

# Keeping In Touch

A Publication of the Free Methodist Church  
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## A Hopeful New Year

A decade has passed since Y2K already! Who would've imagined in the year 2000 that we'd be facing a decade of an attack on our soil on 9/11 as well as a major financial meltdown in 2008? It is probably a blessing that we don't know the future or we'd worry ourselves into sickness.

There is someone who knows the future, however and it is God. In Proverbs 16:9 the wise sage states, "We can make our plans but the Lord determines our steps" (NLT). Also, through Jeremiah, God promised, "I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not evil, to give you a future and a hope" (29:11/ NKJV).

As we look toward this New Year, here are some things to consider:

Read the Bible and good literature. If you'd like a Scripture reading plan go to [www.Biblegateway.com](http://www.Biblegateway.com) and click on "Reading Plans." Healthy literature and information of all kinds is available in libraries, bookstores and on the internet. John Wesley was so adamant about reading he had his carriage fitted with a bookcase. We can do that today by listening to books and the Bible on tape or CD.

Make prayer the air you breathe. Join a group that prays – really prays, not a group disguised as a gossip club! Perhaps you can start a group that values people as made in God's image and desires above all to see his cherished missing to be found.

Do a kindness each day for someone. It can be

large or small, seen or unseen but ask Jesus to open up opportunities and see what happens! One gentleman asked every guest to

leave their shoes outside the bedroom door and in the morning they would find a polished pair of shoes.

Take breaks as needed to avoid burnout. It isn't noble to push yourself into fatigue and emotional depression by working more than the body and mind can stand. Promise yourself and those you love that you will take time away from the routine for recreation and even solitude to think, pray and evaluate.

Emphasize Wesley's rule: Do no harm; do all the good you can; attend to the means of grace. In other words, try to copy the life of Christ in everything – he is our ultimate example of the holy life.

The coming year will certainly hold for all of us the unexpected and sometimes the unfortunate event. Yet, God is able to make all grace abound toward us that we can face anything in his strength. (2 Corinthians 9:8, Philippians 4:13) Let us place our hope and trust in the One who knows us, loves us and will never leave us. Happy New Year!



Eternal God, thank you for bringing us once again to the threshold of a new year. Help us dedicate each day of 2010 to following your will for our lives. Guide us, Lord, in all our decisions and actions, day by day and hour by hour. Help us accomplish all that you desire for us to do, until our mission on earth is finished. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

**A beautiful story.... makes you understand that things happen for a reason.**

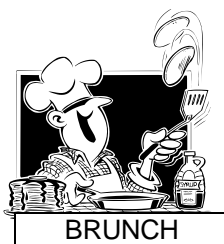
The brand new pastor and his wife, newly assigned to their first ministry, to reopen a church in suburban Brooklyn, arrived in early October excited about their opportunities. When they saw their church, it was very run down and needed much work. They set a goal to have everything done in time to have their first service on Christmas Eve..They worked hard, repairing pews, plastering walls, painting, etc, and on December 18 were ahead of schedule and just about finished. On December 19 a terrible tempest - a driving rainstorm hit the area and lasted for two days. On the 21st, the pastor went over to the church. His heart sank when he saw that the roof had leaked, causing a large area of plaster about 20 feet by 8 feet to fall off the front wall of the sanctuary just behind the pulpit, beginning about head high. The pastor cleaned up the mess on the floor, and not knowing what else to do but postpone the Christmas Eve service, headed home. On the way he noticed that a local business was having a flea market type sale for charity so he stopped in. One of the items was a beautiful, hand ivory colored, crocheted tablecloth with exquisite work, fine colors and a Cross embroidered right in the center. It was just the right size to cover up the hole in the front wall. He bought it and headed back to the church. By this time it had started to snow. An older woman running from the opposite direction was trying to catch the bus.. She missed it. The pastor invited her to wait in the warm church for the next bus 45 minutes later.

She sat in a pew and paid no attention to the pastor while he got a ladder, hangers, etc., to put up the tablecloth as a wall tapestry. The pastor could hardly believe how beautiful it looked and it covered up the entire problem area. Then he noticed the woman walking down the center aisle. Her face was like a sheet. 'Pastor,' she asked, 'where did you get that tablecloth?' The pastor explained. The woman asked him to check the lower right corner to see if the initials, EBG were crocheted into it there. They were. These were the initials of the woman, and she had made this tablecloth 35 years before, in Austria. The woman could hardly believe it as the pastor told how he had just gotten the Tablecloth. The woman explained that before the war she and her husband were well-to-do people in Austria. When the Nazis came, she was forced to leave. Her husband was going to follow her the next week.. He was captured, sent to prison and she never saw her husband or her home again.

The pastor wanted to give her the tablecloth; but she made the pastor keep it for the church. The pastor insisted on driving her home, that was the least he could do.. She lived on the other side of Staten Island and was only in Brooklyn for the day for a housecleaning job.

What a wonderful service they had on Christmas Eve. The church was almost full. The music and the spirit were great. At the end of the service, the pastor and his wife greeted everyone at the door and many said that they would return. One older man, whom the pastor recognized from the neighborhood continued to sit in one of the pews and stare, and the pastor wondered why he wasn't leaving. The man asked him where he got the tablecloth on the front wall because it was identical to one that his wife had made years ago when they lived in Austria before the war and how could there be two tablecloths so much alike. He told the pastor how the Nazis came, how he forced his wife to flee for her safety and he was supposed to follow her, but he was arrested and put in a prison.. He never saw his wife or his home again all the 35 years in between. The pastor asked him if he would allow him to take him for a little ride. They drove to Staten Island and to the same house where the pastor had taken the woman three days earlier.

He helped the man climb the three flights of stairs to the woman's apartment, knocked on the door and he saw the greatest Christmas reunion he could ever imagine.




**Brunch Buffet**  
**Saturday,**  
**February 6, 2010**  
**8 AM—11 AM**  
**Free Methodist Church**

Adults \$7.00  
 Age 6 - 11 \$3.00  
 Under 6 free

**Invite your family,**  
**Friends & neighbors.**  
**Enjoy good food and**

<b>MENU</b>	
French toast - hotcakes	
sausage - scrambled eggs	
stewed apples - home fries -	
toast - breakfast casserole	
biscuits'n sausage gravy	
meat loaf - potato casserole	
fresh fruit - assorted pastries	
strawberry shortcake	
juices - coffee - tea	



**"Crusaders Fellowship"**  
**Adults of all ages welcome**  
**Tuesday, February 2, 2010**  
**10:30 AM**  
**In the Fellowship Hall**

## A winning pattern for the New Year

Some anonymous wise person penned the following directions for living without bringing pain to others or oneself:

"You will never be sorry — for thinking before acting, for hearing before judging, for forgiving your enemies, for being candid and frank, for helping a fallen brother, for being honest in business, for thinking before speaking, for being loyal to God and the church, for standing by your principles, for refusing to participate in gossip, for holding your words when tempted to demean another, for not entertaining impure or hateful thoughts, for sympathizing with the afflicted, for being courteous and kind to all."

## What are the grown-ups doing?



A little girl interrupted her teacher, wanting permission to ask a question.

"Certainly," the teacher responded.

"Well," the child said, "you keep talking about the children of Israel. The children of Israel crossed the Red Sea. The children of Israel built the temple. The children of Israel did this and did that. Didn't the grown-ups ever do anything?"

Questions: What are we grown-ups doing to show that we are faithful children of God today? What is our mission? What is our calling? What does the Lord require of us to prove that we are God's loving and serving children today?

## The old family Bible

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. What he held in his hand was an old leaf that had been pressed in between the pages.

"Mama, look what I found!" the boy called out.

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

The young boy answered in a voice hushed with awe, "I think it's Adam's underwear."



### Youth oriented worship service

Sunday evening

January 17th 6:30 PM

Everyone is welcome!





## Life or death? Or life or life?

Economically speaking, 2009 was a dreadful year for many families around the world. Some lost homes, cars and jobs. Many are unable to fund college educations for their children, and bank accounts have dwindled. What will 2010 bring: movement toward less of everything or toward a more hopeful future?

Here's a good resolution to make: "Our family will pay close attention to our income, our savings and our necessary purchases. We will keep a record of every dollar spent and every dollar saved."

Money accumulated, invested and given wisely will bring peace of mind and the ability to contribute more to the church and people in need. Families must develop a healthy attitude toward money. Scripture doesn't condemn money; it simply warns against loving it or making it an idol (1 Timothy 6:10)

With God as our mentor, nearly every family can avoid having crushing debt. Wise stewardship brings relief and unbridled joy to those who practice it. As economist George Humphrey said, "I don't think you can spend yourself rich."

An oncologist was asked if he had seen a difference between Christian and nonreligious patients who were dying of cancer. The doctor replied that those who took their faith seriously didn't fear death as much as those who had little or no faith. For the Christians it was not a life or death matter, but a life or life situation.

The reason, of course, was that Christians saw their physical demise as merely preparation for the next life – eternal life with the Lord.

According to the doctor, most Christian patients came to terms with their condition sooner than other patients did. That acceptance freed them to enjoy family members and close friends during the time that was left.

One sick man, facing death, said to his pastor, "I am well. I feel blessed and at peace. The cancer is in my body, but it isn't in my soul."



For 2010 try reading the Book of books. For a Bible reading plan go to [www.Biblegateway.com](http://www.Biblegateway.com) and click on "Reading Plans." It will do a soul some good.