



THE CIRCUIT RIDER

Solon United Methodist Church

122 N. West, Solon, IA 52333

Phone: 624-2288 – info@soloniaumc.org

DECEMBER 2011



Monday Morning Musings

Busy little elves have been leaving season's greetings all over town. Entire neighborhoods are alight with reindeer, snow people, stars, lights and other Christmas greetings.

The bible says Jesus came in 'The fullness of time.' This phrase is especially important. The words point to the concept of ripening; or the full measure of an event. For instance, in the fullness of time a flower buds and blossoms, a couple falls in love, or a baby is born.

As fall turns to winter and the sun draws down into the shortest day, we are waiting for the birth of God-with-us, Jesus. Michael Thompson, a theologian at the University of Toronto says during the season of Advent the truth that God takes flesh and is born among us is not revealed, but hidden. We can't know God's promises of peace and wholeness on our own. He says we need prophets, angels, shepherds, magi, and stars to be our guides. Because they are acting as guides who take us to the hidden, holy treasure.

Thompson would say the festivity of Christmas, the gatherings of family and friends, the special events, the gift-giving and worship that we share are needed to fully experience the holiness of Christmas. They convince us something exceptional happened on Christmas Eve. OUR Savior was born.

This season is a busy one. Along with everything else, the church has special events planned. I pray you and yours can take part in them. When we come together we receive God's grace and love. Christmas has the power to provide whatever it is we need... in the fullness of time.

*In Christian Service –
Rev. Carol A. Kress*

Worship Schedule

Sundays at 8:00, 9:30 & 10:45 am

UPCOMING WORSHIP SERVICES

December 4: Communion Sunday

Sermon: Let's get ready - C.A. Kress preaches

Scripture: Isaiah 40:1-11 & Mark 1:1-8

December 11: Guest preacher: Jason Owen

Sermon: Perseverance

Scripture: to be announced

December 18:

9:30 AM: The Children's Christmas

Sunday School Presents!

8:00 & 10:45 AM:

Sermon: How Can This Be?

Rev. Chris preaches

Scripture: Luke 1:26-38

December 24: Christmas Eve

4:30 PM: Family Christmas Eve Service

6:30 PM: Christmas Eve Communion

December 25:

9:00 AM: CHRISTMAS PRAYER SERVICE

Note: ONE service of worship

January 1:

9:00 AM: New Year's Communion Service

Note: ONE service of worship



WHAT'S GOING ON?



Cocoa, Carols, Chili, Crafts, Cookies and everything else will be **December 14th**. The party begins at 6:00 PM with chili at the Family Meal. If you are new to our church or have not been able to join us for this fun filled family event, you will not want to miss it. Everyone will be served chili, cocoa and sugar cookies. You may then decorate more cookies or join Karen as she trims the fellowship hall Christmas tree. The choirs will entertain us and various talented folk will entertain us. But there will also be plenty of time for the church family to sing along with our favorite Christmas songs and carols. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend this great holiday event.



A group called F.E.S.T. Is looking for your stories: The work of the love of Jesus happens all around us and brings us great joy. Please consider enriching the lives of your fellow church members by sharing your stories. We want to hear of the ways the SUMC community has been a blessing to your life. Or the ways your faith has stretched and grown through an experience here or with church members. You don't need to be a writer or a public speaker, just someone with a story of Jesus' love at work in one's life. Let's spark your memory: Have you go on a mission trip or have you helped with a nearby project? Has SUMC helped you get involved with a special group of people? Have you been touched by the prayer shawl ministry? Has a prayer, visit, song or friend inspired you?

Your story can help us all be more aware of the presence of Jesus Christ in our lives. If you have a story (or if you would like to nominate someone with a special story to share) please contact Doug Kopp at dougk@southslope.net or 624-3119. Also if you would like to help gather and coordinate stories, please let me know as well. May the blessing that you have received become a blessing to others.



Book Club: The SUMC Book Club meets on Dec. 20th at 1 PM in the SUMC Fellowship Hall: At this meeting they're discussing THE BRIDES HOUSE by Sandra Dallas. This is a historical novel of family ties, long-held secrets, and the continuing search for love. THE BRIDES HOUSE tells of three women linked by blood, circumstance and a Victorian house in Georgetown, CO.

Whether or not you can attend meetings, everyone is welcomed to read along with the group. Books are readily available at the local book stores or through the public library. Please contact Susan Whetstine, Shirley Anderson or Phyllis Cabbage with questions about the book club. (*For those who like to read ahead; January is WONDER GIRL by Don VanNatta Jr. and Feb: ONCE UPON A RIVER by Bonnie Jo Campbell.*) Happy reading!



SUMC Sunday Dinner Club: The SUMC Sunday Diners are whetting their appetites and preparing to go out to eat after Sunday services on Dec. 11th. They are eating at JO'S ROAD HOUSE, in Solon on HWY 1. We hear sandwiches and burgers reign supreme. But you can make your own decision. So check out the menu at <http://www.josroadhouse.com/MENU.html>

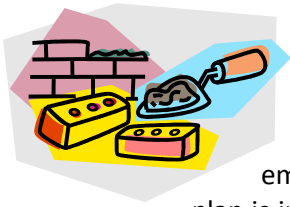
The SUMCSDC is open to any SUMC member or friend who enjoys good company and good eating! You can join us at the Road House at 12:15 PM. Or, after the third worship service, a group will car pool from the church. Please let Rev. Carol know if you plan to join the group so reservations can be made.



If you would like to be an Advent family and light an Advent candle during worship for us, you are welcomed to do so! Please sign up under *Advent Families* on the clip board as it is passed during worship. Do you have a special Sunday or service in mind? Call the church offices (624-2288) or e-mail us at kressc@soloniaumc.org to sign up now.



If you would like to donate toward poinsettias for Christmas you may do so in memory or in honor of someone. If donating with a check, please mark *poinsettia in the memo portion. Gifts of any amount will be accepted for the purchase of flowers. Please clearly print on a separate piece of paper the names you would like listed in the Christmas Eve bulletin. The Worship Committee will then order poinsettias. Thank you for your donations. Feel free to contact the church offices (624-2288) with questions.



CEMENT for CHRIST'S CHURCH (in Abuja, Nigeria) Do you know a bag of cement (110 lb) is only \$13? The "to be constructed" Abuja needs cement for their new church building. As a new church they are operating under strict city building codes. With challenges before them and the strategic location of Abuja as the new capital of the nation; church members embarked on church construction. Under the leadership of Rev. Matthew Daniel Dangombe, a plan is in place for a church/Sunday School building with conference hall, and a guest house. This is a BIG project but trusting God to lead the way, the Abuja UMC requests assistance from their Iowa Partners.

When Iowans travel to Nigeria on a yearly basis, we fly to and through Abuja. Rev. Matthew meets us at the airport, transports the team to a hotel and returns us to the airport for flight to Yola. It would be wonderful to use the church guest quarters! Construction has started with cement blocks laid to the window level. Your gift of \$13 buys a bag of cement to build upward and onward.

Gifts may be dropped in the offering plates on Sunday or mailed to the Solon United Methodist Church. Mark "Cement" in the memo portion of your check so we can send them on to the Iowa-Nigeria Partnership project.



Please note that on Christmas Day, December 25th there will be one service only at 9:00 A.M.

Please also note that the following Sunday, on January 1, there will also be one service at 9:00 A.M. This will be a New Year's Communion Service. Bring treats to share for fellowship!



Gracias, Thank You, Merci, God Bless

Over the past few weeks we've looked at what the Bible teaches about financial management. We've considered how we manage money, deal with debt, and invest for the future. We examined how God wants us to relate to money and earthly possessions, and we explored what it means to live a life of gratitude and contentment. We studied and worshipped and responded.

To date we received 77 commitments for the coming year. Thank you for prayerfully considering what offering you will make to God through the church. Your gifts are an act of worship and investment in opportunities for God to work through us. Our prayer is you will find greater contentment and simplicity in your life as you put God first in your giving and your living. Let's all experience the joy that comes from knowing that our gifts honor God and change lives.



UMW Potluck

The United Methodist Women would like to invite you to their Annual Christmas Potluck on Wednesday, December 7 at 1:00 P.M. Please bring a guest! Chris Humrhouse will present a short Advent program. Come hungry!



Chris' Corner

What good can a quarter do? A lot more than most of us think! A quarter goes a long way to providing a family in need with a means of income, establishing a business and a source of food for their family table. Join the children's groups of SUMC (Club JAM and Sunday Faith Formation) in providing this means of independence to families through **Heifer Project**. Watch for the traveling "quarter tube" around our church buildings throughout Advent. This tube is designed to deposit quarters (they fit just perfectly into a tall stack inside the tube) and we can watch our offering grow. When the tube is filled, it will be enough money to purchase a pig, a goat or a lamb. Our goal, of course is to fill the tube – but more than that – to fill the tube as many times as we can throughout this holiday season! An anonymous matching gift from a member of congregation (up to \$300) will mean that we can make a meaningful contribution to ending poverty in the life of a family somewhere in our world. Won't you help us reach that goal? -- Donate to the traveling tube or contact Rev. Chris at humrichousec@soloniaumc.org to see how you can help.

Looking for a meaningful small group experience? Want to know about the Bible and its application in your life? Want to discuss theology, but the word scares you off? Want to talk with a group of passionate folk about day-to-day issues and faith? Looking for a way to build a good foundation for discipleship? If any or all of the above are true – **Third Thursday** just might be for you! Using present technology and social media, we'll be building a small group that discusses any and all of these subjects – one week at a time. Topics will be presented each Sunday night – and let the discussion begin! The group will also be linked to pertinent articles, books, websites, scripture and small group resources that will inform and contribute to our discussion. Then on the Third Thursday of each month, we will gather at Savvy for a little "face time", fellowship, and follow-up to the month's discussion topics. Then, the following Sunday a new month's worth of topics/themes will begin. Interested? Register for this online group on our website: soloniaumc.org

Don't forget the **Children's Christmas Program** on December 18th at 9:30 worship – guaranteed to put you in a Christmas frame of mind! (Rehearsal for all kids who can make it on December 17th at 9:00 in the sanctuary)!

Advent, Christmas and New Year's Eve/Day mean changes to the schedule. Just a reminder that there are many changes to the **Club JAM** schedule. Please take note of the following:

- December 7 – Club JAM meets at 3:30
- December 14 – Club JAM meets at 3:30
- December 21 – NO CLUB JAM
- December 28 – NO CLUB JAM
- January 4 – NO CLUB JAM
- January 11 – Club JAM resumes at 3:30

Finally, I would like to introduce a change of thinking about spiritual formation here at SUMC. For most of us, what happens on Sunday mornings for our kids has been known at **Sunday school**. This term connotes a certain image or practice of what happens in faith learning and faith formation. Studies show that learning and growing and maturing in our faith happens differently than a traditional Sunday "school" model would indicate. We are formed by faith, and we are formed in the faith. I will be sharing more on this understanding of how faith develops in future newsletters and on our website. But a first step I would like to take is to intentionally refer to Sunday mornings as "**Faith Formation**". Let's practice this together over the next few weeks and months! Our schedule for faith formation also changes during the holiday season. Please take note....

Sunday Faith Formation schedule as follows:

- December 4 – Faith formation groups meet at 9:15
- December 11 – Faith Formation groups meet at 9:15
- December 18 – NO faith formation groups for kids – Christmas Program at 9:30
- December 25 – NO faith formation groups – one worship at 9:00 a.m.
- January 1 – NO faith formation groups – one worship at 9:00 a.m.
- January 8 – Faith formation groups resume at 9:15

May the peace of Christ our Savior be born in you again this Advent and Christmas season – Rev. Chris

PRAYERS and CELEBRATIONS

Baptism Joy:

On November 20th John Radenbaugh and his sister Marissa were baptized as believers into the church family. Their parents are Jay and Lidia Radenbaugh. Blessings, blessings!

Prayers and Sympathy:

For the family of Rick Pearl of Washington, IA. He entered heaven on November 4th. Rick is the son of Roma Pearl, 2753 Anchorage Rd. brother of Tom, Jim and George. Our prayers are with his family.

JOYS & CONCERNS

Rejoicing:

On Nov. 20th, we welcome the following individuals into church membership!

Matt Ashton	Kurt Blankenheim
Katie Folkerts	Louis Gnida
Shae Goldsberry	Evan Grace
Allison Herdliska	Eric Holtorf
Brandon Kramer	Morgan Kroymann
Kolby Melsha	Brianne Messer
Joshua Prybil	Tyler Puettmann
John Radenbaugh	Sam Rebik-Corrigan
Adam Roy	Owen Sherman
Alex Smith	Eric Swartzendruber
Cash Turner	Taylor Weetman

Prayerfully remembering those in military service:

Austin Haury
Abraham Proffitt

Thanks

Roma Pearl would like to say thank you to everyone remembering her and her family following the recent death of her son, Rick.



October 30	8:00	54
	9:30	57
	10:45	91
	Care Center	19
	TOTAL	221
November 6	8:00	70
	9:30	80
	10:45	69
	Care Center	15
	TOTAL	234

November 13	8:00	65
	9:30	47
	10:45	58
	Care Center	16
	TOTAL	186

November 20	8:00	14
	10:00	400
	Care Center	20
	TOTAL	434

Thanksgiving 62

November 27	8:00	68
	9:30	37
	10:45	34
	Care Center	14
	TOTAL	153



December 4 – 2nd Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
2 Peter 3:8-15a
Mark 1:1-8

December 11 – 3rd Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Psalm 126
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28

December 18 – 4th Sunday of Advent

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16
Luke 1:47-55
Romans 16:25-27
Luke 1:26-38

December 24 – Christmas Eve

Isaiah 9:2-7, Psalm 96
Psalm 96
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-20

December 25 – Christmas Day

Isaiah 52:7-10
Psalm 98
Hebrews 1:1-4 (5-12)
John 1:1-14

December 31 – Watch Night/New Year's Eve

Ecclesiastics 3:1-13
Psalm 8
Revelation 21:1-6a
Matthew 25:31-46



Youth Group News

Thank you to EVERYONE who has helped with the Cocoa Cabin!!! The first weekend was a riotous success! It is amazing how much fudge and cookies those Christmas tree shoppers can eat! We can always use more treats if you would like to drop any off in the church kitchen for this weekend. Come out this Saturday and Sunday for a great family Christmas tree hunt. (Remember, you never get to stop with the first tree you like, there is always a better one on the other side of the hill.....!)

Thank you to everyone who donated items for our soldiers. Those packages are on their way now! If you would like to send more gifts yourself let me know and I will get the website to you. There is a note that they love getting beanie babies to give to the local children. Finally! A place to send those bags and bags of beanie babies!!!

We will have regular Youth Group this month on December 7th and the 21st. On the 14th please join us for Cocoa Carols and Chili instead of Youth Group.

Thank you everyone for your support of our Youth Group activities throughout the year. We survive and grow because of the wonderful support we receive. Whether you have made a dessert, volunteered your time, donated money, hired our mission trip crew, or have done any of the unspoken chores over at the Family Life Center, you have lifted us up.

Our youth have collected for the food bank, sent food to Haiti, carved pumpkins for the care center, raised money for disasters, sent gifts to soldiers and books to prisoners and shelters. We have a strong base of youth who couldn't imagine missing the opportunity to serve on a sweltering hot mission trip each year and we have even a larger group of dedicated youth who very seldom miss the chance to get together each week for Youth Group.

We live in a land of opportunity.... the opportunity to serve...the opportunity to give... the opportunity to love... and, above all, we have the opportunity each day to see God's hand at work.

Christmas Blessings!

Get Involved...Be Inspired!

Kelly Meyer
Solon United Methodist Church
Youth Director
319-624-5191

Merry Christmas!



FAITH & FINANCES

CHOIR ROBES ARE ORDERED!

The new choir robes have been ordered and should be here by the first of the year! We've had donations coming in toward the total cost of \$6399. Right now as of today we need approximately \$2300 more to cover the cost for new robes for our most excellent choir!! If you'd like to donate, please indicate "choir" or "robes" in the memo portion of your check so we can apply it toward the cost. You won't miss the old green robes a bit once you've had a chance to see the new ones! Thanks to those donating \$4100 so far!



General fund —Budgeted through the end of November	\$305,126
Expenditures through November 30 2011	\$275,110
Receipts through November 30, 2011	\$299,415
Checking account balance November 30	\$9276
General Fund Balance	-\$60,713

Family Life Center Loan Update—Spreading God's Light Campaign

We are soon moving into the final stages of our Spreading God's Light Campaign. Please make every effort to keep pledges current. It would be a wonderful celebration if we could say this loan could be paid off when pledges come to an end. However as there will be a shortfall, we would encourage all in our congregation to give a gift to get the loan paid off! We currently have approximately \$168,000 in unpaid pledges. We have \$36,366 in the Building Fund checking account to make our monthly payments. Our balance on the loan is \$280,326.14. Help us pay off our loan!!

For You to Know!

Football Dinner profits are currently at \$12,299

Craft Bazaar Profits are currently at \$1210

\$7000 in apportionments were paid this month bringing our paid total to \$13,300. We still owe \$49,584 on the 2011 apportionments. We were not able to pay all of our 2010 apportionments and hope to have enough to pay toward the \$17,143 that is still owed. Many of our apportionment dollars go directly toward ministry and mission. It was the first time in history we have not been able to pay all of our apportionments. If you would like to give a special gift toward Conference Ministry and Mission that is paid through our apportionments, please mark "Aport" in the memo portion of your check. As with all of your monetary gifts, it will show on your contribution statement for tax purposes.

And now it's time for my annual Christmas Poem!

My church family has done it once more,
Giving gifts of time we cannot ignore!
The money pays bills and we need that as well.
But your time and talents have stories to tell!



The comforters meet monthly and knit prayer shawls,
To place on friends to whom grief and sorrow calls.
Cindy, Kris, Susan, Coleen, Connie and Carol,
All of them knitting to present this apparel.

Sue Wilkinson is retiring as Church Council Chair,
But don't you know it—Fred Bark soon will be there!
Sue has served somewhere around 18 years,
So she's thinking it's time to shift volunteer gears.

Jeanne Erhart managed a zillion church dinners,
We've all long known football dinners are winners.
She's retiring from tenderloins, noodles and soup.
(But we all know she'll volunteer in some other group!)



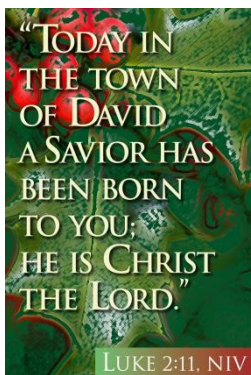
Gina, Bess, Norma and Winnie Hofsommer,
Greet every Sunday each member and newcomer.
We don't say how much we appreciate their greeting
As we arrive for worship and file into our seating.

Our Wednesday night meal crew does an incredible job,
Of feeding a large Wednesday night hungry mob!
The food is superb and the help always loyal.
You never know what they might bake, roast or boil.

Helen and Jay I know never sleep,
As volunteer hours they heap upon heap.
Mike Turner who wears so many church hats,
And does lots of "this" and much more of "that's"!

Dana and Kay helping with every newsletter,
Making arrival at your house smoother and better.
Marissa has helped on several occasions,
And we love it when she's able and has school vacations!

I can't say enough about our good friend Barb Dixon,
(Whose name rhymes you notice with that reindeer Vixon!)
She does bulletins, newsletters, mailings and cooks noodles,
Answers phones, cleans containers, and much more by the oodles.
She does so much for us I'm adding two extra lines,
To say thanks to Barb Dixon before continuing my rhymes!



But I think my most favorite gift of all,
Was the work Al Hulse did in the bathroom stall!
Fixing the stool we were afraid to flush,
As over the top it without fail would gush!

My page is getting long and so many yet to name.
I could list several more doing much of the same!
Giving of time, their service and talent,
Serving for God and serving so gallant.

As Christmas approaches I think of you all
Working for church family and answering God's call,
Being faithful disciples and serving where needed,
It stirs me to know your call you heeded!

Examples you've been to me every day
So I encourage others, and I'd like to say--
As the New Year approaches be a Christian with nerve
And ask yourself—in 2012--how will I serve?






Christmas blessings upon blessings I hope God will heap,
And keep the snow fluffy and not too deep
May Santa find your chimney on Christmas Eve night,
And fill every stocking with Jesus' light!



Merry Christmas!
Karen Schmitt
Director of Business Affairs



December 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 7:00 PM – Solon Habitat for Humanity start-up meeting, SUMC Fellowship Hall	2 11:30 AM: Solon Emergency Food Pantry start-up meeting	3 7:00 AM – United Methodist Men All Day: Solon Youth serving at the Cocoa Cabin
4 8, 9:30, 10:45 AM –Worship 9:15 AM – Sunday School 9, 10:30, 11:45 –Fellowship 5:30 PM – Financial Peace 7:00 PM – Boy Scouts	5	6 8:45 AM – Coffee Connection 9:30 AM – Care Center 12:00–Brown Bag Bible Study 6:30 PM – Comforters 7:00 PM – Endmt, Trste & Finance Super Committee	7 1:00 PM – UMW Lunch 3:30 PM – Jam & 5 th /6 th 6:00 PM – Family Meal 6:30 PM – Bell Choir 6:30 PM – Social Justice 6:45-8:00-7 th – 12 th Youth 7:30 PM – Chancel Choir	 Advent	9	10
11 8, 9:30,10:45 AM – Worship 9:15 AM – Sunday School 9, 10:30, 11:45 –Fellowship 12:15 – Jo’s Road House 5:00 PM – Financial Peace Pizza and celebrations 7:00 PM – Boy Scouts	12 6:30: Missions Committee planning mtg.	13 8:45 AM – Coffee Connection 9:30 AM – Care Center Worship 12:00 – Brown Bag Bible Study 6:30 – Committees check with Chairperson on mtg. NO CHURCH COUNCIL	14 Cocoa, Carols, Chili 3:30 PM – Jam & 5 th /6 th 6:00 PM – Family Meal	15		
18 8, 9:30,10:45 AM – Worship 9:30 AM – CHILDREN’S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM 9, 10:30, 11:45–Fellowship 7:00 PM – Boy Scouts	19	20 8:45 AM – Coffee Connection 9:30 AM – Care Center Worship 1:00 PM – Book Club	21 6:00 PM – Family Meal 6:30 PM – Bell Choir 7:30 PM – Chancel Choir	22	23	24 4:30 & 6:30 PM Christmas Eve worship
25 9:00 AM Christmas Worship –10:00 AM fellowship time – Bring a plate of treats	26	27 8:45 AM – Coffee Connection 9:30 AM – Care Center Worship	28 6:30 PM Bell Choir 7:30 PM – Vocal Choir	29 6:30 PM - FEST Meeting		31  HAVE A BLESSED NEW YEAR!
From Dec. 23 to 30th church offices will be open only by appointment.						