

# The Good Shepherd News

BENTON FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

*"To grow towards Jesus and make God known"*

January 2016

## "Gifts for the Giving"

by Dr. David Russell



I pray that you all have had a very Merry Christmas with lots of joy and good cheer. Perhaps a part of your Christmas celebration involved the exchanging of gifts. Giving and receiving gifts is a tricky matter. We can work long and hard to find just the right gift for a friend or family member and then discover that it is not the right size, color, or they are not as excited about the gift when they receive it as you were when you picked it out. This has led to the booming business of gift cards. A gift card seems to be the perfect gift because the giver shows their love for the one they give the gift card to in wanting the recipient to be able to pick out a gift they want. Of course the downside of gift cards is that they can be seen as not very personal, and they often limit the receiver to shopping at a given retailer or exchanging the gift card for a specific product line. Gift cards may represent the desire of the giver to give, but may not be what the gift receiver needs.

For example, you usually cannot use a gift card to pay for basic living expenses. I have never seen a gift card that would cover a utility bill or a car payment. They might sometimes be usable to purchase groceries or even gasoline, but what about a mortgage or insurance payment? And while we may not think of the gifts we give a friend or loved one as intended to cover such basic necessities, what about the gifts we give to the church?

The church has a budget that includes: payroll, utilities, missions, debt service, programming, insurance, etc. With this in mind, when we limit or primarily give to the church to specified funds or special projects, without first making sure we help fund the general budget, we may be giving the church "gift cards." And these gift cards can only be used for set pre-determined funds or programs. But all the while the church still has items in the budget that have to be paid as priorities for services or goods, and if the congregation is not adequately funding the budget, any shortfall of funds in the general budget are made up by cuts to the missions and programming.

Are we giving to support the church and all the missions and ministries the church carries out? Or are we giving gift cards, gifts that can only be used for certain purposes? It seems we need not only consider the spirit in which we give, but also the actual intent expectations we have for how what we give will be used.

# Helping Hands Food Pantry

January, new beginnings and a time of renewal; everyone hopes that the New Year will bring better things than the last year. We make our frivolous resolutions, only to be broken within a few weeks or months. Perhaps in this new year of 2016, we can do more than hope for better things for the coming year but actively work to make things better.

I can truthfully say that I have broken every New Year's resolution that I have ever made with the exception of one. I have resolved to lose weight, exercise more, stop spending money needlessly, save more money, be nicer, stop talking so much, you get the idea, and I have never kept any of these resolutions. Gene and I made one resolution together many years ago and that was to tithe. We have always kept that resolution. The reason being is that I promised God, and I am not going to mess with God.

So far, this resolution has worked out great. We have never gone hungry, never wanted for anything; we have been blessed with plenty. Now, I am not telling you to make this resolution. That was our personal choice, but I am suggesting that you consider giving more of yourself, time, money or whatever you have to the church and others.

What can you give? You can invite someone to church or to Journey. You would be surprised how many youth we have at Journey because another youth invited a friend to church. You can be polite and smile when you really want to snap. You can find the time to volunteer at our church ministries. You can always be a role model to our children and youth. You can send a card to our shut-ins or take time to visit.

If you have the means, you can give monetary gifts to our ministries. Dave Ramsey, the radio financial advi-

sor, recommends that you give your charitable donations to funds that you are familiar with. Helping Hands is administered by volunteers. All of the money that you donate to Helping Hands goes directly to help those people in our community who are in need. The volunteers are not reimbursed for mileage or the wear and tear on their vehicle when transporting food from PADD. Every dollar donated goes to purchase needed food and household items for the needy. We have about 15 families who are currently maintaining Helping Hands. Won't you join them this year?

What a better resolution for 2016, than to commit to giving all that you can to help mankind and to further the Kingdom of our Lord and Savior?

**Valera Brooks**

## Women's Ministry

Isaiah 61 tells us "He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor..."

The start of the new year is a time to reflect and look forward and the Women's Ministry team looks forward to serving our God by serving the women in our church and community and believe this is the year of the Lord's favor, and we have the blessing of being the hands and feet of Jesus by proclaiming freedom in Christ to all we encounter.

Our first event is "Living Free in 2016," on Sunday, January 31, immediately following the traditional service with a soup luncheon and program with Victory Through Grace Ministries (VTGM). This event is open to the entire church, not just the women. We encourage all women, men, and youth to come hear the founders and residents of Victory House speak on the horror of

human trafficking, and the hope of God that these residents have found through this amazing ministry. Many of us think human trafficking is an issue for another country or large cities, but it is happening right here in Marshall County. We pray this program will open your eyes, ears, and hearts to this plight, and we can stand alongside VTGM for freedom. We will collect a love offering for the ministry. You will have an opportunity to sign up for the luncheon and program soon with a bulletin insert and we encourage you to do so. Parents, please consider allowing your middle and high school youth to attend as VTGM also reaches out to schools to educate our youth on the dangers of this practice. We will offer childcare for the little ones.

We have a full year of opportunities for ministry and fellowship planned with events at church, as well as day and overnight trips. We distributed copies of the calendar last month. If you

have not received one yet, please stop by the Visitor Desk in the Gant Fellowship Hall and pick one up.

We will have a new women's Bible study with this Journey session beginning January 6. Join us in the Seekers room, as we explore the power of prayer with a study based on "War Room."

We give all the glory to God for what He accomplished in 2015 and wait with excitement for what He has planned for this year.

**Tijuana Fowler**

# KIT: Kids In Training Afterschool Program

December was a wonderfully busy month! It was full of giving and showing our KIT families just how much they mean to us. The KIT board, staff, and I want to thank the ladies of the church for making our families feel so special. They went above and beyond to make our families feel loved and appreciated! The Christmas Open House was full of tasty treats for our families as well as an art show presented by the KIT kids. They worked very hard and were very excited to show off their art work. A little thing such as displaying their art work made them feel valued and important. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

The kids still had homework the first two weeks of December. They tried their best to focus on homework but it was very hard with all of the excitement of Christmas. They made it through all of the homework, and then we got to play games and have our Christmas party. It is hard to focus on spelling words, reading,

and math when there is so much fun that has your name on it.

During the two weeks of Christmas break, we had our first ever Christmas KIT Kamp. We had an average of ten kids per day. We had our days full of games, art, activities, and much more. This turned out to be a much needed ministry for parents. This gave the parents a much needed place to leave their children while they worked. The parents were so appreciative of a safe place to come! They knew they would be cared for, loved on, and above all safe! Thank you to all the parents who entrusted us with your precious blessings!

Our devotions for the month of December were, of course, based around the birth of Jesus. We talked about the Christmas story and the meaning of Christmas. We also talked about the WHYs of Christmas. Why do we have certain traditions and where did they come from? The kids were very curious

and interested to find out that there are truly meanings behind our traditions.

As we come to end of a calendar year and start a new year, KIT is very thankful and blessed to be a part of such a wonderful loving church. KIT would like to thank the church for all of the love, support, and prayer that you have shown over the past seven years. KIT has been able to minister to so many families because of this body of believers. I am so blessed to say that there has NEVER been one child or family of KIT that has even gone without, whether it is food, clothes, Christmas presents. These families have truly seen the hands and feet of Jesus! Thank you from the bottom of my heart! We look forward to ministering to our current families as well as the new families that God brings our way.

**For the sake of the kids!**

**Mrs. Juli**

## Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministry at Benton First continues to be an active ministry. We depend a lot on the congregation for referrals. A Stephen Minister is simply someone to provide a listening ear as a person goes through a change in life. It can be illness, death of a loved one, divorce, loss of a home through fire or natural disaster, children moving away, or other life events. Anything that might cause someone difficulty coping is an opportunity for Stephen Ministry. Many times, the perspective of someone not directly involved in one's life can provide an avenue for healing that isn't currently available. The caring relationship then continues as long as it is needed.

As a Stephen Ministry congregation, you are our eyes and ears to needs of our members or loved ones. Please don't hesitate to call the church office with a referral, or let one of us know. We are here to help.

**Gail Dyke and Joy Jackson**



# Communion Teams for 2016

**January**– Dianna Colson and Mary Ann Gammel

**February**– Kim Bradley and Gail Dyke

**March**– Joy Jackson and Rick Rodriguez

**April**– Larry and Nancy Ackley

**May**– Mary Anne Osborne and Peg Riley

**June**– Dianna Colson and Mary Ann Gammel

**July**– Kim Bradley and Gail Dyke

**August**– Joy Jackson and Rick Rodriguez

**September**– Larry and Nancy Ackley

**October**– Mary Anne Osborne and Peg Riley

**November**– Kim Bradley and Gail Dyke

**December**– Joy Jackson and Rick Rodriguez

## UMCOR: Help Needed

Our youth and children groups are leading Benton First with filling health and cleaning kits for UMCOR to provide care to people in times of crisis.

Collection boxes will be located in the Gant Fellowship Hall and in front of the church office. We will be collecting the items thru January.

### Items needed for cleaning buckets:

- 5 gallon buckets with resealable lids
- Liquid laundry detergent (25 oz or 50 oz)
- Liquid household cleaner (12-16 oz)
- Dish soap
- Air Freshener (aerosol or pump)
- Insect-repellent spray (6-14 oz)
- Scrub brush
- Cleaning wipes (no terry cloths)
- Sponges
- Scouring pads
- Clothespins
- Clothesline
- Heavy duty trash bags (33-45 gallon)
- Dust masks
- Kitchen dishwashing gloves
- Work gloves

### Items needed for health kits:

- Hand towel
- Washcloth
- Comb (longer than 6")
- Metal nail file or clipper
- Bath size soap
- Toothbrush in original packaging
- Bandages
- Plastic bag (1 gallon size sealable)
- \$1 to purchase toothpaste

Monetary donations are also needed. Items will be collected thru January.

## 2016 Generative Leadership Academy

Disciples of Jesus Christ are called to three primary responsibilities: follow Jesus, love God and love your neighbor, and to go make disciples of Jesus. Our lack of faithfulness has led to shrinking numbers in worship, a lack of witness to our communities and a world that is not being transformed.

The Purchase District Office of the UMC wants to help your church grow. There are many challenges facing the District in the next decade, and we believe equipping strong, effective, gifted leadership is the key to growth and vitality. To develop this leadership, the Purchase District developed a leadership training.

The Generative Leadership Academy (GLA) was developed to help deeply committed Christian leaders who are eager to serve, find direction and guidance for the changing world we live in. These leaders will train and inspire more leaders who will work together for church vitality. Church vitality will transform the world!

The dates of the 2016 Academy will meet on: February 26-27, June 10-11, August 19-20, and October 28-29. GLA is held at Kenlake State Park. For more information about GLA, please contact the Purchase District Office of UMC at (270) 527-8282. Registration deadline is January 28.

# Memorials and Honorariums

*In memory of Albert Crider*

**Kitchen Fund**

Larry and Nancy Ackley  
Jane Roberts

*In memory of Howard DeHaven*

**Kitchen Fund**

Larry and Nancy Ackley

*In memory of Mary Ann Rodriguez*

**Building Fund**

Tom and Deborah Blankenship

**Kitchen Fund**

Jane Roberts

**General Fund**

David and Marion Fuqua

*In memory of Gilbert and Kathryn Ziemer*

**Food Pantry**

John Ziemer  
Louise Parker

*In memory of William Parker*

**Food Pantry**

John Ziemer  
Louise Parker

*In honor of the Dinner Belles*

**Food Pantry**

R.C. and Peg Riley

*In honor of John Ziemer*

**Food Pantry**

Louise Parker

*In honor of Kathy Papin and family*

**Food Pantry**

Louise Parker

*In honor of Gene and Valera Brooks*

**Food Pantry**

Kelley and Becky Cromwell

*In memory of Martha Strow*

**Building Fund**

Tom and Deborah Blankenship

Lee and Nina Anderson

Gary and Susan Shemwell

Kenneth and Carolyn West

Ray and Nancy Solomon

**Food Pantry**

Allan "Barc" and Joyce Brown

Vicki Wyatt

Gene and Valera Brooks

Kerry and Suzie MacGowan

Johnny and Gail Dyke

**General Fund**

David and Marion Fuqua

Darrell and Valerie VanMeter

Beth Parrish

Dave Burden

**Youth Fund**

Kay Watkins

**Kitchen Fund**

Jo Alice Cothran

Jane Roberts

**Dinner Belles**

Mark and Jane Roberts

*In honor of Children's Directors & Sunday School teachers and volunteers*

**Playground Fund**

Todd and Kim Anderson & children

*In memory of Lunell and John Lovett*

**Food Pantry**

Jim and Jeri Harrell

*In honor of Helping Hands Food Pantry volunteers*

**Food Pantry**

Gene and Valera Brooks

*In honor of George and Kathy Long*

**Building Fund**

Gary and Susan Shemwell

*In memory of Roy Lawson*

**General Fund**

Lillis Lawson

*In memory of Dorothy Shobe*

**Kitchen Fund**

Jo Alice Cothran

*In memory of Barbara Franklin*

**Choir**

Gayle McGregor

*In memory of Emma Howes*

**Nursery**

Gayle McGregor

*In honor of Kaylee Allday*

**Food Pantry**

Gayle McGregor

*In honor of the Franklin family*

**Building Fund**

Gayle McGregor

*In memory of Phillip Wolfe*

**Kitchen Fund**

Jane Roberts

*In memory of Libby Powell*

**Food Pantry**

Curtis and Tijuana Fowler

*In memory of Faye Prince*

**Building Fund**

Ray and Nancy Solomon

Kenneth and Carolyn West

**General Fund**

Beth Parrish

*In memory of Gus Wyatt*

**Food Pantry**

Carlos and Ashley Loftus

# Poinsettia Memorials and Honorariums

*In memory of Tony and Mary Ann Rodriguez*

*In memory of Harry and Carolyn Sunderman*

Given by Rick, Jennifer and Carolyn Rodriguez

*In memory of Belve Smith*

Given by Sue Smith, Karen Porter and Sharon Wiseman

*In memory of Rosalie Porter*

Given by Andy, Karen, Peyton and Dakota Porter

*In honor of Brother David Russell*

Given by The Stilley House Assisted Living

*In memory of Jim Cothran*

Given by Sara Cothran, children and grandchildren

*In memory of George Erickson*

Given by Betty Erickson

*In honor of Gran Gran and Ne Na, Jimmy and Ernie Wiseman*

Given by Brooks, Millie, Faith and Maci, great grandchildren

*In memory of our son Jim Parke*

Given by Larry and Connie Parke

*In memory of Ken Sherman*

Given by Margaret Sherman

*In honor of Dianna Colson*

Given by Brad Colson

*In memory of our loved ones*

Given by Francis Pearsall and Janet Roy

*In honor of Keith Riley*

Given by Peg Riley

*In honor of John Roberts and Lavern Blankenship*

Given by Tom and Deborah Blankenship

*In memory of Sue Roberts and Irvin Blankenship*

Given by Tom and Deborah Blankenship

## From the Mailbox

*"I get by with a little help from my friends."* Well, we've had a LOT of help from our friends and family, and I'm really not sure exactly *how* we would have gotten by without you! Thank you for the delicious food that sustained us, the phone calls and cards, the encouraging words and hugs, the fun gifts, the many sincere offers to help and of course the FFTS....Family and Friends Transportation System! What a blessing beyond measure to have such a loving church family.

**Peg and R.C. Riley**

**Dear Dinner Belles,**

Thank you so much for the wonderful meal you prepared and served after mother's service. It was especially nice to be able to spend that time with friends and family, but most of all, thank you for your love and support throughout the years!

**Love and peace,**

**Robert Strow and family**

**Dear Benton First UMC and all involved,**

I would like to thank BFUMC for hosting the bereavement lunch for my family and would like to thank each of the ladies for making such wonderful dishes. Anyone that knew my granny knew she was NOT into cooking, but she could make a mean fruit salad! So having the jello salad was most appropriate! (Plus everything else she wouldn't have fixed!)

In spite of the circumstances, it was a wonderful lunch, and I thank you for the food, your time, your effort, and most of all, your sweet words about my granny. I know she touched me, but to hear how she touched others was great. It was also nice to put faces with names she had mentioned too!

Thank you all for all of your kindness!

**Love,**

**Julie Ellen Strow**

**Dear Friends at Benton First UMC,**

On behalf of 3rd Place Ministries and all those who from time to time find themselves in need of assistance, I want to thank you for your recent donation to our Crisis Fund. Your donation is especially important at this time of the year when utility costs are higher and people experience unusual or unexpected drains on their income. We appreciate your support, and may God continue to bless you as you have blessed others.

**Bro. Dave Garrett**

**Dear Church Family and Friends,**

Thank you for all of the prayers you offered up in my behalf before, during and after my surgery. I am blessed to have all of you.

**God is good.**

**Jane Roberts**

## Finance

### Year-to-Date Financial Report as of 12/31/2015

<b>Income</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Tithes and Offerings	\$642,518	\$596,815
Special or One Time Giving		
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$642,518</b>	<b>\$596,815</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Administrative	\$124,510	\$112,631
Mission and Programming	\$119,375	\$104,462
Staff	\$255,795	\$239,899
<b>Total General Fund Expenses</b>	<b>\$499,680</b>	<b>\$456,992</b>
Debt Payments	\$72,179	\$72,364
Debt Accrual for Future Payment	\$70,659	\$70,659
<b>Total Debt Expenses</b>	<b>\$142,838</b>	<b>\$143,023</b>
<b>Year to Date Surplus/(Deficit)</b>		<b>\$(3200)</b>
<b>Building Debt Balance</b>	<b>\$574,253</b>	<b>As of 12/31/15</b>

# A Month of Sundays Volunteer Schedule

<u>January 3</u>	<u>January 10</u>	<u>January 17</u>	<u>January 24</u>	<u>January 31</u>
<b>Greeters</b> 8:30 Ramages	<b>Greeters</b> 8:30 Pat and Dinah Hurley	<b>Greeters</b> 8:30 Lee and Ashley Anderson/ Tijuana Fowler	<b>Greeters</b> 8:30 Kerry and Suzie MacGowan	<b>Greeters</b> 8:30 Kim Anderson and children
<b>10:30</b> Royalyn Lawrence	<b>10:30</b>	<b>10:30</b> Scott Wanless Jenn Osborne	<b>10:30</b>	<b>10:30</b> Scott Wanless Jenn Osborne
<b>Acolyte</b> Lauren Thompson	<b>Acolyte</b> Timber Anderson	<b>Acolyte</b> Amber Reid	<b>Acolyte</b> Aaron Smith	<b>Acolyte</b> Thomas Groom
<b>Children's Sermon</b> Brittany Ramage	<b>Children's Sermon</b> Kim Anderson	<b>Children's Sermon</b> April Dunn	<b>Children's Sermon</b> Michelle Moore	<b>Children's Sermon</b> Bro. David Russell
<b>Sound/Video</b> 8:30 Evan Smith Video Tom Blankenship 10:30 Tom Blankenship	<b>Sound/Video</b> 8:30 Kevin Cherry Video Teresa Cherry 10:30 Kevin Cherry	<b>Sound/Video</b> 8:30 Johnny Dyke Video Greg Smothers 10:30 Johnny Dyke	<b>Sound/Video</b> 8:30 Steve Clarke Video Karen Clarke 10:30 Tom Blankenship	<b>Sound/Video</b> 8:30 Jim Green Video Tonia Hainaut 10:30 Kevin Cherry
<b>Praise Band</b> Tim Philbee Michelle Smothers Connie Weathers	<b>Praise Band</b> April Dunn Megan Moore Brittany Ramage	<b>Praise Band</b> Gail Dyke Jennifer Rodriguez Rick Rodriguez	<b>Praise Band</b> Marsha Kubilis Michelle Moore Connie Weathers	<b>Praise Band</b> Megan Moore Savana Smothers Sydney Smothers

## Prayer Concerns

Mary Frances Adamson	Gerald Jones	Beth Parrish	Sue Smith
Greg Aplin	Tom Jones	Sherry Probasco	Mary Smothers
Gene Barnett	Destiny Kennedy	Doris Reed	Family of Clara Belle Tracy
Diane Chilton	Joan King	Jerry Riley	Tristen West
Sara Coleman	Janet Lockard	Peg Riley	Jeff Wiseman
Colvett Family	Carla Marshall	RoeBert Siress	Norma Wyatt
Tom DeHaven	Shane McLeod	Leah Sirota	Maggie Young
Richard Guill	Lea Nan Morton	Judy Small	
Lisa Hercula	Kim Myers	Houston and Delores Smith	
Hazel Hill	Our nation's leaders	Marky Smith	

## January Birthdays

<b>1</b> -Francis Pearsall Blake Wiseman	<b>15</b> -Paul Darnall	<b>25</b> -Larry Ackley
<b>3</b> -Shannon Copeland	<b>17</b> -Marilyn Creason	<b>29</b> -Pat Gordon
<b>4</b> -Jeremy Pedigo	<b>20</b> -Jaime Brooks Patti North	<b>30</b> -Vicki Wyatt
<b>7</b> -Aaron Smith	<b>23</b> -Keagin Brooks	<b>31</b> -Brian Hurley
<b>12</b> -Suzie MacGowan Mark Roberts	<b>24</b> -Kevin Cherry Olivia Konrad Doris Reed	



## January Anniversaries

<b>January 3</b> -Kevin and Teresa Cherry
<b>January 12</b> -Barc and Joyce Brown
<b>January 14</b> -Marvin and Alice Jones
<b>January 16</b> -Gene and Valera Brooks
<b>January 22</b> -Lee and Nina Anderson
<b>January 30</b> -Kerry and Suzie MacGowan Brian and Laurie Hurley

*Happy Anniversary*

*Benton First United Methodist Church  
845 U.S. Highway 641 Spur  
Benton, KY 42025  
(270) 527-3990 phone  
churchoffice@bentonfirstumc.com*



# The Good Shepherd News

*Sunday Services:*

<i>Contemporary Worship</i>	<i>8:30 a.m.</i>
<i>Sunday School</i>	<i>9:30 a.m.</i>
<i>Traditional Worship</i>	<i>10:30 a.m.</i>

*Wednesdays: Meal begins at 5:30 p.m.  
Classes begin approximately at 6:15 p.m.*

*Journey follows the Marshall County School System schedule.*

*Beginning January 4, 2016, the church office will have new office hours.  
Monday-Friday 8 a.m. –12 p.m., 12:30 p.m.-4 p.m.*