

# The Word



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FEBRUARY 2010

St. Thomas United Methodist Church

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## February 2010 – BEARERS OF HOPE

Our church was represented once again this year at the DuPage County Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration held at Wheaton College on Monday, January 18<sup>th</sup>. I participated in the worship service and was proud to do so for you. As I listened to Bishop John Bryant, the presiding prelate of the 4<sup>th</sup> Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church, I heard him remind those of us gathered that we are “bearers of hope”. We are the ones who let the world know that God exists (and is alive!). It is up to us to be the “living presence” in the world. That message nearly knocked me off my chair!! Although I know it and preach about it, it’s a different feeling when you hear it from somebody else! And in such an eloquent way... really touches the depth of one’s heart and soul!

It is the daily living and working that we do in the world that lets others know about the existence of God. There are so many other negative forces, ideas and actions that pull at us and distract us. There are others who would try to convince us that we cannot or should not even try to handle such a huge task – it’s impossible. But our faith story reminds us that there is a challenge always before us – reach out, care for, lift up and support our neighbor – that can be done if we work together to accomplish it.

It is a challenge that we take seriously as a church. We have regular opportunities to be the loving arms and hands of Christ in places we don’t even realize. Every mission opportunity that is presented for our consideration is a tangible example of our meeting the challenge of being the “bearer of hope” to the world. Surely there is one that interests each of us at some point.

We are also “bearers of hope” through our denominational giving. Through the years the term “apportionment” has come to be considered a “bad word”. We take offense at this “tax from on high”! We feel as though it is too much, not used properly (or to our own liking), or mismanaged. None of that is true! Our apportionment is our “fair share” of being a part of this connectional church called United Methodist. It is our opportunity to be the “living presence” in parts of this country and the world where we may never get. It helps us support missionaries as well as colleges, universities and seminaries. It gives us an opportunity to send medical help to remote areas as well as feed hungry children. It supports hospitals and clinics and offers hope and wholeness in the midst of chaos and brokenness.

For the first time in over 10 years, we did not reach 100% in our apportionment giving for 2009. Although, we participated in Rainbow Covenant giving throughout the year, we will not receive the same recognition as before during the annual conference session in June. Let us start now to be “bearers of hope” in the world and work toward reaching 100% in our apportionment payments for 2010. It takes each of us stepping up a little more and making a difference. We pray that we can count on you to stand with us.

--Blessings and peace. *Pastor Danita*

The season of Lent begins 40 days prior to Easter, does not include Sundays and begins with the observance of Ash Wednesday. Many years ago in the New Testament, people wore penitential garments, usually made of sackcloth. Then they either rolled in ashes or had ashes sprinkled on them as a sign of repentance for their sins. Today, it is a common practice that ashes are used to mark the forehead of persons with the sign of the cross. The ashes come from the burnt palm branches of the previous year. During these 40 days of the Lenten season, new converts “prepared” themselves for baptism while the faithful “prepared” themselves for rededication. It was a time of

**THE  
SEASON  
OF  
LENT**

soul searching and repentance by making sacrifices, heeding to very special and rigid diets and/or fasting and praying on a more regular basis. All denominations of churches that have a continuous history before 1500 A.D. have observed Lent.

In many countries, the last day before Lent begins (called Mardi Gras, Shrove Tuesday, Carnival, or Fasching) has become the “last fling” day before the solemnity of Lent. Usually during Lent, it is customary to abstain from eating meat, which is why people call this festival *Carnival*, which means *farewell to meat*.

## **2010 LENTEN SCHEDULE**

### **Adult Study Opportunities**

These study options are open to all. Please see the designated leader for study materials and class particulars.

Sunday mornings: 9:00 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. led by Martha Blumer

Thursday mornings: 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. led by Pastor Danita

Thursday evenings: 7:30 p.m. led by Sally Grenzow  
held at Rolland and Sally Grenzow’s home,

### **Additional Worship Opportunities**

Worship services are held every Sunday at 10:00 a.m. with Sunday School for elementary age children and nursery care.

Ash Wednesday Service of Ashes (Wednesday, February 17, 2010) at 7:00 p.m.

Palm Sunday (March 28, 2010) at 10:00 a.m.

Maundy Thursday Communion Service (April 1, 2010) at 7:00 p.m.

Good Friday Service of Darkness (April 2, 2010) at 7:00 p.m.

Easter Sunday Worship Celebration (April 4, 2010) at 10:00 a.m.

**Next month: “From Palm Sunday to Pentecost”**

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## NEWS... FROM THE WORSHIP COMMITTEE

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*Matthew 6:12 Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors*

This request from The Lord's Prayer that Jesus Christ taught to his disciples takes on special meaning as we enter the Lenten season. Whether you use the words debts and debtors, trespasses and those who trespass against us, or sins and those who have sinned against us, during Lent we strive to be more aware of our sins. We would rather not think about our sins, because we think we don't sin much or when we do, it is nothing like murder or robbing a bank. But Jesus reminded his followers that whether the sin is minimal or major, we must ask forgiveness for our sins and strive to not commit or omit what we should do. Use this Lenten season to examine your life and ask forgiveness for your sins. God would have us do this.

February 17 is Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent. Historically, Lent began as a period of fasting and preparation for baptism, and then became a time of penance for all Christians. It lasts for forty days, not counting Sundays, and offers us a time for contemplating our faith journey. Plan to attend Worship on Wednesday, February 17<sup>th</sup> at 7pm, and give some thought about your journey and how to deal with sin in your life.

The theme for Lent is Lenten Sacrificial Sharing. We would encourage you to do one or more of the following in order to make Lent more meaningful for you and, in turn, reach out and help others who are in need:

~ Fast for one meal a week during Lent and bring the money saved as an offering for the Glen Ellyn Food Pantry.

~ Go through your closet and donate clothes to a charity store in your neighborhood.

~ Collect your spare change in a jar during Lent and bring the money to church as an offering to the Glen Ellyn Food Pantry.

~ Bring food donations to church during Lent that will be given to the Glen Ellyn Food Pantry.

February is Black History Month and Pastor Danita will present a sermon series on spirituals. Music, whether sung or recorded, will help us focus on African American songs that helped people through difficult times and inspired their faith in God.

February 21<sup>st</sup> is the 44<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St Thomas UMC and we will celebrate our being a church for these many years. George Littlefield will bless us with an original song that he has written for our special celebration. The quilt that Nancy Valenta has encouraged us to lend a square for will be hung in the Narthex on that Sunday.

Worship is planning to provide training for ushers, liturgists and acolytes within the next month or two. Could you volunteer one Sunday a month to be an usher? Please see George Graham. Could you be a liturgist? Talk to Sally Grenzow or sign up in the narthex. Young people, would you like to be an acolyte? Talk to Tricia Valenta and she is willing to train you for this very important part of our Worship experience. Worship is more meaningful for everyone if you are present on Sunday mornings at 10am. Come and receive the message that God would give you and commune with fellow believers.

See you in church! --Sally Grenzow

Thank you to those who have participated with the banner. We are still taking contributions but they need to be turned in as soon as possible.

-Nancy & Tricia Valenta

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## **ECCLESIASTES BIBLE STUDY**

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Are you searching for the meaning of life? Is the meaning of life the same for all people? Is one person's answer to the meaning of life better than another's? The author of Ecclesiastes talks about wisdom & folly, vanity & meaning, wealth & poverty, toil & pleasure, life & death.

This Bible study, centering on the book of Ecclesiastes, will challenge us with many thoughtful questions. The study book **ECCLESIASTES: THE MEANING OF YOUR LIFE** will be used as a resource, however, participants do not have to buy the book. Assignment sheets will be distributed for you to prepare for the six sessions on Thursday nights at 7:30pm. The dates of the study are February 18, 25, March 4, 11, 18, 25 and we will meet at the home of Sally Grenzow, 2283 Hiram Dr, Wheaton. You are welcome to bring a friend! Please let Sally know if you are interested in joining this study.

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## **FINDING THE CHURCH ONLINE...AND MORE**

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Have you ever searched **umc.org**, **Glen-Ellyn.com**, **stumc.net**? Some of our visitors do and that's how they find us. The **umc.org** site has a Find-a-Church option that includes our church profile. The **Glen-Ellyn.com** village site has a Houses of Worship option that lists our church and links to our website, **stumc.net**.

We also maintain a site on Facebook, listed as **St. Thomas United Methodist Church**. On that site we have 85 friends, including some of our members and their relatives and friends. It is another way to reach out and highlight our current activities and programs.

Please search these sites and let us know what you think about our public presentations. Are there other places we should be?

What's the **more** in the title of this article? That's **us**. Please extend a personal invitation inviting your neighbor to join us in Worship, in a Mission project, in a Bible study class, or at a Fellowship event. We want people to find the church!

Thank you,  
Membership & Evangelism Work Area  
Comments to Nancy Calhoon: e-mail  
[calhoonnr@comcast.net](mailto:calhoonnr@comcast.net)  
or call 630.790.2126

### **New Photo Directory coming soon**

The Photo Directory is in process. Pictures are in place and editing has been done. Hopefully, the finished product will be here by the end of February, thanks to the Membership & Evangelism Work Area folks!

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## **UMW PLANNING CONTINUES**

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On February 8 the UMW will meet at church at 7:30 p.m. Our scheduled program for this evening has been changed. We are pleased to have a program presented by Shalom Ministries for this meeting and encourage you to come hear this interesting program.

At our last meeting we had a wonderful time making tray favors for the children at Shriner's Hospital. We made snowmen of styrofoam balls, adorned with red hats and scarves, and also Valentine nut cups. Please come out and help with our projects. You will have a good time.

Ladies Lunch Out will be on February 23, at 11:30, at Finley's Grill Room, 3131 Finley Rd. Downers Grove, Please call Dolores Koopman if you are able to attend. 630-469-5747.

All ladies are welcome and we are looking forward to see you.

-- Dolores Koopman,  
UMW Secretary

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## GOING GREEN

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Do you have an old prescription or over the counter medication that you no longer need? Various Police Departments (Wheaton Police Department at 900 W Liberty in Wheaton) will receive it and dispose of it properly. DO NOT flush these medications as this will put it into our water supply and that is not good for us or the fish!

Do you have an old computer that does not work anymore? Ask Rolland Grenzow about it and/or take it to a Goodwill Donation Center. They will take any brand in any condition. Go to <http://reconnectpartnership.com> and find local drop-off centers.

And speaking of "Going Green"  
If you have an old computer to get rid of, don't put it in the landfill...RECYCLE it!

DELL and Goodwill have teamed up to provide this service. You can drop any old computer system at your local Goodwill Donation Center. Go to <http://reconnectpartnership.com> and enter your zip code to find a nearby facility with directions. Or here is a list of nearby drop-off locations:

520 S. Schmale Rd., Carol Stream, IL  
60188 (2.7 miles)  
Mon – Fri: 9 AM – 9PM; Sat: 9 AM – 8 PM;  
Sun: 10 AM – 7 PM  
630-682-2563

543 East North Avenue, Glendale Heights,  
IL 60139 (3.6 miles)  
Mon – Fri: 9 AM – 9PM; Sat: 9 AM – 8 PM;  
Sun: 10 AM – 7 PM  
630-790-1654

539 Fort Hill Drive, Naperville, IL 60540 (7.4  
miles)  
Mon – Fri: 9 AM – 9PM; Sat: 9 AM – 8 PM;  
Sun: 10 AM – 7 PM  
630-357-6258

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## FRUIT & NUT SALE BY UMW

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Remember those packages of tasty apricots, mixed dried fruit, delicious dark chocolate bridge mix, crisp walnut pieces and sweet & salty trail mix that the United Methodist Women sold last spring? Well, this fund raiser is coming around again. All proceeds will be given to missions, especially for children and women.

Items available for order are

Light Walnut Halves & Pieces	\$7.00
Deluxe Mixed Nuts	7.00
Salted Whole Cashews	7.50
Colossal Natural Pistachios	6.00
Roasted Whole Almonds	6.00
Turkish Apricot Halves	5.00
Fruit Mix (No Nuts)	5.00
Fruit & Nut Mix	5.00
Sweet & Salty Trail Mix	4.50
Dark Chocolate Bridge Mix	5.50
Mint Melt-A-Ways	7.00

Orders will be taken during February with delivery scheduled for March 14th. Look for the sign-up sheets in the narthex and talk to Mavis Koopman or Sally Grenzow about ordering these goodies.

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## BOOK BUDDIES RESUME

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**Book Buddies** will be meeting on February 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. at the Zwierlein's home.

The book for this month is She Got Up Off the Couch by Haven Kimmel. This book deals with the growing possibilities for women in the post-60s era. "Kimmel has a distinct voice and introduces quirky characters, but even better, she goes beyond memoir to explore the anxiety inherent in the shifting of traditional family and gender roles common to her generation."

All are welcomed to join this group for a relaxing evening of discussion with St. Thomas friends and fellow readers.

Left intentionally blank  
to accommodate the February Calendar



**The trustees are looking for a pickup or panel truck for the church to own.**

*If you have or know of one that might be donated (for tax credit) or purchased at a "very reasonable" price, please let any trustee or the church office know.*

**2009 APPORTIONMENTS PAID AT 50%**

Thanks to the above and beyond contributions received in December 2009, St. Thomas was able to pay an additional \$6,000 toward our 2009 Apportionment, bringing our total paid for 2009 to \$12,048. This represents 50% of our total Apportionment of \$24,096. While it is disappointing not to be able to pay 100% as we have done for at least the past ten years, we were able to work together to bring our total up by year end.

Many thanks to all who contributed to this effort, including our United Methodist Women who generously provided \$800 toward Apportionment supported mission work.

Our Apportionment is our share of connectional giving used to support the work of our district, conference and the worldwide mission of the United Methodist Church. As we look forward to 2010, we are praying that each person will continue to take seriously our commitment to mission and the ministry of our denomination through our apportionment giving. Let's begin now making an extra effort to pay in full for 2010. We need EACH person's participation to make this happen. Please join us!

--Lisa Rivers, Finance Chair

Join us Easter Morning at 8:30 a.m. for breakfast, followed by the annual Easter Egg Hunt for the children and, of course, Easter Sunday worship.

Thanks goes to

**ROSATI'S of Wheaton**  
1287 Butterfield Road • Wheaton  
630-682-3442

for their generous donation of over \$40 toward the cost of pizza served by St. Thomas at PADS in December.

Thanks for supporting STUMC and our community.

**AURORA DISTRICT LAY SPEAKER ACADEMY BEGINS**

It's time for the Aurora District Lay Speaker Academy again! It will be held at First UMC of Downers Grove this year for 5 Sunday afternoons starting Feb. 21<sup>st</sup> thru Mar. 21<sup>st</sup> from 2 to 5 PM. The cost is \$25.00 until 2/14 and \$35.00 thereafter.

The classes being offered this year are:

- Basic (starting) and Youth Basic lead by Roger Curless
- United Methodist Heritage lead by Rev. Jonathan Dean
- Go Preach lead by Rev. Diana Facemyer and Rev. Jodeen Immer
- Lay Speakers lead Bible study lead by Rev. Danita Anderson
- Lay Speakers lead small groups lead by Isamary Velazquez

See me or the STUMC office for registration forms. See me if you have any questions about lay speaking.

Rick Pearson, Dean  
Aurora District Lay Academy

**HAITIAN DISASTER RELIEF**

As of January 24<sup>th</sup>, money donated by St. Thomas members and friends to the United Methodist Committee on Relief, for assisting those affected by the recent earthquakes in Haiti, totals \$1640. We will continue to

accept monetary donations as you are able. Please be sure to indicate "Haiti" on the check memo line.

In addition, we have been collecting items for the Midwest Distribution Center's use in producing "Health Kits". These items have now been sent to the center for distribution to those in need.

We were shown their new nursery room. It is a very clean, warm, inviting atmosphere. They have space for eight babies.

We appreciate your love and support for this mission project. A very special thank you to Bud (Mr. Santa) and to Mary Kay Sheldon who helped coordinate this project.

For your Mission Committee:  
Norma Thorpe & Donna Tucker



## Bible Readings *for the* Month

### February 7

Isaiah 6: 1-8  
Psalm 138  
1 Corinthians 15: 1-11  
Luke 5: 1-11

### February 14

Exodus 34: 29-35  
Psalm 99  
2 Corinthians 3: 12 - 4: 2  
Luke 9: 28-36

### February 17 - Ash Wednesday

Joel 2: 1-2, 12-17  
Psalm 51: 1-17  
2 Corinthians 5: 20b - 6:10  
Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-21

### February 21

Deuteronomy 26: 1-11  
Psalm 91: 1-2, 9-16  
Romans 10: 8b-13  
Luke 4: 1-13

### February 28

Genesis 15: 1-12, 17-18  
Psalm 27  
Philippians 3: 17 - 4: 1  
Luke 13: 31-35

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## GLEN ELLYN FOOD PANTRY

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The pantry wants to thank all of you for whatever you have done to support them. If you have prayed for their work, given money or food, or volunteered at the pantry, it all has helped in their continuing ability to feed the hungry in our area.

On Monday, February 16<sup>th</sup>, they will hold their annual meeting at St. Marks church on Main Street. It will show all we have done this past year and the plans for next year. The time is 9:00 a.m.

For more information, talk to Carol Johnston (630) 871-1505 or call the Food Pantry at (630) 469-8668. Thanks again for your support.

Carol Johnston  
STUMC representative to the Food Pantry

### ***SAVE THE DATES...***

Saturday, February 13,  
as the men of St. Thomas present....  
"Italian Abudanza Dinner"  
*[serving starts at 6:30 p.m.]*  
Menu: spaghetti, mostaccioli, salad,  
breads, desserts  
Tickets: \$3 for Children, \$7 for adults  
with all proceeds going to the building fund.

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The Fellowship Committee presents:  
"STUMC Game Night"  
Friday, February 26  
Details to follow.

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## CHRISTMAS GIFT TREE...

### For Aurora Children's Center

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Thank you for all the beautifully wrapped gifts you gave our children in Aurora. Bud Zwierlein and I delivered them on December 14<sup>th</sup>. Their party was the following Friday.

## **“New Visions” Retreat**

**What is this event?** It's a chance to meet with the St. Thomas community to formulate a vision for the future. Working together, we will discuss where we are now, where we hope to be in 5 years and how we get there. Your thoughts, concerns, questions, etc. are an important part of this process so please plan to join us.

**Who can attend?** Any member or friend of St. Thomas UMC is welcome, joining members of the STUMC Church Council.

**When?** Saturday, February 20,  
9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.,

**Where?** Woodridge UMC, a red brick, single story building located on the north side of 75<sup>th</sup> street in Woodridge. Driving directions will be provided to those who sign-up.

**What should I bring?** You might start with a continental breakfast treat to share along with personal beverage(s) of your choice to drink during the meeting and with your lunch. Coffee will be provided through-out the meeting, and a box lunch (\$10 each, to be collected on-site at the retreat) as we break at mid-day. You are encouraged to bring your own coffee mug to support our “green” efforts.

**How Do I join the fun?** You can be part of this exciting look at the future of St. Thomas by signing-up on the sheet provided in the narthex. Representatives from the Nominations & Leadership Development Committee will be available for the next three Sundays to answer any additional questions you might have...and to help you get signed-up.

It's been said that it takes a village...well you are a citizen of the exciting village called St. Thomas UMC. Won't you be part of this important discussion on the 20<sup>th</sup>?

## **VOLUNTEERS WELCOME**

Did you know that there are many ways you can volunteer to help at St. Thomas?

You could become an usher; you'd be responsible for just one Sunday a month: George Graham would LOVE to hear from you.

Or you could be a liturgist: Discuss this with Pastor Danita or Lay Leader David Flood or signup on the sign-up sheet in the narthex.

How about donating the funds to provide the flowers for the altar on a Sunday morning: See the signup sheet in the narthex, and place your \$15 donation, marked “altar flowers” in the collection plate.

And that same signup sheet offers you an opportunity to be a greeter on Sunday morning: Nancy Calhoon would welcome you as an addition to her team of greeters.

You could join the choir...Wednesday night rehearsals and an active part in each worship service: Just come to rehearsal.

You could help count the offering on a Sunday morning: talk with Betty Pearson to volunteer to join this group.

Or you could help teach Sunday School: George Littlefield is the man to talk with about this fun job.

So many ways to serve...how about you?!!!

2010 Bishop's Day on the District  
“Our Life Together – The Spiritual Discipline  
of Stewardship”

Laity Sessions:  
Thursday, Feb. 25, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Wheatland Salem UMC, Naperville

# The Word

St. Thomas U M C  
St. Thomas United Methodist Church  
2 S 511 Route 53

Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137

(630) 469-1214



*“Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil.”*

*-- Luke 4: 1-2*