



# The Messenger

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## The Wonder of Christmas Eve

from Dr. Frank Trotter

Thomas Merton, the great 20<sup>th</sup> century mystic, once wrote:

*Christ is born. He is born to us.*

*And he is born today.*

*For Christmas is not merely a day like every  
other day.*

*It is a day made holy and special by  
a sacred mystery.*

*It is not merely another day in the weary  
round of time.*

*Today, eternity enters into time,  
and time, sanctified, is caught up  
in eternity.*

As adults, we keep sifting words like Merton's to understand the mystery and glory of what God did in the Incarnation – when God chose to be born at Bethlehem in human form.

But as children, there is always a part of us that clings to simpler mysteries, purer stories of simple, humble people to whom a great light appeared in the darkness. Was there really a star from the East? Or a great heavenly host singing over frightened sheep and shepherds? While the adult part of us might demur, a childish voice cries out, "Yes, it was exactly like that!"

What I know in what I call my "cognitive imagination" is that something wondrous happened so long ago that changed the course of human history. Mystery is never fully containable, of course, and I hope that there is still space and time within our lives to sink, once again, into the mystery of what happens when God chooses, once again, to be born in our hearts. For when that happens, we know it for sure.

May God bless you richly at the birth of our Lord Jesus.



# Isn't Gratitude Grand?

by Wanda Gae Stefansson

Yes, gratitude is grand! We are abundantly grateful for our beautiful Chapel as light streams through the vibrant stained glass, highlighting the warm wood of the newly refinished pews, chancel furniture and floor.

On Sunday, January 13, we will honor the donors that have made the renovated Chapel a reality.

There are many who have tirelessly overseen various aspects of the renovation, and we, as a congregation, feel enormous gratitude to them. **Virgil Bryant** is one of those. He followed the project from the closing of the Chapel years ago to protect us all against the effects of a potential earthquake to its recent completion. Virgil and Juanita now live in San Diego, and we are taking this opportunity to invite them back "home" to express our deep appreciation. We are declaring Sunday, January 13, "Virgil Bryant Day" at FUMC.

Cards will go out to the more than 300 persons and families who have donated to the Chapel, inviting them to come to the Chapel



Open House after morning worship. Plaques will be displayed commemorating family members and groups for the windows and refinished furniture. There will be a book with an alphabetical listing of all donors which will be a permanent fixture in the Chapel.

There are some window panels, chancel furniture, and pews which have no sponsors.

The debt on the Chapel is still considerable and every donation – personal, in memory, or in honor of a loved one – relieves a portion of that debt while warming the donor's heart. To sponsor a pew is \$700, a window is \$2,500, the altar and reredos are \$4,000, the sound console is \$3,200, the organ console is \$65,000. Contact the pastors or Wanda Gae Stefansson if you wish to become a sponsor. Any sponsorships received by January 1 will have a plaque up by the Open House date of January 13.

Join us and celebrate the Chapel and its donors on Sunday morning, January 13!

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## Music Department Seeks Housing for Tennessee University Singers

The University of Tennessee (Martin) University Singers are visiting Southern California in January and will present a concert in our church sanctuary on Friday, January 4th, at 7:30pm. It promises to be an exciting evening.

Director of Music Ministries, Stephen Gothold, is trying to secure housing for the 32 singers in the group. He is requesting that you provide housing for at least two students. Here is the tentative schedule of their activities:

4:30pm	Students arrive to rehearse
7:30pm	Concert begins
9:00pm	Concert ends. Meet students, take them home for a snack. Feed them breakfast, and have them back to church at a time to be announced.

If you can help in this way, we would be most appreciative! Please call or e-mail Stephen Gothold at [sgothold@fumcpasadena.org](mailto:sgothold@fumcpasadena.org) or call his cell at 562-708-2348.

# We Give Thanks for Memories

by Ruth MacPherson  
FUMC Librarian

Of our beloved church, more like our home than our homes – for God our beloved parent, and our brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ.

Of people, givers and visionaries from the past, who have endowed our building and grounds - with sanctuary, chapel, choir - soloists and pipe organ, brides' room and library.

For the memories of this church, stored in the minds of each of us – of wonderful preaching, leadership and teaching over the years, by beloved pastors, Sunday School and Adult Class teachers, directors and teachers of our Preschool, leaders and counselors of Scouts, Youth and Fellowship groups. For most beautiful and exciting music - and its program offered to adults, youth and children.

For our church's leaders of administrative responsibilities, developing stewardship and guiding our monies toward needful church expenses, missions, and social service outreach.

For front office staff people who have facilitated communication, publication – who are our church's "face of welcome" to members seeking office assistance, or to strangers needing helpful direction to church programs.

Our library is grateful to the professionalism of past librarians and staff. They set a standard of excellence that we still strive to reach – having the best books, tapes and references we can furnish; the best

library events we can offer; and keeping good library catalog records of our holdings. They also left us a archival legacy of portfolio sketches and facsimiles; letters and records about key people and events in this last century of memories. We are grateful too for Pat Mann who has faithfully tended even more of our church's archival material. In all these memories needing a resurrection– to live again.

Sunday, November 4th, our youth began unearthing these "memories" – about our sanctuary, our chapel, library, Fellowship and Great Halls. We are in the process of identifying "key

people" who have "key memories" of our church's history, like Wayne Brubaker, Peter Beam and others of you. These memories need to be gathered and be alive again, - in print, "on line", or in video, and kept for our church's future.

Our FUMC Library has been asked to gather stories of past FUMC events and people that our congregation needs to remember. In priority, we need to begin with FUMC stories covering the years of 1920s to the 1960s. To be an ongoing project, our people's stories, in the decades following, can be added next. We urge anyone who is interested in this project to contact our library staff or committee. Your recorded memories and stories will be needed. We need volunteers now for interviewing and video-recording, as we are already developing a list of key people for their "living memories".



## Children's Camp

January

19th - 20th

(Saturday morning -  
Sunday afternoon)

Theme:

**"I am a  
Child of God"**

*Celebrating the wonder  
of our creation  
in the beauty of the  
mountains!*

Children will be encouraged to celebrate their unique selves as children of God through age-appropriate sessions along with some good 'ol fun camp traditions, activities, and campfire songs!

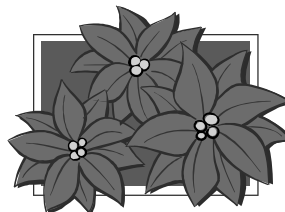
**Leadership:** Rev.  
Debbie Gara and  
Children's Ministry  
Counselors

Watch for registration  
brochure  
in the mail soon!

# Merry Christmas

REMEMBER THE REASON FOR THE SEASON!

from The Messenger Staff





# Light from the Catacombs

by Pat Mann, FUMC Archivist

Please note  
change in date:

## Hilltoppers Meet January 14th

Hilltoppers unit of  
United Methodist  
Women  
will meet

January 14th.

PLEASE NOTE  
CHANGE IN DATE  
because church is  
closed for the Martin  
Luther King, Jr.  
holiday.

Our program in  
January will feature  
Ellen Peterson telling  
us the story of  
"SARAH," one of the  
new stained glass  
windows in  
our chapel. The  
meeting will be at  
1:30 pm  
in the Church Lounge  
and all women  
are invited and  
welcome.

## White Gifts Sunday at FUMC



"White Gifts" Sunday: (L-R)  
Tissue-wrapped gifts surround  
the altar, 1926; youth line up  
for procession, 1956; end of  
White Gifts service, 1950s;  
Christmas pageant "The Holy  
Night," 1948; Youth un-  
wrapping gifts, 1955; Young  
musicians, 1956; Christmas  
tableau, 1950s; youth  
preparing to distribute food,  
1955; kids await entrance,  
1956; families place gifts on  
altar, 1954.

"White Gifts" Sunday was a very special family activity during the Christmas season. Cans of food, collected for the needy, were wrapped in white tissue paper, and presented at the altar.

This Christmas family night included a program which was always exciting and sometimes featured your child!

Later, the youth unwrapped the food and prepared it for delivery to the poor in the community.

Decades later, children brought their white gifts to Sunday School and each class presented them to the altar.

As Christians, we have always been taught by Jesus to love and therefore, to share. Now we bring donated items for the needy on Sunday's and to our drama productions.

# “Wayne Brubaker” Sunday

*Several have requested a copy of the remarks Dr. Frank Trotter made on November 18th in honor of “Wayne Brubaker Sunday.” The following is a reprint of those remarks.*

I am delighted to proclaim this day, November 18, 2007, as “Wayne Brubaker Sunday!”

We have several members who have been here for fifty years or longer and Wayne Brubaker and his wife, Susan, are among those.

Wayne told me that he began to attend First Church in October of 1952, when he was 13 years old. His father had belonged to our church in the 1930’s as a Cal Tech graduate. But when he got a job here in Pasadena as a research physicist in 1952, he brought his family with him.

Wayne joined the church in the spring of 1953 as a member of the confirmation class. It did not take him long to begin volunteering. One of the first skills he learned was how to run the sound system as an assistant to Gordon Hayzlett. Between those two gentlemen, the sound for our services has been taken care of with great care for many years. When Lily Villamin was here as one of our associate ministers, Wayne said to her with a laugh, “Your success here depends on me!”

Another of his jobs in those early years was to run the addressograph machine in the office whenever the church needed to send out a bulk mailing.

Wayne helped organize the ushers for the balcony and took a special interest when the youth fellowship began passing the communion elements through the pews in the 1960’s.

Even in those days, if one was observant, signs of his future vocation as an accountant could be seen. He helped out Grace Whitley, the church comptroller, in preparing financial statements. One of his jobs was to walk the Sunday morning offering across the street to the bank. He told me that someone would

dial half of the police department’s phone number as he walked across and hold the receiver to see if there was any sign of trouble; if there was, the second half of the number would be quickly dialed.

At some point he became known as the member who would come in and open the church for any kind of need or emergency. A youth choir who was visiting our area and staying in the church got in early in the morning. Who did they call? Wayne. When the church installed motion detectors in the Cloister, pigeons set the alarm off. Who got called? Wayne.

Wayne has served as both the chairperson (for four years) and a member of the Camp Committee since the 1950’s. He helped with the catered lunch program that we used to sponsor every Sunday after church.

When Wayne was a member of the S.Y.A. (or Single Young Adult Fellowship), he became friends with a young woman named Susan Summers and they began dating in 1964. As she approached her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, he promised her that he would take her to Las Vegas. Even though he was a few years older, her parents agreed. The two of them rode on the bus and Wayne sat in a chair in the casino all night as Susan played the slots. It was a big gamble that paid off! Susan and Wayne were married on July 2, 1966 in the Chapel. Over the years they and their children, Eric and Nancy, have been active and regular participants in many parts of our church life.

One of Wayne’s special memories was when he attended a session of the Annual Conference in Redlands. At the conclusion of one of the services, Bishop Kennedy gave an altar call – at first, for those who were going

Wayne Brubaker Sunday, *continued on page 6*



## Sunday School Big Red Barrel Donations

### December

This month the wind blows and the rains may come. If you are out in the weather, your skin and lips will most likely get chapped. What helps keep our skin and lips smooth?

We will collect **moisturizing cream & chapstick.**



## Young Adult Writers

The FUMC Theatre Arts Committee is looking for 2-minute plays on a relationship-based theme to consider for a spring mini-play, staged-reading festival.

Entries are due January 31 and can be turned into the Church Office or emailed in the body of the email to [just4shopping@sbcglobal.net](mailto:just4shopping@sbcglobal.net).

Plays must be G or PG in content and tone. A limited number of entries will be chosen for reading. Thank you.

# Winter Youth Potluck, Sunday, January 6th

All 7th through 12th graders and their parents are welcome to participate in the Winter Youth Potluck.

**When:** Sunday, January 6th  
**Time:** 6:45 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.  
(Choir practice starts at 5:15 p.m.)  
**Where:** Fellowship Hall  
**Why:** Come together in fellowship to learn about the many activities planned for our youth this spring season. Bring your calendars as you will be asked to sign up to work on various committees.

We will be discussing cabaret, winter camp, mission projects, choir tour, and desires to form a new praise band. The youth

officers have also planned some great fun activities including special Mother's Day and Father's Day events.

A complete six-month calendar including all youth activities will be passed out at the meeting as well as the acolyte schedule, youth directory, winter camp flyer and Sr. High Mission Trip to Mexico application.

Please bring a main dish, side dish or dessert (enough for 8 people) to share:  
(by last name:)

- A - G ... Main Dish
- H - M .. Side Dish
- N - Z ... Dessert



## Pathfinders' Epiphany Party



### EPIPHANY

Please join us at our annual Pathfinders' Epiphany Party on Saturday, January 12 at 6:00 p.m. at the home of Don and Cynthia Quan. Bring a white elephant gift and an appetizer or dessert. (If you need help in deciding what to bring, you may follow this guideline: if your last name is between A-L: appetizer; M-Z: dessert. Otherwise, surprise us.) Please RSVP to the Quans at (626) 285-9354 or [cquan\\_sgusd@hotmail.com](mailto:cquan_sgusd@hotmail.com).

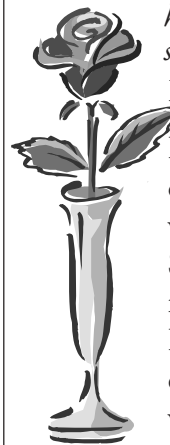
*A grateful heart is a happy heart...my heart is both. Thank you so much.*

Dear Pastor Trotter,

I would like to thank your prayer quilt committee for presenting me with a lovely quilt on this past Sunday. It was wonderful to fellowship with your congregation. I really felt welcomed. I will also cherish the prayer quilt. My family will visit your church again.

Sincerely,

**Lillian Duncan & Family**



## Wayne Brubaker Sunday, *continued from page 5*

into full time Christian service; but then Bishop Kennedy extended the altar call to all those who understood their particular vocation as a calling from God and as a vital aspect of their Christian faith. Wayne said that he went down to the front and that there was standing room only.

Wayne, in many, many ways, you have shared your faith in Christ among us and have been a witness to how we are all called to support our church. We thank you for your service and pray God's richest blessings upon you in all the days ahead. Thanks be to God.

# Thank You!

Your thoughtfulness will always be remembered.

Thank you for my prayer quilt.

Sincerely,

**Gwen Mahjoubian**

# Highlights of Advent Family Workshop

Photos by H Reid



FUMC CALENDAR of EVENTS:

# December

21	9:00am	Happy Birthday Jesus Party	Fellowship Hall
23	10:00am	Worship/Cantata	Sanctuary
	11:45am	Church Council	Church Lounge
24	5:00pm	Christmas Eve Family Service	Sanctuary
	10:30pm	Christmas Prelude Music	
	11:00pm	Christmas Eve Lessons & Carols	Sanctuary
25	10:00am	Christmas Day Service	Chapel
26	10:00am	Foundation (10am-6pm)	Foundation Office
30	10:00am	Morning Worship	Sanctuary
	4:00pm	Confirmation Class	Jr. Hi. Lounge

# January

04	8:00pm	University of Tennessee Choral Concert	Sanctuary
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## Weekly & Ongoing FUMC Events

SUNDAYS	
9:00am	Sunday School for all ages
10:00am	Sunday Morning Worship
11:30am	Youth Handbell Choir
5:15pm	Youth Choir Choir Room
6:45pm	UMYF Dinner & Program Fellowship Hall
TUESDAYS	
10:00am	Social Services Great Hall
7:00pm	Boy Scout Troop Scout Room
7:30pm	Adult Handbell Rehearsal Bell Room
7:30pm	AA Meetings Adult Lounge
WEDNESDAYS	
7:00pm	Young People's AA Meeting Adult Lounge
7:30pm	Adult Choir Rehearsal Choir Room

## FUMC Prayer List

Please remember persons on our prayer list in your regular prayers...

We lift up to God these prayers...

*for healing:*

Gabe Brown  
Wayne Brubaker  
Patrice Daniels  
Everett Dodge



Curt Elrod  
George Griffith  
Peggy Hendricks  
Kyong Hong  
Holly Dale Howard  
Manick Samuel  
Doris Schatra  
Norm Schmidt  
Argie Taylor

*for strength & comfort:*

Phil Carlson  
Barbara Gorton  
Don Hanselman  
Lorene Ozsvath



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