

# Christ Church United Methodist

December 17, 2006

Dr. George Strunk, Senior Pastor  
Rev. Rebecca Heid  
Rev. John Hill  
Rev. Bonnie Glass MacDonald  
Rev. Cherie Parker



## Remembering the Big Grey Elephant....

We walked through a little mental exercise to kick off the Stewardship campaign several weeks ago. I asked a series of questions that ultimately and remarkably lead most of the congregation to the same final answer: a big grey elephant.

Since that was so much fun, I thought I'd attempt another exercise. This time the questions have nothing to do with math, geography, or animals. Instead, I invite you to think about how you would describe your membership at Christ Church. What words would you use to accurately reflect your commitment level? How would you portray your participation? Where would you rank Christ Church in your life's "Top 10" list?

Assuming you're playing along, you should now have your very own membership description in mind. Got it? Now the tough question: Do you think your description is pleasing to God?

Susan and I asked each other these same questions about three years ago

(seven years into our Christ Church membership). Our description was **PASSIVE PARTICIPANTS**.

We discovered that when we made commitments to Christ Church in the form of prayers, presence, giving, and serving that our "membership description" began to change in significant ways. We moved from passive participants to **COMMITTED FAMILY MEMBERS**. Amazing things happened when we opened our Bible, joined a Sunday school class, started praying, discovered our spiritual gifts, and put God in charge of our checkbook. "For the eyes of the Lord search the whole earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him" (2 Chronicles 16:9).

I've also discovered something as Stewardship Chair. Many Christ Church members will have the same final answer for this "membership description" exercise: passive participants. We have about 1500 families at Christ Church, but only 700 make commitments of

prayers, presence, giving, and serving. If you are one of those who have not done so yet, please grab hold of your stewardship packet and grow your faith by inviting God's ministry into your priorities. A written commitment, however small, is a giant leap that God will honor.

I'm passionate about my stewardship role because I've learned that the commitment packet is not a burden – it's something more precious. It's the way I've experienced God in my life, and I want you to experience Him too. Then, as you cast your Seeds of Joy, you will be amazed with the outcome. "For God is the one who gives seed to the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, He will give you many opportunities to do good, and He will produce a great harvest of generosity in you" (2 Corinthians 9:10).

Keith Spayd,  
Stewardship Chair

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# What's Happening

## YEAR END CONTRIBUTIONS

The last day of 2006 falls on a Sunday. The church building will be open until 5:00 p.m. that day to receive contributions that would qualify for 2006 charitable deduction. We must receive your donation in the church by December 31, 2006 or by mail with a December 31 postmark in order for it to appear on your 2006 Contribution Statement.

Please drop your donation off at the Business Administrator's office, Room 216.

Thank you for your faithful stewardship throughout this past year.

Barb Schissler, Business Administrator

## Living Single Group

The Living Single group, for single adults over forty, meets the first and third Tuesdays each month at 7:00 p.m. in Room 102. We are always welcoming new members. The activities are varied and include weekend outings, dinners, guest speakers, etc. We invite you to join us on Tuesday, December 19. Bring a friend and your ideas for activities. For more information, contact Bill Brown (412-3769), Jane Hogan (454-5277), or Glenda McCollum (394-9857).

## Wayfarers Merge with Adventurers

On Sunday, December 17, the Wayfarers Sunday School class will merge with the Adventurers Class in order for these two classes to combine their resources and energy and continue in ministry together.

The Wayfarers Class came into existence with the beginning of Christ Church and several of the charter members are still active. We appreciate the members of this class for their past contributions to our church and for their continuing support as they begin this new chapter in the life of their class.

## Sunday Sermons Now Available Online

The Sunday scripture reading and sermon is now available online through the Christ Church website at [www.ccum.net](http://www.ccum.net). Click on the link on the home-page to download in mp3 format. The sermon posting began with November 5, 2006 service.

## Membership Class



If you are interested in joining Christ Church United Methodist, we invite you to attend our Membership Class to explore this opportunity and step in your faith journey.

The class meets on the third Sunday of each month from 10:10 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. **The next class will be on Sunday, December 17, in the Senior Pastor's office, Room 220.** There will be an opportunity to meet each other and some of the pastors on staff, to ask questions, to discuss what it means to be a Christian, to find out more about Christ Church, and to learn what expectations we have of our members. An optional tour of the building will follow the class. Please contact Rev. John Hill at [john@ccum.net](mailto:john@ccum.net) or 893-2201, ext. 224 for more information or to register for the class.

## Looking to 2007...

### Confirmation Mentors Needed!



Confirmation begins on Wednesday, January 10 and we are still in need of men mentors for six young men in our class. Can you give some time to help a young man in our church through his Confirmation experience this year? Confirmation Sunday is March 25. You will be blessed and be a blessing to someone else as well. Please contact Katie Trehwella, 893-2201, ext. 266 or email to [katie@ccum.net](mailto:katie@ccum.net), if you can serve in this ministry in 2007.

### Explorers Class Begin New Study in January

On January 7, the Explorers Sunday School Class will begin a new study using CCUM member Liz Curtis Higgs' book "Bad Girls of the Bible." If you would like to join us for this multi-week study, you will find us in Room 115 (lower-level, down the hallway along the left side of the gym). More information can be found on our class website at [www.ccum.net/explorers](http://www.ccum.net/explorers).

Byron Graham, class member

# Celebrating the Season

## CHRISTMAS CONCERTS

ARISE  
SHINE  
YOUR LIGHT  
HAS COME

DEC 17, 5:00 & 7:30 PM  
DEC 19, 7:30 PM  
DEC 21, 7:30 PM

**The Christ Church shuttles will be operating from the Brownsboro Center and The Summit parking lots for all concerts beginning one hour before each concert.**

**We encourage you to ride the shuttles to free up parking for visitors.**



### Worship Services

#### Sunday, December 24

##### 10:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary

Nursery available for children under two.

There will be NO Sunday School on Christmas Eve.

##### 4:00 and 6:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary (child-friendly)



##### 8:00 and 11:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary (musical prelude begins at 10:45 p.m.)

Communion will be served at all evening services.

Childcare will be available at the  
4:00, 6:00, and 8:00 p.m. services.



### Third Sunday of Advent

The third Sunday of Advent is the Sunday of "Joy." We light the third candle of the wreath (a special pink one), we are reminded that the promised event is one that is filled with great joy. Joy is a characteristic of Advent that stirs us and charges us with prophetic excitement. The candle of joy is a light of God's generosity to all people. May we feel the wonder of Bethlehem this year and may our hearts abound with joy.

# Looking Inward

Jim Fleming, Counseling Pastor



## “Longing To See the Baby Move”

Raised in the Bible belt of the South, he was well churched. What this meant was that he was taken to everything going on in the church as a child. It didn't matter what the occasion, his parents, sister and he were right in the middle of it. Most of his school friends attended the same church. As a matter of fact, he'd met his beautiful wife there. It was during a particular Christmas that she caught his attention. He'd seen her around, but her face stood out in the small high school choir that particular Christmas. She looked like an angel. By the end of college, he'd proposed, and they had married a week after receiving their diplomas.

His job took them away from their home town and church. Ten years up the road they had two wonderful children. Both had found a church to their liking. They sang in the choir and he taught a Sunday school class for teenagers. If you'd asked him about his Christian faith, his answers would have flowed smoothly, filled with bubbling confidence. His favorite time of the year he would have said was, without a doubt, Christmas. The colors, the sounds, the good news of Christ's birth gave him a jump start for the New Year. He was crystal clear who was in heaven and who was out. Though his wife gently teased him about his black and white view of life, he wasn't much disturbed about such teasing. He knew who God was and who Christ was and, well, the rest better get on board. Nothing, he felt, could shake his faith. But a tsunami was headed his way. An underground earthquake in the quiet ocean of his life erupted. His dear, precious, tender, sweetheart of a wife

died, and the wave moved over 500 miles an hour under the surface of the water. When it came ashore, life turned dark in a heartbeat.

It's been four years after her death in a car accident. Counseling helped his children adjust to being without their mom, but he was still a mess. The enormous wave of her death lifted his feet off the ground, slamming him hard face first into sharp, cutting rocks that bled him to the bone of his soul, and then the wave tried to suck him back out into the sea and drown him. He'd started drinking to calm his pain. His pain was so, so deep. At night he still cried out in terror, in anger, in despair over the loss of his precious other. There were no neat little sayings that put this injustice into a nice little box. He resented church members reminding him of God's care for him through his pain. He stomached the Christmas programs at church primarily to be with his children. His faith was dead, or at least his old faith was washed away by the tsunami of his wife's death. He was at ground zero.

He was struggling with questions that he realized most church folks didn't want to ponder, so he kept them to himself. He realized his faith had been a second hand one. He'd merely echoed what others believed. His “cram-and-jam-it-down-others'-throats” style of Christian witness was actually a witness to his own untested beliefs. Now he'd been washed onto the shoreline of a wilderness to face God whom he distrusted and hated. Without realizing it, his inner eyes, those attached to the face of his soul, were opened for the first time. Like

## Ongoing Support Groups

- **Divorce Recovery Group** meets each Thursday from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. in Room 206 for both church and non-church members.
- **Grief Support Group** meets on Mondays from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. in Room 206.

Contact Jim Fleming at 893-2201, ext. 230, if you are interested in learning more, or to participate in either group. Brochures are also available in the hallway outside the Receptionist Area.

never before, he needed Christmas to come through for him. How, though, he had no idea.

He'd come early to the Christmas play. His daughter was playing Mary. He found himself staring, just staring at the plastic baby lying in the manger scene on the church stage. He stared hoping and longing that the baby would become real. He felt he was losing his mind. At that moment he saw he had settled for a plastic faith that was easily shattered by the wave of his wife's death. He longed for a real live Jesus baby that actually moved with the up's and down's of life. He longed for an authentic faith that wasn't so much a defense against life but was a way of life for him. The more he longed, the more he wanted to wander to the manger alongside the wisemen and shepherds. He needed to see the baby move, so he wouldn't feel so alone without his precious, sweetheart of a wife. Plastic wouldn't do anymore! His wife was gone!

**(Dr. Fleming provides individual, marital, family and group counseling for Christ Church: 893-2201, Ext. 230.)**



## Prayer Calendar for Week of December 17 - 23

*“You have made known to me the path of life; You will fill me with joy in Your presence, with eternal pleasures at Your right hand.”* Psalm 16:11 NIV

### This Week Pray for

**Sunday:** Worship services and those leading them... may we find God's joy this third Sunday of Advent

**Monday:** Church staff – Daniel Light, Music Ministry Associate

**Tuesday:** Job Transition group

**Wednesday:** Church staff Christmas lunch

**Thursday:** Chancel Choir and Handbell Concert – “Arise and Shine”

**Friday:** Persecuted Christians in Iraq

**Saturday:** The Fellowship Chili Cook-off

**Prayer Challenge:** May we pray for the joy that can only come through Christ this Advent season.

**Thought for the Week:** “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!” Philippians 4:4 NIV

**Prayer Chain Contact:** Prayer Chain Coordinator, Bob Parr, 327-8184 or Leigh Ray, 893-2201, ext. 222.

# Our Church Family

**NEW MEMBERS** We welcome the following new members who joined our church family on Membership Sunday, December 3.



## Mark and Meredith Alexander

Mark and Meredith place an associate membership at CCUM while maintaining their full membership at St. Luke's Episcopal Church. They have two daughters, Emily (five-years-old), and Ainsley (one-year-old). Mark is the Senior Vice-President with eastern operations of Atria. Meredith is an attorney but is currently working as a full-time stay-at-home mom.



## Irene Harrison

Irene transfers her membership from Bardstown UMC in Bardstown, KY. She is retired and has two daughters, three sons, nine grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren!



## Durand and Kim Minor

Durand and Kim transfer their membership from Buncombe Street UMC in Greenville, SC. Daughters, Olivia (five years), and Adelle (one and a half), are placed on our preparatory roll following their baptism (see article above). Durand is the general manager with Applied Industrial Services, and Kim works for IBM.



## Brendan and Amy Cahill

Amy transfers her membership from Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Washington, DC, and Brendan maintains his full membership in the Catholic church and places his associate membership at Christ Church. Their sons, Joseph (two and a half), and Harvey (nine months), have been added to our preparatory roll. Brendan is a manufacturing engineer, and Amy is an attorney.



## Jay and Lynn Long

Jay and Lynn join us by reaffirmation of faith. Their son, Will (two-years-old), and daughter, Lucy (eleven months), are added to our constituency roll. Jay is in real estate, and Lynn is a stay-at-home mom.



## David and Jennifer Musich

Jennifer transfers her membership from Westland UMC in Lebanon, TN, and David joins us by reaffirmation of faith. Sons, Connor (one and a half), and Max (two and a half), are added to our constituency roll. David is a radiation oncologist, and Jennifer is a research technician.

## BAPTISM

**Olivia Hope Minor**, (5/14/01), and **Adelle Faith Minor**, (2/15/05), daughters of Durand and Kim Minor were baptized at our 9:00 a.m. service on December 3 by Dr. Strunk. Olivia and Adelle have been added to our preparatory rolls.

## HOSPITAL CARE LIST

*As of Wednesday, December 6, the following persons were in the hospital or in rehab.*



### IN THE HOSPITAL:

**Stu Spransy**  
**Marsha Wardlaw**  
**Steve Wenger**

### IN REHAB:

**Ethel Cropper (Bapt. E. Rehab)**  
**Mark Radell (Oaklawn)**  
**Dottie Watkins (Oaklawn)**  
**Anne West (Jefferson Place)**

## ARMED SERVICES LIST

*The following family members continue to serve in the Middle East. We as their church family want to continue to uphold them and their families in prayer. As we pray for peace, please also remember all the service men and women serving throughout the world.*

**Sgt. Trevor Pruitt, US Army**  
(nephew of Marilyn Sangiuliano)

**Sgt. James R. Rose, USAF**  
(nephew of Theresa and John Bondurant)



**Sgt. James G. Taylor, USMC**  
(son of Jim and Pam Taylor)

**2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Christopher Wardlaw, US Army**  
(nephew of Russ and Marsha Wardlaw)

**Lt. Col. Kevin Wright, US Army**  
(brother-in-law of Scott and Barbie Dickens)



# Worship the LORD

## Worship Schedule

### Sundays

**8:00 a.m.** in the chapel  
Communion served weekly

**9:00, & 11:15 a.m.** in the sanctuary

**10:10 a.m.** Sunday School

### New to Christ Church?

Come check out the Discovery Class at 10:10 a.m. on Sunday mornings in Room 224 to meet some folks, grow in your faith, and learn about our ministries. For more information, contact Rev. John Hill at john@ccum.net or 893-2201, ext. 224.

### Sunday Morning Bus Shuttles

⇒ Park at Brownsboro Center or at the Summit's upper parking lot (corner of Hubbards and US 42) and get a quick ride to church.

⇒ The shuttles run from 8:15 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.

*If you would like to volunteer to drive the 12 or 25 passenger van, please contact Dave Allison at 245-1575.*

### Church Office and Building Closings



The church offices will be close for the Christmas holiday at noon on Friday, December 22. The offices and building will be closed on

Monday and Tuesday, December 25 and 26. We will resume normal operations on Wednesday, December 27.

### Reflections

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### Our Mission

Christ Church provides opportunities to  
**Connect to God,**  
**Connect with people,** and  
**Connect with ministry,**  
through the transforming power of Jesus Christ.

### Vital Signs

#### Worship Attendance December 2 & 3

Weekend attendance	1566
Weekend attendance last year	1409
Sunday School attendance	667

#### Contribution Report as of December 3

Budget pro-rated to date	\$2,501,055
Contributions received to date	\$2,146,838
Amount needed to be on budget	\$354,217

CCUM Website... SEE IT FIRST ON THE WEB!

**\*\*NEW\*\***



**SUNDAY SERMONS NOW AVAILABLE  
DAILY CALENDAR  
REFLECTIONS NEWSLETTER**

We hope you will visit our website often.  
E-mail comments and suggestions to  
webmaster@ccum.net

**LOG ON TO WWW.CCUM.NET AND STAY CONNECTED!**