



The Vine

The Holy Club

That was the name of a small group that Charles Wesley founded at Oxford University in the summer of 1729. It was also called a little society or religious society. The purpose of it was to study together. These groups or societies became the beginning of a movement that became the Methodist church. John Wesley wrote in his journal: "We agreed to advise the more serious among them to form themselves into a sort of little society, and to meet once or twice a week, in order to reprove, instruct, and exhort one another." During the formative period of Methodism, 1738-44, Wesley used these small groups to encourage those who were serious about their faith to grow. They would discuss scripture, pray, and talk about how they were doing with the general rules (doing no harm, doing good, and tending to the ordinances of the church). These groups were modeled closely after the early church. Wesley had no intention of starting a denomination, he wanted spiritual renewal in the existing Anglican church of which he was a part. As the relationship between England and America deteriorated, he was forced into it. Class meetings became a part of the Methodist church in America.

Wesley influenced a revival in England and the Methodist movement and church spread rapidly across the United States. The small groups over the years faded into history. Today, there is a revival of small groups, sometimes



years faded into history. Today, there is a revival of small groups, sometimes called cell groups. These are really nothing different than Wesley's classes, or the early church that gathered in homes.

In 2013, we are beginning some small groups here at the UMC of Mantua. We are beginning with three. It will be a time to meet, share, discuss, pray, and study together. These groups will meet together monthly for an opportunity to worship together apart from our usual Sunday morning worship. I would like to invite you to become a part of a small group. While we have some groups meeting that function

like a small group, the intention of these groups is to grow, divide, and form new ones. Please read Greg's article for more information. I hope you will prayerfully consider your involvement in a group. I look forward to learning and sharing together.

Pastor Doug

We would like to wish all of you a very blessed and joyful Christmas Season. As we celebrate this holy time of year and remember Christ's birth, our prayer for all of you is that His light will shine through the darkness, and that you will reflect that light to others. In gratitude for all the ways that you share in ministry with us, we are making a gift in honor of our church family to the Africa University. This is a some information about the school.

In 2012, Africa University will celebrate 20 years as the first private, international university in Zimbabwe. Located in Old Mutare, the university is the first fully accredited, United Methodist-related institution on the African continent established by action of the 1988 General Conference. The university opened for classes in March 1992 with 40 students and currently has an enrollment of about 1,200. Africa University offers bachelor's and master's degree programs in six faculties or colleges of learning: theology, education, agriculture and natural resources, management and administration, humanities and social sciences, and health sciences. The Institute of Peace, Leadership, and Governance offers postgraduate diplomas and master's programs.

Thanks for all that you do.

Pastor Doug, Pam, Justin, Tyler, and Kristin

January 2013 Mantua Methodist Vine

All Are Free? Guess Again.

By William M. Crowley, Educational Research Director

2 Timothy 2:15 (KJV Cambridge), "Study to show thyself approved unto GOD..."

This exciting, unending series provides a learning journey researching the familiar and not so familiar Gospel passages. Biblical references are KJV unless noted.

The United States Declaration of Independence

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all **men (my emphasis)** are created equal...endowed by their **Creator (my emphasis)** with certain unalienable Rights...", (Thomas Jefferson, 1776).

Howard Zinn's, "A People's History of the United States", pg. 102, states that the passage of the Declaration and the subsequent Constitution did not even consider the early American women. Men were created equal, but, women's rights were ignored. In March, 1776, Abigail Adams, the wife of John Adams, a Declaration signor, wrote to John asking him to remember the ladies and not put such united power into the hands of men. John Adams replied, "...I cannot but laugh...Depend upon it, we know better than to repeal our masculine systems." They did not teach us this in school.

In 1787, the Constitutional Convention placed voting qualifications in the hands of the States. Women who had the right to vote lost, except in New Jersey, this privilege.

How Did This Second-Class Status Start?

The general population believes the Bible has set the standard for women. After all, the snake incident supposedly pointed out Eve's susceptibility to listening to bad advice. But, Adam was there with Eve. **Genesis 3:6-7**, "...she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened,..." The snake deceived **both**. Adam was also punished. **GOD was fair**. Are we? Are Eve's descendants to be condemned by man? Read on!

Myth: Eve's Descendants Are Inferior Women

This absolute nonsense resulted in loss of rights or trials by ordeal:

Numbers 5:11-23. Jealous husband suspects wife unfaithful. No proof needed. Wife forced to drink hot water, dirt from the Temple floor mixed with ink from the indictment. Result: At best, stomach pain and distress. The man is not tested.

I Cor. 14:35, "For it is shameful for a woman to speak in the Church."

What Did Jesus Say?

Gal. 3:28, "...there is no longer male and female; ...you are one in Christ Jesus."

Remember This:

There are more women enrolled in colleges than males. They occupy executive positions. I have worked, almost eleven years, for a Lady Hospital Administrator. Her professional knowledge rivaled any man. They are not inferiors, but, are valuable partners if we accept them. Jesus said women are our equals.

Who wants to dispute HIM?

Back to the Future

How does a church grow? How does the church not only grow, but how do the people also grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ? These questions have been around for as long as the church, but for quite some time the church hasn't been growing, it has been in decline.

Nationally, church rolls have been thinning since the 1960s and one has to ask the question why? There are many answers to this question and I'm not going to detail them here, but rather I'm going to focus in one area in particular; the church has forgotten to really love one another. It's that simple and I would like to say that I've been above all of that, but that wouldn't be the truth. All of us have allowed our petty grievances to get the best of us and this has given rise to anger, resentment and what can best be described as ministerial tribalism. In other words; we've become like the world we live in and have nothing special to offer anyone.

In chapter 13 of John's Gospel there is this golden nugget from our Savior:

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

I truly believe that this is to be our first witness to those who are not followers of Christ and is the key to the success and explosive growth of the early church. The love that they had for one another must have been infectious to the world around them. Those small cells of believers gathering in homes must have appeared as a warm haven or safe sanctuary to the non believers within the communities in which they lived. Those early disciples cared for one another by lifting each other up and encouraging their brothers and sisters to live victorious lives in Christ and the historical record shows how effective they were at transforming their world. Within 300 years a small group of about two hundred people had grown to millions and the church was everywhere.

I've had a fascination with the early church for some time mainly because its early growth really can't be attributed to an institution; just small cells of people gathering and sharing the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ by demonstration and word.

Within our heritage as Methodists we have a similar story. Methodism grew from a small group of people to become the religious force of the 19th Century. The primary reason for this incredible growth can be attributed to the Methodist Class Meeting. The Class Meeting was not really a bible study or a social gathering. Wesley referred to it as a "means of grace" and it was a gathering that allowed people to share their burdens, build one another up, practice forgiveness and work out one's faith within a group. It appears that John Wesley too was fascinated with the early church.

For the past decade there have been many books written about "Small Groups" as a means of evangelism and church growth and the history of the church universal gives credence to this idea. Small groups, church cells or Class Meetings are an excellent place for recognizing gifts, building up and training leadership as the church moves forward. They also foster a warm and loving environment where the new believer can find others who will disciple him/ her. It's also a non threatening place where a non believer can see the Christian life being lived out among a community of believers.

Starting in January the Evangelism Team will be starting three new groups. We have 3 people who have been led to lead and one of our leaders needs a place to hold the meetings. Maybe you would like to offer your home for an hour once a week or every other week. The vision is to expand the numbers as the year unfolds and to have at least six by January 2014. We'll be having special services once a month to bring the groups together for sharing, prayer and communion. Every other month we hope to provide a meal. If you believe that you are being led to join a group, lead a group or offer your home as a meeting place please contact me or the church office. We'll also be making personal invitations in the upcoming weeks.

Please keep the Evangelism Team in your prayers as we move forward. Pray that we are guided by the Holy Spirit and that our efforts are of Him.

In Christ,
Greg



The Coffee House

at Mantua UMC Welcomes

Friday,
January 18th
7:30pm

Free Admission
Free Coffee, Tea,
Baked Goods!

Donations of Baked Goods
Gratefully Accepted.

Call Maria if you can help.

Psalms 118:22
"The stone which the
builders rejected has become
the head stone of the corner."

National GMC
fan favorite winner
in the 2012 GMC
Power Weekend contest.



Mantua United Methodist Church
201 Mantua Blvd. Mantua, NJ 08051
856-468-2711

Check out www.mantuaumc.org for more info
or email mamakreh@gmail.com

Debbie Middleton will be serving as our new altar flower coordinator beginning in January. Please use the form that is inserted in *The Vine* (or can be found in the Narthex) when ordering flowers for the altar and give or mail that form to Debbie. The cost for ordering is \$12.50 per arrangement, and must be included with your order. Thanks to Debbie for taking on this service.

MANTUA ALTAR FLOWER REQUEST FORM FOR 2013

Given By:

In Memory of:
In Honor of:
Birthday Memorial for:
Or any other wording:

Please indicate if you would like requests continued from year to year.

Cost is \$ 12.50

Checks should be made payable to UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF MANTUA

In case of questions please list your phone number _____

Order forms can be left in the box at church in an envelope marked for Debbie Middleton, or mailed to 115 N. Warren St. Woodbury, NJ. 08096. Phone orders are also acceptable. Please call me (856)848-3543(home). You may also email requests to ocdeb51@verizon.net

WE HAVE OPENINGS THROUGHOUT THE YEARS, SO PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR REQUESTS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE FOR 2013 TO INSURE YOU GET THE DATE YOU WANT!

January and February Acolytes Meetings

January 6	5:30 pm Meeting
January 20	Ice Skating at Hollydell \$9.00 per person—Meet at 2:15 pm, skate from 3-4:15pm
February 3	Superbowl Party—More info coming soon!
February 17	5:30 pm Meeting

Parents: If you could help out by providing refreshments, please let us know which night you can help. Thanks!

Family Promise—Our guests will arrive February 10, 2013. After taking inventory on our sheet supply, we could use some new single sheet sets. They do not have to be brand new, they just need the bottom fitted sheet to have elastic so the sheets will stay in place. If you have any questions, please see Janet Fuhrer. Thanks again for everyone's continued support of this program.

Going Food Shopping? Buy Shop Rite and ACME Gift Cards from MTV before you go and use them like cash. MTV receives 5% of the gift card purchase and gift cards can be donated to Family Promise, Corinthian Cupboard or use them for yourself! Gift Cards are available for purchase between services.

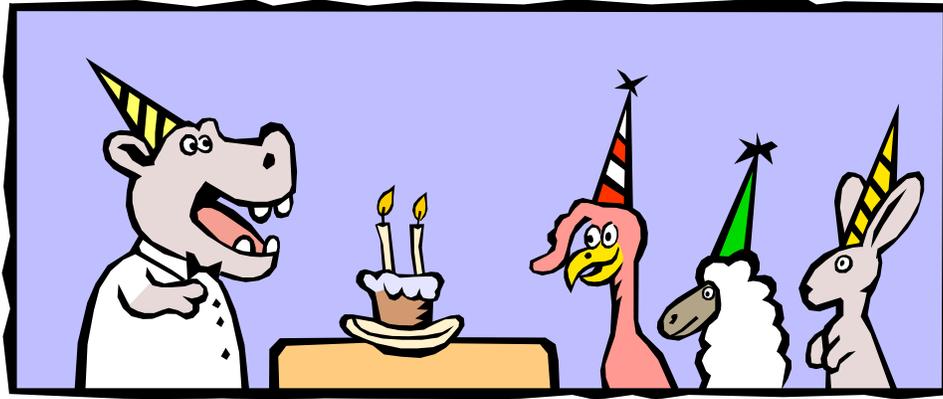
CONFIRMATION

Confirmation is a time for youth to explore whether they would like to accept the vows made on their behalf at baptism for themselves. We share in a time of learning about the church, its beliefs and history, and what it means to be United Methodist. There are trips to a synagogue, to Philly, and to Baltimore. It is for all youth in seventh grade and higher. We will begin meeting on January 10 at 7:00 pm with a meeting for youth and parents who are interested. Please contact the church office if you would like to be a part of the class this year.

Women's Community Bible Study

Women's Community Bible Study led by Pastor Gene Wilkins meets on the second and fourth Tuesdays September through May at the United Methodist Church of Mantua. Starting at 9:30 am for coffee and fellowship, with the study beginning at 10:00 am. Currently, Pastor Gene is leading a study on Biblical miracles. All are welcome. If you have any questions, contact the Church office at 468-2711 or call 468-5549.

HAPPY JANUARY BIRTHDAY!



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|----|---------------------|----|-----------------|----|---------------------|
| 1 | Debra Heston | 13 | Erica Brickner | 26 | Christian Szychoski |
| | Christina Niemczura | 14 | Sarah Reed | 27 | Bob Borgersen |
| | Florence Porter | 15 | Becky Langer | | Mark Durand |
| 3 | Tom Jennings | 16 | Pearl Dickinson | | Lisa Rouh |
| | D.J. Jones | | Delaney Shutman | 28 | Lynn Heiss |
| | Courtney Oudyk | | Beth Wyatt | | Robert Stetser |
| 4 | Gregory Brickner | 17 | Emma Humble | | Margaret Trexler |
| 6 | Corrine Brickner | 19 | Araya Agren | 29 | Darrin Cusano |
| | Lynda Cusano | | Gunnar Fox | | Stephanie Overton |
| 7 | David Fuchs | 20 | Amber Nagtegaal | 31 | Brandi Leach |
| 12 | Paul Brooks | 22 | Chris Donat | | |
| | Carl Kressley | 24 | Muriel Lisle | | |
| | Jill Salvatore | | Laura Scirrotto | | |
| | Marissa Stewart | | | | |

Happy January Anniversary



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|----|---------------------------------------|
| 2 | <i>John & Janet Sfaelos</i> |
| 4 | <i>Mike & Jill Gorman</i> |
| 6 | <i>James & Mary Brickner</i> |
| 9 | <i>David & Nancy Pennell</i> |
| 16 | <i>Darrin & Lynda Cusano</i> |
| 27 | <i>Robert & Michelle Brickner</i> |



Just for Fun!

A little boy opened the big family Bible.
 He was fascinated as he fingered through the old pages.
 Suddenly something fell out of the Bible.
 He picked up the object and looked at it closely.
 What he saw was an old leaf that had been pressed in between the pages.

"Momma, look what I found," the boy called out.

"What have you got there, dear?" his mother asked.

With astonishment in the young boy's voice, he answered: "I think it's Adam's underwear!"

Hurricane Sandy Relief

We are currently collecting the following items to help those effected by Hurricane Sandy Relief:

- NEW winter hats, gloves, scarves and blankets - Please NO other clothing.
- Toilet paper
- Paper towels
- Bottled Water

United Methodist Men

The UMM will be having a meeting on Tuesday, January 22, 2013 at 7:15 pm the meeting is open to all men 18 years and older. All past, present and future members are encouraged to attend. We will be discussing our projects for the future. Refreshments will be served.



 <p>SMITH FUNERAL HOME 47 Main St. Mantua, NJ 08051</p> <p>Robert C. Smith III CFSP, CPC NJ Lic. No. 3161</p> <p>Daniel N. Smith, Sr. Manager NJ Lic. No. 3263</p> <p>Douglas W. Wagner NJ Lic. No. 4378</p> <p>Daniel N. Smith, Jr. NJ Lic. No. 4684</p> <p>Robert C. Smith, Jr. 1921-2003 (856) 468-0670 www.smithfmantua.com <i>Let us answer your questions about funerals, cremations & pre-planning.</i></p>	<p>Shute's Enterprise (856) 456-2675</p> <p>BAT - A - RAMA Rt. 45 & Hazel Avenue Westville, NJ 08093 Indoor Batting Range & Pro Shop Baseball & Softball</p> <p style="text-align: center;">George Arlene</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tuesday - Thursday 10-8 Friday 10-6 • Saturday 9-4</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Aim To Please</i> • Beauty Salon •</p> <p>256-1710 9 North Broadway Pitman, New Jersey 08071</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">PLEASE PATRONIZE OUR ADVERTISERS. THAT'S THE BEST WAY TO THANK THEM!</p> <hr/> <p>Mark W. Nester, D.M.D. Keith G. Wyckoff, D.M.D. Carl K. Wyckoff, III, D.D.S.</p> <p style="font-size: small;">General Dentistry</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; text-align: right;">200 East Mantua Avenue Wenonah, New Jersey 08090 Telephone 856/468-5858 www.southjerseydental.com Fax: 856-468-9098</p>	<p>DUGAN, BRINKMANN, MAGINNIS & PACE</p> <p style="font-size: small;"><i>Dugan, Brinkmann, Maginnis and Pace practices exclusively in civil litigation matters.</i></p> <p style="font-size: x-small;"><i>Our firm is committed to providing aggressive, cost effective, result oriented representation and legal advice consistent with the highest professional standards.</i></p> <p style="font-size: x-small;"><i>For a free consultation, please contact Randy C. Greene, Esq. at 215-563-3500 or rcgreene@abmplaw.com. 33 South Main Street, Mullica Hill, NJ 08062 Tel: 856-223-8600</i></p>
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