

Mission Statement:
To Love and to Lead

The Mission of Heritage United Methodist Church is to **Love** God and people passionately and to **Lead** people into a passionate relationship with Jesus Christ.

Worship With Us Every Sunday!

8:05 AM
Awakening Service

9:30 AM
Traditional Service

11:00 AM
Contemporary Worship

Nursery provided for all services.

Sunday School for All Ages

Heritage United Methodist Church
1604 East Pointer Trail
Van Buren, AR 72956-2326

Periodical
Postage
Paid
At Van Buren,
Arkansas 72956
Permit 24448



Volume 29 Issue 1
January 1, 2015

Heritage
Happenings



Heritage Happenings (USPS Periodical Permit 24448) is published weekly (except Christmas) by Heritage United Methodist Church, 1604 Pointer Trail, Van Buren AR 72956-2326. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Heritage United Methodist Church, 1604 Pointer Trail, Van Buren, AR 72956-2326 PH 479-474-6424

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2015: PASTOR WES

I have great hopes and dreams for Heritage in 2015. It will be the 30th anniversary of the forming of the Heritage congregation when First Church and St. John's voted to merge. But it will also be the 175th anniversary of our presence in Van Buren! That's amazing! We will plan a great celebration of this milestone!

I believe the LORD is calling us to Sound the Alarm about the seriousness of our times in our nation – to call our congregation and others to a life-style of fasting and prayer. *“Who knows, perhaps the Lord will relent and leave a blessing instead (of the judgment our nation deserves)”* Joel 2:14. I am working with our prayer teams now to see what this may look like for us.

The first 2 ½ months of the year we will be conducting a capital campaign to pay off our existing debt and to start saving towards our next building – a multi-purpose Life-Center for worship, fellowship, meals, Bible study and recreation. I am praying that we will be able to erase our debt by mid September, 2015. This is essential for us to move to the next level of growth.

Our Study Committee will finish its report early in the year and our church council will make a decision on what to do “building wise” in order for us to continue in our growth.

I am praying that, by God's grace and blessing, we will lead over 100 people to receive Jesus as their LORD and Savior and make Heritage their church family. We normally have well over 100 join but only 30-60% are by profession of faith. And we normally lead over 100 people to salvation in our ministries, but this year I am believing the LORD for 100 or more to join Heritage by profession of faith.

“The Covenant: Yeshua” will be the centerpiece of a major outreach into the Fort Smith area on Good Friday and Holy Saturday. The LORD is calling us to expand the reach of our influence into the wider River Valley, specifically, into Fort Smith. It is our greatest population center and we believe there are many people in that city that the LORD wants us to reach.

In the fall, Pastor Daniel and his family will return on furlough from their mission field in the Far East. We will study the book of Genesis and seek to equip our congregation to understand and engage effectively the creation/evolution/intelligent design debate.



Please pray with me as we seek the LORD on what special evangelists/speakers/teams he wants us to bring to Heritage this year and in 2016. I am excited to be retiring from the military on February 7th. You are all invited to the ceremony at Camp Robinson at 1400 hours (2 p.m.).

2015 is going to be the best year so far. Lord, let Your Fire fall and Your Glory fill!

Pastor Wes

JANUARY VOLUNTEERS

Ushers

8:05 am

John Poole
Benton Cone
Rick Moore

9:30 am

Wayne Stewart
Connie Mendenhall
Mark Stafford
Mark Evans

11:00 am

Daniel Chisolm
Nathan Elliott
Grant Elliott
Justin Sangster

Greeters

8:05 am

Friends for Life Life Group

9:30 am

Carolyn Loyd and Margo Symonds
Mark Wilkinson and Anita Dowty

11:00 am

Judy Bowen
Jason and Tiffany Parks



In the Hospital:

Charles Frey (Sparks)

At Home:

Kris Ailes, Christy Anders, John Boster, Mary Ellen Weidman-Burris, Daniel Christee, Ellarene Crowley, John Luckau, Jeri Nash, Gary Pittman, Jennifer Roberson, Carolyn Scott, Linda Seubold, Stephanie Watkins, Mary Wrisinger

Assisted Living:

Mary Coble (Crawford H & R)
Jim and Gerlinda Dibble (Willowbrook)
Geraldine Hurst (Covington Court Rehab)
Jean Stratton (Crawford H & R)
Maxine Fahrner (Ashton Place)

In Sympathy:

Doyle Autry and Family in the death of his sister, *Ann Autry Heron.*

Carol Ray and Family in the death of her sister, *Pat Dodson.*

Tara Teague and Family in the death of her grandmother, *Gilda Bates.*

Pam Thomas and Family in the death of her sister, *Diane Smotherman.*

Have an Announcement for the Bulletin or Newsletter?
Email it to office@heritagevb.org.

Becoming the Church of God's Dream...



Visions for 2015

Two-thousand-fourteen was an amazing year. In 2014, our average attendance is up 146 from 2013 (714 - 860); we are bursting at the seams Sunday morning and Wednesday evening. We have received 116 new members; 34 by profession of faith. We have increased our number of small groups by 6. Our giving to the operating budget is up \$150k and we have paid \$370k in principal on our note. TO GOD BE THE GLORY!

This was also a busy year. We had multiple MAJOR events starting with Christmas Eve 2013 and continuing with the Holocaust memorial, *Korczak's Children*, and Passover; Spring Break trips; Fall K/O and Education Appreciation; Tabernacles Celebration; Community Thanksgiving; Christmas 2014..... Our congregation has taken over the chaplaincy at two hospitals. Our benevolence ministries have exploded—we have spent over \$43k on the food pantry alone. And we have extended ourselves even more into the community with events like the STAR luncheons, Education Foundation luncheons, Hmong workshops, VBPD dinners, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4H and Extension Service, and more. And in the middle of this, we managed to remove asbestos and replace all our floors!

I believe that 2015 will also be a great year. Our God is alive and well and He loves this River Valley. With His direction, we will impact the community individually—with each of us better equipped to reach our friends, coworkers, and neighbors—and corporately with events like *The Covenant*. We will improve our outreach ministries; Jesus came to preach the gospel, to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed—we will do the same! We will also improve and increase our media and social media presence; *No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is*

placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father (MT 5:15-16).



I pray that you will join us! It is going to be a GREAT year!

Roger Goin, Director of Ministries

“My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you” John 15:12

From the get go this has been my scripture for the heart of Welcome Ministries. I have always felt if people can see the love of Jesus through us, we are doing our job. 2015 is not going to be any different. We are going to love people passionately and lead them into a relationship with Christ. We have been praying for revival and I believe it is going to happen. So let the preparation begin!

This year I would like to increase our initial contact with people by sending each first time guest a simple survey to complete to let us know how we are doing in the area of hospitality. Whether their experience is good or bad, the information we receive will be valuable.

I would also like to see our Welcome Center open every week and functioning as a Welcome Center. That means I am going to need help from you. I need volunteers to step up and say, **“I will be in the Welcome center. I will make sure our guests our taken to Sunday school, Heritage U, Nursery, or to a seat in the sanctuary. I will ask for their name and I will write it down!”** As much as I personally want to be the one who meets every guest, I have realized over the past few years it is impossible for me to do so. It is ok for you to **“do my job”**. You don't have to track me down. It is more important for you to take care of needs of our guests than it is for them to meet Becki Kneeland. I promise you, if you give them your undivided attention they will return and I will get to meet them.



Let me just close by saying, I hear constantly from our guests how warm and friendly our congregation is and it makes me so proud to be part of such a loving body of believers. I challenge you to continue this tradition in the New Year.

Becki Kneeland, Welcome Minister

Wow! How fast these past 6 months have flown by since joining the Heritage staff. What a blessing it has been to be a part of an amazing church that loves authentic worship, dynamic teaching, has compassion for the lost, and a heart for the broken. The atmosphere at Heritage is highly charged with genuine love for Jesus and for his church. Contagious is the best word I can use to describe how I feel about the awesomeness of all of you who make up this amazing place. It truly makes me want to be a better witness to the lost, discipler of believers, and lover of Jesus.

I pray that 2015 will be a year of growth for our discipleship ministries. I hope to see everyone get connected with a Life group/small group and discover what a smaller community of believers can do for life's ups and downs. I want to encourage those who have a passion to teach and lead to start new life groups or Sunday morning classes. With the new year I would also like to visit all of our life groups. I want to become more familiar with each group and be able to better inform new attenders or current seekers of what each group offers.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer in his classic *The Cost of Discipleship* writes-

“[God says] Discipleship is not limited to what you can comprehend - it must transcend all comprehension. Plunge into the deep waters beyond your own comprehension, and I will help you to comprehend even as I do. Bewilderment is the true comprehension. Not to know where you are going is the true knowledge. My comprehension transcends yours.”



Let's plunge together into deep waters of Discipleship in 2015 and continue to grow in our knowledge and understanding of our amazing God!

Blessings in the New Year,

Bryan Tabakian, Discipleship Pastor

Having just returned from Colorado where Louann and I were working on staging *The New Covenant*, it is a good time to be sharing with you our vision for Worship Arts at Heritage! By now you have heard that in April 2015 we will be mounting the production, which spans the story of the Bible from Abraham to Jesus, at the Fort Smith Center for Performing Arts. This effort will require scores of volunteers both on the stage and behind the scenes, and you are welcome to take part! What a fantastic opportunity to share the Gospel through the arts, and also expand our outreach into Fort Smith as never before.

2015 will truly be an international year for Heritage Worship-guest artists from Nashville to Norway will join us for *The New Covenant*, and then in late summer, we will be welcoming Worship Leader Robin Mark from Belfast to the River Valley. Robin was at the forefront of a revival in the late 90's which swept Northern Ireland and reached around the globe. You will be touched by his down to earth humility, and his passion to lead others into the presence of the Lord.

Throughout the year, and a little closer to home, we are going to be utilizing the facility that John Poole has been developing on his beautiful property for some good ol' down home Gospel Singings, fellowship and worship under the stars. These will be good opportunities for you to invite friends and neighbors to a casual event and enjoy local musical talent. It's going to be great!



The "main event" of the year, however, will be the presence of the King of Kings in our weekly worship celebrations. This must continue to be our focus-worship that touches the heart of God, and draws people into a passionate relationship with Him!

Blessed to serve at Heritage!

Chuck King, Worship Arts Pastor

2014 was a banner year! God did lots of wonderful things at Heritage; I know He has more for all of us! The big change that occurred in Children's Ministry this last year was moving the focus of Sunday mornings from discipleship to worship. Children have the opportunity to worship with their families, I am sure that blesses the heart of our Heavenly Father! Discipleship occurs on Sunday and Wednesday evenings.

2015 should be another 'banner' year! Plans are underway for more summer events and activities and continuing to improve the Sunday evening discipleship curriculum. FISH (Faithfully I Serve Him), the 4th and 5th grade ministry, will be better than ever! Timothy Team will begin its 11th year this fall! This ministry is amazing! In 2014, we have had over 45 volunteers teaching and leading worship to nearly 200 children every week! The addition of the "GOLD" class (children who join us after sign-up is completed) led by Pastor Max has been a huge success!

Personally 2014 was a 'banner' year also! Rick and I became grandparents! Again, God uses the *everyday* family life to teach me so much and remind me of what is truly important! As a parent, you are busy and concerned with the day to day issues of child rearing and training. It is all consuming and it should be! But as a grandmother, your view becomes bigger and maybe even clearer and I think a little closer to God's perspective. The love that God has for His children is overwhelming. And maybe I understand that love a bit more than I did. His desire for His children is that they know just how much they are loved and the lengths He went to show us that love. We should desire to serve and honor Him because of that great love! I desire with all of my heart that our children, the precious ones He sends to us at Heritage, KNOW this love.



Again, blessed to part of God's work at Heritage with the most amazing team of volunteers anywhere!

Debbie Marsh, Children's Minister

I was at the mall the other day doing what some people do at the mall....walk for exercise.... and I noticed the map of the mall. It had the star that said "You are here". Wouldn't it be cool to have that sort of Big Picture perspective in our lives? John Eldridge, talking about our lives, writes, "For when we were born, we were born into the midst of a great story begun before the dawn of time. A story of adventure, of risk and loss, heroism...and betrayal. A story where good is warring against evil, danger lurks around every corner, and glorious deeds wait to be done. Think of all those stories you've ever loved—there's a reason they stirred your heart. They've been trying to tell you about the true Epic ever since you were young." Since you were young, since you were young...hmmmm.

Madeline L'Engle said "All of life is a story." Life for 6th, 7th, and 8th graders doesn't happen like a long division problem (do they even have long division anymore?). It is a story that reveals itself page by page, chapter by chapter. Sometimes like a sitcom other times like a soap opera. They find themselves in the middle of a story that can be exciting yet confusing and not having a clue on how to make sense of it all or to understand the part they play. No wonder some keep losing heart. They need to know as Paul Harvey used to say.... the rest of the story.

I am looking forward to 2015 where, through the power of the Holy Spirit and partnering with an incredible team of volunteers, we will create the right settings and circumstances for students to experience God's ever unfolding plan for their lives and begin to understand "their story". We will be continuing to look at the lives of those people who have met Jesus, to hear their story. By hearing and interacting with other's stories,



students will better understand their story and the role that they play in their own epic...**God's Story for them.** They will take hope in that fact that there is a plan and God knows what it is. Jeremiah 29:11 says, "***For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope."***

Brad Sneed, Middle School Pastor

What a year! There are so many wonderful things we can praise God for from this past year! But I am also praising Him in advance for what He will do this next year as well! My personal goal this year is to increase personal time in His Word, memorize more scripture, take Friday as my Sabbath of rest, be more intentional with my prayer time and to continue my presence within the community. Some of these same goals will be for Pulse Student Ministries as well: to grow in the knowledge and application of His Word, have meaningful times to respond to His Word through prayer and worship, and challenge our students to take His Word and live it out in every area of their lives (ALL IN!). Our Sunday Night teaching in the winter and spring will be "What's Your Pursuit?" This is a series looking at the difference between love and lust. Topics will vary and will cover the main issues relating to sex, love and dating. There will be a time in the spring where students will be



encouraged to participate in taking a stand and making a vow for purity. We will be headed for Spring Break to California and our mission trip in the summer will be to South Dakota. Much more is in store for our youth, and for all at Heritage! As I asked this year, will you be "ALL IN?"

Brian Seewald, High School Youth Pastor

DATES TO REMEM-

1/5: GriefShare Begins

1/11: TT Teacher's Meetings Resume

1/6: Preschool Resumes

1/14: Wednesday Night Activities