

# THE *CROSSLINK*...

Volume 4, Issue 12

December 2009

## From the Pastor . . .

### MAKE ME MARY



One year, right after Christmas, I was in Florida for a District Leader Conference with our area Bishop. I found out that John Keith and his family was going to be in Orlando at the same time and that daughter Becky and her two daughters were going to be there, along with his sister Marilyn and other granddaughter Hannah. So during some free time I went to meet them at their motel. It was a pleasant and fun visit. At one point Becky's then youngest, Marissa, came up to me with a very pretty bright blue cloth. She was about 3 or 4 I think. I'm sitting talking to John, Linda, Marilyn, and Becky and Marissa just walks up to me, hands me that piece of cloth and says, "Make me Mary". It seems she was Mary- of Mary and Joseph fame- in their Christmas program. She was probably only little Mary for an hour but she liked it so much that she wanted to be Mary all the time. A one shot deal wasn't enough for cute little Marissa. She wanted to be Mary even after Christmas was over. She wanted to be Mary on a sunny day in Florida not just in church program. She had her scarf. She had the desire. So I put it on her head and took the cutest picture in the world with my cell phone camera.

Here's what I think about that. First, I wish that all it took for us to be Mary was to put on a pretty blue scarf. Mary was chosen from everyone on earth to hold God in her belly and arms. Mary, knowing how difficult narrow-minded people were going to make this, said enthusiastically anyway, "I am the Lord's servant. May it be to me as you have said." I'd wear a blue scarf all the time if that's all it took to be Mary. (Isn't it funny that all it takes to be Mary is a blue scarf? What a powerful symbol. But, of course, what was so cute on Marissa would just look silly on Grandpa John or me. What I wear has to fit me. I can't wear you your stuff. I've got to get my own).

Second, I find it true that when some people get a holy experience- being Mary for an hour- that often that's not enough. They want the experience again and again. Like the first time you lead someone to Christ, you can't wait for another opportunity with someone else you know and love. Or you attend a powerful, wonderful retreat or seminar that is life-changing. You want to experience it again and again. Living for an hour as Mary- chosen, obedient, blessed, and humble- should make us want to experience that again and again.

Thirdly, our role as friends and fellow believers should be to help others become Mary. We can't be too busy or think it too silly or out of reach. Why not just go along instead of lecturing her on how it was after Christmas, or that it was only a church play, or how it takes a lifetime to be Mary, not just putting on a blue cloth. Sometimes we need to do all we can to help others find their inner Mary instead of criticizing or ignoring them.

Finally, and without a whole lot of explanation, what a great play on words this can be. Maybe this Christmas we should experience God in a scary, but blest manner, like Mary. Maybe we should walk in joyful obedience no matter what kind of trouble it causes us, like Mary. Maybe we should find that symbol for our lives that we "put on" so that everyone knows we have been made into Mary. And maybe we should be both 'Mary' and be 'Merry'. Be more like Mary than like us as usual and be more merry than anything else. "Make me Mary". OK.

Merry Christmas.

Pastor Patrick Coakley

Inside this Issue:

|                                |          |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| <b>Christmas Program</b>       | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Monee Food Drive</b>        | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Poinsettias</b>             | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Treasurer's Report</b>      | <b>3</b> |
| <b>Grow Event</b>              | <b>3</b> |
| <b>Birthdays/Anniversaries</b> | <b>3</b> |
| <b>Living Inside Out</b>       | <b>3</b> |



## Our Worship Schedule



|                         |          |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Worship Service         | 10:30 am |
| Family Night Wednesday  | 6:30 pm  |
| Sunday School ~all ages | 9:30 am  |

## Monee Township Food Drive

**JOINING US FOR  
OUR 2009 ANNUAL  
CHRISTMAS  
PROGRAM?  
INVITE YOUR  
FRIENDS!  
'THRU THE  
EYES OF A  
CHILD'  
DECEMBER 13<sup>TH</sup> @  
6:30PM WITH  
REFRESHMENTS  
AND FELLOWSHIP  
TO FOLLOW**

"Thank You to all the Teachers and Leaders for all their hard work and dedication to the Lord during 2009 by the sacrificial giving of their time and gifts to furthering His Kingdom work."

"Mary, did you know  
that your Baby Boy is Lord of all  
creation?  
Mary, did you know  
that your Baby Boy would one day rule  
the nations?  
Did you know  
that your Baby Boy is heaven's perfect  
Lamb?  
The sleeping Child you're holding is the  
Great, I Am.

*Lyrics from 'Mary Did You Know'*

For many years Monee Free Methodist Church has supported those in need during the Thanksgiving /Christmas season through the Monee Township assistance programs. Last year due to a severe shortage of funds we conducted a food drive instead. You voted with food who should get a pie in the face- Pastor Pat, Pastor Paul, Bonnie Maxedon, Jim Setty, Jimmie Phillips or Greg Krantz. We had so much fun with this that we decided then that this year we would conduct a food drive again even if we had funds to give.

This year the youth are in charge of collecting as much food as possible for those in need in our area. Go to the back wall of the worship area and place your contribution under the name of the one you most want to see get a pie in the face. Vote as often as you want with as much as you want. Canned goods and non-perishable prepared foods (they cannot accept expired/out dated items) will be collected until December 11. Participating youth include Alex Phillips, Brandon Krantz, Zack Edwards, Billy Gertler, Brian Gertler, Alex Thompson, and Emily Thompson. Let's get a heap of food!

There should be no problem beating last year's totals: 130 adults, 51 teens and 122 children were aided with food, mittens, hats, gift-wrap or cash. The 'Thanksgiving Basket' drive distributed 57 baskets and the Christmas drive, Santa's Sack, distributed 99 sacks. All great reasons to get involved!

## DECORATE WITH POINSETTIAS

We will be decorating the church again this year with poinsettias. If you or your family would like to purchase one, fill out the form in your bulletin one of the next 2 weeks or call Carol Schirmer at 815-409-1355 with your order. The last day for ordering the poinsettias is Friday December 18th they will be displayed at the Sunday December 20th service and then after the Christmas Eve service you will be able to take your plant(s) home for the holiday.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

We now offer the option of online giving [www.moneefmc.org](http://www.moneefmc.org) for your convenience.

The budget for the month of December is \$12,255.15.

We can watch as our barns fill with plenty and the vats overflow by honoring the Lord with our wealth.

Proverbs 3:9-10  
If you have questions about the budget you may contact Treasurer Don Schirmer or Pastor Pat.



**Happy Birthday to You!**

- |                   |       |
|-------------------|-------|
| Tess Bottoms      | 12-4  |
| John Maxedon      | 12-5  |
| Jessica Schirmer  | 12-5  |
| Donna Stephens    | 12-9  |
| Shawn Kimbrel     | 12-10 |
| Mark Mowers       | 12-10 |
| Ron Morrison      | 12-11 |
| Kenny Stephens    | 12-11 |
| Tim Thompson      | 12-11 |
| Kaylie Skala      | 12-12 |
| James Sobotka     | 12-20 |
| Eric Bottoms      | 12-22 |
| Don Schirmer      | 12-25 |
| Caeden Cervantes  | 12-30 |
| Gabrielle Roberts | 12-30 |
| Paul Kinsella     | 12-30 |

**Happy Anniversary**

- |                      |       |
|----------------------|-------|
| Greg & Dawn Krantz   | 12-28 |
| John & Aimee Maxedon | 12-12 |

**G R O W e v e n t !**

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR SATURDAY, JANUARY 23- THAT'S RIGHT, BRRRR... JANUARY 23- WHEN THE CHICAGO METRO DISTRICT CHURCHES WILL GATHER FOR A GREAT DAY OF NETWORKING, FELLOWSHIP, RETOOLING, AND WORSHIP WE ARE CALLING GROW: GATHER, RETOOL, OUTWARD FOCUS, & WORSHIP. WE ARE MEETING AT OUR REDEEMER FREE METHODIST CHURCH IN ELGIN FROM 9:30AM-3PM. THE EVENT IS FREE (INCLUDING LUNCH)!**

**WHY SHOULD ONLY THE DELEGATES HAVE THE GREAT TIME OF MEETING WITH OTHER FREE METHODISTS OF THE NORTH CENTRAL CONFERENCE WHEN THEY GET TO GO TO ANNUAL CONFERENCE? THIS IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU TO DO JUST THAT. CONNECT. SHARE. GROW. THE GROW EVENT WILL CONNECT YOU TO OTHER FREE METHODISTS IN THE GREATER METRO AREA WHO ARE SERVING THEIR LOCAL CHURCH LIKE YOU ARE HERE AT MONEE. YOU WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE INSPIRED BY OUR GENERAL SESSION, CHOOSE A WORKSHOP TOPIC OF INTEREST, AND GATHER IN CLUSTERS FOR EXCHANGE OF IDEAS AND ENCOURAGEMENT. IN THE MIDDLE OF IT ALL WILL BE A LUNCH THAT IS... WELL, YOU'LL HAVE TO SEE IT FOR YOURSELF! IT WILL BE A GREAT DAY TOGETHER.**

**WHO SHOULD ATTEND? WELL, LET'S SEE. FOR SURE ALL BOARD MEMBERS, SMALL GROUP LEADERS, MEMBERS OF COMMITTEES, AND TEACHERS. PRAISE TEAM MEMBERS SHOULD GO AND GREETERS. IF YOU THINK OUR CHURCH IS GREAT YOU'LL WANT TO BE THERE. IF YOU THINK WE HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO AND WANT TO GET SOME IDEAS ON HOW WE CAN GET THERE, YEP, YOU TOO. OH, AND IF YOU LOVE JESUS AND LOVE BEING WITH GOD'S PEOPLE FOR A GOOD REASON OR NO REASON AT ALL, BE THERE. IF YOU USED TO BE MORE INVOLVED BUT HAVE STEPPED BACK DUE TO AGE YOU SHOULD ESPECIALLY CONSIDER GOING. THOSE YOUNGSTERS NEED YOUR THOUGHTS AND ENCOURAGEMENT.**

**HERE'S A CHALLENGE: LET'S HAVE THE LARGEST GROUP FROM ANY CHURCH IN OUR DISTRICT ATTEND THIS EVENT! WE DO IT AT FAMILY CAMP AND MEN'S RETREAT AT SKY LODGE AND THAT'S ALL THE WAY IN THE MIDDLE OF WISCONSIN. ELGIN IS ONLY 1½ HOURS FROM HERE. PASTOR PAT WILL EAT SOME PIE IF WE HAVE THE MOST THERE☺.**

**ALTHOUGH YOU DON'T HAVE TO SIGN UP, WE ARE MAKING A SIGN-UP SHEET AVAILABLE SO THERE IS ENOUGH OF THAT GREAT LUNCH WAITING FOR YOU. GO AHEAD AND SIGN-UP EVEN IF YOU JUST THINK YOU MIGHT GO. IT DOESN'T COMMIT YOU, JUST SAYS "HEY, THIS SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR." MORE INFORMATION WILL BE AVAILABLE VERY SOON AND VISIT THE NEW FACEBOOK PAGE CALLED METRO CHICAGO AND THEN "EVENTS".**



***THIS 'Every Sunday ~All Ages' Program is running Sundays @ 9:30am.***

***THIS MONTH'S THEME IS FOUND IN LUKE!***

***&***

***In the month of December the Children's Church class will also reinforce those truths by learning from the book of Joshua.***

***Each week offering a unique truth; 'God meets our needs', 'Living Right honors God, 'Jesus' Birth is something to celebrate', 'Jesus is amazing' & 'God lives with us!'. Please look for opportunity to reinforce this learning about God's truth, it is a treasure.***



Monee Free Methodist Church  
25528 S. Willow Creek Lane  
Monee, IL 60449

Phone: (708) 534-5683

To Know Christ, Exalt Christ,  
and Share Christ

## Who We Are

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to our church. At Monee Free Methodist you will learn to build a relationship with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We are a Bible-believing church that seeks to know Christ and have a desire to teach others to know Him the same way.

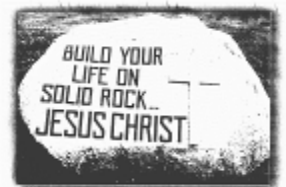
You will enjoy and feel refreshed in our casual family environment. "Come as you are" is what we say and practice. We offer Sunday School learning from God's word for all ages, a midweek family activities night, and our Christian Education/Outreach Committee plans events each month that are safe, fun, and encourage faith. To make everyone feel comfortable, our worship service is relaxed and versatile. The music is a wonderful blend of contemporary and traditional favorites.

Pastor Pat has a way of teaching the Word that is understood and enjoyed by all. His personal touch and humor will keep you involved every step of the way week after week. Most Sundays it feels as if he is speaking right to you personally.

We offer our ☐ Younger Worshipers a Children's Church Program (3 years through 2nd grade) dismissed right before the morning message. We also offer a Nursery for children 3 years and younger.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact the Church Office at 708-534-5683.

We hope to see you soon!



# December Happenings

## December Happenings

---

Board Meeting - Saturday December 12<sup>th</sup>

Wednesday Night Bible Study – 6:30-7:30pm. Dinner available beforehand for \$2.00 ~ starts serving at 5:30.

Children's Church – The children will be studying from the book of Luke which correlates directly with L.I.O Sunday School. Topics include 'The world NEEDS Jesus', 'Repenting prepares us for Jesus', 'Christians celebrate Jesus' birth', & 'Jesus is SPECIAL'.

Living Inside Out – An All Ages ~ every Sunday morning program at 9:30am. This month's theme pulled from the book of Luke will focus on learning about God's provision. God tells us the Truth about showing His love and serving Him. Please remember to bring your friends along! If you are interested in volunteering, please see Sandi Dasch. Thank you!

Adopt-A-Highway - (Community Outreach Opportunity) Plan for helping in the Spring. Due to weather we take a break in clean-up until Spring. Watch for more info!

Communion Sunday — December 27<sup>th</sup>.

\*\*See calendar for additional events, dates and times!

## Small Group Opportunities

### Small Group Opportunities

---

Pathos Youth Ministries – Guys meet every other Sunday night 6:30-8pm at Pastor Paul Alfs for small group. Everyone meeting the weeks between for Service Projects/Events. Gals meet at Kaiti Bierdeman's every Monday at 6:30pm-8pm. Everyone also meeting Wednesday nights at MFMC for bible study @ 6:30-7:30pm. Be sure to check calendar for specifics!

Quizzers – Please see Jim Setty if you are interested in joining the Monee FM Quiz Team & get prepared for the next season!

Women's Bible Study – Beth Moore's 'Believing God' will be starting November 10<sup>th</sup> with the new leader Jennifer Keith. They will be meeting at MFMC. You may contact her if you have any questions about this every other Tuesday Night Bible Study.

Men's Group – Meets at PJ's Ice Cream Parlor in Manteno on Thursday's at 6:30 p.m. The 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday meets at Manteno Springs Senior Home (600 N. Birch). For more information, please contact Eric Bottoms 815-468-7791.

# December 2009

## December 2009

| Sun   | Mon   | Tue   | Wed  | Thu  | Fri                                   | Sat                                      |
|---|---|---|--|--|---------------------------------------|--|
|   |   | <b>1</b><br>Women's<br>Bible study<br>7pm<br>to<br>9pm              | <b>2</b>   | <b>3</b><br>MEN'S SMALL<br>GROUP ~<br>NURSING<br>HOME VISIT    | <b>4</b>                              | <b>5</b><br>BIBLE QUIZ<br>@<br>WOODSTOCK |
| <b>6</b><br>LIVING INSIDE OUT<br>9:30AM<br><br>Lifeline Youth<br>Group @ Alfs/<br>6:30-8:30pm | <b>7</b><br>Lifeline<br>Youth<br>Gals<br>BIBLE STUDY<br>6:30PM  | <b>8</b>  | <b>9</b><br>BIBLE STUDY<br>6:30PM<br>SERVING \$2<br>DINNER<br>@5:30  | <b>10</b><br>MEN'S<br>SMALL<br>GROUP<br>7PM                    | <b>11</b>                             | <b>12</b><br>BOARD<br>MEETING<br>6PM     |
| <b>13</b><br>LIVING INSIDE OUT<br>9:30AM<br><br>Children's<br>Christmas Program<br>6:30pm     | <b>14</b><br>Lifeline<br>Youth<br>Gals<br>BIBLE STUDY<br>6:30PM | <b>15</b><br>Women's<br>Bible study<br>7pm<br>to<br>9pm             | <b>16</b><br>BIBLE STUDY<br>6:30PM<br>SERVING \$2<br>DINNER<br>@5:30 | <b>17</b><br>MEN'S<br>SMALL<br>GROUP<br>7PM                    | <b>18</b>                             | <b>19</b>                                |
| <b>20</b><br>LIVING INSIDE OUT<br>9:30AM<br>Lifeline Youth<br>Group<br><br>6:30-8pm           | <b>21</b>   | <b>22</b><br>Lifeline<br>YOUTH<br>CHRISTMAS<br>LOCK-IN<br>START 7PM | <b>23</b><br>Lifeline<br>YOUTH<br>CHRISTMAS<br>LOCK-IN<br>END 7AM    | <b>24</b><br>CHRISTMAS<br>EVE<br>CANDLELIGHT<br>SERVICE<br>9PM | <b>25</b><br><i>Christmas<br/>Day</i> | <b>26</b>                                |
| <b>27</b><br>LIVING INSIDE OUT<br>9:30AM<br><i>Communion<br/>Sunday</i>                       | <b>28</b>   | <b>29</b>   | <b>30</b><br>BIBLE STUDY<br>6:30PM<br>SERVING \$2<br>DINNER<br>@5:30 | <b>31</b><br>NEW YEAR'S<br>EVE PARTY<br>8PM TO 2010!           |                                       |  |

\*\*Dates are subject to change. Please contact church office at 708-534-5683 if you have any questions.\*\*