY SPEAKING.....

CHRISTMAS

There is very little recorded about the early Christmases in the Old Fort United Brethren Church—only in people's memories. Christmas was not celebrated then as it is now. Rarely were there any decorations in the early days. Christmas was observed by reading the scriptures of the great event of Jesus' birth with a sermon and discussion.

Most people did not decorate their homes—if they had a tree there were no lights. Some put on candles which were a beautiful but a dangerous thing. Most people would light the candles only for a few minutes on Christmas eve or Christmas day. Trees were not usually set up in the church itself until the 1940's.

Treats were always handed out to the children in Sunday School, put into a small brown paper bag with an orange, hard tack candy pieces and a chocolate drop (nothing wrapped) and occasionally a candy cane. These were originally all purchased from Nease's store (now known as the Country Market).

Church and Sunday School offerings were collected for the Otterbein Home (then both a nursing home and an orphanage) which is still located near Lebanon, Ohio. Little red cardboard stockings were handed out to the children, which were designed with slots where dimes could be inserted up to the amount of \$1.00. Many times \$30.00 was considered to be a very large offering for this cause.

Around the 1930's, a choir was organized to enhance the Sunday Services. It's very capable leader, Effa Zimmerman, had served as the school music teacher for several years. At Christmas time, under her direction, the choir many times performed Handel's Messiah—and it was well done by an amateur group.

Over the years there began to be a more organized Sunday School and the children would put on a Christmas program—usually a portrayal of the manger scene, recitations and carol singing. They became more elaborate when they were held in the evening, preceded by a potluck supper and the program would be a playlet or pageant to portray a Christmas story. The Women's Missionary Society also hosted a family night with a potluck supper and a program following.

The youth group would organize a caroling event on a Sunday night, and go around the town singing the old favorites. Hot chocolate and cookies were a treat afterwards.

The Midnight Christmas Eve Service with candle light was started in the 1950's by Rev. Ernest Daubert and has remained a highlight of the Christmas season. It was solemnly joyous, very impressive and a true start for the meaning of Christmas day.

SECRET SISTER

CHRISTMAS PARTY!

On Friday evening, December 6th, at 6:00 PM, your 2013 Secret Sister will be revealed. Please bring your Secret Sister Christmas gift, a gift (around \$10) for a game with exchange and a snack to share. Guests are welcome.

New forms for 2014 will be available on the gift table in the overflow room.



SENECA CO JAIL CHAPLAINCY

The Seneca Co. Jail Chaplaincy Committee is a group of volunteers that provides a weekly worship service, a Saturday morning study time, and individual visits as requested. Each year we do a Christmas Project which consists of a cookie plate along with soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, pencil, writing tablet, envelopes, puzzle book, and the Gospel in a Christmas tract. Our need is for the hygiene items and Christmas cookies from the Old Fort Church family. Other churches are providing some of the other items. Usually over 100 packages are distributed.



COLLECTION DATES: November 10—December 15

COLLECTION LOCATION: Box in overflow room

ITEMS NEEDED: All items need to be individually wrapped!

BAR SOAP ONLY: For men and women

DEODORANT: For men & women— Stick type only

TOOTHPASTE: Medium or large size tubes

TOOTHBRUSHES

HOMEMADE CHRISTMAS COOKIES

Questions....please contact Ed Smith at 419-618-0976



LADIES "CHRISTMAS " BREAKAWAY BREAKFAST

Generations Ministry invites you to come and celebrate the season with us on

Saturday, December 7th at 10:00 AM.

It is held at Old Fort Church.

There will be special music by:

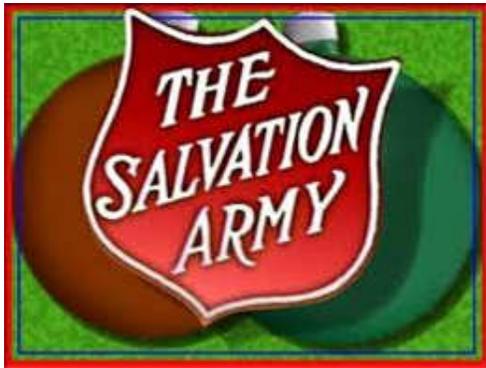
Heather Goble & Steve Drown



If you wish to host a table, please contact Carol Pence (419-986-5848), or

Becky Wilkinson (419-992-1298

RSVP by 12/2/13 by signing up in the pew pads or calling the church office at 419-992-4336.



SALVATION ARMY FOOD & TOY DRIVE

Through December 11 - Collection dates for grocery bags for food and toys.

December 11 at Noon - Deliver toys and food to Salvation Army. We will need several trucks, vans, and volunteers to help load the donated items.

December 16 from 5:00—8:00 PM - The Salvation Army will need volunteers to help sort and pack food boxes.

December 17 from 5:00—8:00 PM - The Salvation Army will need volunteers to sort and pack the toys.

December 19 from 5:00—8:00 PM - Distribute food boxes

December 20 from 5:00—8:00 PM - Parents will be allowed to come in and pick up the toys.

If you have any questions, or wish to help with the transporting of food & toys, or to volunteer at The Salvation Army in Tiffin, contact the church office.

Pastor	Marc Quinter	992-4335
Church Office	Janet Hickey	992-4336
Family Life Director	Willie Fultz	992-4336
Worship Arts Leader	Mike Sooy	992-4336
Finance	Tanya Wheatley	332-4126
Lay Leader		
Lead Team	Luke Riesen	447-8579
CARE Team		
Hospital/Emergency		
Prayer Chain	Lois Murray	334-2427
Preschool	Terri Davenport	639-3820
UMW	Lois Murray	334-2427
Generations Ministry	Carol Pence	986-5848
	Becky Wilkinson	992-1298
Staff Parish	David Stover	443-8836

The Messenger

is published monthly by Old Fort UMC.

Informational articles may be submitted by

e-mail to newsletter@oldfortchurch.com

or placed in the newsletter mailbox

by the **20th of the month.**

Sunday Mornings

Blended Experience

8:30 AM

Contemporary Experience

10:00 AM

Children's Classes

8:30 AM, 10:00 AM