

The Messenger Monthly

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Anniston First  United Methodist Church



Three of the talented ladies who knotted fleece blankets given to Meals-on-Wheels.

MISSION HIGHLIGHTS

Knots of Love

Reverend Noble shared a vision of opportunity. This opportunity was for members of our church community to participate in meaningful activity. He was referring to a group of individuals who come to receive hot meals served twice each week in the Bridge. These members of our community had expressed a desire to give back, but they needed help with resources. The Emerging Mission Funds provided just the opportunity this group of church participants needed to get started on their mission for giving back.

In January, a group of twelve stayed after lunch to begin work on knotting fleece blankets. With fleece provided by mission funds, and labor provided by those with a gift to share, a mission began. After several weeks of work by a growing

number of participants, twenty fleece lap blankets have been created. These blankets provide additional opportunity. Several Meals on Wheels recipients will receive an unexpected gift of a blanket, knotted with love, when a meal is delivered by a caring mission worker.

- ▶ If you would like to see visions for mission opportunity continue to become mission realities at Anniston First United Methodist, **please make a contribution today to the General Mission Fund.**
- ▶ If you would like more information about volunteering your time with a mission activity, **please contact Erna Hardy for information concerning ongoing opportunities for service.**

Your support is always appreciated!

- Erna Hardy

More Mission Highlights inside on page 2



Ray Crump and Don with health kits boxes from Anniston First ready to be shipped.

Haiti Relief

Last Wednesday, I took 256 health kits from our church to the North Alabama United Methodist Disaster Warehouse in Decatur, AL. The 157 tubes of toothpaste, plus some other miscellaneous items, that came in with some of the donated health kits, were,

in turn, given to the Interfaith Ministries to use in their ministry. Some people brought in bulk

items and all of the cash that came in with kits was used to make up complete kits.

The day I arrived at the warehouse, they were expecting a semi-truck to arrive the next day to take supplies to Sager Brown warehouse in Louisiana. They had 8,000 health kits packed and ready to go, plus many other additional items. I talked with Ray Crump and a co-worker named Don for over an hour. All of the work done at the warehouse is done on a volunteer basis. The warehouse is also collecting many other items to be used in various types of disaster situations. The warehouse itself is donated space by the owner until someone comes along and wants to rent this particular warehouse. So every once in a while new space for a disaster warehouse has to be located to move all of the donated items. Ray told me that he has been in the current location for the past three years.

Please continue to bring in items for the health kits. The need is still great.

Barbara & I return from Guadalajara, Mexico, on Tuesday, March 16th. We will try to get word about our trip back to Anniston FUMC as we can. Please keep us, the people we meet in Mexico, what we are asked to do, and what our involvement should be in working with them, in your prayers.

- In His Service, Jim Gray



UMW Retreat: Pancake Mix donated to Community Enabler

I am the bread of life. John 6:35

Sweet Life Cafe renewed old relationships and forged new ones. The best one of all was the renewal of our relationship with Jesus Christ. We are never alone. We are invited, included, lifted up, comforted, listened to, encouraged, and loved by our friends, by our fellow Christians, and by Jesus. We savor the bread of life.



Maudine from The Community Enabler

At the retreat, the women spent time assembling a cinnamon pancake mix. The mix was bagged and a personal, hand-written note and dish towel were attached. Twenty-eight bags were made and donated to The Community Enabler. Comfort food to comfort those in need.

Many thanks to Angel Rait, our fearless leader, and to Kathy Murphy, our music director. It takes many hands to put together the retreat, and we are fortunate to have such capable hands. Attendance totaled 36. Sixteen of us braved the elements and the bunkbeds to spend the night. Come join us next year, February 4 and 5, 2011.

- Marjorie Tanner



What's new and improved:

- New section for visitors to find out more about Anniston First
- New section for our missions and outreach
- A Photo Album page
- *Have you moved?* Update your information at CONTACT US
- *Need some inspiration?* Look for a devotional site at RESOURCES
- *Can't remember that meeting day?* Look for it on the CALENDAR

New Look for Website

If you haven't been to the church website lately, go check it out. We are a church that is giving and growing in ministry, an exciting place to worship God, and now the website better reflects that passion.

I have to thank Clair Cabellero and Brandon Harris for their help with photography. Clair took several of the photos used on the front page and throughout the website and Brandon's photos of the Children's Christmas Program and O Holy Night are found on the PHOTO page.

I hope you will visit the website often to keep informed about upcoming events in the life of our church and use it as a tool to invite others to worship.

► www.annistonfirst.org

- Stacy Booth

Send in your items for the website
or Messenger to stacy@annistonfirst.org

He Wasn't Crazy, He Was Simply Calledby Brandon Harris



"You do know this is only a part-time job, right?" This was the question I asked when William Murray called to tell me that he was moving his wife and three children (at the time, all under three-years old) from Cullman to Anniston

so he could take the job of contemporary worship leader. My next question: *"Have you talked to your wife about this?"* I felt like it was a reasonable question, because I was already working on the assumption that William was just a little crazy.

In the late summer of 2007 we had been without a contemporary worship leader for almost seven months. In an act of desperation, I posted a classified ad on the conference web page advertising the position. *"No one will ever see this,"* I thought. Four hours later I received an e-mail message from some guy in Cullman who wanted to be our worship leader. I politely wrote him back and reminded him that the ad clearly indicated that the position was in Anniston, and that the distance would be too far. He

was persistent. After auditioning (an excellent audition, might I add), he insisted that he was prepared to make the twice-weekly commute from Cullman to Anniston for band rehearsal and worship, so the Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) enthusiastically endorsed him for the job.

It was only after William came on board that I discovered he wasn't crazy, he was simply called. It didn't take too many conversations with him for me to realize that God was at work in his move to Anniston.

William grew up in Florence, Alabama, where his family attended the First United Methodist Church. *"As a kid, I was terrified of getting lost in that church—especially if it was dark,"* William recalls. However, it wasn't darkness, but Christians that caused William the most discomfort and ultimately drove him away from the church. *"I was driven away largely by my perception that most people in church were led and motivated more by their own desires and interests rather than a commitment to Christ,"* he says. *"I made my mother cry."*

... continued on page 4

After attending Middle Tennessee State University, William says he returned to the Church because he realized that the negative witness of self-serving Christians didn't mean that there wasn't a Savior worth following. William notes, *"The truth is the truth regardless of how Christians respond to it. Thankfully my time away from the church allowed me the perspective to see clearly the truth that is revealed uniquely in Jesus."* It was this commitment to follow the call of the Lord that led him to pick up his family and move 115 miles to his wife Jennifer's hometown.

When William came to Anniston, he had been working in banking as a loan officer. In order to make the move, his manager had orchestrated a transfer to the Anniston branch of the bank. He never stepped foot into his new office.

Before William even officially began serving as worship leader, a holy conversation took place between him, Bobby Green (then pastor), and me. The three of us were enjoying lunch together at a leadership training event, chit-chatting about things that ministers chat about, when out of nowhere (if I recall correctly) Bobby asked William, *"Have you ever considered doing youth ministry?"* He had, and he did, and a few days later he was interviewing with the SPRC for the second time in as many weeks.

Through his ministry here, William has contributed to some amazing steps forward for our congregation. Not only has attendance increased in worship and in youth, but also he has raised the bar of expectation and commitment to both. Perhaps owing to his experience as a child, finding the motivations of many Christians out of sync with the Scriptural mission of the church, William has engaged our young people to accept the radical nature of Christ's calling. He has shown them that Church isn't about pleasantries and niceties, but that it's about living your life in passionate obedience to Christ—going where He goes, doing what He does, loving whom He loves.

In that same vein, he has raised the level of theological honesty and rigor in our worship service. Much of contemporary Christian worship music has to do with a sweet, nonthreatening Jesus who we can hold and cherish in our hearts like a valentine from a boyfriend or girlfriend. Because William recognizes that any God who would call someone to uproot his family from Cullman to Anniston cannot possibly



William at work in his office at The Bridge. He was Contemporary Worship Leader, Youth Director, and Bridge Coordinator.

be so sweet and tame, he has introduced us to music that praises God for his awesomeness and that calls us to faithfulness in service.

Not surprisingly, when I asked William about the times in his Christian journey when he felt most alive, he easily answered that it was when he first began leading worship at his church in Cullman. *"That's where I first led worship by filling in when the worship leader was on vacation and I also helped teach a young adult Sunday school class. Those experiences led to the door opening to...my arrival at Anniston First."*

Since coming to Anniston, he has answered God's call to ordained ministry. So, it's fitting that even as his call led him to Anniston First, it is his call that compels him forward to a new chapter in his life. Even as he moves to Columbiana to serve as their youth pastor, he is confident Anniston First will always be a big part of his life. *"Anniston First has some of the kindest, most compassionate people I have ever met in my life. There are friendships that I have made here that have deeply impacted me and I hope will continue to."* I, for one, am sure that they will, because I'm sure that his ministry will continue to deeply impact this church.

I know that all of you will join me in thanking God for bringing William and his family to us, and praying for his continued passionate and humble service in the Church.

- Brandon Harris

**Think you know William?
See sidebar on next page for Q&A fun.**

MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS FOR WILLIAM MURRAY

- Q: Make three wishes for the future of Anniston First.**
A: *Pay off debt, unify as one body, become a beacon for the Gospel in Calhoun County*
- Q: What celebrity do people tell you that you most look like?**
A: *Jack Black*
- Q: What is the biggest personal challenge that you've overcome?**
A: *Tough call. I'm having a pretty rough time leaving the youth at Anniston First.*
- Q: Not including Hal Noble, who is your favorite appointed pastor at Anniston First?**
A: *The Right Reverend Robert Brandon Harris, of course.*
- Q: What would you consider to be your greatest impact at Anniston First?**
A: *I have undoubtedly seen the lives of some of the youth deeply impacted during my time here. However, I believe that has more to do with the Holy Spirit than me. I would also say that the praise band has gotten pretty good during my tenure.*
- Q: If you could relive one moment in your life, what would it be?**
A: *Falling in love with my wife.*
- Q: If you could relive one moment in your life differently, what would it be and how would you change it?**
A: *Screaming at my parents for not buying me the right kind of fire truck for my 4th birthday.*
- Q: What three things would you take with you to a desert island?**
A: *My family, iPod, and a replicator from Star Trek.*
- Q: Earl Grey or Darjeeling?**
A: *Earl Grey—it smells like Fruity Pebbles and it's Capt. Jean-Luc Picard's beverage of choice.*
- Q: What is your favorite praise and worship song—why?**
A: *"God of Wonders." It was the first worship song I heard after becoming a Christian.*

Attention Students! Scholarship money available!

Ann T. Williams Scholarship

Deadline to turn in your form is April 1, 2010. Applications can be picked up at the church office and you can also download a PDF from the website at RESOURCES.

Everyone is encouraged to apply. Open to high school seniors and current college students.



Our History: The Beginning

Rev. R.A. Thompson and his bride rode his buggy into Anniston in 1881, having been assigned to the Anniston Mission Station by the Huntsville Annual Conference. In December at Lloyd's Springs, located at 11th and west of the railroad, he preached his first sermon to a congregation of 25, known as the First Methodist Episcopal Church South. Later the Woodstock Iron Company donated two lots at the NW corner of 12th & Noble on which a plank arbor church with sawdust floor was built. The congregation grew and a 40' x 66' wood frame church with fabric covering the window openings was built on that same site. Glass for the windows came later. However, on Saturday before Easter 1891, there was a fire and the church burned to the ground.

- David Boozar

OUR HISTORY will be continued in March & in the coming months. This information was taken from a history written by Barbara Hodge Hall in 1960.



The Confirmation class, consisting of five sixth-graders and their mentors, along with Brandon Harris and Diane Wood, attended a retreat at Camp Sumatanga the last week in January.

Financial Highlights

2009 IN REVIEW

Generous giving especially at year end and controlled spending throughout the year provided us with an excess of revenue over operating expenses of \$37,000. In an expression of thanks for many answered prayers, the Finance Committee unanimously agreed to contribute 10% (tithe) of that amount or \$3,700 toward 2009 Conference apportionments, which is our part of the North Alabama Conference’s shared expenses and giving. Although we had given what we budgeted, that amount was lower than what the Conference asked of us. Bottom line, we were able to carry over \$33,300 in operating funds and \$77,000 in debt retirement funds which we will desperately need as we move forward into 2010.

On the expense side, spending controls were put in place early in the year by the Finance Committee, as they saw expenditures in excess of income and an uncertain outlook. In response, the staff and leadership were able to hold operating spending down from an already “skinny” budget by almost \$50,000. They used a combination of staff changes, reduced spending, lower-cost vendors, redesigned contracts, use of previously designated funds, and special fund raisers for special programs.

On a positive note, we were able to sell the Mini-warehouses which, as a landlord, we have struggled with for many years, bringing in \$200,000. One of our members, Jim Ulrey, challenged our congregation by matching “extra” gifts to the church dollar for dollar, bringing in over \$36,000 in total. Midyear, we received an unexpected bequest of \$146,000 from the estate of one of our cherished members, Panzie Purser. During the year we also received contributions totaling \$325,000 from the Stewart Family, which helped us draw down our debt. Most important of all, in spite of the financial climate, our members and affiliates provided \$792,000 in operating funds, \$34,000 in mission funds, and \$169,000 in capital or debt retirement funds, not counting memorials and funds designated for specific programs and purposes. **A special thank you goes to all of you who contributed, no matter what the amount.**

2009 Operating Results (in Thousands of \$)			
Description	Actual	Budget	Difference
Income			
Contributions	828	802	26
Other Income	66	70	(4)
From Gift Funds	0	36	(36)
Total	894	908	(14)
Expenses			
Conf Apportionments	61	57	(4)
Salaries & Benefits	488	499	11
Utilities, Insurance, & Maint.	228	237	9
Worship & Music	17	23	6
Children and Youth	8	18	10
Discipleship & Evangelism	5	6	1
Hospitality	7	8	1
Finance & Administration	47	60	13
Total	861	908	47
Carryover to 2010	33	0	33

2009 Capital Funds (In Thousands of \$)	
Beginning Cash	115
Income	
Contributions	494
Sale of Mini-Warehouses	200
Total	694
Expenses	
Final Building Costs	20
Interest	136
Debt Reduction	576
Total	732
Ending Cash	77

read more

2010 Budget Highlightson page 8
 Loan Agreements Finalized ... on page 10

- Mary Larson mary@annistonfirst.org

New Bible Studies & Small Groups

Esther: It's Tough Being a Woman **Leader: Angel Rait**

Starts February 16 (Tuesday) and meets from noon to 1:30pm in the Library

Cost is \$15 for books

Call Angel Rait at (256) 831-5097 or the church office (256) 236-5605



Beth Moore looks at the Old Testament story of Esther as a profile in courage and contains many modern parallels for today's woman. Going up against heavyweights bent on her destruction, Esther trusted God and landed a blow that saved her people. Esther's destiny can be yours as you know more deeply the God who is in your corner.

This study peels back the layers of history and shows how very contemporary and applicable the story of Esther is to our lives. If you've ever felt inadequate, threatened, or pushed into situations that seemed overpowering, this is the study for you. Just as it was tough being a woman in Esther's day, it's tough today. This portion of God's Word contains treasures to aid us in our hurried, harried, and pressured lives.

One Girl Can Change The World **Leader: Cannon Connell**

Starts February 24 (Wednesday) and meets from 6:00pm to 7:00pm

For girls 1st grade - 6th grade

Call Diane Wood at (256) 241-3513 or the church office (256) 236-5605



You know you've had them - whispers of ideas, pieces of plans, dreams of making a difference. And here's the thing - GOD has them too. Ideas, plans, dreams - all for YOU.

In this study, you'll discover that God has a particular place for you in his kingdom. If you hold on to him, he'll lead you to change yourself, your school, your town, your country - even THE WORLD.

Raising Up Spiritual Champions **Leader: Scott Hamilton**

Starts February 24 (Wednesday) and meets from 6:00pm to 7:00pm

For boys 1st grade - 6th grade

Call Diane Wood at (256) 241-3513 or the church office (256) 236-5605



This study will help our boys answer the big questions about what it means to think and act like Jesus every day of their lives! A discipleship program that nurtures a lifelong spiritual growth. Because most children's spiritual beliefs are in place by age 9, it's crucial that they acquire a biblical foundation for how they view themselves and the world. This program will teach them God's truth!



BibleZone **Leader: Cheri Hamilton**

Starts February 24 (Wednesday) and meets from 6:00pm to 7:00pm

For boys and girls Kindergarten and younger

Call Diane Wood at (256) 241-3513 or the church office (256) 236-5605

2010 Budget - Highlights

The Operating Budget was approved by the Board of Stewards on the 7th of February. The Finance Committee, as well as Staff and Committee Chairs, have worked hard at developing the operating budget for 2010 because of the many challenges facing our Church. The major financial change for 2010 is the addition of \$138,000 in interest expense, which was previously funded by the second Capital Campaign contributions. That Campaign ended at December 31, 2009. The third campaign, the Debt Retirement Campaign held early in 2009, overlapped during 2009 and extends over a 5-year period. Pledges to the Debt Retirement Campaign were lower than the previous two Capital Campaigns. Debt Retirement dollars will only be enough to cover principal payments on the indebtedness and build a small reserve for 2011, when the pledged funds are lower again.

The added expense made it necessary for all other areas to reconsider their spending. As part of that effort, the Staff Parish Committee recommended eliminating the Associate Pastor position. That action has already been approved and will save half a year of related expenses in 2010 and a full year of expenses after that. In addition, it may free up the parsonage for sale or other uses. The Board of Trustees is currently working on determining the best outcome for that facility. In addition, in 2008 and 2009, the Staff Parish Committee eliminated or re-structured some of the office positions.

2010 Operating Budget (in Thousands of \$)

Description	2007 Actual	2008 Actual	2009 Actual	2010 Budget
Contributions	810	797	828	763
Other Income	48	58	66	69
Carryover from Prior Year	0	0	0	33
Other Fund Raising Activities	0	0	0	41
From Gift Funds	5	49	0	0
Total	863	904	894	906
Conf Apportionments	53	57	61	39
Salaries & Benefits	471	477	488	448
Utilities, Insurance, & Maint.	219	261	228	187
Worship & Music	19	17	17	18
Children and Youth	15	15	8	11
Discipleship & Evangelism	7	11	5	5
Hospitality	11	13	7	6
Finance & Administration	70	57	47	54
Interest on Indebtedness	0	0	0	138
Total	865	908	861	906
Carryover to 2010	(2)	(4)	33	0

Uncertainties related to the Senior Pastor's position and the Youth Minister's position have not been addressed. The Staff Parish Committee will be using the money

previously budgeted for these positions to fill these needs. All program budgets have been kept to a minimum, but that means that the Children, Youth, and Music areas will be holding fund drives from time to time to cover special activities and unfunded needs.

The Utilities, Insurance and Maintenance line item in the past has borne some of the burden of large unplanned replacements or repairs. The 2010 budget contains no funds for those larger expenditures. All large unplanned needs will have to be funded by special fund drives or distributions from Trust or Gift Funds.

On the positive side, we were able to carry over \$33,300 from 2009 to help fund the additional expenses in 2010. In fact, 2009 was the first year, in at least the last five, when there was money left over at the end of the year and no subsidy was needed from Trust or Gift funds.

In addition, the Missions Committee voted last week to provide \$27,800 for World Service and Benevolences (part of Conference Apportionments) previously covered by the Operating Budget plus \$4,500 in other mission-related Apportionments which they contributed to in 2009. This still leaves us significantly short of the amount requested by the Conference and, if extra funds become available, the Finance Committee would like us to consider added funding here.

When everything is finally computed, there is still an additional \$39,000 needed. Rather than tap trusts or gift funds, the committee recommends that we try to raise the money through special fund raising activities. They feel that if we all, as a church, work together, we can bring in whatever is necessary to balance the budget.

The year 2010 will be a challenging one, but we, as a Church with God's help, will come out of this much stronger.

- Mary Larson mary@annistonfirst.org

- ▶ Detailed budgets are available at the church office and will soon be available on the website/RESOURCES
- ▶ A church-wide meeting is being planned on Sunday, February 28, after the 10:30 service. There will be a combined service on that date, and the meeting will follow the service. Please plan to attend.
- ▶ An opportunity will be provided for you to submit questions and concerns in advance so that you can be assured they will be addressed at the meeting.

34 Years of Mission and Ministry



Rev. Hal & Janice Noble

On Sunday January 24th, I read the Gospel lesson from Luke 4:14-20, which is the same passage I read at my first appointment in June of 1976 at the Oak Bowery Charge of the Roanoke District. On that first Sunday, I stood in the pulpit with anxious thoughts about

an unknown future in ministry as a United Methodist Student Pastor, yet somehow knowing that the spirit of the Lord was upon me. I had prepared myself to prayerfully begin the journey, trusting God, and the process of becoming a United Methodist Pastor. The challenges at that time were enormous, but I knew, that with God's guidance, I would welcome each challenge and work my way through to another milestone in my life. That journey has taken me to areas of mission and ministry I could never have imagined. My life has been enriched by God's people throughout these thirty-four years including the wonderful followers of Jesus at Anniston First United Methodist.

And so, the irony of that day was found in the proclamation of January's Gospel lesson from Luke 4:14-20, the spirit of the Lord remains upon me at the announcement of my retirement effective this June of 2010. At this time, once again, I have anxious thoughts about an unknown future in ministry as an Ordained Elder in the United Methodist Church. I am confident that God will lead Janice and me into the future as He has done from the day I said, "Yes," to His call to full time ministry in the United Methodist Church.

Please be assured that Janice and I have arrived at this life-changing decision following months of personal discussion, processing and prayer. Please also know that when I announced this decision to your Staff

Parish Relations Committee on January 10th that my decision was met with great concern and requests for me to please reconsider. Your fellow members who serve on the SPRC completely represented your interests. I shared with them that I had a genuine peace about this decision, a peace that I had not experienced for some time. I also shared that I was confident in the appointment process of the United Methodist Church which would result in the best spiritual leader for this great church. The Cheaha District Superintendent, Rev. Bob Alford, has been in communication with your SPRC chair Mickey Starling and has met with your Staff Parish Relations Committee.

During these next few months of pastoral transition, please be assured of my continuing service for and with you and the community as we focus on our mission of "Making Disciples of Christ by Being Disciples of Christ." Please also be in prayer for the membership, the staff, the process, including the deliberations by the Cabinet and Bishop, and for the Noble and Harris families as we begin this transition into the next phase of our lives.

Please be assured of our ongoing prayers for you!

- Hal and Janice Noble

PRAYER FOCUS on Wednesdays and Thursdays:

Wednesdays the Chapel is open for prayer from 12 noon to 1:00 p.m. The Sacrament of Holy Communion is served at 12:15. Thursdays are set aside as a day of fasting and prayer for our church and community.

LENT: Personal & Group Reflection

During the season of Lent, there will be opportunities for guided personal and group reflection. This will be a meaningful and productive time for us to celebrate the past and discuss the future of our church.

An introduction to this reflection time will be held February 21st at 4:00 p.m. in The Bridge B102.

Subsequent reflection times will be held Sundays

March 7, 14, 21 and 28,

at 4:00 p.m. in The Bridge B102.

Loan Agreements Finalized

In January, after many months of negotiations, the Trustees have reached agreement with Wells Fargo/Wachovia and completed a debt refinancing package. The package includes three loans. The first is a note for approximately \$800,000 which replaces a note originated in April 2008 for \$1,250,000. Since that time, payments of \$450,000 plus interest have been made. The new loan has a fixed interest rate of 5.45%, requires monthly interest payments (approximately \$3,633 per month), and is due and payable in full on December 15, 2010. Prepayments are allowed.

The second loan agreement amends a prior agreement which was signed in April 2008 and has a principal balance owed currently of \$1,600,000, at the original fixed interest rate of 6% and the original due date of April 14, 2011. Payments of approximately \$12,500 are due on the 15th of each month covering interest and principal. The payment amount was set based on a payoff period of 15 years. Prepayments are also allowed on this loan.

The third loan agreement is a renewal/extension of a loan to Camp Lee with a remaining balance of approximately \$28,500, at the bank's prime rate. Payments of \$25,000 are required in September of each year, and interest payments are due quarterly. The final payment of interest and principal will be due in March, 2011.

All three loans are secured by a mortgage on the Church's property at 1700 Noble Street, including the Sanctuary, Chapel, Bridge, Wesley Hall, Asbury Hall, Coleman Hall, Epworth Hall, and the Community Enabler Building. In addition, a total of \$400,000 in Elizabeth Watson and General Gift Funds have been pledged as security for these loans. Other requirements of the loans involve provisions related to insurance, cash flow coverage ratios, and submission of quarterly and annual financial statements.

- **Mary Larson** mary@annistonfirst.org

Mission Highlights

The Soup Bowl

I want to thank all who were willing to serve at the Soup Bowl last year. Many volunteered more than one time. A special thanks to Sara Starling for mono-programming our new aprons.

Virginia Parker	Katie Collins
Bob Payne	Robin Cooper
LaNelle Phillips	Linda Dostie
Delores Pierce	Sally Estok
Jackie Powell	Judy Fincher
Emily Seagle	Forrest French
David Sims	Mary Ann Gann
Sarah Sloan	Bill Gann
Jimmy Sloan	Linda Harvey
Carolyn Smith	Becky Hollingsworth
Bob Smith	Marissa Howell
Jenny Stafford	Sherlyn Jackson
Gerry Stafford	The Grove Class
Joan Stewart	Mary Larson
Jana Tyson	Mary Eloise Leake
Jim Tyson	Jerry Leake
Barbara Varnum	Genesis Class
Sylvia Wall	Judy London
Rita Wells	Lee London
Jaudon Williams	Jerri Lybrand
Patsy Young	Virginia Matheny
Arthur Young	Jan Merrill
Betty Bolt	David Merrill
Janet Booth	Les Pair
Tom Coleman	

We have been assigned the week of Feb. 22 thru 26th. If anyone can serve that week please let me know.

- **Nancy Lee Payne**

256-236-0101
nanleep@cableone.net



Jamie Jenkins

Every Wednesday night, between 40-45 children have been learning drama or painting. They have created art based on:
Jonah 1:15-17, 2:1
Matthew 2:13-15
Matthew 4: 18-23

Celebrating and Honoring Others

ARCOLA LEE LIBRARY FUND

In memory of Mrs. Evelyn Prickett, given by Mrs. Mary G. Eccleston.

In memory of Mrs. Evelyn Relfe, given by Grove Fellowship Class, and Mrs. Gordon T. Wood.

BUILDING FUND

In memory of Mrs. Louise Meadows and Mr. Ira Hill, given by Ms. Yvonne Alt, Judy and Arthur Toole, and Charlie and Anne Brockwell.

In memory of Mr. Ira Hill, given by Mrs. Mary G. Eccleston, Mr. George Hall, Bill and Mary Ann Gann, Merrill Sales and Marketing, Mrs. Wanda Couch, Peggy B. Gudger, Anniston Ear, Nose and Throat, P.C., Paul and Cindy Baker, Dick and Sherry Coats and Evelyn Hubbard, Betty M. Hicks, Charlie and Paula Couch, Brooke, Freeman & Lee, PC, Dr. and Mrs. John A. Edwards, Jr., Mr. Tom Coleman, Betty and Rob Mabry, Jean and Ken Deal, Donald and Elizabeth Gay, Ann Prichard, Dorothy Jones and Jean Williams, Betty P. Henley, Dot Ford, Bob and Lou Kennamer, Pat and Jack Kettles.

In memory of Mr. Charles Mabry, Jr., given by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Payne and Mr. Tom Coleman.

In honor of Hal Noble, Woodfin Grove, Brandon Harris and James Roberts, given by Genevieve C. Hill and Robert and Betty Jackson.

GENERAL BUDGET FUND

In memory of Mr. Larry Sylvester and Mr. Ira Hill, given by Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Bolt.

HANDBELL FUND

In honor of Art and Toni Hathorn, given by Sara Starling.

MEALS OF MERCY

In honor of The Nobles, given by Dr. and Mrs. Kenneth Vandervoort.

In memory of Mrs. Lucile Smith, given by Dr. and Mrs. John R. Payne.

INTERFAITH MINISTRIES

In memory of Mrs. Lucile Smith, given by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Payne.

MUSIC FUND

In memory of Mr. Larry Sylvester, given by Rebecca B. Stewart.

In memory of Mr. Ira Hill, given by The Ridgeview Road Neighbors: Charles & Kay Eiland, David Young, Jackie Hunter, Doug & Judy Doss, Lee & Judy London, Dan & Cathy Pitts, Charles & Deborah Kelly, Perry & Marilyn Reynolds, and Anne Phillips.

ORGAN FUND

In honor of Dan and Becky Brown, Marge Martin, and Louise Gray, given by Virginia Matheny.

In memory of Mr. Larry Kay Sylvester and Mrs. Jeanne Coleman, given by Mr. and Mrs. James Potter.

In honor of James Roberts and Kathy Murphy, given by Margery C. Whitlock.

In memory of Mr. Mickey Stewart and Mrs. Jeanne Coleman, given by Margery C. Whitlock.

In memory of Mrs. Evelyn Relfe, given by Mrs. Pat Decker.

In memory of Mr. Charles Mabry, Jr., given by Dr. and Mrs. John A. Edwards, Jr.

WORSHIP MEMORIAL FUND

In memory of Mr. Larry Sylvester, given by David and Jan Merrill and Janet F. Booth.

MISSION FUND

In memory of Mr. Ira Hill, given by Dr. and Mrs. Kenneth Vandervoort.

MISSION FUND FOR HAITI

In memory of Dr. Charles H. Chandler, Jr., given by Mary and Trey Chandler.

Dear Church Family...

There are moments in life that are put there for a reason. Brittany's recent surgery will be one of those moments that will impact her life forever. It already has. The day before surgery, she felt inspired to write a new song...*"God is in control."* She wrote it in an afternoon and shared it that evening with the youth group. Her new motto in life now is, you guessed it, *"God is in control."* In all of her anxiety and our anxiety as parents, her song was able to give us comfort that all was OK...God is in control! How many others has she/will she touch as well?

From the depths of our hearts, we want to thank you, our church family, for your genuine concern for Brittany. Your prayers, your calls, your visits, your cards—Brittany has been blown away by your thoughtfulness. A very special thanks to Pastor Hal and William Murray for being at the hospital so early on surgery day and having a special prayer time with Brittany before surgery. A very special thanks to Patsy Young for being with us during her surgery, sharing some laughs with us, and praying with us. And a very special thanks to all of YOU who have surrounded her with prayer before, during and after surgery. Her recovery has been amazing to us! Why? Because of the power of prayer. When you are surrounded by so many praying for you, you can't help but know that *"God is in control."*

***We love you and appreciate you,
Kevin, Dee Anne and Brittany McDade***

Dear Friends and Church Family,

Thank you all so much for the support and caring you gave me and Deb after Larry's accident. It meant more than I can express.

Please take time to notice the beautiful ginkgo tree in front of the Chapel that was placed there in Larry's memory by dear friends Bill and Sherlyn Jackson and Roy and Margaret Crow.

***With appreciation and love,
Sheila Sylvester***

Anniston First United Methodist Church
P.O. Box 1789
Anniston, AL 36202

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

The Monthly Messenger
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Making disciples of Christ by being disciples of Christ

Join us for Worship and Fellowship

Sunday School	9:30 Sunday
Worship in the Chapel	8:30 Sunday
Worship in the Bridge	10:30 Sunday
Worship in the Sanctuary	10:30 Sunday
Youth Group	5:00 Sunday

Special Dates:

February 14

Baby shower for Church Nursery 9:15am
Upstairs gathering area, Wesley Hall

FEBRUARY 17

Ash Wednesday Service in the Sanctuary 6:00pm

February 21

Lent: Personal & Group Reflection, 4pm B102

February 24

Pot Luck Dinner at The Bridge 5:15pm

February 25

Emmaus: Cheaha Cluster meeting 6:30pm
First United Methodist Church of Oxford

February 27

Angel Food pick-up day 8:00am in the Bridge

FEBRUARY 28

Little Women Concert to benefit Haiti 9:30am/Chapel

Combined Service 10:30am in the Sanctuary

Church-wide meeting to follow in the Sanctuary



POT LUCK SUPPER February 24 5:15 IN THE BRIDGE

Bring casseroles, salads, and desserts. The Upper Room Sunday School class will provide the table decorations for the Mardi Gras theme evening!

LaNelle Phillips, Coordinator 831-3839

