



THE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
OF FRANKLIN PARK
9857 SCHILLER BLVD FRANKLIN PARK, IL 60131
847.455.5858
WWW.FRANKLINPARKUMC.ORG

The First News

December 2011

Christmas is a Time for Giving!

Inside this issue:

Staff Feature Story	2
Prayer List	3
Birthdays & Anniversaries	
Stewardship Report/News	
Poinsettia Order Form	
UMW News	4
Church Conference update	
Christmas giving letter	5
List for Families in Need	6
Gift-Giving	
Sunday School News	
Calendar	7

Quick Takes:

- Nobius meets next on December 4 at 11:15 a.m.
- Advent After-Worship study meets each Sunday at 10:30 in the Parlor
- Christmas decorating will take place on Saturday, December 3 at 9:30 a.m.
- Christmas eve worship service of Lessons & Carols with candlelight will be offered at 10 p.m. on Saturday, December 24
- Christmas Day "Breakfast in Bethlehem" worship will be at 9:30 a.m. in the Parlor

At this time of year, we celebrate God's great gift to us in the form of the Christ-child. To aid in your preparation for the celebration of Christmas, please take a minute to pick up one of the devotional resources for adults, youth, and children that will be available on the table outside the sanctuary. Take some time each day during Advent to prepare yourself.

It seems quite natural that we would give generously to others, too, in this season of giving. As a congregation, we have several opportunities for giving this Christmas season.

- Buy Christmas gifts for families in need in our area (see list printed in this newsletter)—pick up one of the gift tags and select a gift for someone in need this Christmas; return your gift on December 11.
- Instead of sending Christmas cards to each other, bring one card to be posted for all to enjoy, then donate the cost of cards and stamps to the church to help people in need this Christmas—and save a few trees!
- Contribute to our collection of food pantry items for Leyden Township
- Share in the poinsettias that adorn the sanctuary at Christmas – see the order form in this newsletter.
- Consider your gift for our special Advent and Christmas offerings. Gifts given through these offerings will be used to help people in need in Chicago, in Northern Illinois, and throughout the world!

Giving is good for us all, even—perhaps especially—when economic times are tight. This Christmas, please consider these ways to bless others! And don't forget to give the gift of your presence in worship during Advent, at Christmas eve worship (10 p.m.), and on Christmas Day (9:30 a.m.) as we share "Breakfast in Bethlehem."

SPRC Focus on Our Staff: This Month Featuring Pastor Randy Creath

Editor's Note: Beginning this month, we'll get to know our staff better through feature articles by Staff-Parish Relations Committee chair, Jeri Lynn Fox. Thanks, Jeri Lynn!

Randy's began playing at age 2 ½ when his grandfather took him on an insurance sale call. He found a piano in the waiting area and spent an hour and a half picking out note combinations and listening to the sound. A lifelong love, actually a need, to play and create music began.

He grew up in a big church with pianos everywhere and like many children, he ran off to explore as soon as he got there – but he was exploring the world of music, as each instrument spoke in a distinct voice.

At the age of 8 or 9, he attended a Peter Nero (a keyboard player, conductor and arranger) concert. Randy concentrated on the conductor to figure out how he coordinated the voices of the instruments; in less than an hour he saw the pattern and another dialect in the language of music was translated.

At age 9 he started music lessons, and at age 10 or 11 he recognized there was a language between rhythm, melody and harmony – and it was the language he spoke best! At age 12 had the powerful revelation that he learned by ear – if he heard someone play a piece of music, he knew it. A rare gift that that he uses to hear the music in his soul and mind – each instrument, each music phrase speaks and Randy seeks to know what it says and understanding the meaning, just as we struggle to understand what an individual means, what they feel, by the words they use.

As with all who follow the gifts of the Lord, Randy's career, love and life are one. He began his professional calling at age 15 by starting a Christian band. By the time he was in college, he had played 400-500 concerts, on one tour he played 80 shows in 60 days – not always knowing the name of the town he was in, but always knowing the music.

The deeper meaning of music came more slowly – the link with theology, spirituality and life. Randy opens doors with lyrics – words – augmented by passionate music. This is both worship and preaching; and we are witnesses and participants to the miracle of the gift the Lord gave Randy each Sunday. As with all gifts the Lord gives us, it blossoms when given away; and Randy gives from his gift each week as he shares his music with us – a language he interprets for us so we can receive the blessings of the Lord.

In this world we have each other – and are called to help each other on the way. Randy and Denise understand we are each called to nurture and support the gifts of those we are in community and communion with. We can support Randy, the talented musician the Lord sent to our congregation, just as he used the talents of one of our own Nicole Kuhlman to design the covers of two of his CDs. Randy currently has five albums available for purchase; with the exception of the one that was recorded live, he plays all the music on each instrument on each album – through a labor intensive process of multiple recordings, re-recordings, and mixing. Each is a work of love that only a person following the gifts and path of God can produce.

Randy's CDs make great gifts; each is only \$10. If you are feeling very adventurous, pick up the one he recorded under the name Rannulf McCrea entitled "Randy"! And to set the holiday mood while decorating your tree, get his Christmas CD. Randy's music is available online (sources like iTunes) or from him directly.

Under the Mercy, 1994, Live Album

"Randy", Rannulf McCrae, 2005 Dance/Trance (mostly instrumental)

Auditory Incense, 2009, Hymn Improvisations on Piano (instrumental)

Killin' da Mammoth, 2010, Originals by Randy, Folk/Rock/Faith

Once Upon a Time, 2010, Christmas music



Standing in the Need of Prayer

Stewardship Update

Thank you for your faithfulness!

Our Giving by the Numbers...

November Giving	\$ 3,738.00
Total 2011 to date	\$37,957.58



Those in need of our continuing prayers:

Mary Pease	Marilyn Oxby
Edna Kirchhoff	Arvis Knutson
Louise Spain	Eve Gogonas
the families of Margaret Jackson and Virginia Densborn who passed recently	

Celebrating December Birthdays & Anniversaries

12/7 Paul Feldmann	12/25 Nicole Kuhlman
12/8 Mohini Das	12/26 Ben Anthony
12/18 Alison Shragal	12/27 Carol Michaels
12/19 Joshua Nowicki	12/29 Marilyn Oxby
12/20 Elois Kasza	12/21 Brian & Victoria Revere ♥



Join in Giving Thank-You Gifts for our Staff!

Our church staff is a group of dedicated individuals who do far more than just their jobs—each in their own ways, they are stewards of this ministry, caring for this church family graciously! At Christmas time, it is our tradition to give gifts that reflect our gratitude and love for the staff: Agnies, Scott, Pastor Randy, and Pastor Denise. You are invited to make a gift to be pooled and distributed by the SFRC to each one at Christmas. Envelopes are available at church, or make checks payable to “First UMC” with “staff” in the memo.

Make a Gift for Poinsettias to Adorn the Sanctuary as we celebrate Christmas!

Gifts must be received by December 18

to be included in Christmas Eve bulletin listing!

Please find enclosed my gift of \$5 toward Poinsettias for the sanctuary.

Name _____ Phone _____

In memory of/In Honor of (choose one) _____

(you may also order by calling the church office 847.455.5858 or emailing the pastor: revdlj@att.net)
 Make checks payable to First UMC. Gifts in excess of cost will be donated to the church budget.
 Gifts are tax deductible as allowed by law. Credit cards accepted at www.franklinparkumc.org

United Methodist Women Meets, Plans Christmas Party

The UMW Mission Team will meet in the church parlor at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, December 1 to complete the year's business. Final changes for publishing the 2012 yearbook will be made.

The Christmas Luncheon is scheduled for 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, December 10 at Villa Brunetti, with lunch to be served promptly at noon. Please plan to join us for food, fellowship, and entertainment from an East Leyden High School choral group to start the Christmas celebration off right. Tickets are \$20 (choice of three entrees). Please see Diane Pritchett or Circle chairpersons for tickets. All women of the church and friends are welcome for a time of relaxed holiday fun.

There will be no general meeting scheduled for January.

Aunt Libby Circle meets December 8 at 1 p.m. in the parlor

Wesleyan Circle gathers December 8 at 7:30 p.m. at Diane Pritchett's home

Susannah Circle meets on December 22 at noon at Joy Perry's home

UMW Mission Team meets on Thursday, December 1 at 9:30 a.m. in the parlor, and then not again until late January or early February (TBA).

News from the Circles...

Advent After-Worship Study Begins Sunday, November 27 at 10:45 a.m. (for 20-30 mins) in the Parlor. Four lay members from the Nurture Committee will take turns leading the weekly studies. Get your free devotional guide, and let's study and discuss as we wait together through Advent!

Church Conference Update from November 19 meeting

Our 2011 regular Church Conference with Presiding Elder Rev. Preston Price was held on Saturday, November 19 at 2 p.m. in the Parlor. As a congregation, we celebrated the lives of those who've passed on since last we met. There were reports from the Conference and from various ministry areas of our congregation, including a substantial report from the Trustees regarding building improvements to the church and parsonage over the last year. We were challenged by our guest presider with a message from Philippians chapter 2. Together we gave thanks for God's faithfulness to us over this past year. This Church Conference took the place of our regular November Ad Council meeting. **The next meeting of Ad Council will be Sunday, December 11 at 11 a.m. in the Susannah Room.**

Christmas 2011



Think back with me to the story of the first Christmas. A young couple, their first baby on the way, journey to his hometown because the government required it. It was complicated timing for such a journey, just when she was about to give birth. But then it was a complicated story how this young family arrived at this moment. Their story was full of angels

bringing impossibly good news about a miracle baby who would live a life that would change history. Good news was unlikely for a poor couple from backwater Galilee!

Now fast-forward to Christmas 2011. It's a pretty unlikely time for good news today, too, with the economic downturn continuing to cause people to lose their jobs and their homes. But even in this difficult year, good news bursts into our lives at Christmas! This year, perhaps more than in good times, the hope and joy and love and grace of the Christmas message of good news needs to be told in our community. Now, when the news of our world isn't particularly good, our faith brings "...good news of glad tidings which will be for all people! Unto us is born in Bethlehem a Savior, who is Christ the Lord!" Now is the time to tell the good news, far and wide! And we are the messengers God has chosen – unlikely though we may be – to tell that good news.

This Christmas, we have an opportunity to gather together to tell the good news, and to invite friends and neighbors – people need good news! It turns out we have some to share! A Christmas eve worship service of lessons and carols with candlelight is offered at 10 p.m. And a Christmas morning "Breakfast in Bethlehem" worship will take place at 9:30 a.m. Please consider who you will invite to share in celebrating the good news with you!

I also want to invite you to join me in making a special Christmas gift to share God's love through the work of our church. I have enclosed an envelope for you to use for a special Christmas gift, or you may make a gift online through the church website: www.franklinparkumc.org Our Christmas offering will be passed along through our United Methodist connection to help those in need throughout our city, our conference, and our world this Christmas. Our goal is to give away at least \$1,500 this Christmas to those in need. Please know that 100% of your gifts, whether larger or smaller, will be used to help people in need.

We may not have a lot this Christmas, but we're blessed with the best news ever told! Let's share!

Help Make Christmas Special for These Local Families in Need!

This year more than ever, our neighbors would appreciate help with gifts to brighten their Christmas celebrations. Before you buy a gift from this list, please check the sign-up at church to see if it is already taken, or call/email Pastor Denise to express your interest and check on availability. Gifts need to be returned to church no later than Sunday, December 11. They should be wrapped, with a gift receipt included. The tag from church indicating the letters/numbers listed below should also be attached. If you prefer, you may give cash by December 4 and gifts will be purchased for you. Thank you for your generosity!

SAS 3-3-2 Girl 13yrs Blue Top Juniors Large	
SAS 3-4-2 Boy 12 yrs Dominos, Candyland or any family board game	
SAS 3-5-1 Woman Jeans size 16	
SAS 3-5-2 Woman Brown Sweatshirt Size XL	SFC 1-1-1 Teen boy shaving kit
SAS 3-6-1 Man Winter Hat and Gloves size Large	SFC 1-1-2 Teen boy bean bag chair
SKS 2-1-2 Girl 17 yrs Bath and Body Works Sweet Pea Scent	SFC 1-1-3 Teen boy Jeans 44x32
SKS 3-3-1 Grandma Sweater size Ladies Medium	SPC 1-1-4 Teen boy shirts XXL
SKS 3-1-2 Girl 15 yrs Makeup Kit	SFC 1-2-1 Teen girl makeup/nail polish
ORB 1-4-2 Girl 11 yrs Clothes size 14-16	SFC 1-2-2 Teen girl perfume
ORB 1-3-2 Boy 6 yrs Games or Toys	SFC 1-2-3 Teen girl purse
ORB 1-2-2 Boy 10 yrs Board Games	SFC 1-2-4 Teen girl pants size 5
OLH 1-2-1 Girl 5 yrs Dolls, Barbies	SFC 1-2-5 Teen girl shirts S/M
OLH 1-1-1 Boy 8 yrs WWF Action Figures	SFC 1-3-1 Preteen girl Doll (baby doll or barbie)
SKS 1-3-2 Woman Body Spray	SFC 1-3-2 Preteen girl craft kit
SKS 1-1-2 Victoria Secret Body Spray	SFC 1-3-3 Preteen girl jewelry
STG 2-2-2 Boy 2 yrs Toys	SFC 1-3-4 Preteen girl pants girls plus 20.5
STG 2-1-1 Girl 16 yrs Black Jeans size 3 juniors	SFC 1-3-5 Preteen girl underwear, women's size 7
STG 1-4-1 Boy 15 yrs Black Hoodie size Large	SFC 1-3-6 Preteen girl shirts Girls 20.5 or Woman M/L
STG 1-3-1 Girl 16 yrs Gym shoes size 6.5	SFC 1-4-1 Man/Dad socks (9-13) and diego Ts XL
STG 2-7-2 Boy 10 yrs Toys or Games	SFC 1-4-2 Man/Dad wallet (3-fold) and cologne
RAS 1-1-1 Man Winter Coat size large	SFC 1-5-1 Woman/Mom watch (all numbers, expandable)
RAS 1-1-2 Man Robe (tie-in-front) size large	SFC 1-5-2 Woman/Mom Jewel gift card (for Christmas dinner)
RAS 1-1-3 Man Electric Shaver	
RAS 1-1-4 Man Wallet	
RAS 1-1-5 Children's picture books	

*****Please request gift receipts for all gifts and include them with your wrapped gifts, just in case*****

Come share "Breakfast in Bethlehem" on Christmas Morning!

Did you realize that Christmas Day is on Sunday this year? Since it's Sunday, of course we'll have worship at our usual 9:30 a.m. worship time, but we'll be doing something special since it's also Christmas morning. Come and enjoy a simple, relaxed service of carols and celebration, with coffee and coffee cake, on Sunday, December 25 as we enjoy "Breakfast in Bethlehem" together in the Parlor. There will be plenty of time left for family celebrations and dinner on Christmas Day—why not take a few minutes for worship together with our church family as we celebrate the Christ child whose birth changed the course of history so long ago?

DECEMBER 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 9:30 am UMW Mission Team Mtg.	2	3 9:30 am Christmas Decorating at church
4 Second Sunday of Advent 9:30 am Worship w/Communion 10:30 Coffee Hour/Advent Study 11:15 Nobius	5	6	7	8 7:30 pm Wesleyan Circle at Diane Pritchett's home	9	10 noon UMW Christmas Luncheon at Villa Brunetti
11 Third Sunday of Advent 9:30 am Worship 10:30 Advent Study 11:00 Ad Council in Susannah	12	13 1:00 pm Susannah Circle at Joy Perry's	14	15	16 6:30 pm Cub Scouts in Fellowship Hall	17
18 Fourth Sunday of Advent 9:30 am Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour/Advent Study	19	20	21	22 Maple Park Academy Winter Break Begins	23	24 Christmas Eve worship service at 10 pm
25 Christmas Day 9:30 am "Breakfast in Bethlehem" worship in Parlor	26	27	28	29	30	31

December 2011

THE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
OF FRANKLIN PARK
9857 SCHILLER BLVD FRANKLIN PARK, IL 60131
847.455.5858
WWW.FRANKLINPARKUMC.ORG
REV. DENISE JANSSEN, PASTOR

Christmas Eve Worship Service

Candlelight Service of Lessons & Carols

Saturday, December 24, 10 p.m.

“Breakfast in Bethlehem”

Sunday, December 25, 9:30 a.m.

*Invite Your Friends
and Neighbors to join you!!*

