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January 2013

BREAD

7020 Cass Street Omaha, NE 68132 (402)556-6262 www.fumcomaha.org

Worship Schedule

Sundays
8:30 & 10:50 a.m., Sanctuary

Taizé Worship
Saturday, January 5
5:00 p.m., Mead Chapel

Pastors:
Jane Florence, Senior
Debra McKnight, Associate

"We are a United Methodist congregation of all sexual orientations and gender identities making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

We stand in solidarity with Reconciling Ministry Network working against injustice and discrimination through peace and justice."

BREAD is published once monthly.

Submit your articles by the 15th of each month to Roberta.Coss@fumcomaha.org.

Copies of BREAD are available in the printed version mailed to your home or found around the church building, the electronic version e-mailed to the address you provide, or the electronic version on the church's website.

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Staff Extensions & E-mail Addresses:

1002.....Pastor.....	Jane.Florence@fumcomaha.org
1006.....Pastor.....	Debra.McKnight@fumcomaha.org
1001.....Office Administrator.....	Roberta.Coss@fumcomaha.org
1005.....Youth Coordinator/Membership.....	Becky.Jones@fumcomaha.org
1021.....Music Ministries Director.....	Mark.Kurtz@fumcomaha.org
1003.....Finance Manager.....	Ed.Pearce@fumcomaha.org
1010.....Building Manager.....	Steve.Nehrig@fumcomaha.org
1008.....Dir of Children's & Comm Programming.....	Barrett.Scroggs@fumcomaha.org
1004.....Director of Adult Education	Mary.Spurgeon@fumcomaha.org
1009.....Rainbow Factory Preschool Director.....	Linda.Thompson@fumcomaha.org
.....Urban Abbey Manager (Jim Dias).....	UrbanAbbey@fumcomaha.org
.....Music Associate.....	Marie.Meyers@fumcomaha.org
.....Mins w/Cognitively Impaired & Healing Arts	Sue.Rood@fumcomaha.org



Rev. Dr. Jane Florence

Ponderings from Your Pastor...

I've seen the television ad where a wide green line unrolls across the kitchen floor encouraging the mom to follow it towards the next step in her financial planning. I've seen the infomercials of the lean bodies prompting us to step up our exercise workout programs to the next fitness level. We think of moving up in our career, moving on from our "starter home", moving forward toward our financial and health goals; so, what is the next step in your spiritual journey? How is it with your soul?

We are taught good financial practices, good fitness exercise, good career advancement techniques, even good marriage enrichment practices. Shall we not also attend to our spiritual growth at least as much as all the others?

We gather as a community for many reasons. Some come to escape isolation; some come to join in service with others; some come to sing; some come to listen and learn. Our spiritual journey is one of increasing our awareness of God in and through us and others. Our spiritual journey is one of ever-increasing union with the holy within and beyond.

Sometimes encounters with God just happen serendipitously; mostly we must place ourselves as open receptacles and practice those behaviors that carry us forward in our quest for truth and purpose and righteousness and reverence and awe and praise.

I invite you to make the commitment that 2013 will be a year of intentional spiritual attentiveness to your journey. I invite you to discern where you are on your path and to take one more step forward. If you now pray once a week, commit to two or more days. If you now pray ten minutes a day, try thirty. If you worship twice a month, commit to four times. If you don't have a small group or a spiritual friend to dialogue and explore faith's deeper questions, sign up for a class. If you don't have a mission or service event on your calendar, add one.

We shall be transformed people, and we shall work to transform the world, but we must be on the journey. It has been said, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." (Loa-tau) Christ invites us to take a step. Please let me know (email, note, phone message) how you will be taking your next step in 2013. I'll look forward to hearing from you!

Traveling Companion,

Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday, 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
Friday & Sunday, 8:30 a.m.-12:00 noon
Closed Saturday

Faith Community Nurse: Jan Dixon, 402-571-4076
Community Counselor: Becky Herber, 402-354-6891, ext. 21

Urban Abbey website: www.UrbanAbbeyOmaha.com

Altar^e the World

We are progressive Christians
who believe we can make a Difference
who strive to live the example of Love
who gather in Community of Support
who work for Justice and Peace

Join us for Worship
Sunday mornings 8:30 and 10:50
And for Dialogue
Sunday mornings 9:35

Welcoming

Attendance for December 2012

	Total Attendance	First Time Visitors
12/2/12	379	5
12/9/12	382	2
12/16/12	455	6
12/23/12	will be listed in February issue	
12/24/12	will be listed in February issue	
12/30/12	will be listed in February issue	



Thank You!

The United Methodist Women thank all of those who supported our Holiday Fair. We appreciate all of you who attended, who baked cookies, and who bought cookies, books, and lunch. This event is one of our primary ways we make money to support Methodist mission work. Many people we have not met benefit from your support.

January Meeting

Our next meeting will be **Thursday, January 10, 10:00 am** in room 112. The executive meeting will be in room 111 at 9:00 am. All are welcome to attend.

Saving Labels for Education

Please save the labels for education on Campbell soup and Pepperidge Farm products. UMW contributes them for mission projects. There is a container under the counter at the front office door.

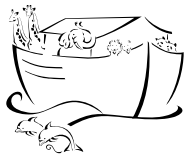


From the Library Shelf...

"The Bible Tells Me So: Uses and Abuses of Holy Scripture" by Jim Hill and Rand Cheadle illuminates historical and current events where religion, politics and power collide and Holy Scripture is used and abused to influence public opinion and policy.

"The Bible and the American Future" edited by Robert Jewett, Wayne Alloway Jr. and John Lacey (all ordained Nebraska UM pastors) addresses two major issues: an apocalyptic vision in which conflicts are to be resolved by war or a vision of coexistence under some system of conflict management. A new vision challenges us beyond the usual definitions of liberal, conservative or evangelical politics.

You can find these and MANY more books in the Adult Library (room 107) and in the Gathering Place.



Noah's Ark Library—

This is the children's library located directly across from Cary Hall in the north education wing.

If you've checked out a book or other media that needs to be returned, the blue bin right outside the door can be used for that purpose and is there all the time!

Questions can be answered best by Kathy England at 402-292-1312 or volunteermomke@cox.net.



UA Student

Too broke to go out to dinner in the Old Market? Tired of wandering around looking for something to do? Join us on Friday, January 4 for UA Student.

This is a free gathering of 9th-12th graders at Urban Abbey in the Old Market. Our night will feature FREE PIZZA, conversation, games, a jazz trio, and a chance to have your voice heard. Join us from **6:30-8:30 pm on Friday, January 4 @ Urban Abbey, 1026 Jackson St. in the Old Market.**



We are open for business @ 1026 Jackson Street in the Old Market

Coffee Shop Hours:

Manager: Jim Dias
402-898-7600

UrbanAbbey@fumcomaha.org

Monday-Friday, 6:30 am-10:30 pm

Saturday, 8:00 am-10:30 pm

Sunday, 8:00 am-5:00 pm



Beginning January 13, 2013
Sundays at 5:30 p.m.

Mercy & Justice



"The Changing Meaning of 'Belief'"



People who have lived in the USA in the last half of the 20th Century may have gotten the following impression of the *Christianity of the culture*—it was primarily a matter of belief, belief being head stuff, with wordy affirmations of what your brain would pledge to know and understand about God, church, and Christian dogma.

In that culture, the most important thing appeared to be getting "saved". That is, pledging allegiance to the name of Jesus with a wordy prayer. This assured one that "there would be pie in the sky when one died, by 'n' by". The next most important thing, after having established this safety net for oneself, was to work to get others into this net while one worked to stay pure and holy. It was thought to be helpful to rail at and condemn other folks for their impure acts (that being anything to do with sexuality and the independence and equality of women) and other uppity behaviors. The underlying goal, although it was shushed up, was to maintain the patriarchal power and authority of Christianity in its multiple representations of denominations, some being more extreme in volume and expression than others.

Imagine my surprise (me being one of the Americans mentioned in the opening sentence) when I learned that the earliest meaning of "belief" had zero to do with creeds, conformity and condemning. It was not isolated to the mind. When "belief" was first used, in the King James translation of the Bible, it meant "loyalty to a person to whom one is bound in promise or duty". When Jesus asked people to "believe" in him, he was asking for commitment to and engagement with his mission. It was a whole self, whole body, whole life endeavor.

An important part of enacting this definition of "belief" was having a practice, a routine, of caring for and guiding one's own soul to stay in connection with the life-giving, nourishing spirit of God. Then, one could more easily follow in the just and compassionate footsteps of Jesus with the rest of one's body, over the course of one's daily life, one day at a time, through the years of life one was given.

Ancient Christianity well realized the importance of this whole body "soul work". It was the process by which a person became transformed (built character) so that one could truly follow the way of Jesus. This process so interested Brian McLaren that he wrote a book about it called, *Finding Our Way Again: The Return of the Ancient Practices*.

It is from the standpoint of this conception of belief that Brian McLaren will appear at Horizons of Faith 2013 on March 8, 9, & 10. His topic: *Why did Jesus, Moses, the Buddha, and Mohammed Cross the Road? Christian Identity in a Multi-Faith World*. This topic, immediately relevant, is sure to be exciting. Plan now to attend! For

more information, visit www.HorizonsOf Faith.com, or go to that link on FUMC's website.—Mary Spurgeon, Horizons of Faith Committee



Rev. Debra McKnight

From Debra's Desk...

This week when visiting with folks that are active in Wesley Pub and now through Sunday evening worship, I felt small. I shrunk before the resilience of the women before me. One woman knew discrimination in the work place and discrimination in hiring. She knows life with a six figure salary and life without the security of a roof over her head. One woman had been sent away from the church choir under a blanket of brutal words, she struggled on the streets and found security in YES! which empowered her to make her way through the wild world. They are on their feet again in a tender balance and their feet are bringing them to the Abbey in the evenings. Their resilience is the stuff of sacred stories and for me brushing up into God through their voices made me feel like removing my shoes, just as Moses did before the burning bush. Of course, in a coffee shop, even a church coffee shop, the health codes kept that action to more of a metaphor.

Over and over, I receive questions that could be summed up in the phrase, "Is Grace True?" Your work in showing grace, your work in being people on a journey of grace and your call to proclaim love to all the world is being heard by new folks in new ways. I urge you in this new year to imagine the next steps in the journey of grace. As we begin some small group reflections together or renew our ties through faith studies, may it be a space of deep refreshment for your souls that can send each of us out to be a loving presence in the world.

My visits with folks wishing to join this community are reminders to me on a weekly basis of the deep commitment faith requires. A commitment to be present with one another and keep God on the calendar for worship. A commitment to study, imagine and be challenged. A commitment to serve and take action in the world that makes us living gospels of grace. A commitment to give with intention as a spiritual practice, mindful not of amounts but of percentage, mindful not of our need but of our need to practice generosity. Every time I visit with new members, I feel worried that such a request is so big it may frighten them away. But that's the amazing thing about this faith, commitment means something and I am humbled by every commitment made again and for the first time in this family of faith. **Debra**



First United Methodist Church-Omaha

The Kids Zone @ First Church

First United Methodist Church-Omaha Youth

Urban Abbey Omaha

Inspiring Worship Assistants for January

January 6—Epiphany

Lectionary: Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14;
Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12

Acolytes (10:50 only): Philip Andress & Jade Meusch

Coffee Servers: Tim Dreher & Family

Greeters:

8:30—Ranita Lilyhorn (Captain), Nancy & Walt Coziahr,
Carol & Michael LaCroix

10:50—Barb Bredthauer, Joanne & Roger Burns,
Dave England, Judy Nauman

Ushers:

8:30—Bruce & Dottie Deines (Head), Rosemary Hroch,
Jean Wilmoth

January 13—Baptism of Jesus

Lectionary: Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8:14-17;
Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

Acolytes (10:50 only): Sophia Kazmierski & Paul Bierman

Coffee Servers: Barry & Sherry Houston

Greeters:

8:30—Kevin & Patty Bain (Captain), Chuck &
Mary Haskell, Emogene & John Whitten

10:50—Gay Biga, Dave England, Ann Hudson,
Nancy Simpson

Ushers:

8:30—Bruce & Dottie Deines (Head), Rosemary Hroch,
Jean Wilmoth

January 20—Human Relations Day

Lectionary: Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:5-10;
1 Corinthians 12:1-11; John 2:1-11

Acolytes (10:50 only): Molly Young & Danny Baron

Coffee Servers: George & Sally Winn

Greeters:

8:30—Carol & Michael LaCroix (Captain), Mako Jacobs,
Shirley Ward

10:50—Dave England, Ruthie Lees, Kay Peters,
Jodi & Steve Sindelar

Ushers:

8:30—Bruce & Dottie Deines (Head), Rosemary Hroch,
Jean Wilmoth

January 27

Lectionary: Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10; Psalm 19;
1 Corinthians 12:12-13a; Luke 4:14-21

Acolytes (10:50 only): Abby & Ellie Siebe-Walles

Coffee Servers: NEEDED

Greeters:

8:30—Emogene & John Whitten (Captain), Alan &
Jann Dappen, John & Marilyn Hansen

10:50—Dave England, Ann Hudson, Lowen &
Ruth Kruse

Ushers:

8:30—Bruce & Dottie Deines (Head), Rosemary Hroch,
Jean Wilmoth



After the monthly church luncheon in Cary Hall, you are cordially invited to attend the Hospitality and Leadership session on January 20 at 12:30 p.m. in room 112. Not only are Ushers, Greeters, and Pew Ministers invited, but committee members, teachers, and all who participate in leadership and hospitality roles are also encouraged to attend.

Pastors Jane and Debra will discuss how your hospitality and leadership impacts guests and those currently participating at FUMC. R.S.V.P. to Becky, 402-556-6262 x1005 to let us know you will be there.



Mark Your Calendar
for an Afternoon Away—
A Gift You Can Give to Yourself
**The Fourth Annual Celebration of
Soulful Healing
Sunday, February 10
1:00-4:30 p.m.**

Healing is so much more than going to a doctor or taking a pill. Healing involves the body, mind and spirit in a holistic blend of science and spirituality. This is the reason that the Healing Arts Team will offer this opportunity to ignite and honor the energy, and draw forth the power within for healing and wholeness for self and all of creation.

Adults, teens, and children alike will have the opportunity to explore a variety of healing experiences and spiritual disciplines designed to develop the body, mind, spirit connection. For example, we will offer experiences with yoga, breath work, zumba, healing touch and much more. Watch our website, www.fumcomaha.org, for more details.

Thank You! to the Retiring 2012 Committee Members

We appreciate the time, talents, and treasure given to your committees throughout your tenure!

Church Council Members-at-Large: Carmen Burr, Amanda Chatham, Mark Schulze

Annual Conference Delegate: Emogene Whitten

Lay Leader: Chris Jorgensen

Board of Trustees: Marilyn Stewart, Adella Wacker, John Whitten, Mary Zlomke

Committee on Finance: Chris Smith, Sarol Wiltse

Foundation Board: Larry Jensen, Roberta Miller

Staff-Parish Relations Committee: Dennis Fogland, Charlie Harper, Donna Smith

Committee on Lay Leadership (Nominations): Tom Dobson, Susan Keasling

Faith Studies@First: Cheryl Nelson

Families & Children's Education Council: Colleen Aken, Cama Charlet-Sayles, Alison Dreher, Niki Kinart, Sheila Kirsch, Susan Sievers

Healing Arts: Patrick Davis

Rainbow Factory Preschool Board: Mary Bahney

Welcoming & Supporting: Roger Burns

2013 Committees

Church Council

Chair: Sheran Cramer; Recording Secretary: Denise Rogondino; Church Treasurer: Dale Bahney; Lay Leaders: Mary Bahney & Michael Rosenthal; Annual Conference Representatives: Barrett Scroggs & Alan Dappen, Alternate: Dottie Deines

Members-at-Large—2013: Paul Gadzikowski, Sherry Houston, Jean Keeney, Jim Keeney, Zaiga Moriarty; 2014: Kaitlin Bierman, Ann Hudson, Jamie Peery, Jessica Thacker, Fred Zydek; 2015: Mary Beneke, Steve Girvan, Rosey Higgs, Tom Niemann

Chairs of all Committees & Church Staff

Board of Trustees

2013: Chuck Haskell, Carol Kloss McClellan, Marv Morgan; 2014: Patty Bain, Ken Jones, Katie Knecht; 2015: Tim Dreher, Mark Schulze, Nancy Simpson
Chair of Trustees elected at first meeting annually

Committee on Finance

2013: Annette Dickman, Mike Ramsey*; 2014: Linda Sudduth, Joel Walker; 2015: Michael LaCroix, Kathy Tooker

Foundation Board of Directors

2013: Ken Peters, Deb Romberger; 2014: Tom Dobson, Judy Prenzler; 2015: Denise Britigan, Steve Ruppert
Chair of Foundation elected at first meeting annually

*Indicates Committee Chair

Staff-Parish Relations Committee

2013: Nathan Morgan, Judy Torrens, Bonnie Wallace*; 2014: Jon Kemling, Bruce Kirby, Carol Sundermeier; 2015: Kevin Graham, Lola Mullins, Melanie Peltz

Committee on Lay Leadership (Nominations)

2013: Alan Dappen, Donna Dobson; 2014: Melanie Peltz, Sue Rood; 2015: Jessica Thacker

Building & Grounds Committee—Jack Boyer, Clif Ellis, Barry Houston, Jamie Peery, Kay Peters, Ed Schwenk, Bonnie Wallace, Emogene Whitten, George Winn

Rainbow Factory Preschool Board—Church Representatives: Elizabeth Meyers, Sonya Siebe; Preschool Family Representatives: Chris Douppnik, Sheila Kirsch

Arts Board—David Davies, Jerry Meis, Bob Meyers, Fran Sillau, Marilyn Stewart, Jessica Thacker

Faith Studies@First—Nancy Coziahr, Susan Davies, Steve Girvan, Kevin Graham, Marilyn Hansen, Carol Kloss McClellan, Lowen Kruse, Matt Payne, Maria Walker, Bonnie Wallace

Families & Children's Education Council—Krista Andress, Liz Dickson, Suzanne Douppnik, Patty Fogland, Veronica Marchand, Becky Morton, Matt Morton, Eve Norton, LeighAnne Scharp, Delinda Sundsboe, Maria Walker, Carie Walles, Sarah Weidner, Sue Weidner, Monica White

Health, Spiritual Formation & Care Ministries—Roger Burns, Carmen Burr, Ranita Lilyhorn, Darlene Ulrich, Lucy Wood; Faith Community Nurse—Jan Dixon

Healing Arts Committee—Jan Dixon, Jennifer Duffy, Troy Everson, Ruthie Lees, Ranita Lilyhorn, Marj Phillips, Sue Rood, Michelle Smith, Mary Spurgeon, Tom Sudduth, Joel Walker

Mercy & Justice—Carol Beaty, Bruce Deines, Jim Dias, Tom Dobson, Kevin Graham, Ellen Larson, Judy Prenzler, Deb Romberger, Mike Rosenthal, Sheri Shuler, Tom Sudduth

Welcoming & Supporting Committee—Gay Biga, Rosey Higgs, Barry Houston, Sherry Houston, Jane Jones, Ken Jones; Greeters: Dave England; Ushers: Bob Dorr

Youth/Parent Council—Jim Dias, Mandy Gruhlkey, Jason Nehrig, Jessica Thacker

Church Council Meeting—Tuesday, January 29, 6:00 p.m. in room 112—all committee chairs are required to attend. Everyone is welcome!

Supporting

Please remember in prayer these members of Our Church Family

For Continued Healing: Betty Alderman, Dean Barnett, Judy Bornholdt, Roger Burns, Dick Burroughs, Phyllis Burroughs, Milo Cowdery, Milton Davison, Betty Dorr, Terri Elliot-Mason, Kathy England, Laura England-Biggs, Leah Gadzakowski, Ella Gerber, Charlie Gould, Garnet Hafer, Paul Halverson, John Hansen, Gladys Haskett, Audrey Heavrin, Jim Horrocks, Daline Jensen, Eileen Johnson, Jean Keeney, Bev Lobo, Deborah Mabry-Strong, Mildred Mattson, Norm Miller, Bonnie Morehead, Marv Morgan, Suzanne Morgan, Ella Muntz, Cheryl Nelson, Helen Nipper, Elna Peirce, Dorothy Pennington, Arlene Peterson, Victoria Peterson, Mildred Plumb, Eudene Rood, Rusty Rushton, Dale Seyl, Laura Seyl, Mary Ellen Shuler, Ed Schwenk, Carol Windrum, Jack Wright

Sympathies to: Sharisse Kroh on the death of her grandmother, Alice O'Connell, on December 14; Mark Darby on the death of his father on December 11; Debra McKnight on the death of her grandfather, Don Holman, on November 30.

Please let the church office know if you are hospitalized or if there has been a family loss.



Submit your prayer requests to Marylin Stewart at MarylinS@aol.com or call the church office at 402-556-6262 x1001. Please follow these brief guidelines when submitting a request for the Prayer Chain:

- A. Use names without describing the need. Give the first or full name and relationship—friend, brother/sister, spouse/partner, parent, child, etc.
- B. Give a brief statement of need—illness, grief, crisis
- C. Get permission from the person to be listed on the Prayer Chain before contacting Marylin or the church



Together, Inc. thanks us for our monthly donation as well as the collection from the Interfaith Thanksgiving Service on November 25 of \$1,428.00. To find out more about Together, Inc., go to their website at: www.TogetherOmaha.org.

Teddy Bears for Ted E. Bear Hollow

The teddy bears for Ted E. Bear Hollow are returning on February 17 and 24. Watch for bears on sale.

Due to health concerns for the recipients, we **must** have new bears. The new bears are given to children who are grieving the loss of someone they loved.

Thank you for continuing to support this mission.
—Suzanne Morgan and Lucy Wood



Shine Forth Update

By Donald Bredthauer, Co-Chair, Leadership Team

Nearly 150 members of the congregation have given time and talent in one way or another to the Shine Forth Campaign to renovate the east end of our building. The vision of making our facility more welcoming and inviting for our congregation and the larger community has energized us and has deepened our sense of mission. This campaign was not just about bricks and mortar or raising money. It has been about responding to what we believe God is calling us to be and to do as a community of faith and that is why this campaign has united us in exciting ways.

Near the beginning of the public phase of our campaign we announced our financial goal of \$1,200,000. Because of your enthusiastic and generous response we have exceeded our goal. As I prepare this report we have received commitments of just over \$1,285,000. With just a few more commitments we will exceed our goal by over \$100,000. That is something to celebrate!

It's not too late to make a commitment if you have not yet done so. Your giving will not only build something for us. Ten percent of what is given will help build something new at the Pearl Community Center as well.

With this very fine response, the Building Committee has met for conversation about how to maximize our resources for the actual renovation. First Harvest gifts of over \$328,000 will provide important resources to get started as soon as possible.

On behalf of the entire congregation, I thank you for all that you do to make our ministry possible so that we can Shine Forth as a beacon of God's love!



Faith Studies@First

Safe Sanctuary Training

On Sunday, January 13 from 12-2 we will have a training/re-training for anyone needing to be Safe Sanctuary trained. Remember, your training expires after 3 years. Anyone working with children, youth, or adults with developmental disabilities needs to be Safe Sanctuary trained. If you are working with any of these groups, or plan on working with any of these groups in the near future please plan on attending the training. Forms are available at the front office to fill out ahead of time. If you need to check to see if your Safe Sanctuary training is expired, please speak to Barrett Scroggs. Refreshments will be provided for those staying for the training.

What's going on in the Kids Zone?

Join us each Sunday morning at 9:35 for Hosanna Choir and other creative activities upstairs in the Kids Zone (room 208). Parents, be sure your child arrives at 9:35 so that we have plenty of time for fun and learning.

Youth Update

Blankets for Y.E.S.

Thanks to your indulgence of soda from the pop machine and your recycling of cans, the youth are able to purchase fleece and make tie-blankets for the clients of Youth Emergency Services (Y.E.S.). It would definitely be easier to buy ready-made blankets, but our youth know the importance of getting a blanket that says, "Ahhhh...". Thank you for making this project possible! We begin our project this month.

Lock-in for 7th-12th grade January 25

It's an all-nighter, for sure! Bring a friend, bring your favorite snacks to make it through the night, and be prepared to play basketball, kickball, volleyball, and dodge ball! Clair UMC will be joining us. We start at 8:00 p.m. Friday and end at 8:00 a.m. Saturday. Cost is \$5 to stay up all night. R.S.V.P to Becky, 402-556-6262 x1005, by January 21.

Adult Classes

These classes meet Sunday mornings at the church in the room listed at 9:35 unless otherwise noted.

Boomers +/- This class will continue their study of Ruth, an uppity woman, in our faith history. They are still at the front end of this study, so don't be shy. Join them and they will cheerfully catch you up! January 20 will find them at the All Church Forum, otherwise, find this class on the Stage.

Connections—As the deadline for this publication approaches, Connections members are still considering what ingredients they will put in the pot to be served up for their class in the New Year. Regardless of the particular ingredients, there will always be something upon which to chew on Sunday mornings, as well as cheerful, welcoming faces of Millennial and GenXers to greet you in the Parlor.

FaithLinks—Want to start the New Year fresh, "caught up", and on top of things? Then FaithLinks is the class for you! Each week a new, stand-alone topic from a current event or contemporary problem is explored within the context of the Christian Faith. If you come to room 111 at 9:35 on Sunday, you won't be behind.

Galileans—This class begins the year with a study of the Gospel of Mark led by the Rev. Mark Kemling. This Gospel has been the subject of his intense personal study and reflection for two years. A cursory reading of the book can leave one perplexed and mystified by what is meant. Join this class for 3 Sundays in January as teacher Mark, a scholar of Mark, shines a crack of light on some of these mysteries. The Galileans will join the All Church Forum on January 20. This class meets in room 112.

Explorers—This class investigates books and in January is *Why Did Jesus, Moses, the Buddha, and Mohammed Cross the Road?* authored by Brian McLaren. As you read this, if you are thinking, "That's the fellow and the topic for Horizons of Faith 2013!" you would be correct. If you would like to be a part of this study, come to room 108.

Centering Prayer—This prayer time begins with 10 minutes of fellowship, followed by a 20 minute sit in silence, closing with The Lord's Prayer. This sacred time is set aside for you to be present in each moment, and to willingly consent for the Divine to work within you, in community with others who are doing the same. All are welcome in Mead Chapel at 9:45 a.m. Sundays and the second and fourth Thursdays monthly at 6:15 p.m., also in Mead Chapel.

Sophia's Path—a group of women (but men are welcome!) meeting weekly to learn, reflect, and grow together. This group meets on Wednesday, 9:30-11:30 a.m. in room 111. **Sophia's Path will NOT meet December 26 or January 2. Their first meeting of the New Year will be on January 9!** Childcare is provided at the church in room 105. Come join us! Questions? Contact Maria Walker at mariaabwalker@yahoo.com.

An All Church Forum on Mercy and Justice will be held in Cary Hall on Sunday, January 20, 9:35-10:35 a.m. Seize this opportunity to get acquainted with congregants of FUMC that you might otherwise never meet, as you learn about how our church endeavors to be a partner with God in "mending the tears in the world", through works of mercy and justice. Everyone is welcome!