



The Window into the heart of

Mt. Lebanon United Methodist Church

Volume 2, Number 4, Holiday 2016

Our Vision: Reaching Outward, Nurturing Inward and Growing Together

by John Esaias, Chair of the Church Council

Recently the Church Council voted to revise our Vision. It has now taken the form of listing all of our church's ministries. Each ministry will be asked to submit at least one achievable goal for the 2016-2017 church year. We are hopeful that our church will experience great progress if each ministry attempts to increase its accomplishments and influence by August 31, 2017.

All of us should be very proud that our church has over 100 active ministries. We urge our 1,000 resident members to reach outward, nurture our faith and grow together while developing disciples through our 100 ministries. To see a list of our ministries, turn to page 3.

You Are Invited to a Town Hall Meeting with Horizons Stewardship

Our congregation will be having a Town Hall meeting with Scott McKenzie from Horizons Stewardship on **Wednesday, November 16th, at 7:30 pm** in Asbury Center. All are invited to attend.

Horizons Stewardship has been contracted to help us identify ways to increase engagement among both active and inactive Church members, whether it be attendance at worship, participation in ministries, or on-going financial support. Scott McKenzie, a principal at Horizons, at one time was on the staff of the Western PA Conference and is very familiar with our Church. Our hope is that Scott can assist us in developing a strategy to reinvigorate our congregation for 2017 and beyond.

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The Benefits of Giving

"Each one should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." 2 CORINTHIANS 9:7

We're entering a time of the year when "giving" is a major theme. This month it's Thanksgiving, and next month it's Christmas. Both holidays have something to do with giving and receiving good gifts. At Thanksgiving, we give thanks to God, who is ultimately the giver of all that we receive. The Bible is clear that the best way to respond to God's generosity is through some generous giving of our own.

This fall, our church has been celebrating the fact that God has blessed us with 1,000 local members (residing in Allegheny County), who all could potentially become involved in our 100 ministries, toward the fulfillment of our 1 mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. You will hear this mantra repeated a lot around here these days – **"1,000 members supporting 100 ministries for 1 mission."** That is our vision of who we are called to be as a Christian congregation in the world today. May God transform this vision into reality through our efforts this year.

Where would our church be today without the fine example of our forbearers in the faith, whose generous response to God's call has laid the foundation for our ministries today? Now it is our turn to lay the foundation for present and future ministry in this place. History and Scripture are both very clear – if you want to grow spiritually, then you must be generous in your giving. This is the best way to give our thanks. *"Each of you must give,"* says Paul, *"as each of you has made up your mind."* God wants us to grow in trust. God wants us to learn to give. God wants us to risk growth in grace by giving back to God in proportion to God's giving to us. In all areas of your life – your time, your talent, and your finances – if you are currently giving at the five percent level, can you increase it to seven percent? If you are giving at one percent, can you increase to two or three percent? Growth is the hope in the heart of God for you and for me! The question for each of us to ask is this: What is the next rung on the stewardship ladder for me? Giving is an act of trust for you and for me. As we grow in our giving to God, our faith deepens, and we open up new opportunities for spiritual advancement in the years ahead. Do you want to really give thanks this season, and move to a higher level in your spiritual life? Giving is an essential key which unlocks the door to spiritual growth for each one of us.

Let's give and grow together!

Pastor Tom

Thomas Q. Strandburg,
Pastor

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1000 members involved in 100 ministries for 1 mission

Reaching Outward

- 1 Week Day Ministries (WDM)
- 2 WDM Pre K Class
- 3 Cub Scout Pack & Dens
- 4 Boy Scout Troop
- 5 Fall Festival
- 6 Community Christmas Caroling
- 7 Good Friday Fish Fry
- 8 June BBQ
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- 12 FoodLift
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Introducing Friedenskirche in Zwickau and Our Partnership

by Deanna Baird



Our partner church is located in the southern part of eastern Germany near the Ore Mountains (Erzgebirge), famous for silver mining and for the woodcarvings of

nutcrackers, smokers, and Christmas pyramids. It is also located near the cultural capitals of Dresden and Weimar. The influences of Luther, Goethe and German history are particularly strong in this part of Germany. More recently, this area was under communist domination, which strongly affected the life of our partner church and its members. In 2017 the area will be celebrating 500 years since Luther began the Reformation!

Most Protestants in Germany belong to the Evangelical Church (main protestant church) which requires a church tax of its members. The Friedenskirche, on the other hand, is a minority church because it is of the Methodist "sect". It is called a "free" church because it requires no tax of its members. Our Zwickau partner church is the largest in the conference with a membership of approximately 600. Since the fall of communism the nature of our partner church's work and the goals of its mission have changed. Its leaders are dealing with an aging congregation, and the church must appeal to a young generation that is mistrustful of organizations. The church music programs and the outreach to the community and to the many refugees have been helpful.

MLUMC has visited Zwickau five times; 1996, 2000, 2004, 2009 and 2013. Zwickau has visited us five times also;



1998, 2002, 2006, 2011 and 2015, in addition to a pastoral working experience in the summer of 2000 when Pastor Stephan Ringeis came with his family and worked at our church. Pastor Lutz Brueckner and his wife Martina led groups to Pittsburgh in the summers of 2011 and 2015. Our new partner pastor will be Christian Posdzich. MLUMC's pastors, Rev. Dr. Harvey, Rev. Hecht, Rev. Dr. Miller, Rev. Warman, and now Rev. Strandburg, have enthusiastically participated in our exchange visits and hostings since 1996.

The Zwickau Committee, a part of the Mission Commission, has started plans for our June 2017 Zwickau trip. The itinerary will include 10-12 days with Zwickau host families, a visit to a city like Berlin before Zwickau and a visit to town in southern Germany after Zwickau. Because of the long hosting experience, the costs are very minimal. While in Zwickau the group will visit various tourist sites and participate in work projects with our partners.

Our next group meeting will be in January, but sign-ups and deposits are beginning now. A \$300 deposit check made out to MLUMC, *Zwickau* written on the memo line, will secure your seat on the plane. Because of airplane/hotel reservations, the sign-up deadline will be at the beginning of January. All ages are welcome—we would like a broad intergenerational span. A conversational German language class has begun this month with another to follow later.

For more information, call 412-606-4719 or e-mail Deanna Baird at fraubaird@aol.com.



*Boy scouts,
Terrific Tuesday
regulars and
volunteers sorted
rummage the
Tuesday evening
before the sale.*

A Rummage Sale Thank You

A whole-hearted thank you to all the rummage sale volunteers who donated goods, effort and energy to the November 5th rummage sale. From the food workers, shoppers, workers, organizers, and drivers—everyone's time and enthusiasm is appreciated. Because of your work, our church mission committee made approximately \$7,600, and will be able to extend a helping hand to our needy brothers and sisters here and abroad. Thank you.



Wrapping Nativity Gifts

Koinonia Circle, under the umbrella of UMW, will be meeting, Wednesday, **November 16 at 7 pm**, in the Welcome Center. We will be wrapping the nativity figures to be distributed to the congregation's children in December. Come join us, have some fun, learn about the long tradition of gifting the figures to children of the church. Paulette Colonna will be guiding us so we won't make any mistakes. Email Betsy Harkins, bbh555@aol.com, with questions.

Ward Home Angels

Ward Home angels for teenagers have flown onto our Narthax Christmas tree. The angels are waiting for church goers to pluck them off the tree, purchase a gift card and fulfill the wish of one of the Ward Home participants, making their holiday season a bit brighter. Ward Home, a long time partner of the United Methodist Church Union family, works with at-risk teens and young adults, providing them with safe, nurturing, home environments. Ward Home counselors use the gift cards from the angel tree to help teach budgeting and money management skills to the youth.

The gift cards for the youth are to be for \$25, for various stores in the area. Directions for returning the cards to the Ward Home are included with the angels.



Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. EPHESIANS 5:1-2



Tiny tots and super-tots dressed for Halloween

Children love to dress up and imitate other people. How wonderful it is that through Weekday Ministries we can offer them the opportunity to imitate Jesus Christ!

On November 23rd the Pre-K children will be performing their annual Thanksgiving pageant in Sanner Chapel. The production, led by Bernice Merchant, Beth Brack and Carol Flaherty, dramatizes the story of the first Thanksgiving while emphasizing God's love, protection and provision.

During Advent, the children will be learning that Jesus came as a baby, just like us. To celebrate his birthday, they will be treated to a special lunch on December 19th and may even get a surprise visit from Santa Claus!

Our Weekday Team is sponsoring a special Christmas breakfast for our dedicated staff on December 21st. Parents will be encouraged to contribute items for the party. We could use more participation on our team. Any church member who wants to serve can speak with Pastor Strandburg, Sandy Waters or Mettelse.



Advent Help Needed

Volunteers are needed to help with lighting candles each Sunday during Advent and to assist behind the scenes for our Christmas Tableaux. The Tableaux is scheduled for the 10:45 service on Sunday, Dec. 18th. Children and adult participants must be available for a rehearsal on Wed. Dec. 14th at 6:30 pm. Contact Kim Rhoton, krhoton@mlumc.org.



CONTEMPORARY SERVICE @MLUMC

Sunday, November 20
6 pm Sanner Chapel

Led by Pastor Tom Strandburg and
contemporary Christian musician B.J. Collins

Come worship at a contemporary service led by Pastor Tom and B.J. Collins with Christian musicians, including church member Keith Moorhouse.



B.J. Collins, a Bethel Park resident, formed a Christian rock band, "70x7" in 1996. He plays regularly with Tara Park, a singer who was at Christ United Methodist for years and is now in Butler serving with her husband Rev. Eric Park. B.J.

also plays at the United Methodist church in New Stanton on Sunday mornings. Anyone who has attended Annual Conference at Grove City has heard B.J. leading the contemporary service.

**Contemporary Service
Sunday, November 20
6 pm Sanner Chapel**

Thanksgiving Meal Prep & Delivery



Our 34th year of delivering meals to homeless, lonely and homebound community members.

Turkeys, kitchen workers, drivers and clean-team volunteers are needed for the annual Thanksgiving Day meal. We need:

Donated turkeys—60 cooked turkeys and 15 cooked turkey breasts, dressing, pies and cans of sweet potatoes

Kitchen workers—20 day workers to work with and assemble meals

Drivers—approximately 50 drivers to help deliver Thanksgiving meals

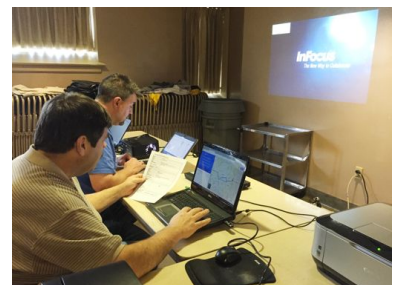
Clean-team volunteers—15 kitchen cleanup workers arriving at 3 pm.

The dine-in portion of the meal is held at Bethany Lutheran Church on West Liberty, from 1 to 5 pm on **Thursday, November 24**. The delivery portion of the meal is held at our church in Asbury Center. Delivery drivers report to our church, not Bethany Lutheran. The sign-up sheet is on the main bulletin board on the 1st floor of the education wing. .

For more info, contact **Sandy Waters, 412.833.3702**, bluepen1123@yahoo.com or **Bonnie Lawson, 412.343.3498**, bonnielawson58@comcast.net.

Last year, we fed over 500 people, so your help is greatly appreciated.

Volunteer drivers wait for delivery directions while volunteers at computers are pulling together the logistics. They're computing time requested and time it takes to get there; locations and proximities; and driving directions - for the delivery of a hot turkey dinner.





Volunteer Opportunities at the Allegheny County Jail

If you've ever thought about volunteering at the Allegheny County Jail, here are some excellent volunteer opportunities. Sing Christmas carols with the inmates, wrap presents and/or donate needed items.

Advent Lessons & Carols Services

Dates:

Thurs. Dec. 1 and/or Wed. Dec. 7

Time: 5:30 - 7:30 pm

Restrictions:

All volunteers must be 21 or older

RSVP:

Call Marci at 412-350-2057 or email
marci.burkhart@alleghenycounty.us

The services will consist of readings, prayers, and carols sung by volunteers. Volunteers from multiple churches will sing together from caroling sheets provided by the Chaplain's Office. No rehearsal is necessary ...just come and sing! Volunteers may choose to come to one service or to both.

Packaging & Delivering Christmas Gifts

Date: Thurs. Dec. 15

Time Slots:

8 am - 1 pm (packaging)

5:30 - 9 pm (delivering)

Restrictions:

All volunteers must be 21 or older

RSVP:

Call Marci at 412-350-2057 or email
marci.burkhart@alleghenycounty.us

The jail needs volunteers to help pack and deliver inmate Christmas Care packages. Christmas is an especially rough time for inmates who are separated from their families and traditional holiday activities. Being remembered by caring volunteers can make a huge difference.

Donating Needed Items

Restrictions: Donor must sign up on the Approved Donor List

More info:

Call Marci at 412-350-2057 or email
marci.burkhart@alleghenycounty.us

The Chaplain's Office provides paperback books, toiletries, calendars, and religious literature to inmates and sweatsuits to inmates being released. We are always in need of these items. Call the Chaplain's Office to become an Approved Donor.

To learn more about volunteering inside the jail, contact: foundationofhope.org

Community Christmas Caroling

Join MLUMC Christmas caroling at homes in the church neighborhood, nearby apartments and nursing facilities on **Sunday, December 18th**. It starts with dinner at 5 pm in Wesley Hall, then caroling at 6 pm, and back to Asbury Center at 8 for hot chocolate and cookies. Don't forget to dress for the weather and bring a flashlight. Register with Kim Rhoton, krhoton@mlumc.org.



Christmas Cookie Sale and British Tea Room

Iced cutout sugar cookies, buttery shortbread, spicy gingerbread people, chewy peanut butter cookies, old-fashioned chocolate chip cookies, nutty almond crescents, melt-in-your mouth ginger crinkles, delicate, sugary lady locks....

These are just a few of the types of homemade cookies the UMW will be selling by the pound as part of this year's Christmas Cookie Sale & British Tea Room event. Mark your calendars now:

**Saturday, December 10
9 AM – noon at the church**

Please plan to arrive early for a premium selection of cookies.

After you've shopped, drop into our British tearoom for a hot cup of tea and a buttery scone with jam and cream served by one of our teens from the Dames In Action (DIA) circle. Hot soup will also be available. The DIA girls will also be selling raffle tickets for gift baskets, which will be on display.

All proceeds will benefit UMW projects and missions.



Calling all cookie bakers

Cookie bakers are needed for this year's Christmas Cookie Sale sponsored by members of the United Methodist Women.

1. Bake a batch of your favorite Christmas cookies.
2. Bring the cookies to the church kitchen on Thursday, Dec. 8 between 9 a.m. and 8 p.m. or on Friday, Dec. 9 before noon. *Please include with your cookies the name of the cookie and a list of ingredients as a courtesy for people with allergies.*

For more information, please contact Sandy Waters at 412.833.3702 or bluepen1123@yahoo.com



World Thank Offering

The United Methodist Women have been collecting a Thank Offering every year since 1881 for the benefit of our women and children's projects around the world.

The United Methodist Board of Global Ministries relies on Thank Offering money to help cover administrative costs and to support missionaries already in the field. A high standard of stewardship and very low administrative costs enable more of each mission dollar to be spent in the field than any other dollar one might give to charity. Because of this, all other funds donated, for example, disaster relief money sent to UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief), go directly to the afflicted or targeted area.

I hope you will take this opportunity to express, with a generous gift, your gratitude to the God from whom flows the bounty with which we are blessed. Please make your check out to *United Methodist Women* with "World Thank Offering" noted in the memo section. You may put your contribution in the offering plate at church on NOVEMBER 20th or mail your check directly to the church.

Yours in Christ,
Joanne Dempe
UMW Treasurer



Holiday Special Events

Thurs. Nov. 24 *Thanksgiving Meal Preps and Delivery* - 1 to 5 pm Asbury Center

Thurs. Dec. 1 and/or Wed. Dec. 7 *Lessons & Carols with Allegheny Co. Jail Inmates* - 5:30 pm

Sat. Dec. 10 *Christmas Cookie Sale & British Tea Room* - 9 am Wesley Hall and Asbury Ctr.

Sun. Dec. 11 *Teddy Bear Sunday* - both services, teddy bear & stuffed animal donations for children's charities.

Sun. Dec. 11 *Lessons & Carols* - MLUMC & St. Bernard's Choir 4 PM St. Bernard's

Sun. Dec. 18 *Nativity Scene Tableaux with Lessons & Carols*, music for Chancel Choir harp and flute 10:45 service

Sun. Dec. 18 *Dinner & Christmas Caroling* - 5 pm Asbury Center and the neighborhood

Sat. Dec. 24 *Christmas Eve Candlelight Services*

Service for Children & Families
5 pm

Traditional Christmas Eve Services with Chancel Choir, harp and flute 8 and 11 pm

Wiggle room for children provided at 5 and 8 pm services

Sun. Dec. 25 *Christmas Day Service* - 10:45 only Sanctuary

Sun. Jan. 1 *New Year's Day Service* - 10:45 only Sanctuary

Poinsettia and the Food Pantry Fund Christmas Memorials

Make a donation to the Food Pantry or purchase a poinsettia in honor or memory of friends or loved ones. The red poinsettias cost \$12.50 and will be on display Sun. Dec. 18, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. You may pick up your plant after the 10:45 am service on Christmas Day. Then, spread the cheer by volunteering to deliver the poinsettia to a shut-in, or ask the church to deliver. **The deadline for ordering flowers is Sun., December 4.**



Christmas Memorials 2016 Order Deadline Sunday, Dec. 4.

Make check payable to MLUMC. Mark the memo line *Poinsettia* or *Food Pantry*.

Donation to MLUMC Food Pantry \$_____ Given in (circle) "memory" or "honor" of :

Purchase poinsettias (number) _____ @ \$12.50 each = _____ Given in (circle) "memory" or "honor" of :

☐ I will pick up ☐ I will deliver to a shut-in ☐ Church to deliver to a shut-in

Donor Name _____ Phone _____



*Give thanks to the
Lord, for he is good;
His love endures
forever.*

November 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
13 9:30 AM Worship Sanner 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Sanctuary 12 PM Celebration of Ministry Lunch 4:30 PM Youth Choir 5 PM Youth Group	14 7 PM Chapel Bells Rehearsal 7 PM German Class	15 6 PM Terrific Tues 7 PM BSA #23	16 6 PM Finance 7 PM Koinonia UMW Circle 7:30 PM Horizon Town Hall	17 9:30 AM UMW Faith Circle 11:30 AM UMW Rebecca 6:30 PM Promise Bells 7 PM Cub Scout 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	18 9:30 AM Women's Bible Study	19 10 AM Food Pantry
20 8:30 AM Worship Sanner 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Sanct. 4:30 PM Youth Choir 5 PM Youth Group 6 PM Contemporary Service 6 PM BSA Eagle Court	21 7 PM Chapel Bells Rehearsal 7 PM German Class 7:30 PM Community Events & Outreach	22 7 PM BSA #23 7 PM BSA Board Reviews	23 6:30 PM Cub Scouts	24 THANKSGIVING OFFICE CLOSED Thanksgiving Meal Prep & Delivery	25 OFFICE CLOSED 9:30 AM Women's Bible Study 6:30 PM Cub Scouts Bear Den	26
27 8:30 AM Worship Sanner 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Sanctuary 4:30 PM Youth Choir 5 PM Youth Group 7 PM BSA Patrol Leaders	28 7 PM Chapel Bells Rehearsal 7 PM German Class	29 6 PM Terrific Tues 7 PM BSA #23	30 6:30 AM N. Side Lunch Prep	1	2	3

Mark
Your
Calendar

Town Hall Meeting

Don't pass up your chance to participate in a Town Hall Meeting with Horizons Stewardship on Wednesday, November 16 at 7:30 in Asbury Center. See page 1 for details.



Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

27

28

29

30

1

8:30 AM N.Side
Lunch Preps
9:30 AM Hands & Heart
Noon TNT Asbury Hgts
5:30 PM Lessons &
Carols @ the AC Jail
6:30 PM Promise Bells
7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal

2

8 AM Kitchen Cleaning
9:30 AM Women's Bible
Study

3

10 AM Food Pantry
10 AM New Member Info
Session

December 2016

4

8:30 AM Worship Sanner
9:30 Sunday School
10:45 AM Worship
Sanctuary
4:30 PM Youth Choir
5 PM Youth Group

5

6:30 PM Tiger Cub
Scouts
7 PM Chapel Bells
Rehearsal
7 PM German Class

6

6 PM Terrific Tues
7 PM BSA #23
7 PM BSA Parents
7:30 PM SPRC

7

5:30 PM Lessons &
Carols @ the AC Jail

8

6:30 PM Promise Bells
6:30 Webelo Scouts
7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal

9

9:30 AM Women's Bible
Study
1:30 PM Memoirs Group
6:30 Cub Scouts Bear
Den

10

9 AM Christmas Cookie
Sale & British Tea
Room

11

**Teddy Bear &
New Member Sunday**
8:30 AM Worship Sanner
9:30 Sunday School
10:45 AM Worship Sanct.
4:30 PM Youth Choir
4 PM Lessons & Carols
@ St. Bernard's
5 PM Youth Group

12

7 PM Chapel Bells
Rehearsal
7 PM German Class

13

7 PM BSA #23
7 PM BSA Reviews
7 PM Cub Scout
Planning
7 PM Charge Conference

14

6:30 PM Wolf Cub Scout
7:30 Finance

15

9:30 AM Faith Circle
6:30 PM Promise Bells
7 PM Cub Scouts
7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal

16

9:30 AM Women's Bible
Study

17

10 AM Food Pantry

18

8:30 AM Worship Sanner
9:30 Sunday School
10:45 AM Worship Sanct.
10:45 Tableaux
4:30 PM Youth Choir
5 PM Christmas
Caroling
6:30 PM BSA Eagle

19

7 PM Chapel Bells
Rehearsal
7 PM German Class
7:30 PM Community
Events & Outreach

20

6 PM Terrific Tues
7 PM BSA #23

21

7 PM Koinonia UMW
Circle

22

6:30 PM Webelo Scouts
6:30 PM Promise Bells
7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal

23

OFFICE CLOSED
6:30 PM Cub Scout
Meeting

24

**CHRISTMAS EVE
Services:**
5 PM for Children &
Families
8 PM & 11 PM
Traditional

Hosting Family Promise

Sun. 12-18 through Sun. 12-25

Hosting Family Promise

25

MERRY CHRISTMAS
10:45 AM Worship
Sanctuary

26

OFFICE CLOSED

27

7 PM BSA #23

28

29

30

OFFICE CLOSED

31

10 AM Food Pantry

1

HAPPY NEW YEAR
10:45 AM Worship
Sanctuary

Christmas Day and New Year's Day fall on Sunday this holiday season. MLUMC will observe the holidays with ONE service at 10:45 on each Sunday.

Mt. Lebanon United Methodist Church

3319 West Liberty Avenue • Pittsburgh, PA 15216
(412) 531-7131 • fax (412) 531-7155 • www.mlumc.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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FAMILY PROMISE HELPED AGAIN !



Thanks to everyone who greeted our guests, cooked dinners, drove the van, stayed at the Church, washed the linens, set up rooms, purchased supplies, made phone calls....and helped make three homeless families welcome when they stayed at our church in October. Because of you, each family was able to have a room to themselves, where they could sleep, spread out, and feel "at home".

During the daytimes at Family Promise's Crafton House, the adults not at work could receive advice and counseling to help them to find and establish new permanent homes. When they returned to MLUMC in the early evening, there was always a delicious warm meal awaiting them. The children attended school during the days, and had space to play, read, do their homework and make friends during their stay at MLUMC.

Our next Family Promise hosting will be the week before Christmas, Sunday, December 18 until Sunday the 25th. What a meaningful week that is for us as Christians. And what an opportunity it will give us to provide "room at the inn" and make real our commitment to our fellow men - and women - and children !

I have a feeling that our congregation will prove up to that challenging task, and will step forward readily when Mike Naragon issues his call for volunteers. I hope I'm right !

Hazel Cope