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Under the Dome...

Dunbar United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation

January, 2010

“One spring afternoon a king looked from the roof of his palace and saw a beautiful woman taking a bath.” So begins one of the most interesting chapters of the Bible, not because of what it says about David, but because of what it says about us. King David is our spiritual father, so we have a share in his glory -- and his sin. From his capacity to pray to his deceit which led to murder, King David is in each of us. Something of him is in our blood and no matter how many transfusions we have -- dialysis treatments, kidney flushings -- no matter how pure we pretend to be, the good and the bad are blended in us. We are a blended product.

So why are people surprised about Tiger Woods? It's an old, old story. And all it says about Tiger is that he's human, like our father King David, like us. What kind of trouble would we generate if we had a billion dollars? Can you imagine the temptations pulling us IF WE COULD HAVE ANYTHING WE WANTED? It's hard enough being poor or middle class. And it's only God's mercy that keeps us from winning the lottery and opening that pandora's box. Money and publicity are a lethal mix, a hard burden to carry. There are magazines that will pay 250,000 dollars for a picture of Elin Nordegren (Wood's wife) and their children. To hide, she bought an island -- but helicopters with long-range cameras fly over it. She can't even hide on her own island! What a life.

God forgave King David, but the consequences of his lying, adultery, murder, lust, envy, desire -- the consequences on his family -- were tragic. Son raped daughter, brother killed brother, son betrayed father, general killed son. And now the consequences of Tiger's appetites are unraveling. I hope he weathers this storm and finds a way through the nightmare. The least we can offer him is our sympathy and our prayer. Maybe pray for ourselves too so when our own fall comes -- our own tragedy -- we will find the grace we need to recover, and stand up, and continue the path God chose for us.

I hope we are not harsh in our judgment of king David, or Tiger. If we have gained any insight over the years then we know that in their places, we'd probably do the same thing, or worse. Aren't you glad we follow a God of mercy who takes our hand when we fall and gently helps us up, saying, "Here, try again (and again....and again....)." Eventually, with the help of the angels, the holy spirit, God's grace -- with the friendship of Jesus Christ, we will get it right. In this life or the next or the one after that, we will learn mercy and compassion.

Now let us see what wonders the New Year will bring. Together we go with Jesus, skipping, tripping, falling, flying -- into the New Year.

George



Please keep the following friends and family in your prayers:

- **J**udy Campbell as she continues to recuperate at home
- **J**effrey King, nephew of Noreen Endriss.



Best wishes to all those **celebrating birthdays & anniversaries** in January...

- 14th **Paul DeStefano** Birthday
 16th **Nicole Jacques** turning 33
 21st **Taylor and Jordan Jacques** turning 17
 21st **Demi Luedee** turning 13



Save these dates...

Monday, Jan. 4th

Bible for Beginners @ 7:00pm in the Parish House and continues every Monday Evening

Wednesday, Jan. 13th

Women's Fellowship Soup Lunch in the church hall @ **12:00 pm.**
Trustee Meeting @ 7:30pm

Thurs. Jan. 14th

Deacons Meeting @ 7:00pm

Sunday, Jan. 24th

Annual Meeting after church service -- bring a covered dish to share at the Potluck.

WOMENS' FELLOWSHIP: Our Covered Dish Christmas Luncheon was postponed from a snowy Dec. 9th, to a sunny Dec. 16th, at noontime. About 20 persons attended and enjoyed many various delicious dishes. A short meeting followed, and we decided to continue having our December meetings at noontime. Louise Mazur distributed copies of the Apple Festival income from each booth and activity. We will hold a Board meeting at 9:30 AM on Wednesday, January 6th, to determine how to distribute these monies. After the meeting, the Christmas Story was read from the Bible, with appropriate hymns sung during the readings.

Our annual SOUP LUNCHEON will be held at noon on Wednesday, January 13th, in Fellowship Hall. This is a popular event, with homemade soups and breads to warm us up on a usually chilly day. Do plan to attend -- only \$3.00 -- for men and women. Young children are free. Our program subject will be announced later.

Work meetings will commence at 9:30 AM on Wednesday, January 27th, and then on February 10th and 24th.

Barbara Walters

2009 Annual Columbarium Board of Governors Report

Board of Governors: Ellyn Liseo, Robert Corona, Charles and Barbara Walters, Ann Watjen, Bruce and Betty Detmers.

There were no additional interments in the church Columbarium this year.

Bob Corona did most of the weeding, and cutting of the grass to maintain the columbarium this year. Robert Corona placed evergreen blankets over the gravesite gravesites in the columbarium.

Bob and Carolen Hurd purchased a plot in the Columbarium in May 2009.

Expenses:

Fertilizers.....	\$33.87
Topsoil/seed	\$92.39
Vases.....	\$8.82
Hydraulically drained the irrigation system in November.....	\$65.00

Financial status:

Bank balances as of December 31, 2008

Checking account.....	\$917.69
Money Market	\$2114.20

Respectfully submitted

Bruce Detmers Chairman Columbarium Board of Governors

Christian Education

Thank you to all who made Advent Workshop Sunday such a special day. The children shared their beautiful voices during service - that is truly a gift to cherish! Many thanks to the Arts & Crafters and to those who donated and purchased cookies for this year's Cookie Walk.

We look forward to another inspired and fun-filled winter season at Church School, and encourage anyone interested in serving on our CE Board to please join us. We invite you to spend a morning with us to enjoy the experience of seeing the children learning and actively participating in their Church School lessons. Please consider it! Although she will still continue to be a very important part of our Sunday School teaching-team, we bid farewell to CE Board member Heather Sibley who will be completing her term in January 2010 - many thanks for serving on the CE Board.

Thanks again to everyone!

Respectfully Submitted,

Cindy Long, CE Chairperson

Trustees Report

Pledge Drive

From a dollars & cents standpoint, this year's pledge drive can be declared a success. Through the generosity of many of our members, we were able to close a gap of more than \$10,000 in the operating budget for 2010. This gap was the result of falling interest rates on the bonds that make up the lion's share of our church's endowment. As I write this on December 15, we have received pledges from 45 member families for a total of approximately \$54,000. While this is many more dollars than last year, it is about the same number of families as last year. What this means is that members who pledged previously are being more generous, and the members who have not pledged in the past continue not to pledge. We did not achieve our goal of 100% participation, so we are somewhat short of declaring victory. We do have a few more weeks before the annual meeting, so if you haven't submitted a pledge card yet, please do so. If you have nothing to give, please let us know by putting a zero on the pledge card. Any and all responses are appreciated.

Capital Projects/Maintenance

In the past month or so we completed repairs to the heating system in the Parish House, just in time to be able to fire up the boiler ahead of the cold weather.

In mid-December, the heating system in the church building was making a loud rumbling noise. A trip to the boiler room uncovered a problem with one of the circulating pumps (did you know we have three?). That was repaired the next day and heat was restored to the sanctuary.

Trustees Need New Members

Linda Kresta and I will be leaving the Board of Trustees as of the Annual Meeting in January. The Trustees need three new members for the coming year to serve full terms of three years. The board also has positions to fill from previous years, including one new member to complete a two year term and two members to complete a one year term on the board. Trustees' responsibilities requires roughly 2-3 hours a month to fulfill. The Board of Trustees oversees the church's finances, enters into contracts for services and is responsible for attending to the maintenance of the church buildings and grounds. Everyone should take a turn as trustee. It is an eye opening opportunity and a great way to get to know fellow members and the operations of the church building itself. No experience required.

Goodsearch Update (www.Goodsearch.com.)

We recently received a check for about \$30 from Goodsearch for our use of their search engine and shopping portal (Goodshop). Thanks to those who continue to

use it.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Parlapiano

Kim Chicoine calls her the "bag lady" but I just call her mom. During January's Crafter's Time (1 / 16) my mom, Janet Sola, will be demonstrating how to make beautiful (yes, beautiful), soft, durable bags from plastic shopping bags. It's incredible. You need to see and feel the completed bags to believe it! The ultimate in recycling. Let us know if you're interested in attending so we can have enough materials....but also plan to bring along your own shopping bags. Even black garbage bags will do.

If interested, call me at 287-8106 or Barbara Hamilton at 203-288-0762 .

Janet Manukas

Childcare is Available!!

If your child is too young for Sunday School, we have Childcare offered to all families during our Sunday Worship!! Mary Allen and Linda Rua run the Childcare on the lower level of the Parish House. So drop off your little one's for fun and play while you enjoy the Sunday Service!!



Dunbar UCC Open and Affirming/Mission Statement

We, the members of Dunbar United Church of Christ, want Jesus to be the center of our lives. Our mission is to practice the New Commandment that Jesus gave us: to love one another as he has loved us (John 13:34). We seek to follow God's will by loving our neighbors, friends and enemies alike. We seek justice for all.

We celebrate the image of God in every person. As an Open and Affirming Church, we welcome all persons into the full life and ministry of our church, and affirm that the grace of God, known especially through Jesus, is a gift meant for people of every race, color, age, ability, and sexual orientation. Worship, leadership, ministry, and employment are open to all.

We are on a journey of faith and invite all people to join us. No matter the church or community where your journey began, you are welcome here.