



# NBUMC NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2011



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## The View From Here

by Pastor Pam

Many years ago, someone asked a big name German pastor if he could sum up in a few words the heart of what he believed about God. The pastor, who over the course of his life wrote many books about the spiritual life put it this way. *“Jesus loves me; this I know. For the Bible tells me so.”* That’s how one of the most influential pastors and scholars of all time broke down the essence of his faith. *Jesus loves me.* We learned those words as children. We sang them hundreds of times in Sunday School. The words and melody of that song are so etched in our minds that we couldn’t forget them if we wanted to, and yet, deep down, not everyone believes those words to be true for them. *Jesus loves me?* Really?

If our hearts are unsure of the truth of that statement, then it’s time we got back to the Bible and started thumbing through its pages to see if it could really be true. The truth is, our hearts have a way of deceiving us. Jeremiah himself tells us *“the heart is devious above all else; it is perverse.”* (17:9) That’s why the scriptures are so important. They give us God’s words and God’s thoughts on the matter and given a choice between the two...what my own heart might be telling me at any given moment and what God has said...I prefer what God says.

One way of coming to know for ourselves that Jesus loves us is by looking at the relationship between Jesus and his Father. There are two turning points in Jesus’ life that open a window into that relationship. The first of those turning points is the moment of Jesus’ baptism. As he was coming up out of the water, the gospels tell us the Spirit descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove and a voice from heaven said, *“This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.”* Notice that word, *“beloved.”* This was not the only time that the Father used that word of his Son. Later, on the

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mount of transfiguration when Moses and Elijah suddenly appear in glory with Jesus, a voice from heaven again is heard, saying, *“This is my beloved Son; Listen to him.”* On these two separate occasions, Jesus was blessed with the extraordinary, first-hand knowledge of his *belovedness* before God. He heard it personally from the Father’s lips and the knowledge of his belovedness would carry him through unimaginably difficult moments that would cause ordinary folk to crumble. Jesus knew he was loved by his Father and whatever else he would have to go through, nothing could change that love.

Those words the Father spoke at Jesus’ baptism and transfiguration were directed toward Jesus. It was Jesus that the Father proclaimed as his beloved Son. But do you realize that we too can claim the incomprehensible privilege of being the beloved of God? Isn’t that the truth behind Jesus’ words in John 15:9? *“As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you.”* In other words, Jesus loves us with the same love, to the same degree, as the Father loves him! The very idea is breathtaking. Forget about all the things you don’t like about yourself, forget about the things that you’re no good at, forget about the dumb mistakes you’ve made that you wish you hadn’t made. Jesus knows about all of that stuff and still Jesus loves you *just as much* as his Father loves him. But there’s more. The Bible says *the Father loves you too just as much* as he loves his Son. Jesus says so in John 17:23.

I’ve been mulling over these scriptures and others for the past month at least. A South African pastor by the name of Trevor Hudson has come up with an exercise for us to impress upon our hearts the truth of our belovedness. It involves writing for ourselves what he calls a *“beloved charter.”* It’s a very

simple thing to do really. Set aside some time where you can look up those verses of scripture which for you speak most profoundly of God's love for you. Write them down at random on a sheet of paper. When you feel satisfied that you have identified those passages that most clearly speak to you of how much you are valued by God, arrange them and rewrite them into a meaningful personal address to you by God. It need not be long. Over time, it may change as you discover other passages of scripture. Once you have it written, set aside a few moments each day for the next month to be alone and to read what you have written. Picture Jesus sitting before you and speaking these words to you. They are from the scriptures of course. You have not invented them. You have simply taken the words of the scriptures, which are from God, and refashioned them into a direct address to you by God. As you read and meditate upon your charter, ask the Spirit of God to press home their message on your heart so that you may know deep within your own belovedness.

I've worked at this myself and have written my own charter. I include it here simply to help you see more clearly what I mean by it. Many of the scriptures I am drawing upon are recognizable even though I don't quote them word for word. Each of us, in one fashion or another, needs to claim for ourselves the truth that we are God's beloved children. When we are firmly grounded in that reality, we will find that we have everything we need, wherever our path may lead.

*Pam, You did not choose me but I chose you. You are amazingly made. I saw you even before you were born. Every one of your days was written in my book even before a single day existed. I formed your inward parts and knit you together in your mother's womb. You are just a little lower than God and crowned with glory and honor.*

*While you were still a sinner, I sent my Son to die for you. You did not love me but I loved you. (I John 4:9-10) I love you as much as I love my Son. And my Son loves you just as I love him. Nothing, not hardship or persecution, distress or peril shall ever separate you from my love. I have created you in Christ Jesus for good works which is to be your way of life.*

## *Valentine's Day Is for Christian Love*

*Valentine's Day is for honoring love;  
To show those we love we care.  
Red hearts with tender sentiments  
We send, our love to share.*

*So on Valentine's Day we're reminded  
Of our very first Christian goal:  
To love the Lord with all our heart  
And all our mind and soul.*

*To love our neighbor as ourselves  
We are also told to do,  
So let's live our love by the Bible;  
It's God's word, flawless and true.*

*If we give this Christian Valentine first,  
We'll never run out of love,  
For infinite love will come to us  
From God in heaven above.*

*By Joanna Fuchs*



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***Greeters***

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*Feb. 6 Larry & Pam Buck*

*Feb. 13 Allen & Donna Williams*

*Feb. 20 John & Carol Ruth*

*Feb. 27 Pat Lewis & Michael Witte*

*March 6 Steve & Brenda Lehr*

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***Liturgists***

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*Feb. 6 & 13 Larry Buck*

*Feb. 20 & 27 Michael Witte*

*March 6 & 13 Carol Bequette*



**PANCAKE BREAKFAST**

**February 19**

**6:30 - 10:00 a.m.**

**Your help would be appreciated!**

**In the Mail...**

*The following letter was received this past month, along with a financial gift of \$100 to the church.*

To Rev. Pam Hoffman and the United Methodist Church of New Baden,

This took much too long in coming, but considering other obligations and the holidays our family hopes that those concerned understand. My mother and father, Ruth and Hank Roeber were members of the United Methodist Church of New Baden for many years. During better health they also enjoyed attending.

Our family would like to extend to your family our deepest thanks for the thoughts as well as all those who had a part with the lunch provided, the very nice stone, cards, and those of you who attended the viewing of the funeral service. Rev. Pam did a very nice job at the service and my family was very appreciative. We hope only the best for the church and community for the new year. From everyone in our family, thank you so much for everything that was done to make a very difficult time manageable.

Our thoughts, hopes, and prayers go out to all of you as yours went out to us when we needed it most.

The Roeber Family (Richard Roeber)

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**The Back Pew - Jeff Larson**



**CANDY for Valentines Day.. SWEET!**  
 CANDY from the **BULK FOODS** store.. NOT!  
*God gives perfect gifts, people give good gifts.. HUSBANDS?? well we try. Mt 7:11*

## Calendar & Events

### February 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28					

February 1	7:00 pm Trustees
February 2	7:00 pm Finance
February 3	7:00 pm Choir
February 4-5	Pasotr Pam in Henry, IL for a clergy retreat planning meeting
February 6	8:00 am Praise Team
	7:00 pm Youth Group
February 8	7:00 pm Administrative Council
February 10	7:00 pm Choir
February 13	8:00 am Praise Team
	7:00 pm Youth Group
February 15	7:00 pm U.M.W
February 19	6:30-10:00 a.m. Pancake Breakfast
February 20	8:00 am Praise Team
	7:00 pm Youth Group
February 22	7:00 pm Worship Committee
February 24	7:00 pm Choir
February 25	6:30-7:30 pm Brownies
February 27	8:00 am Praise Team
	7:00 pm Youth Group

### February Birthdays

Lucille Bann	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Joshua Buck	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Justin Buck	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Joshua Jackson	4 <sup>th</sup>
Angela Witte	7 <sup>th</sup>
Dennis Strake	14 <sup>th</sup>

### February Anniversaries

Chris & Janine Dates	20 <sup>th</sup>
Larry & Pam Buck	24 <sup>th</sup>

#### **New Baden United Methodist Church**

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