

## Pastor's Ponderings from Rev. Trish

I write this article following two very busy months as we prepare for a very busy time of year: Thanksgiving and Christmas. During September and October, I attended three continuing education events: "Not Your Parent's Offering Plate" by J Clif Christopher; "Exploring the Longevity Revolution: Aging and Ministry in the 21st Century" led by: Dr. Richard Gentzler, Jr., Director of the Center on Aging and Older Adult Ministries, General Board of Discipleship, UMC; and "Effective Evangelism in a Changing Culture" with David Kinnaman, author of "UnChristian". We observed Consecration Sunday on September 26, making our financial commitment for 2011 and were reminded it is really a matter of our heart. When Christ truly has our whole heart, we give through His church. Charge Conference was held on October 17. We remembered those who died since our last meeting, celebrated baptisms and those with renewed walks with Christ, and elected officers for 2011. The district superintendent, Rev. Becki Curry challenged us with a devotion based on Acts 8:26-35: to come along side, to sit with and tell of Jesus and His love.



All of these events were very interesting and informative. **Clif Christopher** stressed there are more nonprofit organizations every single year and the number of churches remain constant. The competition for charitable dollars is skyrocketing. The church needs to shift its thinking and educate members and attendees as to why give to the church over other nonprofits. The church needs to be better at telling the story of changed lives. **Dr. Gentzler** covered four important areas of aging and ministry concerns: myths and realities of aging; spirituality and aging; Boomers and aging; and older adult ministry models.

**David Kinnaman**, a part of The Barna Group, shared what a new generation (16-29 year olds) really thinks about Christianity ... and why it matters. Kinnaman spent three years doing research and discovered six broad themes raised by the outsiders. The most common points of skepticism and objections are (1) hypocritical – saying one thing and doing another; (2) too focused on getting converts – do we genuinely care; (3) anti homosexual –bigoted and show disdain for gays and lesbians; (4) sheltered – old-fashioned, boring, and out of touch with reality; (5) too political – overly motivated by political agenda; (6) judgmental – quick to judge and they doubt we really love people as we say we do. We may not agree with these six broad themes, but we should not ignore the views of the outsiders. We need to deal with this generation as they are, brazen, candid and irreverent. If we do not, it makes their criticism even more forceful because it goes unanswered. ("UnChristian", page 30)

**Isaiah 43:18, "Forget the former things, do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing. Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland."** was the key verse for Mr. Kinnaman and Bishop Lindsey Davis. Bishop Davis spoke on "Transforming Existing Congregations". The reality of 1 in 6 Americans are unaffiliated with any religious group and 1 in 4 young adults (ages 18-30) are unaffiliated was stressed over and over.

I wonder how different our Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas celebrations will be as we ponder the above verse, and the current realities of what a new generation thinks about Christianity and the numbers that are unaffiliated with any religious group. Below are the events that we will be planning in the next few weeks. Let us pray for direction as we, as a congregation, "*Embrace extraordinary risk and change in order to grow—experiment, innovate, adapt, create and learn new paths*" to reach out to those that are unaffiliated.

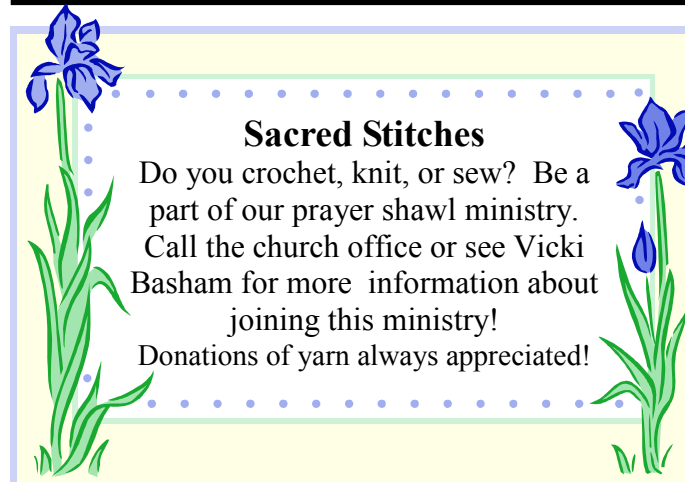
The Okolona Ministerial Association will be hosting an ecumenical Thanksgiving Worship on Wednesday, November 24, 2010, place to be announced. Advent will be celebrated from November 28 – December 19. This will be a time to prepare ourselves for the coming of Christ. December 19 will be an evening of sharing our gifts, followed by a Christmas tea. We will have a family friendly Christmas Eve Service at 6:00pm and Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion at 8:00pm.



**Worship Time**  
**Sunday School at 9:30 AM**  
**Worship at 10:30 AM**

## Opportunities for Ministry

- Cards for Military and their families...contact the church office for more information
- Interested in visitation? Contact Rusty Hudgell
- Cooper Memorial sponsors Cub Pack, Boy Scout Troop, & Venture Crew 190. Any boy 1<sup>st</sup> grade through age 20 is invited to become a part of this vital ministry. Contact Rusty Hudgell 964-5251 for more information.
- Children's Ministry volunteers needed— contact Renee Hudgell



### Sacred Stitches

Do you crochet, knit, or sew? Be a part of our prayer shawl ministry. Call the church office or see Vicki Basham for more information about joining this ministry! Donations of yarn always appreciated!

Advent is the perfect time to clear and prepare the Way. Advent is a winter training camp for those who desire peace.

-Edward Hays



**Forever Young**  
**Meets monthly 4th Monday of every month.**  
**AARP**  
**Meets 3rd Thursday of every month.**

### UPWARD SEASON 12

It's time to begin planning for our season. What can you do?  
 Volunteers are needed: coaches/assistant coaches, referees, concession stand help, time keeper, scorekeepers, practice night hospitality room workers (this is a chance to make the connections)  
 If you're willing to volunteer please contact Barb (322-7986) or Renee (338-1970). Background checks need to be updated and the process can be started now.  
 Help us make this an awesome 12th season.

## Children's Worship Ministry

Children ages 4 and up are encouraged to pick up a "Worship Bag" as they enter the Sanctuary. We are excited that you will be joining us for worship and look forward to seeing you grow in Jesus. All "Worship Bags" are to remain at church.

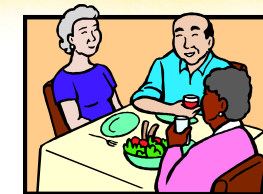


Sing, Share and Pray group on the second Thursday of every month at 1:30 pm. It is held at the Community House of the Village patio homes of Wesley Manor at 5400 East Manslick Rd and is led by Nina Adams.

For more info call 966-2959 or 931-3636

"Bluegrass Squares & Taps"  
 Square Dancing 1st & 3rd  
 Friday 7:30-10 PM  
 Spectators Welcome. Must know how to square dance to participate. For more info call Kenny or Trish Jarvis 955-8341

**Line Dancing**  
**Each Tuesday night**  
**Beginner level**  
**6:15 PM walk-thru steps**  
**6:30-8:30 Class**  
**Cost \$3.00 per person**  
**bigalofamerica@aol.com**  
**or call 502-643-2786**



## Forever Young Holiday Gatherings

Thanksgiving Celebration- November 29th -  
 Social Hall 11 AM  
 Christmas Party -December 20th -meet at church  
 at 11:30 am