As we [launch] into the New Year 2012, many will greet us with “Happy New Year” – almost as if were a wish, or a blessing, or a hope. All of that is nice, but I want to say to myself and others, “Make it a Happy New Year.” Don’t just wish for a Happy New Year – make it a Happy New Year.

I believe that the year 2012 will be mostly what we make of it. We can choose to make it a new year, a fresh start, and a new beginning. Or we can choose to have another year which is just “the usual.” In some rare cases, we can even choose to have a miserable, unhappy, and unproductive new year. I believe that having a Happy New Year is mostly our choice.

Of course there are tragic events and accidents which come along, and no one should be blamed for those unexpected events. Accidents happen, and bad things do happen to good people. Tragedies occur. But even when such bad things occur, we can choose to look for the “good” in those bad things. I have seen many, many persons deal with very tragic events in ways that are redeeming and inspiring.

A few years ago, I was visiting with a person who had been through a lot of tough times and transitions. I made some unhelpful comment like, “That sounds miserable.” He replied, “Yes, but I believe misery is a choice, and I do not choose to be miserable about it.” What a great attitude!

“...persons deal with very tragic events in ways that are redeeming and inspiring.”

(continued on next page)
What if this New Year will be what we choose to make of it? What if our personal lives will be mostly what we decide they will be? What if our own expectations and attitude have more to do with a Happy New Year than any particular “good luck” or favorable happenings?

So let’s go ahead and offer the greeting, “Happy New Year.” And then let’s make it a Happy New Year.

Good Eats! Good Fun!

Community Family Game Night

Mark your calendars for Wednesday, January 11 from 5:30-8:30 pm for Game Night. All you need is your appetite and/or your favorite game.

Please RSVP to Susie Pierce at 832-9721 or Sandee Frey at 832-2533 if you can come.

Soup, Sandwiches & Dessert--Oh, My!

What: Fifth Sunday Dinner
When: January 29th at noon

Forget about having to go out in the cold for a while longer! Join us for a simple, delicious meal. Please sign up in the lounge area (table with the cross) if you can come and jot down what you are planning to bring, (if you know.) Contact Joyce Taylor or Margie Lapworth for more details.

Calling All Women! Save the Dates!

Women’s “Beat the Cabin Fever Retreat”
Friday & Saturday, Feb. 24-25, at Turkey Run State Park with Covington UMC Women
Details to follow.

Wabash Valley Women’s Unity Night
Friday, March 9 @ 7:00 pm
Saturday March 10 @ 2:00 pm
Maryland Community Church
Terre Haute
Details to follow.
The Esther Circle gathered at The Castle on December 20 for dinner. The remainder of the evening was enjoyed by sharing stories and remembering stories from the past.
A donation will be given to the general fund of the church.
It was announced there will not be a meeting in January.

Those attending the gathering were Karen Hartman, Lou Ann Andis, Joyce Taylor, Kathy Haraburda, Mary Ten Have, Margie Lapworth, Martha Rutan, Ruth Hollingsworth, Phyllis Marsolf, Katherine Marsolf, Pastor Susan Martin and Audrey Lientz.
The meeting closed with a prayer circle.

No meeting in January
Next meeting will be in February

Find Your Treasures!: New Program
Begins Sunday, January 15

New program: We will begin a church wide program on Sunday, January 15. The Treasure Principle: Discovering the Secret of Joyful Giving, " is a six-weeks series. Randy Alcorn is the author of both the book and the DVD series. He states, "Because once you discover the liberating joy of giving, life will never look the same."

The economy has been a major issue in our lives as individuals and as a church. Pastor Susan has used this study in her previous charges with good results. The study on stewardship is based on Biblical principles and will be for all ages. We will begin our 6-week study January 15 during the Sunday School time. A 20-25 minute video will be shown in the sanctuary immediately following worship to everyone participating. We will break for 10-15 minutes (coffee time) and end with discussion groups to answer the study guide questions.

The Purpose: To better manage the money God has given us.

We invite you to join us in this important, informative program.
The Miracle of Life Change: New Video Study Planned!

In place of a six-week Lenten study, Brian Hutchinson is offering to lead a ten-week video study, The Miracle of Life Change, by Chip Ingram from Living on the Edge.

"Is a "changed life" really possible? If we're honest, most of us would disagree. Maybe you've tried numerous programs that promise big changes, but in reality, they deliver very little results. You long for transformation, but don’t know where to begin. There’s good news for you! Life change is possible! God created you to grow, to change, and to experience intimacy and adventure.

"In this series, you will learn how true life change can happen to you. You'll be able to identify the barriers that have held you back from receiving God’s best and you’ll also learn how to break out of a destructive lifestyle so you can become the person you’ve always longed to be. This fresh approach to spiritual transformation is designed to move you from the frustration of failure to the freedom you have in Christ."

To end the series before Easter, we will need to start the last week of January. Please contact Brian if you are interested in The Miracle of Life Change.

End of the Year Report: Food Pantry

Giving was down $2,857.02 this year but we were grateful for the $6,466.67 we received for the Vermillion County Food Pantry plus what was given through the Presbyterian Church. Again people were very generous in giving to the food drives. It takes us all working together to help meet the needs in our community. I am so grateful to everyone who helps with this mission in the many different ways.

We are still serving over 100 people each month through the Gleaners Food Bank of Indiana Commodity Program. The third Wednesday of each month commodities are delivered to Victory Baptist Church and Clinton Chateau. Thanks to all the workers who help to make this mission possible.

Audrey Lientz

Sur…..prise!

Pastor Susan was lured to the church on Saturday, December 17th to supposedly attend a routine church dinner to be followed by a Christmas program rehearsal. Little did she know, husband Andy had engineered a surprise big 5-0 birthday party in her honor. Imagine her thoughts when her family and church family welcomed her into the fellowship hall! It was fun for all to mingle and meet.
According to THE DAILY CLINTONIAN of Saturday, October 14, 1916, “A crowd that almost filled the new Methodist church, Friday night was delighted and greatly enjoyed the organ numbers by Franklin Stead of Peoria, Ill., assisted by Miss Hannah Dick, of Clinton who sang two numbers. Rev. Brandon stated that Mr. & Mrs. S.C. Stultz gave the fine instrument and there was a great volume of applause. It was explained by Rev. Brandon that the chimes, which were added to the organ after the original contract was let, were provided by Mr. & Mrs. Roy Stultz, after the word got around to them that some had been suggesting this would be a nice feature. The chimes brought the total cost up by $350, making the cost of the organ with chimes, $3,350. (This information is from research that Pat Frist did in August 1997.) See http://clintonfirst.org/fumc/about/ for more historical information. Please help maintain our place of worship and fellowship.

“Bethlehem...Nothing Ever Happens Here”

A Christmas Play

Oh yes, it did happen—right here in Clinton UMC! Well, not exactly the birth of Jesus, but a fairly elaborate play about this birth was performed on Sunday, December 18th to an appreciative audience. It involved approximately 24 cast members of all ages in our church, including singing children, skipping teenage boys, and other humor. The count doesn’t even include others who made the play possible such as music by Joni Weeks, sets painted and built by Debbie Bonness (with some grunt work by others), Chet Rutan-sound, and Freida Rutan—who typed the whole play for the screen, & Virginia Schragel who managed costumes, just to name a few.

Thank you, Dianna! The whole deal was directed by Dianna Devlin, who should be nominated for sainthood.

The Praise Band showed up and, as always, provided wonderful music, along with a special visitor, who did lots of “Ho, ho, ho-ing.” There were refreshments provided by the Esther Circle and a good time was had by all.

(l to r) Three Very Wise Men--Matt Martin, Dean Harris, & Michael Rennick

(l to r) Larry Carlson & Ed Shew are getting into character with a shepherd’s crook and even a lamb. Eric Weeks played Simeon.
Delivering Christmas Joy!

As many of you are aware, the youth had requested help with collecting food for 12 baskets, something they have often done in the past. What was a new twist, however, was the request for toys/gifts for the children in those families. An small pink angel tree named the gender and age of each child. The response was outstanding! Each and every child received a gift and each & every family received a food basket. Give yourselves a little pat on the back because the amount given totaled $1,500-$2,000, according to Nicole Roberts-Smith, youth leader.

Four adults and eight youth shared the rewarding task of delivering the food and toys to the families. The youth are already making plans for next year!

Some GREAT Wildcat Store News!

“…Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me—put it into practice, and the God of Peace will be with you.” Philippians 4:8,9

December 5, 6, and 7th brought the Wildcat Store into reality. This was its second year for the Wabash Valley 83 Cluster to sponsor the event. We started with set-up on Monday evening (December 5). Many individuals and church groups donated beautiful items for our Store. We were overwhelmed with the outpouring of blankets, hoodies, jeans, and things for the students to “pick up” for other family members for Christmas!

Thanks!!! A special thank-you goes out to all those that had a hand in preparing for the event (laundering, ironing, donating hangars, and just donating items for the Store as well as those that worked any part of the event). Kudos goes to the church coordinators who facilitated what was needed and got it done!

A huge thank-you to those who stayed late on Wednesday to help pack up and transfer to a storage place (Eugene Church) until the Falcon Store was a reality. And many thanks go out to the folks who manned the Store on both Tuesday and Wednesday to help the students make choices and to help with proper fit. You were great with the students! It takes an enormous amount of work and coordination to pull this event off (continued on next page)
and you all were Christ’s hands and feet!

Making good decisions: Starting at 8:30 a.m. through 2:30 p.m. on the 6th and 7th, students “shopped” the store. Each hour, five to eight students browsed the items they sought most, tried some on for fit, and discussed with one another which looked the best for them. Making the right decision was talked about a lot. The students enjoyed the second day when they could shop for their family members! A table full of new items was brought in just for the occasion. A few students came the second day with a list to help them shop for a loved one. Ninety-five percent of the students came back on Day 2 to help themselves to Christmas gifts for family members. The workers had lots of fun helping the shoppers select gifts.

Five give-aways: There were five give-aways this year. For sophomores, juniors and seniors, the school donated a 2011 Yearbook. All students were eligible for a gently used microwave, a new MP-3 player, a new CD player, and a $50 VISA gift card. The students seemed to enjoy signing-up for the prizes.

The students were cautious and shy at first. They didn’t know quite what to expect. One student brought a book with her because when the assistant principal called her down to the bookroom, she thought she might be in trouble; although, she couldn’t figure out why. She prepared herself for some kind of detention and wanted a book to read while there. She was certainly surprised to find that this was a fun event for her! Another student (on the second day) came rushing in waving her list and shouting, “I brought my list, I brought my list!” There was a feeling on both days of surprise and wonder! The students were very appreciative and wished us all a Merry Christmas!!! I don’t think there was a student or event worker that wasn’t touched by the process of the Store. It was certainly a wonderful experience.

“I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel… being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion.” Philippians 1:3-6

Thank you for doing Christ’s work here on earth.

God bless you all,

Sandee Frey
Wildcat Store coordinator
In the Hospital
Mary Hogan, Room 4026
Union Hospital Terre Haute
1606 N. 7th St.
Terre Haute, IN 47804
Tentative Release Date: Jan. 11

Terry Coleman, Room 330
Portage Hospital
3630 Willowcreek Road
Portage, IN 46368

Lamplighters’ Class Party
On Saturday, December 10, members of the Lamplighter’s Sunday school class and their guests trekked down to Boot City to hear the Vandells perform renditions of their own songs and others from the 50’s & 60’s. Afterwards, they all met up at the MCL Cafeteria for dinner, fellowship and to play the Secret Santa game. It was a fun way to spend the evening!

A Computer Savvy Church
Our church is very fortunate to have computer savvy people in our church family. Rhonda Reed keeps us updated, both on Facebook and the web site. Sermons and even the bulletins are available online. Check out what’s going on! online at http://clintonfirst.org/fumc/2011/12/december-2011-observer/ or linked from the church Facebook page at http://www.facebook.com/clintonfirst/

You can subscribe to the posts on the web site by clicking on the POSTS link at the top right of the website...and following the instructions on the page that opens....you will then receive email notification of any posts to the site.
Would You Like to Serve?

No, Really....Would You Like to Serve?

**Ushers & Greeters Needed!** Please mosey back to the round table with the cross in the lounge area and affix your John Henry to greet & usher for a couple of weeks in the next three months. Four people are needed each week. NO experience necessary! As you can see from the list below, the possibilities are wide open!

If questions, contact Brian Hutchinson or another Radical Hospitality team member

**January-March Hosts (Ushers/Greeters)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Hosts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/15</td>
<td>Larry Carlson</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/22</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/29</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/5</td>
<td>Terry Lewis</td>
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<td>2/12</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/19</td>
<td>Terry Lewis</td>
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<td>2/26</td>
<td>Terry Lewis</td>
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<td>3/4</td>
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<td>3/11</td>
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<td>3/18</td>
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<td>3/25</td>
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**Coffee Time Volunteers:** Oh, by the way, please help out for coffee time.

No baking required!
# JANUARY 2012 CALENDAR
## REGULAR EVENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>9:30 am</td>
<td>After worship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>11:00 am</td>
<td>First Sunday of month is Communion Sunday, Food Pantry Sunday &amp; Hillcrest donations taken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>6:00 pm</td>
<td>Worship KFC for Preschoolers-Grade 5 children (except on first Sunday of month &amp; during Barn Fests)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td></td>
<td>Coffee Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sunday school for all ages nOvus Youth Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>7:00 pm</td>
<td>Worship at Chateau</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>7:15 pm</td>
<td>Choir Rehearsal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>2:00-3:05</td>
<td>Pack for Backpack Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>6:00 pm</td>
<td>Weight Watchers</td>
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</tbody>
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**Prayer Concerns**

*Telecare Prayer Chain: Contact Vera Shew if you have a prayer request or concern. Or, email church at clinton-first@gmail.com*