

The Church Mouse

- November 2007 -



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF EMMANUEL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

He Comes, Comes, Ever Comes

*Have you not heard his silent steps?
He comes, comes, ever comes.
Every moment and every age,
every day and every night he comes,
comes, ever comes.*

*Many a song have I sung in many a mood of mind,
but all their notes have always proclaimed,
"He comes, comes, ever comes."
In the fragrant days of sunny April
through the forest path he comes,
comes, ever comes.*

*In the rainy gloom of July nights
on the thundering chariot of clouds
he comes, comes, ever comes.*

*In sorrow after sorrow it is his steps
that press upon my heart,
and it is the golden touch of his
feet that makes my joy to shine.*

-From Gitanjali, By Rabindranath Tagore

(continues on page 2)

Worship Schedule

Sunday, Nov. 4 - Consecration Sunday
~ one service only at 10 a.m.

Join us as we celebrate our generosity as a community of disciples by worshipping together. The Rev. David Argo, District Superintendent of the Washington Columbia District, will be our guest preacher.

10 A.M. - Blue Skies Puppet Theatre
Program for Children in
Fellowship Hall
No Sunday School.

10 A.M. - Joint Worship Service

11:15 A.M. - The Amazing Race Brunch
Celebration in Fellowship Hall

(continues on page 2)

December Newsletter deadline -

Articles deadline for The Church Mouse is the second Sunday of the month. The deadline for the December newsletter is Sunday, November 11.

Book Study -

Everybody's Normal Till You Get to Know Them By John Ortburg

Beginning Monday, November 5 from 10-11:30 a.m. Fee Childcare.

(For more information, see page 3.)

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He Comes (begins on page 1)

In our world today waiting and watching are seen as unproductive. Our culture is result-driven because results feed the economy. Hence, Christmas decorations appear in stores long before Thanksgiving, and Christmas carols are played and sung as soon as Thanksgiving is over. Even in our holidays and sacred traditions we are urged to speed along ever and ever faster, and yet our souls cry out for silence and stillness. We are caught in the trap of wanting everything “now” yet feeling that we never really have the opportunity to experience anything fully. In so many arenas of our lives, we are hardly aware of finishing one thing before moving on to the next. And because we are hardly aware, we miss -- “he comes, comes, ever comes.”

What would it be like if this holiday season, we were to change our attitude and work on eliminating the “hurry sickness” from our lives? In the book *The Life You’ve Always Wanted*, author John Ortberg writes: “Hurry is the great enemy of spiritual life in our day. Hurry can destroy our souls.” John Ortberg also says: “If we have hurry sickness, we are haunted by the fear that there are just not enough hours in the day to do what needs to be done. We will read faster, talk faster, and when listening, nod faster, to encourage the talker to accelerate. We will find ourselves irritated whenever we have to wait.”

Hurry also diminishes our ability to love. Love takes time and people who are always in a hurry don’t have time. Because hurry kills our ability to love, it is the greatest enemy of spiritual life. We can become unhurried people but we need to enter a life of training to eliminate the hurry sickness from our lives. Here are some spiritual practices suggested by John Ortberg in his book - some training exercises for the hurry sick. Commit yourself to practice at least one of these and your ability to love will grow.

1. Slowing – Cultivate patience by deliberately choosing to place yourself in positions where you simply have to wait. (This practice has a certain “gamelike” quality, although you will probably not like it much, at least at first.)
2. Choose to deliberately drive in the slow lane on the highway. You might get there five minutes later than if you swerved from lane to lane but you will not get so angry at other drivers. Instead of trying to pass them, say a little prayer for the drivers who go past you.
3. For a week, eat your food slowly. Sit down to eat and don’t eat in front of the television. Force yourself to slow down and savor your meal. Say a prayer of gratitude for your meal.
4. Spend time in solitary prayer for five minutes a day. This may feel short but it is better to begin short and stick to it than start longer and soon give it up as impossible. You might feel discouraged or bored but stick to it. Theologian Henri Nouwen says: “It is not easy to sit and trust that in solitude, God will speak to you - not as a magical voice but that God will let you know something gradually over the years.”



–With love and peace, Rev. Stephanie

Worship Schedule (begins on page 1)

Sunday, November 11 - All Saints Sunday Celebration

We will remember those who have died since All Saints Sunday last year. There will be an open time for those who have died to be remembered by name. We will also show pictures of those who have died since All Saints Sunday last year. Please send your pictures electronically to the church office to be included at eumclarel@comcast.net.

Sunday, November 18 - Season After Pentecost: Scripture: Ephesians 1:15-23 ~ Sermon: "Pilgrim Legacy"

Sunday, November 25 - Christ The King Sunday: Scripture: Matthew 6:25-34 ~ Sermon: "Thanksgiving Songs"

Sunday, December 2 - First Sunday in Advent: Scripture: Isaiah 2:1-5 ~ Sermon Series: "Traveling with Hope"



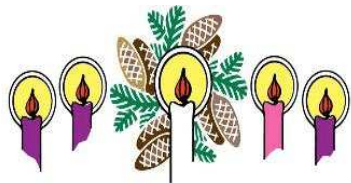
Advent Wreath Readers & Lighters are needed

The word Advent means "coming" or "arrival." The focus of the entire season is the celebration of the birth of Jesus the Christ in his First Advent, and the anticipation of the return of Christ the King in his Second Advent. Thus, Advent is far more than simply marking a 2,000 year old event in history. It is celebrating a truth about God, the revelation of God in Christ whereby all of creation might be reconciled to God. That is a process in which we now participate, and the consummation of which we anticipate. Scripture reading for Advent reflect this emphasis on the Second Advent, including themes of accountability for faithfulness at his coming, judgment on sin, and the hope of eternal life.

If you have never participated or have not participated in several years, and would like to do so, please email Wanda Roberts at eumclairel@comcast.net or call 301-725-5200 OR complete the Ministry form enclosed in Sunday bulletin announcements.

We need at least two people for each of the four Sundays in Advent at 9 & 10:30 (usually different ones participate at the two different services), as well as the three Christmas Eve services at 4, 8 & 10 p.m. Each group can be made up of families or as I mentioned, just two people. There can be one reader or multiple readers but we recommend only one lighter for safety reasons. I will provide you with written instructions about when to come to the lectern (where liturgists stand), where each person should stand, the readings, when to read what, which candle(s) to light and when, etc. I will provide you with everything except what to wear but I can make suggestions, if you ask!! (JUST KIDDING.)

SO PLEASE STEP FORWARD AND VOLUNTEER. YOU ARE NEEDED AND WANTED!!!!



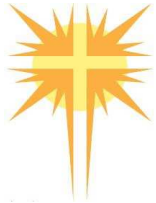
Advent Schedule

Sunday, December 2 @ 9:00 A.M.
Sunday, December 2 @ 10:30 A.M.
Sunday, December 9 @ 9:00 A.M.
Sunday, December 9 @ 10:30 A.M.
Sunday, December 16 @ 9:00 A.M.
Sunday, December 16 @ 10:30 A.M.
Sunday, December 23 @ 10:00 A.M. (One service only)

Monday, December 24 @ 4:00 P.M.
Monday, December 24 @ 8:00 P.M.
Monday, December 24 @ 10:00 P.M.

Annual Advent Special Offering collected during Advent: The offering will be divided up and given to the three major community service organizations supported by Emmanuel - LARS (Laurel Advocacy and Referral Services), Elizabeth House (Laurel's Meal Kitchen), and Grassroots (Homeless shelter in Columbia). Make checks payable to EUMC, write "Advent Offering" on the memo line, and place in the offering plate or mail to the church office.

Note: The general offering collected during the Christmas Eve services will go into Emmanuel's General Fund, unless you specifically indicate on the memo line of the check that your offering is to go elsewhere.



Celebrating Christmas at Emmanuel

Sunday, December 2 ~ All Ages Advent Workshop

5:00 P.M.- Dinner (no charge)

5:45 P.M. - Advent Workshop ~ Make an advent wreath for your home. Learn about St. Nicholas (the original Santa Claus) and make a St. Nicholas shoe to take home for your St. Nicholas Day celebration.

Saturday, December 8 ~ Breakfast with St. Nicholas

St. Nicholas will visit Emmanuel from 8-10:00 a.m.

Cost: \$7 for ages 13 and older / \$5 for ages 4-12 / Free - 3 and younger

Enjoy breakfast and a visit with St. Nicholas. Each family is asked to bring a toy to give to St. Nicholas that will be donated to a local charity.

Pre-registration is required. Registration begins on Sunday, November 25.

Sunday, December 9 ~ Children's Christmas Pageant

10:30 A.M. - Join us in the sanctuary for the story of Jesus birth told by the children of Emmanuel. A magical experience for everyone.

Sunday, December 10 ~ Christmas Concert

9:00 A.M. & 10:30 A.M. - Join us in the sanctuary for beautiful music. Come and enjoy the cantata *Navidad Nuestra (Our Nativity)*, composed by Ariel Ramirez, performed by Emmanuel's adult choir with guest soloists and musicians. *Navidad Nuestra* is a folk drama of the nativity based on the rhythms and traditions of Hispanic America.

Monday, Dec. 24 ~ Christmas Eve Worship - What If God Was One Of Us

4:00 P.M. - Family Service

8:00 P.M. - Candlelight Service with Praise Band

**10:00 P.M. - Candlelight Service with Brass Quartet,
Handbells & Choir**



Church Ornaments for sale

The ornaments are being sold during Together at Ten. The brass ornament is a depiction of our church at a cost of \$11 each. They make great gifts! Questions?? Contact Ginny Russ at 301-776-3195.

Monday Morning Book Discussion

Everybody's Normal Till You Get To Know Them

By John Ortberg

Time: 10 - 11:30 A.M. - Starting: Monday, November 5

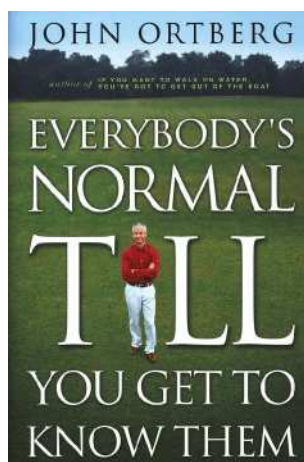
Class Leader: Rev. Stephanie Vader - (register at revvader@comcast.net)

Free Childcare

Normal? ^whō's nōr̄māł ?

Not YOU, that's for sure!

No one you've ever met, either. None of us are normal according to God's definition, and the closer we get to each other, the plainer that is. Yet for all our quirks, sins, and jagged edges, we need each other.



Community is more than just a word—it is one of our most fundamental requirements. So how do flawed, abnormal people such as ourselves master the forces that can drive us apart and come together in the life-changing relationships God designed us for? In *Everybody's Normal Till You Get to Know Them*, teacher and best-selling author John Ortberg zooms in on the things that make community tick.

You'll get a thought-provoking look at God's heart, at others, and at yourself. Even better, you'll gain wisdom and tools for drawing closer to others in powerful, impactful ways. With humor, insight, and a gift for storytelling, Ortberg shows how community pays tremendous dividends in happiness, health, support, and growth. It's where all of us weird, unwieldy people encounter God's love in tangible ways and discover the transforming power of being loved, accepted, and valued just the way we are.

Results of Mini-Walk for the Homeless

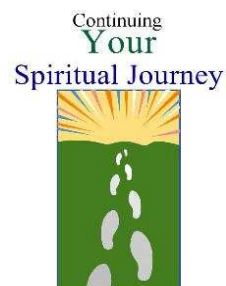


Paul Sutton reports that we had another very successful Fannie Mae Mini-Walk to Help the Homeless on Sunday, October 7. Together, Emmanuel raised over \$2,400 that will go to the Laurel Advocacy and Referral Services (LARS) to assist the homeless and those at risk of becoming homeless in the Laurel area. While the majority of the money raised was from the 101 registered walkers, we also had a number of individuals make contributions to help sponsor local school children, who will be participating in Mini-Walks organized through their schools. Whether you walked, sponsored a child, or both, your generosity will help ensure LARS exceeds the number of walkers needed to maximize the matching money offered by the Fannie Mae Foundation, which last year represented a significant portion of the \$80,000 LARS received from the Foundation.

Revised New Members Class Schedule - Discover Yourself as a New Member

Letters are mailed to those whom, according to our records, may be interested in joining or transferring to Emmanuel. The letter provides you with insight on how some people's spiritual journeys led them to Emmanuel, information about new members classes, and a class schedule. Free child care is provided.

You do not need to receive a letter to respond to Rev. Stephanie's invitation to join. If you are interested in joining Emmanuel United Methodist Church, please contact Rev. Stephanie at revvader@comcast.net or the church office at eumcl Laurel@comcast.net or call 301-725-5200.



Revised Class Schedule for 2007 - Two Consecutive Sunday mornings - November 11 & 18 from 10:30-12:30 on the stage of Fellowship Hall. Watch for more information. Questions?? Contact Rev. Stephanie at revvader@comcast.net or 301-725-5200.

We have Two Church Libraries - Library on a Cart is now in Fellowship Hall/Library Room is getting a Makeover!



During the summer, the library cart had been in the narthex. Now it has moving to Fellowship Hall. Borrow the books and other materials for free. There are no due dates, no fines and no special card is required. Just sign the card in the back of the book and leave it in one of the pockets on the book cart. When you return the book, just put the card back in the book and put the book back on the cart. Simple and free. The "other" library is in Meeting Room 4. Stay tuned for news on its make-over.

Questions? Contact Diane Leonard at dpleo@comcast.net or 240-568-7932.

Worship Volunteers for November

<i>Date</i>	7 th	14 th	21 st	28 th
Acolyte Coordinator - Karen Irons	Ricki Edsall	Volunteer	Josie MacDonald	Jessica Pinion
Counters Coordinator - Doug Williams	Doug Williams Andy Sigamoni Debbie Pavelik	Andy Sigamoni Debbie Pavelik Ralph Roberts	Debbie Pavelik Ralph Roberts Julie Neal	Ralph Roberts Julie Neal Rosemary Leonard
Greeter Coordinator - Jeanne Lineberry	Nancy Herron Carolyn Taylor Tyrone Taylor	Carol Sheets John Sullivan	Carol Davenport Dave Davenport Debbie Bell	Jim Robinson Dave Wittman
Liturgist for 9 A.M. Coordinator - Karen Irons	Al Lehtonen (10 am service - Consecration Sunday)	Becky Barbusca	Ric Cook	Karen Irons
Liturgist for 10:30 A.M. Coordinator - Karen Irons	One service @ 10 due to Consecration Sunday	Wanda Roberts	Susanne Sutton	Youth
Together @ Ten Servers Coordinator - Mary Jo Fisher	No Together at Ten due to Consecration Sunday	Linda Corso Alison Lutz Debbie Bell	Anita Huff Janine MacDonald Susanne Sutton	Youth
9 A.M. Ushers Coordinators - Butch Herron/Kris Thompson	John Sullivan Monty Montgomery (10 am service)	Jim Robinson Dave Davenport	Polly Lehtonen Al Lehtonen	Kirk Taylor Steve Fuchs
10:30 A.M. Ushers Coordinator - Wanda Roberts	Nancy Williams Marty MacFarland (10 am service)	Wanda Roberts	Monika Kramer	Youth



greeters



Liturgists Serving

Spiritual Formation and Youth Ministry

By Donna Meoli, Director of Spiritual Formation/Youth Ministry and Diane Baltz, Assistant Director
eumcyouth@comcast.net or 301-725-5200

Blue Sky Puppet Theater

Sunday, November 4 @ 10:00 A.M. in Fellowship Hall
No Sunday School - One Worship Service @ 10:00 A.M.

Traveling with Hope

Inter-generational Advent Event & Potluck Dinner
December 2 - 5-7:00 P.M.

Traveling with Hope is the theme for Advent. We will *encounter the hope of Isaiah as we learn to wait for Jesus*. Come join us on December 2 for a potluck dinner followed by activities suitable for all ages. Questions? Contact Donna Meoli 301-725-5200 or eumcyouth@comcast.net

For Traveling with Hope, We need your old shoes

Please bring any of your old shoes to church and place them in the container in the narthex or bring to the Ministry Center. The shoes will not be returned. We are looking for a variety of sizes and types of shoes. Any shoes we are unable to use will be given to charity.



Tree Decorating Fun!!

This year, the trees in the front of the church will be decorated for Advent. The theme for each tree has already been decided - love, hope, joy, peace, recycled items, and nature-friendly. You will determine what goes on the tree! Individuals or families are welcome to participate. The decorating begins on November 23 and should be completed by December 2. Send Donna Meoli an e-mail eumcyouth@comcast.net or fill out a Ministry Opportunity form if you would like to participate.

Faithfully Weighting to Lose (FWL)

We had our first two meetings in October. The first meeting focused on how easy it is to be tempted by a quick fix to weight loss. The magazines sold at the checkout promise rapid weight loss if you just do one thing. During our second meeting, we learned to identify the things in our lives that are stopping us from becoming healthy. We have made short- and long-term goals, and a commitment to pray for each other.

Some of the scriptures we have read will help us in our daily lives. We have read:

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Jeremiah 29:11

You are tempted in the same way that everyone else is tempted. But God can be trusted not to let you be tempted too much, and he will show you how to escape from your temptations. I Corinthians 13

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your request to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6-7

Our next meeting will take place on November 4 between 12 & 12:15-1:00. Bring your walking shoes! We are going to sample some exercise tapes by Leslie Sansone in addition to having a short meeting. In December, we hope to schedule a nutritionist!

Please keep these people in your prayers: Diane Baltz, Barbara Bloodworth, Beth Bosley, Kathy Bredland, Lee DeLong, Nadine Hines, Debbi Kinsey, Beth Krespan, Carol Lewis, Marty MacFarland, Donna Meoli, Jennifer Nance, and Nora Walker

Congratulations to Our Third Graders

Received Bibles in September:

Rhea Amber Bradley
Edward Davenport
Todd DelTufo
Dylan Dhanraj
Holly Ann Edsall
Ashley Hof

Elizabeth Rose Jacobs
Tim Kramer
Emily Mary Magoon
Brooke Leighann Russ
Kelly Marie Smith
Kevin Kirkbride Taylor

Upcoming Events for UMY

On November 11, from 11:45-1:15, we will make cookies and pack a lunch bag for the Homeless at St. Luke's. Please meet in Fellowship Hall!

Our group will go on a youth retreat at St. Luke's UMC in DC and participate in the Homeless Walk on November 16-17.

The youth will provide the food for Together @ Ten on the 25. A meeting will be held on the same day from 11:45-1:00.

We will participate in the Tree Decorating event by making decorations for one of the trees in front of the church!

Join us for a Birthday Party in honor of Jesus!

When: Friday, November 30th - Saturday, December 1st

Time: 6:30 P. M. - 8:30 A.M.

Where: God's House (meet in Fellowship Hall)

Who: All of Emmanuel's children 4 years old - 5th grade

Why: To celebrate the birth of Jesus!

Cost: \$10 per child, \$25 family limit

Plans: Pizza Dinner Make two presents Play games Watch a movie
Spend the night Eat breakfast



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY,
*Jesus!***

Notes: You can also choose to leave at 10 P.M. Space is limited to 25 children!

See following page for registration form.

**Count me in for
Jesus' Birthday Party!**

Family name: _____

Child(ren) who will attend:

Name(s) _____ Age(s) _____

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY,
*Jesus!***

- Yes, my child(ren) will spend the night
- No, my child(ren) will not spend the night and I will pick up my child(ren) at 10 p.m.
- Yes, I can help by staying the night.
- Yes, I can help with crafts.
- Yes, I can help clean up in the morning.

If allergies, please list them: _____

Please make check payable to EUMC, write "Jesus" on the memo line, and place in offering plate or drop off at the church office. Questions?? Contact Donna at eumcyouth@comcast.net or 301-725-5200.

UMY Update

On Sunday, September 23, Emmanuel's middle school students had their first UMY meeting of the new school year. Our Sunday UMY meetings are usually held on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month, following our second service. Our group of 12 met with Diane and Mike Baltz from 11:45-1:00. (Those football fans were able to get home for the 1:00 game!)

Since it was such a beautiful day, we all took a walk down to our outdoor ministry center in the woods behind the church, where we refreshed each other on our names and our uniqueness! We then walked down the nature path to Scott's Cove at Rocky Gorge Reservoir. We enjoyed the playground, the paths, the mud (!) and a yummy snack. It was a great time of fellowship for our group, especially those new 6th graders joining this year.

Thanks to the following kids who came: Kelsey Fisher, Taylor Brown, Alicia Eddy, Kyle Jacobs, Robbie Eddy, Michael Sullivan, Laura Sullivan, Ricki Edsall, Griffin Baltz, Bryan Lamm, Zach Watson, Daniel Meoli.

Rock Worship on Wednesday Update

We held our second Rock Worship on Wednesday meeting on October 17th at the Ministry Center and it was quite a big group! Our focus for the meeting was the Bible: what it is and how it is important to our spiritual growth. All the kids had fun playing Human Tic-Tac-Toe and sharing the ups and downs of their week.

This is a wonderful group of kids who are blessed to have such positive Christian fellowship with each other. A big thank you to Steve Lamm, our parent volunteer, and to all those who attended: Emmalee Pinion, Hannah Pinion, Taylor Brown, Olivia, Alicia Eddy, Michelle, Ricki Edsall, Daniel Meoli, Robbie Eddy, Kyle Jacobs, Bailey Parater, Griffin Baltz, and Zach Watson.

Keep the Date: Youth Lock-In and 30-Hour Famine for World Vision

February 22-23 - 6:00 P.M. - 12 noon

Registration begins in December!



Correction to October Thank You

Diane Parzow was the person who delivered the curtains in the foyer to the cleaners and returned them.

Thank You to . . .

Tara Lehner, Nadine Hines and Pete Meoli for volunteering in Sunday School recently.

Everyone who helped with the Family Fun Day and Children's Bazaar!

Those who helped with the Recycling Collection:

Holly & Matt Garnett for overseeing drop offs.

Elaine Williams, Ralph Roberts, & Debbie Pavelik for driving their vehicles loaded down with items to the landfill for proper disposal or recycling.

Marty MacFarland who hitched a ride with Debbie to help.

Carol who came by to see if she could help but all duties were filled!!!

Barbara Bloodworth for loaning the preschool's orange cones.

All who donated containers.

Everyone who dropped off items.

Special Thank You

Dear Carol (Lewis) and Friends at EUMC,

Thank you so much for another generous Baby Bottle Campaign. Your kindness and hard work is appreciated by all of us at the Laurel Pregnancy Center! Please see the special Thank You below. I hope you can share it with your church family.

Blessings to all of you and thank you again!
Teri Augustine
Dir. Marketing/Fundraising

How can we ever thank you?

By letting you know that

**Emmanuel United Methodist Church's
2007 Baby Bottle Campaign raised**

\$1,003.04 to support the life affirming work of the Laurel Pregnancy Center.

Your change has made a change...thank you!



**Women's Group invites all women to the
Healthy Harvest Potluck - Tuesday, November 6
at 6:30**

All women are invited to Fellowship Hall for a healthy potluck dinner to help one another get ready for the holidays. We ask each person to bring a dish to share and one copy of the recipe. The dishes may be appetizers, main dishes, and/or desserts. The idea is to try a new recipe and sample some dishes that may be low fat, low calories, vegetarian, etc. For questions, contact Jennifer Ricketts at 301-483-4593.

Next Women's Group meeting - November 28, 7:00 P.M. in meeting room 2: We will be making/wrapping holiday gifts for shut-ins, making Christmas decorations for the Love tree outside the church, and meeting to discuss how to spend the proceeds from the fall fundraiser and cookie sales. New and old members are encouraged to come. Please RSVP Jennifer Ricketts if you need childcare for the evening.

Women's Group Co-chairs: Ann Thompson at kagethompson@verizon.net or 301-604-6406 or Jennifer Ricketts at 301-483-4593 for RSVPs or any additional information concerning the Women's Group and its activities.

SOS (Seniors of Scaggsville) Events



Monday, November 12 - Meet in church parking lot to go to a restaurant (Watch for more info.) RSVP: Doris Ritter at 301-725-2017.

Monday, December 10, 11-2 in Fellowship Hall - Covered Dish Christmas Luncheon and entertainment. (Watch for more info.)

Questions about SOS? Call Rosemary Hall at 301-490-6517.

Remember the Hungry



Two food baskets are in the narthex to collect non-perishable food for the hungry in our area.

See the lists attached to each of the two baskets: one for Elizabeth House (Laurel meal kitchen)/ FISH (administrator of Elizabeth House that also donates bags of groceries per appointment out of Elizabeth House); and one for Grassroots Emergency Shelter (temporarily located in Ellicott City until new facilities are ready in Columbia).

Good Earth Stewards

By Wanda Roberts

Protecting tomorrow's environment today.

How about dreaming of a green Christmas instead of a white one (although white's good too - you know, the moisture and all - as long as it's clean)

Eco-Friendly Christmas

By Michael J. Ross of Pristine Planet



There exists an incredible variety of eco-friendly products that are ideal for holiday giftgiving, just as there are methods of packaging those gifts attractively. We can use far gentler alternatives that are far gentler on our planet's iminishing resources.

Choose wrap and bags made from recycled paper and plant-based inks, and save them to reuse for future gifting. Furthermore, the fuel and time consumed by driving from one store to another, can all be saved by shopping online, and having the items delivered by the USPS, whose carriers would make their delivery rounds to every mailbox, and burn their fuel, whether or not any particular package was sent.

Choosing appropriate gifts for the people on one's list can be challenging enough, but some people incorrectly assume that limiting oneself to environmentally sensitive products, would make the process nearly impossible. Yet nothing could be further from the truth, as there is a tremendous variety of such gifts available and easily ordered over the Internet. Many Web sites now exist that exclusively offer "green" products, at a wide range of prices, which can fit anyone's Christmas budget, as well as any recipient's merit.

For instance, why give your favorite nephew another videogame cartridge, when a more mentally-stimulating option would be a puzzle made of replenishable wood? For an angelic niece, forget about the plastic doll that looks "surgically enhanced"; treat her to a more huggable soft doll crafted from hemp, organic cotton, seed hulls, and recycled plastic. Your always-helpful and always-hungry uncle would be better off not receiving a slab of steak cut from a cow on steroids, but instead a big box of healthy energy bars to power him along, as he shovels snow or vegan ice cream. Even your wicked aunt won't be improved by receiving the ancient and hardened fruitcake that gets passed among the relatives every Christmas. Take a deep breath and treat her to some organic chocolate. After all, it might sweeten her up a bit, and it's possible that she's the one who made that fruitcake a decade ago, and might recognize it... well, maybe.

So this holiday season, leave the turbocharged "sleigh" in the garage, cozy up to a glowing computer monitor, and spend some fun time exploring the many ecological product Web sites that can make your Christmas shopping a little less black, and a whole lot more green.

Green Christmas: Tips for an Eco-Friendly Holiday

By Cameron Walker for National Geographic News



Yes, the holidays draw out the best in most of us each year. But they also bring what seems like an environmentalist's worst nightmare: tons of extra garbage, millions of chopped-down trees, and megawatts of flashing lights. With a little tweaking, however, everything from holiday gift-giving to light-stringing can celebrate the environment, too. Here's how:

Between Thanksgiving and New Year's day, Americans throw away a million extra tons [900,000 metric tons] of garbage each week, including holiday wrapping and packaging, according to Robert Lilienfeld. Lilienfeld is co-author of the book *Use Less Stuff: Environmental Solutions for Who We Really Are*.

So why not recycle holiday gift wrap? Lilienfeld, who has published a newsletter on reducing waste since 1996, notes that if every family reused just 2 feet [0.6 meter] of holiday ribbon, the 38,000 miles [61,000 kilometers] of ribbon saved could tie a bow around the entire planet.

And not all gifts need wrapping. Think back to your three favorite holiday memories. I'm willing to bet that they all involve time you spent with your family and friends.

By giving gifts that can be experienced, like tickets to a baseball game or a homemade dinner, you can minimize wrapping and still win points with the receiver. "People like these gifts just as much," he said.

Fake Fir: For many, Christmas wouldn't be the same without a live, fragrant Christmas tree in their home. Today nearly all of the trees sold at seasonal Christmas-tree lots are grown on tree farms. So forests aren't hurt by choosing a cut tree, said Jeff Olson, the vice-president of marketing and development for American Forests, a Washington, D.C.-based conservation nonprofit.

While potted trees might seem like a green option, they often don't fare well in unseasonably warm homes.

"The last thing you want to do is bring it into the house," Olson said. He plans to get a potted tree this year and keep it outside for the holidays.

Artificial trees, he noted, consume significant energy and petroleum-based materials during their manufacture. But Lilienfeld, the Use Less Stuff co-author, noted that a one-time purchase of an artificial tree can save gas otherwise used for annual trips to the local tree farm.

Wanda's Suggestions

- Ralph and I cut our own tree on a tree farm. One of the reasons I do this is because it helps to sustain that tree farm vs. a huge development being built on the property with people living on top of each other or McMansions being built.
- How about down-sizing Christmas in keeping with the true spirit. Remember - less is more.
- My stepfather had five children and he wrapped their gifts in the comic strips from newspapers.
- Gift bags can be easily reused.
- When opening gifts, have a recycling container near by for any unusable or unwanted gift wrap including any recyclable commercial packaging of gifts.
- Be conscious of the amount of commercial packaging a gift has before purchasing it.
- If you conduct a search online by simply typing in Environmentally-friendly Christmas, you will find an array of websites to check out with a vast amount of information for a green Christmas.

Questions? Contact Wanda Roberts, Co-Chair of the Green Team at eumclaurel@comcast.net or wandajroberts@verizon.net / 301-490-5045.



Prayer List for Our Shut-ins - Remember them with prayers, visits, cards & calls.

Evelyn Hall
Harmony Hall
6336 Cedar Ln, #261
Columbia MD 21044
410-531-6000



Mildred Walker
8063 Murphy Road
Fulton MD 20759
304-725-1278



General Prayer List

If you have questions, please call the church office at 301-725-5200.

(Date indicates when name will be removed.)

General: None

Grieving: ~ Family of Cathy Gravers, who died of cancer (She was like a grandmother to Brianna, Terri Holman's daughter) (12/16)

~ Chad Hall & Family - Death of Ray Hall, Chad's father & Terri Holman's uncle, from cancer (12/16)

~ Ray Hall (Terri Holman's dad) & Family - Death of Ray's brother, Jimmy, from cancer (12/16)

~ Polly & Al Lehtonen - Death of Polly's mother (11/18)

~ Ann Parlette & Family - Death of her husband (12/9)

Healing:

~ Stephen Glascoe - Recovering from heart surgery, Requested by Mark Lineberry (11/4)

~ John Hare - Heart attack, requested by Mark Lineberry (12/9)

~ Danielle Sigamoni (Andy & Tara's daughter) - Car accident - broken collar bone and possible concussion (11/4)

~ Jim Spriggle - Kidney & breathing problems - Requested by Jennifer Ricketts (11/25)

~ Jennifer Wheeler - Requested by Andi Kidd (11/4)

Long-Term for Service People: (Date indicates when placed on list.)

~ Josh Gaither (Ann Parlette's grandson) in Marines (10/21/07)

~ Chad Hall leaving for Iraq in December - has wife & six-month old baby (11/4/07)

~ John Kidd - in Army serving in Iraq (9/2/07)

~ Alex Proya (friend of Josh & Rod Gaither) in Marines serving in Iraq (10/21/07)

~ James Robinson (Jim & Rosemary's son) in Marines (9/19/04)

~ Owen Sutton (Paul's brother) in Army KY National Guard serving in Afghanistan (9/13/07)

~ Daniel Von Vyke in Army serving in Iraq - Requested by Andi Kidd (9/2/07)

~ Elizabeth Walker (Nora & Dave's niece) in Air Force stationed in Alaska (1/16/05)

Long-Term Needs: (Date indicates when name will be removed.)

~ Judson Bennett (10/08)

~ Clara Mae Boender (8/08)

~ Judy Coe (7/08)

~ Darfur Victims (10/08)

~ Michelle Edwards (11/08)

~ Heather (4/08)

~ Hurricane Victims' Families (9/08)

~ Madaline Jones - Cancer (9/23/07)

~ Bruce & Annette Knox & Family (11/08)

~ Lifeline Cancer Support Group (4/08)

~ Emily Meoli (6/08)

~ Janie Nance (5/08)

~ Alfred Orr (6/08)

~ Ellen Pierce (11/08)

~ Suzi Pfeifer & Family (8/08)

~ Prison Ministries (6/08)

~ Benjamin Reiser (6/08)

~ Cathy Reith (3/08)

~ Mason Roberts (7/08)

~ Lynda Scaggs (7/08)

~ September 11th 2001 (9/08)

~ Andrew Shipton (9/08)

~ Rylan Simpson (4/08)

~ Karen Smith (4/08)

~ Frank Stanton (10/08)

~ Janet Stanton (9/08)

~ Phyllis Steinberg (9/08)

~ Joan Sweirszc (9/08)

World Hopes/Concerns:

Christianity

Peace

Terrorists

War

World Leaders