



# News From Holland

Holland First United Methodist Church

December 2011

Dr Phil Shuler, Pastor

Web Site: [www.hollandum.org](http://www.hollandum.org)

## FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN

Once upon a time – many years ago – the Christmas season began the day after Thanksgiving. I know because I remember those days. Such is not the case today! The Christmas season begins...who knows when...the day after Halloween? Seriously, Christmas begins as soon as merchants get the Christmas items on the shelves. Actually, I believe I saw some Christmas items out prior to Halloween this year!

Upon reflection, this might not be such a bad idea. I don't say this in a joking manner. Do we not believe that it would be great if we celebrated the Christmas spirit year-round? If we could only find a way to add nine more months to the season, we really could observe Christmas every day of the year.

Wouldn't it be wonderful to be able to sing "Tis the season to be jolly" every day? Of course, this is not realistic. But the good news is that we can experience the season each year. And the best news is that it is here once again! We may not know when merchants begin Christmas, but the church officially begins the celebration of Christmas with the First Sunday in Advent, Sunday, November 27. The four Sundays in Advent remind us that we have four weeks to prepare for the celebration of Christ's birth.

We do this in several ways. Of course, the exchange of gifts probably becomes our initial concern. It is for me, because I never know what to get. No doubt, some of you reading this have already begun making your lists! Remember, it's really the thought behind the gift rather than the dollar amount we spend. In fact, a gift in which one places time, effort, and skill often means more than expensive store-bought gifts. This Christmas, think about giving a gift of self. Given current economic circumstances, such gifts not only cost less. They are more personally valued.

Then there are the decorations of the home including a Christmas Tree, poinsettias, green garland all around, wrapping presents, and eagerly awaiting the dawn of Christmas Day. My wife, Anita, and I want to invite you to our Christmas Open House that will be on Saturday, Dec 17 from 3:00-5:00 PM. Directions: from Midway Rd, take Hickory St toward Lions' Park. Turn right on Robinhood Dr (just before the creek) and go to the end. The address is 4014 Robinhood Dr. Love to have you!

This year we have special services in a beautifully decorated sanctuary to help us maintain a true Christmas spirit. Take note and mark your calendars!

**Sundays., Nov 27, Dec 4, 11, 18** *First-Fourth Sundays in Advent*

**Sun., Dec 18, 6:00 PM** *Community Christmas Service of Carols, Communion, and Candles at Holland UMC*

**Tues., Dec 20, 6:00 PM** *Cowboy Christmas Service at the Hegar Ranch*

**Sun., Dec 25** *GOD'S GIFT TO US – Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!*

Regardless of the economy, come and celebrate this Christmas! Have a Blessed CHRISTMAS! See ya in church...

Phil Shuler, Pastor

## Community Breakfast

The December 4th Free Pancake Breakfast will be held at the Kuhlmann Center 7:30-9:30am. Regular church service will follow at 9:30 am. Come and enjoy the food and fellowship!

## Judy's News

We are still growing. We prepared for the 60 families that came last month but low and behold 70 families came through. The extra 10 families received their turkeys on the following Sunday before Thanksgiving. Our shelves were bare but low and behold the Granger I.S.D. held a food can drive and I picked up the bounty today. With that and the generous donations from you all with more coming we will have enough I know for the Christmas giving on the 15<sup>th</sup>. God is good! I know I enjoyed my Thanksgiving meal knowing 70 families from Granger were enjoying the same meal. I cannot thank you all enough for contributing to this mission. The Hegars are even coming down and helping hand the food out. Believe me we are blessed giving as they are receiving. God's mission is spreading to more families and you are helping make it possible. We have just received word we will receive \$250 from the Conference for our Christmas giving. The American Legion here also donated \$250. We are truly blessed.

## UMM

The United Methodist Men will meet on December 10th at 8:00 am in the Fellowship Hall. Come join the fellowship and worship.

## UMW

**We will meet at the home of Kathy Hegar on Dec 7th at 11:30 am for the Annual Christmas Luncheon. Please bring a covered dish and unwrapped toy for a child at Open Arms Ministry in Temple. Everyone is welcome!**

## Cowboy Church

This will be held on Tuesday, December 20<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 P.M. Homemade Soup is on the menu. And don't forget those goodies for dessert. Yummm! It will be a great night to welcome in our Christ Child!

## Community Candlelight Service

The service will be held at 6:00 P.M. on Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup> at our church. All the churches are invited to participate. We have fellowship following the service so remember the finger food. Let's get the word out to have a joyous night of celebrating our Savior's birth.