



# “Christmas Preparation!”

The last couple of days I have been frantically working to get things accomplished before going out of town on a weeklong vacation over the Thanksgiving Holiday. During this process I have begun to develop a better understanding of how important preparation can be. The older I become the more I realize that I cannot do or remember things as I did when I was younger. I struggle to remember all the things I need to do. I realize the importance of creating a strategy that will assist me as I work toward accomplishing specific tasks. Especially those tasks that

need to be handled before I leave town. I now make a list of items that need to be done. This list helps me to focus my efforts. As each task is completed I mark them off the list. This list helps with my forgetfulness. It is good to have a plan when we are making preparations for an event. The same can be true about the Christmas season. Christmas is just a few short weeks away. Many of us have already made or are making plans for the holiday season. Perhaps you already are making a list of things that need to happen during the Christmas season. I hope your list helps you to prioritize the things that are really important during the holiday season.

We are entering into the season of Advent. Advent means “a time of preparation for the coming of the Christ.” Advent is a time whereupon we begin to prepare ourselves spiritually for the Christmas season. This period of preparation is vital in that it allows us time to experience the fullness of the Christmas season and the true purpose behind Christmas—the birth of the Savior of the world. How is your preparation going?

I read a story a while back by J. Edgar Park. In the story, Mr. Park’s tells about a grumpy man who was very critical of Christmas. However, something happens in his life that turned his world upside down. For this man the events that unfolded helped him to once again evaluate his understanding of Christmas.

It was Christmas Eve, and as usual, George Mason was the last to leave the office. He walked over to a massive safe, spun the dials, and swung the heavy door open. Making sure the door would not close behind him, he stepped inside. A square of white cardboard was taped just above the topmost row of strongboxes. On the card a few words were written. George Mason stared at those words, remembering...

Exactly one year ago he had entered this same vault. And then, behind his back, slowly, noiselessly, the ponderous door swung shut. He was trapped—entombed in the sudden and terrifying dark. He hurled himself at the unyielding door, his hoarse cry sounding like an explosion. Through his mind flashed all the stories he had heard of men found suffocated in time vaults. No time clock controlled this mechanism; the safe would remain locked until it was opened from the outside tomorrow morning. Then realization hit him. No one would come tomorrow—tomorrow was Christmas. Once more he flung himself at the door, shouting wildly, until he sank on his knees exhausted. Silence came, high-pitched, singing silence that seemed deafening. More than thirty-six hours in a steel box three feet wide, eight feet long, and seven feet high. Would the oxygen last? Panting and breathing heavily, he felt his way around the floor. Then, in the far right-hand corner, just above the floor, he found a small circular opening. Quickly he thrust his finger into it and felt a faint but unmistakable, cool current of air.

The tension release was so sudden that he burst into tears. But at last he sat up. Surely he would not have to stay trapped for the full thirty-six hours. Somebody would miss him. But who? He was unmarried and lived alone. He had been invited to spend Christmas Eve with his brother’s family, but children got on his nerves and expected presents. A friend had asked him

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DECEMBER 2009

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## ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES

### DISCOVERY

Discovery meets in the Parlor just outside the Sanctuary. Each Sunday we open with a time of sharing prayer concerns and praises. Grab some coffee or tea from Crossbucks, bring your Bible and head to the Parlor (with the comfiest chairs and sofas, “the good seats!”) to discover how God still reveals Himself to us in the Apostles and Nicene creeds. We would love to have YOU join us on Sunday mornings! Lesson materials are provided and Kim Phillips is leading the study. Come fellowship, learn and laugh with the Discovery Sunday School class for adults.

### SOJOURNERS

A Sojourner means “a temporary resident”. Come join us as we journey with Paul through his Letters. Currently, we are studying 1 Corinthians. Come for great questions, great discussions and great insight!

### SERENDIPITY

Want to join a class, but can’t make it every week? Come join us in the Serendipity Class! Each lesson is self contained as we use the Serendipity Study Bible lesson that contains that morning’s message scripture. A great class to visit when you can, or become one of the core regulars! Todd Brown is the “facilitator” for the class. Come experience unraveling the scripture on our own before **hearing Pastor Steve tell us what it really means! Best of all—no homework!**

### YOUTH

Junior High is continuing with “Talksheets,” a curriculum that invites discussion on different topics of interest to middle school youth, and then uses scripture verses to let us know what God thinks about those topics. Senior High will be discussing the Top 13 Questions about God, which deal with the tough questions that impact their Christian faith.

### CHILDREN (K-5)

Our theme for December is “The Gift of Jesus.” Come to Sunday School this month and experience God’s great gift to us in Jesus! Luke’s gospel will come alive to us through science and games! Did you get your postcards in the mail for your Bible verse and trivia question? If not, ask your shepherd for one. Bible bucks table will be set up on Dec. 13 and Dec. 20. There will be a chance to get Christmas gifts for your family at the Bible Bucks table!

Don’t forget to come to Jesus’ Birthday Party on Dec. 13 at 9:00 in the fellowship hall! We’ll have crafts, games, birthday cupcakes and a message! No Sunday School on the 27!



We still don't have a shepherd to rotate with Julia for the 3-5th graders! They are really great kids!!



## Christmas Preparation

Continued from page 1

to go to a home for elderly people on Christmas Day and play the piano-George Mason was a good musician. But he had made some excuse or other; he had intended to sit at home, listening to some new recordings he was giving himself. George Mason dug his nails into the palms of his hands until the pain balanced the misery in his mind. Nobody would come and let him out, nobody, nobody, nobody...

Miserably the whole of Christmas Day went by, and the succeeding night. On the morning after Christmas the head clerk came into the office at the usual time, opened the safe, then went on into his private office. No one saw George Mason stagger out into the corridor, run to the water cooler, and drink great gulps of water. No one paid any attention to him as he left and took a taxi home. Then he shaved, changed his wrinkled clothes, ate breakfast, and returned to his office where his employees greeted him casually.

Grimly, the truth closed in on George Mason. He had vanished from human society during the great festival of brotherhood and no one had missed him at all. Reluctantly, George Mason began to think about the true meaning of Christmas. Was it possible that he had been blind all these years with selfishness, indifference, and pride? Was not giving, after all, the essence of Christmas because it marked the time God gave His Son to the world? All through the year that followed, with little hesitant deeds of kindness, with small, unnoticed acts of unselfishness, George Mason tried to prepare himself. Now, once more, it was Christmas Eve. Slowly he backed out of the safe and closed it. He touched its grim, steel face lightly, almost affectionately, and left the office.

There he goes now in his black overcoat and hat, the same George Mason as a year ago. Or is it? He walks a few blocks, and flags a taxi, anxious not to be late. His nephews are expecting him to help them trim the tree. Afterwards, he is taking his brother and his sister-in-law to a Christmas play. Why is he so happy?

Perhaps the card has something to do with it, the card he taped inside his office safe last New Year's Day. On the card is written, in George Mason's own hand: **"To Love people, to be indispensable, that is the purpose of life. That is the secret of happiness."**

Be sure that you do not get so wrapped up in the activities of Christmas that you forget to celebrate the true meaning of Christmas. During your preparation time make time to celebrate the birth of your Lord. Be sure to share the gift of love with people. It is my prayer that each of you experience—in its fullness—the true joy that comes through this holiday season. May the babe of Bethlehem be born in you anew as you celebrate Christ's birth. Hope to see you in Church on Sunday!

*Pastor Steve*



## The Mountain View Chancel Choir will present the annual *Christmas Cantata*

on Sunday, December 13, at 10:00 am.

"Bethlehem Morning", arranged and orchestrated by Marty Hamby, is a timeless musical for the season. A delightful combination of traditional carols and new arrangements, it tells the beautiful story we love to hear of Jesus' birth in a somewhat non-traditional way. The Cantata shines with soloists from the choir, narration, drama, and excellent directing by our own Joy Pantana. Please join us on the 13 and celebrate Christmas with music!



# 10 GREAT DATES

TO ENERGIZE YOUR MARRIAGE

**Start 2010 off on the Right Foot!**

**Who will Benefit? All couples who want to energize their relationships!**

**Including newlyweds, empty nesters and especially parents of all ages!**

**JOIN US FOR 10 FUN FILLED**

**Dates:** Sessions will be held the second Friday of each month at 6:30pm beginning January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2010 and running through October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

**Place:** Couples will meet in Mountain View UMC's Fellowship Hall to view a 15 minute video then spend the rest of the evening on a date with your spouse.

**Fee:** Registration is \$15 per couple (includes the workbook and all 10 class sessions).

Register before January 3, 2010. Payment must be received at the time of registration. Hand in money & form (below) to the Church Office or Ellen Bohn.

For additional information please contact the church office 434-525-6612.

Register for 10 Great Dates!

Paid \$15

Names:	
Phone:	
Email:	
Wedding Date:	



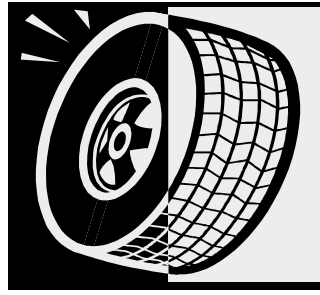
# Christmas Coffee House

Saturday, December 12  
7pm

Do you want to jump-start getting into the holiday spirit? Do you want to avoid the "bah humbug" syndrome? Well, we've got a perfect way to do that! Plan now to join in the fun for Mountain View's Christmas Coffee House. A variety of acts will be presented by a number of folks, who will share their wonderful talents for your enjoyment and entertainment! And all of your favorite Christmas carols will be sung! Delicious baked goodies and coffee will be served. Admission is free.

- Would you like to be a part of the performance?
- Would you help decorate?
- Would you bake and bring goodies for the evening?

For more information, please contact either Catherine Goetz or Starla Kraber at 252-6612..



## Meals On Wheels Volunteer Opportunity

Mountain View has committed to provide **drivers** for one of the lunchtime meal delivery routes for each day the week of December 7 thru December 11. **Please consider volunteering** for one day during this week. This requires your vehicle, gas and about 1 1/2 hours of your time (10:45 am to 12:15 pm approximately). A Meals on Wheels technician who is experienced with the route rides with you, directs you on where to drive and takes the meal to the door. This is a wonderful and eye-opening experience. If you would like to commit to one of these days, please call or e-mail Melanie Kirkpatrick @ 525-6612.



## A Star is Born

Messenger's will be presenting their Christmas Play, "A Star is Born" on December 20, during our worship service and a 2nd performance at 4:00 p.m. Please come and support our Messenger's as they have been working very hard.

December 2009

# WHUZZZ UP?



Mountain View UMYF



December 6	Movie Matinee	TBA
December 13	Rise Up Climbing	TBA
December 20	Christmas Party	5:00-6:30
(Please bring a \$5 wrapped present for a boy or girl)		
December 27	No UMYF	
January 3	No UMYF	



# Check out Mt. View UMC Youth on Facebook!



**BEDFORD  
CHRISTMAS STATION  
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY  
FOR DECEMBER 10**

This Christmas season Mountain View has committed once again to help the Bedford Community Christmas Station. The Christmas Station is an all volunteer, community-wide, non profit organization which assists low-income families in Bedford County on a seasonal basis by providing a shopping experience characterized by choice and dignity. Serving families with children is their highest priority. To be eligible for assistance, the families must apply, have a low income, and have a child, senior citizen, or disabled adult in the home. Eligible families are assigned a date and a time to shop in the Christmas Station. Shoppers use “points” to “purchase” new toys and clothing for each child in the home. Senior citizens and disabled adults are eligible to shop for household items. A volunteer host escorts each shopper through the Station. Also, used coats are available to any family member who needs protection from the cold winter weather. All families also receive a box of food. In 2008, over 1000 people right here in Bedford County were served. The need is expected to be even greater this year. The Mtn. View Angel Tree that was in the narthex throughout November helped a great deal in stocking the Christmas Station store.

We hope to provide at least 10 volunteers to work the Christmas Station store on Thursday evening, December 10, from 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Volunteers must be college-age or older. Please contact Melanie Kirkpatrick at 525-6612 to sign up.

There will be optional training sessions for new volunteers at the Christmas Station on Monday Dec. 7, Tuesday Dec. 8 and Wednesday Dec. 9. The training session times are 2:00pm, 4:00pm and 6:00pm on those days and training lasts about 20 to 25 minutes. The Christmas Station is located at 206 Washington Street in downtown Bedford. Please visit their website at [www.bedfordchristmas.com](http://www.bedfordchristmas.com) for their mission statement, history, photos and lots of useful information.



Join us for our  
**Christmas Eve  
Candlelight**  
Worship Service  
at 8:00pm  
to prepare yourself for the  
birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*Holy Communion  
will be served.*

**The church office will be closed beginning December 24, at 12noon. The office will reopen on Monday, January 4, 2010. If you have a need during this time, please call the church office and leave a message on the answering machine. The answering machine will be monitored during the staff time off.**

***Memorials***  
Given to Mountain View

- Peggy McCarter by John Mason
- Elaine Reirden by John Mason
- Peggy McCarter by Bill & Sherry Purdy
- Elaine Reirden by Bill & Sherry Purdy
- Peggy McCarter by Jean & Jerry Cornelius
- Elaine Reirden by Jean & Jerry Cornelius
- John Perdue by Nan Perdue
- Arlie Knitmeyer by Nan Perdue
- Bill Vandiver by Jean & Jerry Cornelius

**In Honor**

- Phyllis Gary by Jean & Jerry Cornelius



Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.

**The people of The United Methodist Church™**

### ***Mountain View United Methodist Church***

1077 Viewpoint Lane

P.O. Box 543 - Forest, VA 24551

(434) 525-6612 - Phone - (434) 525-1336 - Fax

**Worship Services**      **Sunday School**

10:00 a.m.

9:00 a.m.

*Nursery Provided*

Office Hours: Mon.- Fri. 8:30 am -4:30 pm

[www.mountainviewumc.org](http://www.mountainviewumc.org)

**Office Staff**

**Rev. Steve Propst** - *Pastor*

**Joy Pantana** - *Accompanist*

**Gayle Saunders** - *Administrative Assistant*

**Pat Hubbard and Melissa Nelson** - *Child Care*

**Tammy Carter** - *The Knight's Club After School Program*

**Our Missionary**

*Jacques Umembudi Akasa*

**E-mail:** [ujacques1@juno.com](mailto:ujacques1@juno.com)