

First United Methodist

972-253-3531  
www.fumcirving.org



# Connexion

Volume 7 Issue 2

February 15, 2012

Some of us are simply trying to get done what needs to be done without enough hours in a day. Others of us are biding our time with activity that fills our day, but it holds little meaning other than just passing the time. In both cases, we spend our days skirting along the surface of life.

The church offers the season of Lent, so we might dig deeper below the surface of our human condition; diving into the depths of our own humanity. Lent is not about striving to be a better human. Lent is meant to raise questions regarding what it means to be a human. Being made perfect in love requires a willingness to mine deeper meaning from experiences throughout life. Therefore, Lent is a time to invite God to inspect the inner parts of our soul we hide. We can do this with the assurance “nothing can separate us from the love of God offered in Christ Jesus”.

“Identity Crisis” is this year’s Lenten theme. We will explore how our identity is set, shaped, and determined by our relationship with Christ. We are born, baptized, live, and will eventually die to be united with Christ in whom we trust. This series will delve into some of the crises of our lives that can break or make us. Crises can break us if we try to face these crucibles with our own power and might. These crises can also shape our identity if we are looking to the one who creates, redeems, and sustains us.

I am providing everyone a Lenten devotional guide this year that can be used as a preparation guide for each Sunday. I recommend you read the scripture text for that week early in the week; thinking on it for a few days; making notes, journaling, and discussing with another person if possible. Next, read my devotional thoughts during the middle of the week and also; make notes, journal, and discuss with another person if possible. I have provided you an exercise to help you engage the scripture each week. I suggest you do it during the weekend. Then, spend time with the question posed at the end on Sunday morning before you come to church to experience the story in worship and hear the message.

Feel free to use the guide in other creative ways that work better with your lifestyle and schedule. I pray you will use it as a guide as you walk through the journey of Lent; allowing your identity to be remolded or made new in whatever place of crisis you may be experiencing at this present time. I hope you will walk with another person as you read and reflect. May you draw closer to Christ in this season! Our Savior wants to work in our lives; shaping us through all experiences that comes our way.

“For we are what God has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.”

Walking with you,

Russell



Great Days of Service 2012 is looking for houses to work on. If you know of a church member, neighbor, or friend, who needs some help with house repairs, painting, yard clean-up, please let us know. We will contact them to determine if they qualify for assistance.

The work weekends are April 13-14 and 20-21, 2012, the two weekends following Easter.

For questions and more information, contact Rod Alleman, 972-258-0346.

**BE SURE TO SIGN UP FOR OUR E-NEWSLETTER!**

# ATTENDANCE

## JANUARY 22

10:30 AM Worship	264
6:30 PM Worship	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>289</b>
Sunday School	182

## JANUARY 29

10:30 AM Worship	265
TALENT SHOW	203
<b>Total</b>	<b>468</b>
NO Sunday School	172

## FEBRUARY 5

10:30 AM Worship	283
NO EVENING WORSHIP	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>283</b>
Sunday School	177

## FEBRUARY 12

10:30 AM Worship	294
6:30 PM Worship	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>319</b>
Sunday School	184

## Financial Update

January 31, 2012

Contributions & Other Receipts	\$55,225.00
Less: Expenses	-\$64,985.00
<b>Net Gain or (Net Loss)</b>	<b>-\$9,760.00</b>

### GIFT FROM BETTY KANNENBERG ESTATE

THE CHURCH RECEIVED A VERY GENEROUS GIFT FROM THE BETTY KANNENBERG ESTATE. BETTY WAS A LONG TIME MEMBER OF THIS CHURCH AND THE KEYSTONE SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS. SHE WAS FAITHFUL IN HER GIFTS, PRAYERS, PRESENCE AND SERVICE. THIS IS A WONDERFUL GIFT THAT WILL BENEFIT THE CHURCH GREATLY BUT HER LASTING LEGACY IS IN HER WITNESS TO JESUS CHRIST AS HER LORD AND SAVIOR.



Get a Tune Up on April 20-22

You tune up your car regularly; why not tune up your marriage? A Marriage Encounter weekend can have your relationship firing on all cylinders. Join millions of married men and women who have learned how to keep their marriage running smoothly. Attend the next weekend in our area on April 20-22. For information and to make reservations, go to [www.encounter.org](http://www.encounter.org) or contact Mickey and Linda Wheeler, [jamesw3681@aol.com](mailto:jamesw3681@aol.com) and 972-594-0232.



## DULCIMER

**February  
24-25**

**We will need soup and baked goods again! Please let Sean know if you would be willing to donate.**

Refuge R.O.C.K.S. (Youth Choir) is moving to a new rehearsal room! We are going to move to the old "Homebuilders" Sunday School room on the 3rd floor. We have to get the room ready first and the first thing that we need is a piano! If you or someone you know has a piano they would like to donate, please contact Susan Smith!

### Upcoming Events:

**February 22 - Ash Wednesday  
7:00 PM Service**

**February 26 - First Sunday in Lent**



““A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”” [John 13:34-35 NIV](#)

## SEAN'S SCOOP.....

ON 2-24 AND 2-25 THE REFUGE YOUTH WILL BE HOSTING THE WINTER FESTIVAL OF ACOUSTIC MUSIC AKA DULCIMER. THIS YEAR WILL BE QUITE DIFFERENT IN SOME WAYS AND VERY TYPICAL IN OTHERS. FOR STARTERS, THE REFUGE ROCKS CHOIR WILL BE AT BAYLOR UNIVERSITY IN WACO, TX AT YOUTH CUE, (THE SAME WEEKEND) A MUSICAL EXPERIENCE INVOLVING SEVERAL HUNDRED OTHER CHOIR GROUP MEMBERS FROM ALL OVER THE SOUTHERN STATES. THE BAYLOR MUSIC DEPARTMENT PROVIDES INCREDIBLE ORCHESTRA MEMBERS WHO PERFORM WITH THE SINGERS. YOU ARE HIGHLY ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND THIS EVENT. THE FINALE IS ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26 AT 3:00PM. IT IS WELL WORTH THE HOUR DRIVE AND TO SEE OUR YOUTH IN THIS ENVIRONMENT; IT IS AMAZING.

WHILE THE YOUTH ARE IN WACO, DULCIMER WILL BE MOVING ALONG AS NORMAL HERE IN IRVING. OUR ENTIRE CAMPUS IS UTILIZED FOR THIS EVENT. AS ALWAYS, WE ARE IN NEED OF YOUR DELICIOUS SOUPS, AND DESSERTS. YOU CAN DROP THOSE OFF BEGINNING THURSDAY, 23RD IN THE MAIN OFFICE OR IN THE MORNING ON EITHER FRIDAY OR SATURDAY THE DAY OF THE EVENT. PLEASE NOTE, SUSAN IVEY, JENNIFER AND RICHARD COX WILL BE OUR PARENT LIAISON THIS YEAR FOR DULCIMER. THIS MEANS THAT THEY WILL BE ON HAND TO HELP COORDINATE VOLUNTEERS, SERVICE, AND TO HELP UNLOAD YOUR GOODIES WHEN YOU ARRIVE. IF YOU CAN HELP WITH A SOUP OR DESSERT OR VOLUNTEER TIME, PLEASE SEE ONE OF THEM OR MYSELF AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

WE GREATLY APPRECIATE YOUR HELP FOR THIS EVENT. EACH YEAR, THIS SINGLE FUNDRAISER, WHICH EXTENDS OUTSIDE OUR CONGREGANTS, IS THE LARGEST INCOME EARNER FOR OUR DEPARTMENT. SINCE WE HAVE BEEN DOING THIS FOR MANY, MANY YEARS NOW, ANOTHER GROUP (LOOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH DULCIMER) WANTS TO DUPLICATE THIS EVENT FOR A BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL IN JULY. THIS IS A WONDERFUL DEVELOPMENT AND WILL GO A LONG WAY TOWARDS HELPING THE YOUTH DEPARTMENT. BUT FOR NOW...WE NEED YOUR HELP WITH SOUPS, DESSERTS AND ANY VOLUNTEERING YOU CAN DO. THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU...

CALL ME, EMAIL ME, TELEGRAPH ME, MAIL ME, MORSE CODE ME...ANYTHING...JUST LET ME KNOW IF YOU CAN DO SOMETHING!!!

BLESSINGS,  
SEAN



## Children's Ministries...

**Grace Place:** We're having fun on Wednesday nights at Grace Place! Ten children have signed up to experience the Gospel According to Dr. Seuss. Last week we learned that Yertle the Turtle was a perfect example of Proverbs 16:18 which says, "Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall." We also compared this Dr. Seuss tale to the Bible story about the tower of Babel and the parable of the wise man who built his house on the rock. It's not too late to join the fun at Grace Place! We meet in Son-Rise Village immediately after choir practice at 6:30/6:45.

**Children's Church:** Since Christmas, we have been learning about Jesus as a child. Although the Bible doesn't tell us much about Jesus' early life, we can be sure that he experienced many of the same things that children today experience. Jesus played, went to school, helped his parents, etc. He also had to make choices like our children do each day. We know that we'll always make good choices if we ask ourselves, "What would Jesus do?"

**Easter Egg Hunt:** Our annual Easter Egg Hunt will be held after worship on Palm Sunday, April 1. Bring your basket and join the fun!

**Vacation Bible School:** VBS will be held on July 9-13 from 9 am to noon. Our theme this year is Operation Overboard: Dare to Go Deep With God! Set in an exciting ocean environment, the curriculum teaches about people of deep faith from the Old and New Testaments and encourages children to develop life-changing habits as they grow and become followers of God. Mark your calendars and join the fun!



Kelly

### Get On Board!!!

Before you know it the Refuge ROCKS choir will be heading off for our annual Choir Tour. We have a ton of great stops and places lined up to perform and witness God's mighty presence. Thank you so much for supporting us through the years!!! These kids have grown leaps and bounds. They are becoming more bold in their ministry and it is truly a joy to see them blossom.

We are going on a fantastic Eight Great States Tour!!! We will leave Irving and land in places like Paris (Texas, you know?), Little Rock, Memphis, Nashville, Louisville, Springfield, Saint Louis, Wichita KS, OKC (Oklahoma City for you Texans) and Weatherford. This will be a whirlwind time of singing, community, learning through trials, and managing time, talent and patience. We've done it before and we will do it again... Get On Board!!! It's time to ROCK the Great Eight!!!

In Christian Joy,  
Susan

### Communications:

In an effort to keep everyone informed of Church schedules and activities, a spot has been set aside at the end of the table outside the office where you can pick up hardcopies of the Church Calendar, the Connexion, the Weekly Activities List and the Leadership Roster. If there is other material you would like to see, please let the office know.

### Efforts are Underway to Improve Sound in Sanctuary

Pastor Russell Floyd and Sammy Hargrove announced on Sunday Epic Resource Group has been contracted to troubleshoot, repair, and upgrade the sanctuary sound system. They began work this week. This decision was made after Pastor Sammy working with the AV Team explored several repair and upgrade options. It was determined Epic's proposed scope-of-work for our sound system was the best approach for the needed repairs and for improvements that will enhance our worship experience. When the work is completed, we will all be able to hear the word and enjoy the music without distraction.

These repairs and improvements are estimated to cost approximately \$13,500, and were not budgeted for 2012. Members of the congregation are being asked to help defray or possibly cover this unexpected cost. An appeal was offered this past Sunday from the pulpit and \$4,282 was raised. If you are led to contribute do so this week, or bring your gift on Sunday, February 19. Any size gift is needed and appreciated.

Everyone is encouraged to pray for the engineer, supervisors, and technicians of the Epic Resource Group who labor on our behalf. Also, pray for our worship services; asking the Holy Spirit to descend on First United Methodist, Irving, so we all may experience the touch of our Living God each week when we gather for worship.

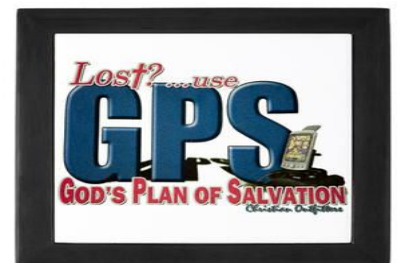


*Susan Galloway Bitts, Mr. and Mrs. David G. Bitts,  
and Boy Scout Troop 508  
request the honor of your  
presence at the Court of Honor Ceremony  
presenting*

***Stephen Westley Bitts***

*with Scouting's highest honor,  
The Eagle Scout Award  
Sunday, March 4, 2012  
Two O'Clock,  
First United Methodist Church  
211 W.3rd Street  
Irving, Texas  
A reception will in the Fellowship Hall*

**Next Connexion will be mailed  
and emailed on March 21! If you  
would like something in the Con-  
nexion please have it to Keri by  
Monday, March 19.  
keri@fumcirving.org**





### **Connexion**

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#### **Russell Floyd**

Senior Pastor

#### **Sammy Hargrove**

Associate Pastor

#### **Susan Smith**

Director of Music Ministry

#### **Sean Cawthon**

Youth Pastor

#### **Kelly Drury**

Children's Director

#### **Barbara Canafax**

Financial Manager

#### **Keri Moreno**

Office Manager

#### **Debbie Robinson**

Director of Parent's Day Out

#### **Cindy Alleman**

Program Facilitator

### ***.... AMONG OUR PEOPLE .... AMONG OUR PEOPLE ...***

**MEMORIALS:** In memory of **Noralene Deeson**, sister of John Tilley, to Wednesday Work Crew Endowment fund from Bill and Janet Bailey.

In memory of **Avis Richards**, mother of Bonnie Jones, to Children's Department from Debra Atzbach; from Kevin and Kayla Ohl.

In memory of **Regina Taunton and Harold and Sue Harpst**, family of Shelbie Michaels to General Budget from Charles L. Brown.