



Al & Margie Forrest gave a gift to the Maintenance Reserve Fund in honor of the 50th anniversary of **Jim & Carol Black**.

The *International Sunday School Class* gave a gift to the Budget Fund in honor of **Bill Campbell, Jr.**

Carol & Diane Holmes gave a gift to the Habitat Fund in memory of **Julia Cawelti, Nell Stegall, and Ruby Moore** and in honor of the 50th anniversary of **Jim & Carol Black**.

Judge & Katie Lane gave a gift to the Room in the Inn in honor of the 50th anniversary of **Jim & Carol Black** and the 53rd anniversary of **Charles & Phyllis Jones**.

Jack & Irene Murphy gave a gift to the Budget Fund in honor of the 50th anniversary of **Jim & Carol Black** and in honor of the birthdays of **Elsie Fulcher** and **Bob Burns**.

Recently In the Hospital

Wilson Brooks
Lynne Crum



Dear United Methodist Women,

The need for emergency food has never been greater and your donation could not have come at a better time. In October, Loaves & Fishes provided food to 8,242 people. Your generous donation of \$200 will help us continue to serve clients as hunger needs increase in our community.

Sincerely,
Beverly Howard
Executive Director of Loaves & Fishes



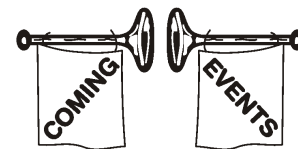
Boy Scout Troop 147 will be holding their annual Spaghetti Dinner on **Saturday, February 14**. Bring your sweetheart and help out the scouts. This is the only fund raiser for the boy scouts. The needs of the troop are growing with replacing old camping equipment and the financial condition of the scouts in the troop. Come and enjoy the great food and fellowship. See any scout or scout leader for tickets.

- Submitted by Bruce Fowler

Volunteers Needed

Cokesbury has supported the scouting program for 50 years, and now that the numbers of kids participating in the scouting program has increased, we need some help. If you can give one hour a month, like telling stories, or an opportunity to boss adults around, please call Bruce Fowler at (daytime) 704 376-0756 or email bnmfowler@aol.com.

- Submitted by Bruce Fowler



Young Adult Christmas Gathering
Saturday, December 27 at 7:00 p.m
at Houston's home.

Young Adult Led Worship
Sunday, December 28 at 10:30 a.m.

Epiphany Sunday
January 4, 2009
Kings Cake served at morning worship

Mama Ndoyi Children Village Project in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

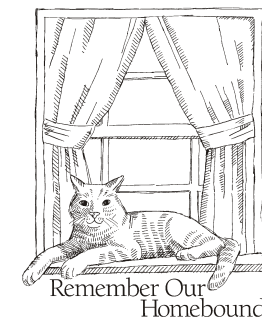
After a year of strenuous efforts to raise money for the Children's Village Project in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), we are still tireless and our commitment is unflagging. We haven't given up our faith to accomplish what arose from our hearts, and we believe is God's mission to help vulnerable children, mostly orphans and street children in the region.

Last year's donations reached only one fourth of the ten thousand dollar goal prospected for acquiring land for the village. Thanks be to God! Initially, the money was set aside to purchase a small piece of land, but facing an increasingly and huge demand for an orphanage, our team in the Congo decided to rent a property instead. We are anticipating, by January 2009, to be effective in a temporary renting place and provide services to needy children and orphans while we are seeking more funds for the construction of the village.

Folks, we need to act! The endless war in the Congo has separated millions of children from their parents and displaced thousands of families. If you would like to be part of this mission or need more information, please contact us at the church address: Action for the Vulnerable, Inc., c/o Cokesbury UMC, 6701 Idlewild Road, Charlotte, NC 28212.

We thank our fellow Cokesbury UMC members and all our partners for their support and prayers. God Bless!

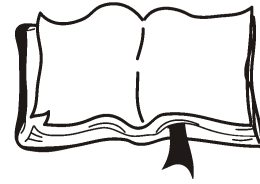
- Submitted by Mundeke Wembo



Going Out Beloving

The group that finished the book: *The Life of the Beloved* has decided to in-flesh our belovedness by meeting once a month on the second Wednesday at 12:30 p.m. at Wendy's (Independence Blvd.) to have lunch and then go out and visit our homebound and/or sick members. We do welcome others to join us and to go out and make a short visit. We are hoping to do the meal and visitation in less than two hours. Our next visit will be on January 14. Contact either Kay Dumas or Houston for more information.

- Submitted by Houston Hall



Extra Bible Study for Epiphany 2009

The following classes will be offered beginning the week of January 11: Tuesday nights at 7:00 January 13, 20, 27 and February 3, 10, and 17. Wednesday mornings at 10:30: January 14, 21, 28, and February 4, 11, and 18.

The Enneagram is an ancient Sufi teaching that describes nine different personality types and their interrelationships. It is a tool that can be used for spiritual growth and awareness. The class will learn the nine different types and help you discover yours.

There had been several requests for a book study of *The Shack* and this will be announced at a later date. Look for more information soon.

- Submitted by Houston Hall



Through Cokesbury Windows

Vol. CCCXXIV 324

December 15, 2008

The Real Christmas

As St. Luke describes the birth of Jesus, Joseph and Mary travel to Bethlehem because of a census ordered by Emperor Augustus. Mary is very pregnant and because of the influx of so many people in this city, they are unable to find a place to stay. At last, an innkeeper allows them to stay in his hotel stable since he also has no rooms left. While there, Mary gives birth to a baby boy. The event is told to shepherds keeping their flock by a chorus of angels that appear to them in the sky. These shepherds seek out the blessed event and become witnesses of the birth of the Messiah.

The story Luke presents is of God incarnate coming among us to save us all. Christmas is about this great news, God with us. Not a God who remains aloof and inactive in the affairs of humans, but a God who is deeply concerned for human life and intimately involved in the ultimate outcome of life on earth. The story is also about how God chose to be involved, born to humble parents in a crude ancient homeless shelter. When we come to celebrate this story and message, we must recognize God's choice, not that God spurns the rich and wealthy and powerful, but that God's approach to world salvation begins among the poor and powerless. The real Christmas acknowledges that salvation and the will of God begins somewhere among the bottom rung of humanity and works its way throughout. Therefore, if one is to truly celebrate this miracle and joy, is it best to do it with a Christmas tree and lights? Do we do it with presents to loved ones and family and a family gathering around a great feast? Do we do it with worship around our own construction of the nativity scene while singing or hearing sung the great songs and hymns of the season?

I propose that the best way to celebrate and acknowledge this great event is to visit the place where God chose to be born: our modern day version of a homeless shelter. Right now in Charlotte and other places throughout the nation, there are more homeless and indigent persons than principalities can accommodate. In this difficult economic climate, many have lost their homes, their jobs, and their dignity and many more are on the verge of such loss. Even when times are good to great, there are usually many unable to provide for themselves and their families. The love of God that proposes salvation for all has at its heart a compassion that reaches out to the least among us. Christmas begins there, in the cold and dark, among the lonely and indigent, with the hungry and thirsty, and in the filthiest and most germ-infested places you can find. I hope you are able to find Christmas in a variety of places, but if you're having difficulty, visit the homeless, God did, and you can still find him there.

Peace!
Pastor John

Church Staff
John A. Moore, PASTOR
Houston Hall, DIR. OF CHRISTIAN ED.
Louise Ward, FINANCIAL SECRETARY
Marty Gregory, MUSIC DIRECTOR
Joan Gillis, SECRETARY
Dennis Cannon, SEXTON

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Mission Statement
As disciples of Christ, we are called to look upward in celebration of God's grace, mercy, and love; to reach inward in worship, study, prayer, and to send outward in mission and servant ministry the love of Christ in our community.
Other Churches Worshipping at Cokesbury:
Islesia El Siloe, Pastor Felix Herera
Tuesdays & Friday 7:00-10:00 p.m.
Providence of God Free Methodist Church
Pastor Calby Patva
Sundays 6:00 p.m.