



# Thank You

A much belated Thank You for the invitation to preach at Grace during the 150<sup>th</sup> celebration - and for the gifts the congregation gave us. The shirts, mugs and cookbook are all being put to good use - and it was a wonderful weekend for us. Thanks!!!

Nancye Dunlap

Again, we had a wonderful response to our Adopt A Family this past Christmas.

As I opened my trunk and backseat to help the clients transfer the christmas gifts, she was so overwhelmed. Her comment was "God is so Good!" What a blessing you were for this family.

Cathy Covington, ALIVE

Blessed are the Givers...and Grateful are the Receivers.

Thanks so much!

Thank you for all of our family Christmas gifts. They were greatfully appreciated.

The Adopted Family



Thank You!

I am so blessed to be a part of the ministry of GUMC. Thanks for your expressions of appreciation and love throughout the year. Now I have a special Christmas gift to share with friends. The gift certificate to Cracker Barrel is perfect for me!

Marje Bandy

It is so wonderful to be appreciated. This church is so good at doing that. Thanks so much for the gift card to Cracker Barrel. With life being so busy it comes in handy for those days that you don't feel like cooking or you just want to get away from the kids for a while. Thank you again for your thoughtfulness.

Shirley Isgriggs and Sheri Griffin



## Children's Church

Children's Church is an opportunity for children in grades K-5 to worship in a less restrictive environment than the sanctuary. Each Sunday (except the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday) children may be excused from the worship service immediately following the Time for Young Disciples to attend their own church service. There are always two teachers to lead your children through a Veggie Tales lesson, activities and prayers. All children in grades K-5 are welcome to attend, or they may choose to remain in worship with their parents. Either way, Children are always welcome at Grace UMC!

## February Book Discussion

The book selection for February is *Absolute Power*, by David Baldacci. It is the story of Luther Whitney, a career break-in artist who finds himself in the wrong place at the wrong time, and Alan Richmond, the U. S. president with the power to commit any crime. It has been described as a "shattering, relentless, suspenseful thriller that will change the way you think about Washington - and power - forever." We will meet on Monday, February 25, at 7:00 PM for a lively discussion of this book. Your input and ideas are important, and you are invited to be a part of the conversation. Please join us!

## Kids' Choir

Kids' Choir began the new year by singing a baptismal song in January. We plan on singing the second Sunday of each month during the second service. On Sunday, February 10, we will be singing "God Made Me", one of their favorites!

## Ash Wednesday Worship

The church season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. In observance of that day, there will be a special worship service on Wednesday, February 6, beginning at 6:30 PM. It will include both the Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion. You are invited to join in taking these first steps in the Lenten journey. You are also encouraged to invite others to join you on this journey. God's table is open to all people, and God's grace is available to all. Let us make this time of Lent a holy one as we travel it together, seeking God's grace, and sharing God's love.

## Floods in Nova Mambone

We have received the following letter from Ezy, our Mozambican liaison to our partner church in Nova Mambone, concerning the recent flooding there.

*Nova Mambone is the village where the church with the same name is located. Two days ago I had a conversation with the D. S. Ana Maria of Inhambane North District and she provided me with a desolate account of the flood situation in that area. She had two aborted attempts to visit the church and community there. The village is located along the Indian Ocean and literally crossed by the Save River. It is an area that suffers cyclical natural disasters. You may have been informed that the previous floods left damages last year, followed by the Cyclone Favio which claimed extensive damages and loss of human life as well last February 2007. Today, after the recovery from the cyclone and with your support, this church and its villagers was severely hit by floods once again. The parsonage, kitchen, toilets and chapel were destroyed and the pastor and members of that congregation live in tents at the hilltop of the village. Many people were left without shelter and food. Local government is trying to alleviate the situation supplying tents and food but the needs are increasingly high.*

*The D. S. has already instructed the pastor to request space of land through local authorities to move the church from the flood area.*

*Your prayers are needed as they go through this problem.*

*She has promised to continue monitoring the situation, as rains are continuing falling in the region.*

*Blessings, Ezy  
January, 2008*

Please continue to uphold our brothers and sisters affected by this flood in your prayers. Very soon, we will be collecting funds to help them in their rebuilding efforts. Your prayers and support are greatly appreciated!

## **Blocks for Juarez**

Our Volunteers in Mission team is getting very excited about our trip to Juarez, Mexico in April. We will be building a home for a family in need in Anapra, a community on the outskirts of Juarez. These homes are simple concrete block structures, with a plywood roof and concrete floors, but they provide protection and place for a family that has perhaps been living in a cardboard box or a shack made out of pallets.

Even if you can't go to Mexico, there is a way that you can be a part of this exciting mission. The Volunteers In Mission team is selling concrete blocks. Each block costs \$5.00. You are invited to purchase one or more blocks, perhaps in honor or memory of someone, or as a special present for the person who has everything!

All of the money collected from these block sales, which will continue throughout the month of February, will go to help pay the cost of the building materials. A list of all of those who have purchased blocks will be placed into the foundation of the house, giving our congregation a permanent connection to the family who will occupy it!

Envelopes to make your block purchases are available in the church office, or in the entryway on Sunday mornings. Thank you so much for your support of this project!

## **Is Your Light Shining?**

If you haven't yet taken the opportunity to light a Commitment Candle, why not make this coming Sunday the time start? It's simple. Find a Commitment envelope in the Commitment Candle Box, located by the organ in the front of the sanctuary. Fill it out, put \$4.00 in it, and drop it in the slot on the top of the box. Then, sign one of the small Prayer Parchments, roll it up and place it in one of the openings on the Commitment Candle Stand (which is in front of the pulpit). Place a white candle in the same spot. Light your candle each Sunday at the beginning of worship as a way to remember the commitments you have made.

## **From the Finance Committee**

The 2008 Budget is complete and available in the church office, if you are interested. Because our 2008 apportionments are lower, and because we are anticipating slightly lower heating and cooling bills because of our new units, the budget is down a little from 2007. In 2007, we were able to pay all bills and 70% of our apportionments. In 2008, we hope to pay at least 80% of our apportionments, and with your help, we will be able to pay them all.

It's not too late to pick up a can from the table in the Narthex. This month (Feb) the can totals will help to pay utilities, and the March cans will help with the \$2000 insurance bill due April 1<sup>st</sup>. We plan to continue with the cans, designating something for each month. This is the opportunity for you to get rid of all that change you don't want to carry around, and help the church at the same time. The cans for apportionments last November and December totaled over \$2000. That was great help and we are hopeful that it will continue to help.

## **Chocolate Festival**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Chocolate Festival will be February 9<sup>th</sup> from 1 pm until 5 pm. We had a great response from the Church and the community last year and are planning bigger and better things for this year. We have expanded our kids' games and moved them to a larger area. The fudge contest will take place. The cake walk was the surprise hit last year, and we are planning to run it all during the Festival. In addition, we will have a silent auction, homemade candy, cakes, cookies and pies to buy (all chocolate, of course). A new feature this year will be ready made gifts. Since it is only a few days before Valentines Day, we will have available some pre-packages chocolate gifts for your sweetie. We need all things chocolate: fudge, candy, cookies, cakes to sell and cakes for the cakewalk, brownies, chocolate covered pretzels, etc., etc. Please have these items to the church on Friday afternoon or early Saturday. Fudge contest entries must contain a recipe and a plate of fudge with 6 pieces. (Please bring the rest to sell.) We also need workers. If you can spare a few hours of time, come help us. We had a great time last year. Come be part of it. (By the way, SMELLING chocolate does not add calories, but it's not nearly as much fun as EATING it.)