



Connexion

Volume 6 Issue 19

November 2, 2011

Both Sides of Halloween

We just finished a night of great fun and revelry at our house last night, hallowed eve. I sit here writing this morning after the merriment with our 2200 little monsters, ghosts, skeletons, witches, and devils. This was our first Halloween in the neighborhood called Munger District. We were told to expect 1000's of kids and this time they were right. I think we are ready.

I also reminded myself on this day after that it is the day we remember our saints, All Souls Day. Ancient pagan traditions thought that on this day the natural and supernatural worlds were nearest in actual proximity. Thus, by the 12th century, Christians thought this was the time to thank God for those who had passed to the other side because of this assumed metaphysical closeness.

I am drawing a little closer today and this week to those who have gone before me to dwell in places only eyes of faith can see. As I call the names of saints in my life, I am always struck between the difference of saints and celebrities. Celebrities busy themselves branding their name on our culture; saints busy themselves branding the marks of God on this world. A celebrity cannot be anonymous, but few of you would know my saints, nor would I know yours. I may have to keep my distance from a celebrity, but I share a common ground with all my saints.

We are still laughing with joy on the morning after at all the cute kids and awkward adolescents dressed as spirits and superstars they will never intimately know. I also feel a deep smile on this day thinking of some names of people whose living and dying drew me closer to them and God. Join me in thanking God for ordinary folk who help us see we can live in an extraordinary way if we can trust the source of life comes from beyond us.



BE SURE TO SIGN UP FOR OUR E-NEWSLETTER!

ATTENDANCE

OCTOBER 23

10:30 AM Worship	254
6:30 PM Worship	24
Total	78
Sunday School	175

OCTOBER 30

10:30 AM Worship	275
6:30 PM Worship (Pete's Church)	0
Total	275
Sunday School	190

The Whitley family is appreciative of all the support and love our church friends have shared with us as we face the loss of our son, Keith. We thank each one for the comforting words, prayers, visits and cards given during these difficult days. We are so grateful to those who prepared the meal for our family. We are so blessed by God to be a part of a church body so filled with compassion.



Thanks be to God,
The Whitley Family

CORRECTION



Starting in December the Connexion will be once a month. The Connexion will be mailed and emailed on the **THIRD WEDNESDAY** of each month! Which means the deadline will be the Monday before.

A SPECIAL REQUEST
IN AN ATTEMPT TO ACCOMMODATE THE NEEDS OF ALL OF OUR MEMBERS, WE ARE ASKING THOSE WHO ARE ABLE TO PLEASE PARK ACROSS THE STREET ON WEDNESDAY EVENINGS AND SUNDAY MORNINGS, LEAVING THE CLOSER PARKING AVAILABLE TO THOSE WITH SPECIAL PARKING NEEDS.

United Methodist Men Veteran's Day breakfast will be on Saturday, November 12th at 9:00 AM in Fellowship Hall. Breakfast is free for Veterans and a guest and is \$6 for other attendees. Please RSVP with Jessica by phone or email. Let us know if you'd like to share a story!

All-Church Thanksgiving Dinner & Evening Service

Sunday, November 20th

5:00 PM
Family Life Center

Last names beginning with A - L:

Bring meat dish & dessert.

Last names beginning with M - Z:

Bring meat dish & vegetable or salad.

SchoolWorks

Do you have time and talents to work with an elementary student? **SchoolWorks** is a new coalition of churches working with Irving ISD to make a difference in our neighborhoods. The mission is to provide **Half-Hour Heroes** – volunteers who spend 1/2 hour a week and meet with an at-risk child. At the elementary level, you are a **Reading Buddy**, and in middle school, a **Lunch Buddy**. This is very similar to our past tutoring activities at Paul Keyes Elementary School. All you have to do is commit 30–60 minutes each week, at a time that best fits your schedule. If you are interested, call Rod Alleman, 972-258-0346. Please consider giving some of your time to this very worthwhile and rewarding outreach activity.

FUMC REFUGE YOUTH FUNDRAISER!

WE HAVE A TEAM OF YOUTH THAT ARE READY TO RAKE LEAVES, PICK WEEDS, PICK UP TRASH, WASH WINDOW, MOW YARDS, ETC...
SATURDAY, NOV. 12 & SATURDAY, NOV. 19
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
CALL OR EMAIL KER!
PROCEEDS GO TOWARD YOUTH CAMPS!

ALL YOU CAN Eat PANCAKE BREAKFAST!

SUNDAY, November 6th!

GRAB A PLATE OF HOT, FRESH FLAPJACKS AND SUPPORT YOUR YOUTH!

FAMILY LIFE CENTER 8:15-10:00
\$5.00 ADULTS & \$3.00 FOR KIDS

Proceeds go toward Choir Tour 2012

Staffing Changes in the Office

Cindy Alleman will be stepping in to fill the need of a Program Facilitator for our church. She will be helping support Adult Education and Family Life ministries. She will also be assisting in making the church's internal communication processes more effective. You can reach Cindy at her new office two days a week here at church. Please join the SPRC and the staff in welcoming her on board and speak a word of gratitude next time you see her.

DON'T GIVE UP!!!

There is a sense of urgency today as I pen the words above. I want to take you immediately into the story of the prophecy of Azariah son of Oded the prophet in 2 Chronicles 15. Verse one sets up the account, "The Spirit of the Lord came upon Azariah..." The king at the time in Israel was Asa. He was in his fifteenth year as king when the prophecy came to him. They had turned away from God and supplanted the Almighty with many other gods, whom they served and set up altars. They allowed these gods to become greater than God therefore bringing ruin upon the people and the land.

Here's what happened... "He went out to meet Asa and said to him, "Listen to me, Asa and all Judah and Benjamin. The LORD is with you when you are with him. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you forsake him, he will forsake you." I find this fascinating. How simple is this formula? When you are with [God], He is with you...hmmm. Continuing on, "For a long time Israel was without the true God, without a priest to teach and without the law. But in their distress they turned to the LORD, the God of Israel, and sought him, and he was found by them." Again, another simple plan...In distress, turn to God and seek him and he will be found. How awesome and yet so simple that we bolt right past it because we think, "It just couldn't be that easy?"

Moving along, "In those days it was not safe to travel about, for all the inhabitants of the lands were in great turmoil. One nation was being crushed by another and one city by another, because God was troubling them with every kind of distress." Do you wonder whether or not God is causing trouble for you 'with every kind of distress'? This verse says so much and it's not because God has a heavy hand, it's because he loves us so much that he would "distress" us in order to be in a closer relationship with us. Azariah continues, "But as for you, be strong and *do not give up*, for your work will be rewarded." My bold italics *IS* the punchline. Here is the response..."When Asa heard these words and the prophecy of Azariah son of Oded the prophet, he took courage. He removed the detestable idols from the whole land of Judah and Benjamin and from the towns he had captured in the hills of Ephraim. He repaired the altar of the LORD that was in front of the portico of the LORD's temple. Then he assembled all Judah and Benjamin and the people from Ephraim, Manasseh and Simeon who had settled among them, for large numbers had come over to him from Israel when they saw that the LORD his God was with him."

I could say so much about this passage. But why don't you just read it for yourself and let the "Spirit of the Lord" come upon you...today. Perhaps you will be driven to courage and start tearing down idols and altars that are detestable to the One True God just like Asa. But no matter what my dear friends *do not give up!* You are worth it. Other people are worth it. Friendships, children, marriages, jobs, finances, love, life, giving...they are all worth it...and so much more. Go ahead and see for yourself. Read it. And may the Spirit of the Lord fall heavily on you...right now, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

Blessings,
Sean

Children's Ministries...

In Children's Church we've been talking about the importance of stewardship. We've learned that everything we have is a gift from God, including our money, possessions, time, talents, bodies and the world. God wants us to take care of and share these gifts with others. As part of our stewardship theme, the children have been donating change for Irving Cares. This past Sunday, the children invited the congregation to help us help people in need by donating their change to Irving Cares. The children excitedly passed metal pie pans to collect their Noisy Offering.

All in all, with what the children donated throughout the month of October and what we raised through our Noisy Offering, we collected...drum roll, please... \$914.57! WOW!!! What a generous congregation! Thank you to everyone who reached out to help our neighbors in need by participating in our Noisy Offering. It was fun for our children and it taught them a valuable lesson in generosity and cheerful giving!

Kelly



ALL SAINTS DAY
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 6
10:30 AM WORSHIP



Connexion

(USPS #023757) published monthly Volume 6
Issue 19 at 211 W. Third St., Irving, Texas 75060.
Periodicals postage paid at Irving, Texas.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to
Connexion c/o First United Methodist Church
211 W. Third St., Irving, Texas 75060-2940

Russell Floyd

Senior Pastor

Sammy Hargrove

Associate Pastor

Susan Smith

Director of Music Ministry

Sean Cawthon

Youth Pastor

Kelly Drury

Children's Director

Debbie Robinson

Director of Parent's Day Out

Cindy Alleman

Program Facilitator

Barbara Canafax

Keri Moreno

Jessica Anderson

Administrative Staff

.... AMONG OUR PEOPLE AMONG OUR PEOPLE ...

HONORARIUMS: In honor of **Sammy Hargrove** to General Budget from David and Sylvia Mayhew.

MEMORIALS: In memory of **Jon Waldo** to General Budget from Rudy Gonzalez/R.D. Pool and Spa Plumbing. To Chapel Renewal From Pool and Electric Products of Texas; from Dick and Jeanell Bischofhausen. In memory of **Keith Whitley** to Chapel Renewal Fund from Dr. and Mrs. Francis Gilbert; from Jimmy and Christine Burkett; from Billie and JoAnn Connell; from Dick and Jeanell Bischofhausen. To Building Fund from Jack and Pat Carnell; from Frank and JoAnn Maykus; from Tuesday Night Dinner Group; from Cliff and Joyce Bradley; from Lillian Lyles; from George and JoCarol Adamson.