



# News From Holland

Holland First United Methodist Church

January 2011

Dr Phil Shuler, Pastor

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

## FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN

Hasn't this been a great Christmas Season this year? I know that Christmas Day has past and we are headed for the transition from 2010 to 2011. For the next few days, we will be reading and listening to reports about all that has taken place during the past year, but it really is hard for me to turn loose of Christmas! The good news, however, is that we don't have to turn Christmas loose. We can LIVE Christmas throughout the coming year! By living Christmas, I mean that we can choose to live with a spirit of love, of giving, of generosity, of joy, and of faith. We can choose to relate to friends, family, and even strangers with love and compassion. We can wear a smile on our faces every day of the coming year!

What does "the coming of the new year" mean? Traditionally, it means we have a moment in time to begin once again! That is, 2010 has come to a conclusion with all of its events, and we are now at the threshold of a new year. There will be new experiences, new people to meet, new friends to cultivate, new possibilities, and new joys. Of course, it also may mean new problems and obstacles we will face and strive to overcome. But based on my own experience, what else is new?! The crucial point is that we are given a moment to begin afresh – to start again.

If we think about it, we are confronted regularly with the possibility of beginning anew. In our worship services, we are given the opportunity to "confess our sins" and receive divine forgiveness and healing thereby providing us with a moment of beginning again. Forgiveness means no longer having to carry the baggage of our past actions or inactions. We can truly begin again without feelings of guilt or self-condemnation.

I wonder if God built recurring moments of new beginnings into creation itself. Do we not have the same opportunities every time the sun awakens us to a new day? In reality, every January 1<sup>st</sup> is just another day! AND, every day is a kind of January 1<sup>st</sup>. I mean, every morning, the sun brings all of the possibilities for new life that any beginning of a new year brings.

It is wonderful that we experience the Christmas season immediately before the New Year because we are invited to take the newborn Christ child with us into the New Year. This means that we can take the Christ child with us into each new day and that every moment constitutes a new beginning. It further means that we can "start over" at any moment knowing that God's love enables us to continue living without guilt and fear, and that we can move into the future with confidence and joyful anticipation. "But" – you say – "what if things don't go right?" My answer is that God has built into His creation an infinite number of times when we can begin again – afresh. The fact is: through God's grace we NEVER RUN OUT of chances to start over!

So, I want to wish you a Happy and Productive NEW YEAR! I want to wish you good health and prosperity during the coming year, and please note that this wish includes every day – every moment – the sun initiates a new day during 2011. With the Christ Child within us, we will truly receive God's blessings and new life all during this coming year! See ya in church Sunday.

Phil Shuler, Pastor

## Cowboy Church

The January Cowboy Church will be held on the 16<sup>th</sup> at 5:00pm. I am sure this service will be special as we begin the New Year. Don't forget to bring those sweet goodies.

## Community Breakfast

Jan 2<sup>nd</sup> the UMM are hosting a Community Pancake Breakfast at the Kuhlmann Center at 7:00am and our worship service will also be held there at our usual time. All church members are urged to come early and help them make this monthly event a success. Call Rob Fagner if you have questions.

## Judy's News

### Granger Community Food Pantry

Once again through God's grace we were able to supply 55 families for Christmas dinner and extra for the children who were out of school. The day was busy but filled with blessings and very grateful families. We want to give a personal thank you to all who continue to help make this mission successful.

### Candlelight Service – Granger

Four of the churches were represented at our Community Candlelight Service. Our music was provided by Kristen Zajicek (Holland 1<sup>st</sup> UMC) on the keyboard and Chip Geil (SSCyril Methodius –Granger) on the guitar. Jill and Angelinia Minor, Risa and Victoria Pajestka, and Chip Geil sang to everyone's enjoyment. Approximately 50 were in attendance. It was a great way to welcome our Savior.

### 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Community Service

This service will be held at St. Love All Baptist Church at 6:00 on January 30<sup>th</sup>. Rev. Roy Woolridge from Bartlett has been installed as Pastor there.

## UMW

**Our January organizational meeting will be held on the 19<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm at the Fellowship Hall of the Church. Please join us to help plan our 2011 year.**

## UMM/UMME

The United Methodist Men will meet on **Jan 8th at 8:00 am** the fellowship hall and breakfast will be served

### Everyone's Loss of a Dear Friend

June Stewart went home to be with the Lord on December 21<sup>st</sup>. We each pray our life will have a meaning and will have made a difference when we are called home. June did just that. She has left quite a legacy. June had softness in her heart for the homeless and the hungry and always looked for them so she could brighten their day in one way or another. She loved to decorate and had storage shed full of decorations for all seasons of the year. Her decorations were used and seen in Holland, Academy, and Temple. Now it is up to us to carry on her legacy. When you see someone in need, extend your hand, and when the seasons to decorate are here, lend a helping hand. She was always filled with zest for life and love of travel. She was compassionate about children and anyone who seemed not to fit in. She will be missed in so many ways, but most of all as a friend. Be a good friend to someone and know June is smiling knowing you are making sure her legacy continues. Now our Lord is saying, "Well done, my child."