



Rick's Journal

The beginning of a new year can be an unsettling time. No matter how good the past year was, at least there was some comfort with it. We came to know what we could expect and what we could not; at least we thought we could. We didn't know everything there was to know, but we felt like there was some connection.

Now we have a brand new year. In some ways we start over again, in others we continue, hopefully, with a fresh perspective. We have no idea what challenges we will be presented with, but we know they will come. Our commitment and our resolve will be tested and tempted and we will get an idea of how determined we are to the call of Christ.

A new year can also be an exciting time. There will be new people to meet; new experiences, new opportunities. We just don't know what the New Year will bring.

We do know that God has a plan for us. He has some things he wants us to do. He has a vision for Bethany as we celebrate our 100th anniversary and he hopes we will be open to what he has on his mind. He wants to know if he can count on us.

We also know that God will be with us every step of the way. He will help us and guide us and give us all the encouragement we need to be successful. We also know that we will have each other to rely on and share the journey with.

The past six months have been a wonderful experience and Sonja and I can't think of any place we would rather be. We are grateful for your support and your friendship and for allowing us to be a part of this special community of believers.

We can't wait to see what God has in store for us.

Joy & Peace In The New Year

Rick



Mission Opportunities

- **Food Pantry**—continues to be a blessing for those who are in need. Personal items are needed such as deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, toilet tissue, etc.

- **Community Table**—Bethany UMC has committed to serve the Community Table twice per year. If any group or Sunday School class would like to serve please let Lynette Foster know as soon as possible.

- **Pregnancy Resource Center Needs**—Bethany UMC works closely with the Pregnancy Resource Center of Stanly County. These are items that are always needed at the center.

The following items should be new: Playtex bottles and liners, 4 oz. bottles, diapers (size 4 and 5), new or gently used baby outfits (size 0 to 4T), baby shampoo, baby wash and lotion, baby oil, anti-bacterial gel, diaper rash ointment, wipes, crib sheets.

These items may be used but in good shape: Baby beds, swings, bassinets, high chairs, changing tables, strollers, infant car seats, monitors.

Items that would be great for the mothers: Toiletries, Bibles, photo albums, picture frames.

- **Loving Stitches Prayer Shawl Ministry**—will meet at 7 pm on Wednesday, January 11, at the home of Lucille Cranford. We extend an invitation to anyone who would like to be involved in our ministry. Knowing how to knit or crochet is not necessary.

- **Evangelism Team**—meets quarterly. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, March 27, at 11:30 am in the Parish House.

- **Healing Hearts**—blood pressure checks will be held on January 29, April 29, July 29, September 30, and December 30 in the fellowship hall, immediately following the worship service.

- **United Methodist Women**—meet at 7 pm on Tuesday, January 10, in the Parish House. Susan Calloway will lead the program "Call to Prayer and self Denial". Debbie Bailey and Cathy Smith will serve refreshments.

The Davie Lee Circle will meet at the Log Cabin on January 24 for lunch. They will then visit Lizzie Walker at Stanly Manor who will celebrate her 97th birthday.

The Mildred Hall Lowder Circle will meet at 6:30 pm. on Tuesday, January 24.

Debbie Bailey will host The Betty Drye Circle meeting on Wednesday, January 25, at 7 pm. Plans for 2012 will be made.

- **United Methodist Men**—will meet at 7 pm on Thursday



My Favorite Animal

Our teacher asked what my favorite animal was, and I said, "Fried chicken."

She said I wasn't funny, but she couldn't have been right, because everyone else laughed.

My parents told me to always tell the truth. I did. Fried chicken is my favorite animal. I told my dad what happened, and he said my teacher was probably a member of PETA. He said they love animals very much. I do, too. Especially chicken, pork and beef.

Anyway, my teacher sent me to the principal's office. I told him what happened, and he laughed, too. Then he told me not to do it again.

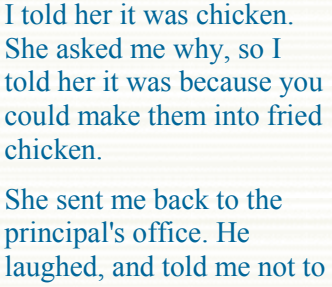
The next day in class my teacher asked me what my favorite live animal was. I told her it was chicken. She asked me why, so I told her it was because you could make them into fried chicken.

She sent me back to the principal's office. He laughed, and told me not to do it again.

I don't understand. My parents taught me to be honest, but my teacher doesn't like it when I am.

Today, my teacher asked us to tell her what famous person we admire most. I told her, "Colonel Sanders."

Guess where I am now...



UMYF

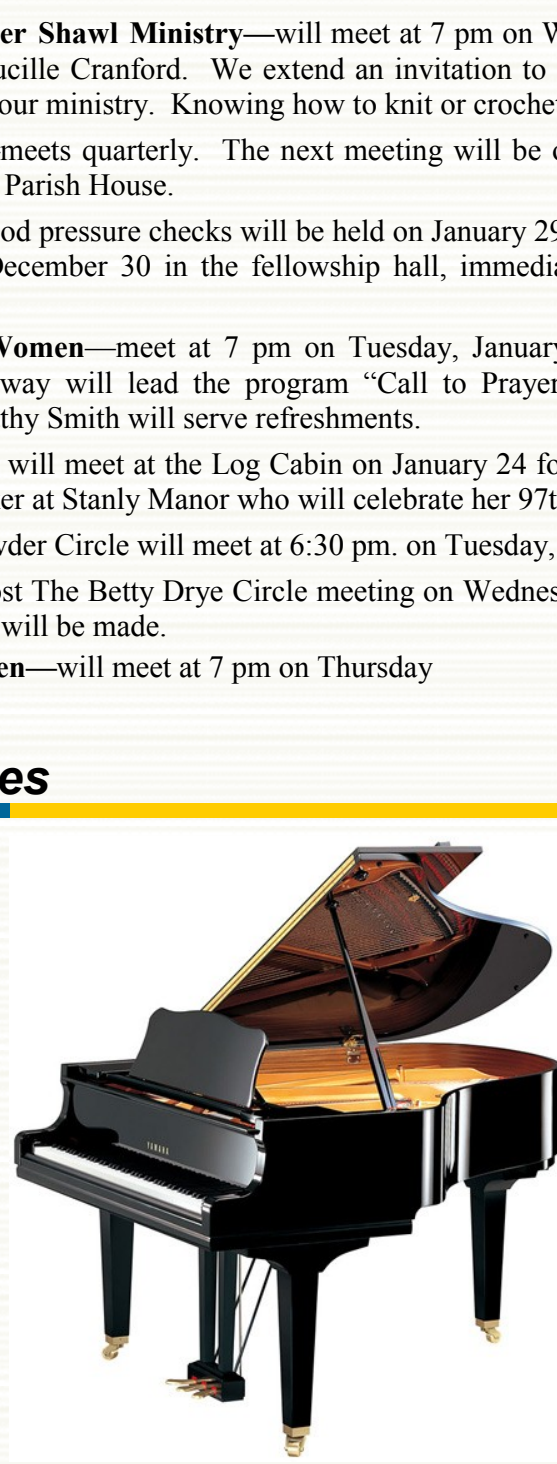
Meet each Sunday at 6 pm. Middle School through High School are invited to attend.

Gifts

To the **Piano Fund** in memory of Walter Clark by Paul & Bonnie Albee; in honor of Frances Brown by the Christian Homemakers Sunday School Class; in honor of Trudy Jepsen by Betty Huneycutt. To the **General Fund** in memory of Walter Clark by Ben & Tempie Furr and by Ronald & Jeanette Furr.

Contribution cards are available in the Narthex. To make a contribution, please complete the card, include your check or cash, place in the envelope, and then into the offering place. An acknowledgement will be sent promptly to those individuals you have requested. In addition, you will receive a receipt from the church office for your tax deductible gift.

Music Notes



New Piano and Renovations

Goal: \$25,000

Currently: \$13,374

Donation cards are located in the narthex should you wish to give to the piano fund in honor or memory of a loved one.

Need Bible Study or Devotional Material?

Stanly County is fishing country but there is also a place you can fish for Bible Study material, personal devotional works, class studies, and program resources for all ages and situations. The Conference Fishin' Hole, directed by Sonja Clough, is the place to go and fish for just what will meet your needs or the needs of your group. The best part is everything is free. Bethany has a membership and the only thing you need to check out material and access the online catalogue is to contact Sonja at the Conference Office (704.535.2260). She will be glad to help you!



Around the Church....

UMYF

UMYF will leave the church parking lot at 1:30 pm on Sunday, January 15, to go to the Charlotte Checkers hockey game and ice skate afterwards with the team.

UMYF meets each Sunday at 6 pm. All youth Middle School through High School are invited and encouraged to attend.

Bible Study

The Wednesday Bible Study group continues to study the Book of Genesis with Dr. Mickey Efird. Everyone is invited to join us in the Parish House at 10 am.

A Bit of History

"Now and Then"

(compiled by Marlene Huneycutt)

Sunday, August 14, 2011 was church school promotion day. Karen Efird, Sunday School Superintendent talked about the attributes our present school and stressed her desire for each class to keep weekly records in the books provided by the church.

As I searched through old record books—back to the year I was born, and before—I found many detailed entries. These books listed attendance, offerings, money spent, scriptures shared, teachers' names, songs, even the weather on the given day. In these entries I found children's day programs listed...Selma Cooper told me the girls in her family always had new dresses for this event, hand made by their mother. I found children's Christmas programs dating back to 1926—1934—1951.

Old church ledgers listed membership, marriages, pastors, and "members lost sight of".

Why keep these detailed records, you ask? They remind us and the future membership, that "Bethany" has always been a house of learning and worship, a home for fellowship.

We invite you to visit the UMW Library in the Parish House to enjoy the church's history display

Bethany Then and Now

A Mission Moment

"Now and Then"

(compiled by Marlene Huneycutt)

Dear friends and family,

It seems that no matter where we find ourselves in the world, Christmas is a busy time of year. A careful reading of the Christmas story in Luke and Matthew's gospels reveals that the first "Christmas" and the time leading up to it was also a period of tremendous activity, both in the heavens and on earth. At the time of the accommodation to arrange, food to be brought in, officials to be instructed and sent to their appropriate posts, and bewildered people standing in queues for hours or days. Angels, too, were busy, carrying out specific tasks of announcing unbelievable messages.

This Christmas, I would like to take the example of Jesus' mother, Mary. She was not immune to the wonder of it all. Her challenges and discomfort were great, and there was much she simply did not know or understand, yet she watched, and waited, and acted, and "stored up all these things and pondered them in her heart" (Luke 2:19).

My prayer for us all, friends and family, is that we would joyfully do what needs to be done, but at the same time, receive grace to watch and pray, wait and listen, share and worship, and store in our hearts the mystery of the wonderful gift given to us in Jesus, our Savior.

With thanksgiving in our hearts for your faithfulness in prayer and giving, we wish you a joy-filled, and Merry Christmas.

Jane and Larry Kies, Africa University, Mutare Zimbabwe

Happy Birthday

Birthdays

Dusty Mason

Angela Alejo

Rodney Russell

Kristi Hatley

John Hearne

Thomas Patrick

January 2

January 10

January 11

January 12

January 13

January 20

Darrell Jernigan

Kevin Smith

Payton Jernigan

Susan Crisco

Faye Hipp

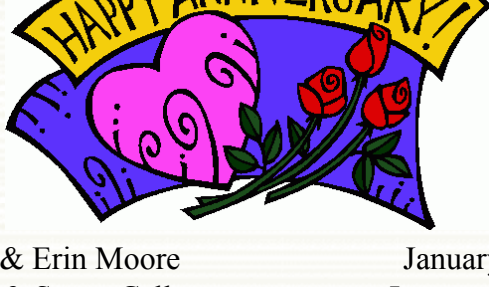
January 24

January 27

January 28

January 29

January 29



Ian & Erin Moore

Joe & Susan Calloway

W.C. & Patty Green

January 1

January 19

January 23

January Calendar of Events

January 4	10 am, Bible Study, Parish House
January 4	7 pm, Bethany Woods singing
January 7	8 am, Take down Christmas decorations in sanctuary
January 8	6 pm, Chancel Choir practice
January 10	7 pm, UMW, Parish House
January 11	10 am, Bible Study, Parish House
January 11	7 pm, Prayer Shawl Ministry, home of Lucille Cranford
January 15	6 pm, Chancel Choir practice
January 15	6 pm, UMYF
January 16	Office Closed
January 17	11:30 am, JOY Club
January 17	6 pm, Strategic Planning Committee, Parish House
January 17	7 pm, Administrative Council, Parish House
January 18	10 am, Bible Study
January 22	6 pm, Chancel Choir practice
January 22	6 pm, UMYF
January 24	1 pm, Davie Lee Circle
January 24	6:30 pm, Mildred Hall Lowder Circle
January 25	10 am, Bible Study, Parish House
January 25	7 pm, Betty Drye Circle
January 26	7 pm, UMM, Parish House
January 29	11 am, blood pressure checks
January 29	6 pm, Chancel Choir practice
January 29	6 pm, UMYF