

DOWNTOWN PULSE winter 2007; vol.1, issue 1

bringing the heart of the church to the heart of the city



The Christmas Carol

... we're still having our "safe place Bible study" at our home for Christians and non-Christians ... the Epiphany discipleship group was started in

January ... our Home Team is forming ... starting community meetings with a FUMC member to start a KIPP school ... John was elected to the Board of Directors for a non-profit that helps homeless men/women get jobs ... networking with church and city leaders

the beat

to get the full scoop, www.downtownpulse.org

This December, our neighborhood celebrated the fourth annual Christmas Caroling and Chili Cook-off. Each year there is a bigger gathering, as children and neighbors join the singing pilgrims, and eventually we all descend upon the home of Mike and Sarah Brown for some hot chocolate and warm chili. The first year, an elderly neighbor tenderly expressed her gratitude to the carolers. She said she had lived in this neighborhood her whole life, and this was the first time Christmas carols had been sung at her doorstep.

This year, the gang of singers numbered so many that we stopped traffic when we crossed the street. At one house, we began a discordant rendition of "Hark the Herald Angels Sing." A man came to the door with money in his hand. It must have appeared that we were on our way to a Las Posadas party. In keeping with his Mexican tradition, he sang a carol back to us in his native Spanish. He conveyed in Spanish that he has been separated from his family in Mexico for several years. When he heard the singers outside, it was as if God was enveloping his home.



Cecilia Mardock

Another woman came out of a boarding house wrapped in a warm blanket. She stood across the street under a dimly lit light, as the carolers walked by. In a voice barely audible from the other side of the street, she said, "I want to hear a song too." We stopped the growing train of carolers, now numbering near fifty, and sang a beautiful round of "Silent Night" to an audience of one.

To conclude the evening, the frozen huddled masses packed themselves into the Browns' house, and chowed-down on some yummy chili and cornbread. What a beautiful way to proclaim and celebrate the coming of our Lord with our friends and neighbors.



- “I look on all the world as my parish; thus far I mean, that, in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty, to declare unto all that are willing to hear, the glad tidings of salvation.” – John Wesley
- In 1900, 8% of the world’s population lived in cities. Today, the number is over 50%.
- The world is in our cities. Even a small city like Lexington, Kentucky is becoming more multicultural and global. The world has literally come to our parish.

unbelievable

At the beginning of the book of Acts, Jesus has dinner with His disciples. This is more than just a bit unbelievable, because He had been killed just a few days earlier. He had warned them that the crucifixion would happen, and it did. He told them that the crucifixion wouldn’t stop Him, and it didn’t. He was alive and well, and eating. Unbelievable.

At this dinner, He told His disciples that they must continue doing what He had been doing -- healing the sick, restoring status to marginalized people, challenging injustices, loving the “unloveable,” proclaiming to the world that God is healing everything that is broken. They would heal, restore, love, and proclaim with the same power that put life back into His crucified body. Unbelievable.

After seeing unbelievable miracles and receiving an unbelievable mission, the disciples must have been wondering what the first step would be. Jesus tells them that thier first step would be to wait. Unbelievable.

The disciples had to wait for God to equip them with the power of His Spirit. We’ve seen and experienced unbelievable miracles, and have

received an unbelievable mission. While we’ve already experienced the very real power of God’s Spirit, God still tells us to wait. In many ways, the ministry has already started. In other ways, it must wait until the support is fully established.

We now understand that while raising support is humbling, it is also a blessing. It is a time that forces us to wait, while God is continuing to prepare the way in our midst. He has brought together an amazing group of people (you among them) to carry forth this ministry. He is preparing the resources for this ministry. He is preparing us for this ministry. We are being groomed to understand time and time again, that this is much bigger than the two of us, and that God has called a number of people into this ministry together. We have been challenged with our doubt, thinking that we’ll never be able to raise support. God has shown us that it is



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Please contact us if you would like to be added to our monthly email prayer letter.

His money, and He will provide. The amount of generosity and real support that we have received already has created a very authentic feeling that this is God’s ministry, and the rest of us get to join in. The foundation that is being built right now, is being built by our Creator, not us. And so, for now, we wait, expecting the unbelievable.



AROUND THE CORNER

ministry presentation to Lex FUMC congregation

set goals for 5 year strategic plan

fourth annual neighborhood “St. Patrick’s Day Party”

organize FUMC city “field trips” to experience the city

FUMC community roundtables and city coffee talks to explore scripture, Christianity, and issues of the city

urban missionary training in Brazil

