

## A Note from Pastor Brian

As you know, our beautiful Sanctuary, Fellowship Hall, offices, kitchen, and all upstairs classrooms were destroyed by fire on the night of November 20th. Despite the destruction to the building, what has not been destroyed is the resilience and character of David Haas Memorial United Methodist Church. While the mourning of the building will continue for some time, we have been everything but a paralyzed and defeated Church. I want to thank all of you for your willingness to go forward despite the loss and the encouragement you are extending to one another and to me. There was a time when I thought David Haas UMC's best days might have been in the past, but I am encouraged about what lies ahead. We serve an awesome God and, despite this tragedy, I believe he is working in and through us to minister to the Bunkie community.

I want to thank Leodocia Pope for hosting our gathering on Wed, Nov. 23rd at her home and I want to thank all of you for coming and sharing stories about our church. What really intrigued me was that while we were supposed to be sharing stories about the building, almost all the memories shared had the true church, the people, as the primary emphasis of what made the memory special. I also want to thank all of you for coming to our combined service at Evergreen. Again the feeling of togetherness was so evident in that service as well. I hope you found encouragement in having our District Superintendent and Bishop join us for worship. Empowered by the Holy Spirit we will continue our quest to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world!



Remembrance Meeting at Leodocia Popes. Photo by: Angell Duplechain

## Fire Investigation

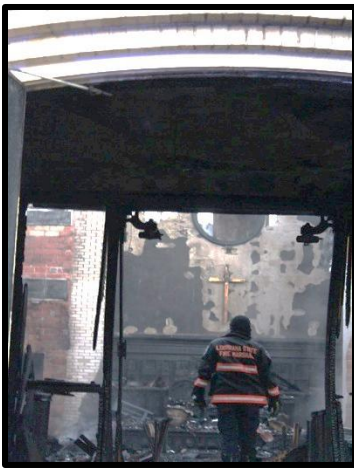


Photo by: Angell Duplechain

The State Fire Marshall's Office and the Insurance Company's own investigation have been completed. While the official reports have not been released, we were told by both parties that the cause of the fire seems to be electrical in nature and started in the attic. Again I want to commend the Bunkie and neighboring fire departments for their hard work in saving what they did, namely the parsonage and education building. Basically all the classrooms that are upstairs were destroyed either directly by fire or the falling of burning material from the attic. The Sanctuary is totally destroyed. Most of the downstairs was destroyed by water damage as a result of extinguishing the roof. However, almost all of the current church records are intact and all information has been recovered from the computer systems. There have been some artifacts and other items recovered that were virtually unharmed and some that were harmed but may be able to be recovered. Of course many items were consumed or are otherwise unrecoverable. I want to thank those who have come and helped with the recovery, cleaning, and moving of so many items.

## Move Back on Campus

The Trustees decided early on that we wanted to be back on campus here in Bunkie as soon as possible. So last Monday we met with a contractor to begin the work of turning our current Education Building into a worship space. Work began immediately. The small children's bathroom, closet, and kitchenette have been removed along with the partitioning walls to make a larger space for worship on the parsonage side of the building. A small office was partitioned off in the area as well. The choir room, library, and rest rooms will remain as they are. Electrical power, gas, water, and sewer service has already been restored to the building. Walls will be refinished and painted, new carpet will be added, and curtains for the windows are planned as well. The plan is to use existing furnishings to decorate the new space and buy only necessary items that we do not have. Our desire and expectation is to be in the building as soon as possible, but hopefully no later than Christmas weekend.

# Calendar of Events

<b>Sun Dec 4</b>	3:30pm - 4:30pm	Because of Bethlehem Advent Study - Leodocia Pope Home
<b>Tue Dec 6</b>	10:00am – 11:00am	Bayou Vista Nursing Home Ministry
	2:30pm – 3:30pm	Service at Bailey Place - Bailey Place
<b>Wed Dec 7</b>	5:00pm – 6:30pm	Choir Practice
<b>Sat Dec 10</b>	10:30am – 11:30am	Christmas Caroling at Bailey Place - Bailey Place
<b>Sun Dec 11</b>	3:30pm – 4:30pm	Because of Bethlehem Advent Study - Leodocia Pope Home
<b>Mon Dec 12</b>	6:30pm – 8:00pm	Venture Crew, Boy Scouts, UMYF Christmas Party - TBD
<b>Tue Dec 13</b>	11:30am – 12:30pm	Women's Fellowship at Rocky's - Rocky's
	4:30pm – 5:30pm	Finance Team Meeting - TBD
<b>Fri Dec 16</b>	6:30pm – 7:30pm	Choir (churchwide) Christmas Party - Home of Leodocia Pope
<b>Sun Dec 18</b>	3:30pm – 4:30pm	Because of Bethlehem Advent Study - Leodocia Pope Home
<b>Tue Dec 20</b>	10:00am – 11:00am	Bayou Vista Nursing Home Ministry
<b>Wed Dec 21</b>	5:00pm – 6:30pm	Choir Practice
<b>Sun Dec 25</b>	5:00pm – 6:00pm	Deadline for Newsletter Articles

## Personnel Change

We regret that Lucrecia Mouser will be stepping down from her paid position as Publications Coordinator at the end of the year. Lucrecia has done a wonderful job for us but with the reduction in some of her duties due to the fire she felt that the church would be better served using her compensation to meet other needs. Thanks Lucrecia for all you have done and we do hope you will continue to serve and use your talents in a voluntary roll.

# Plans for Rebuilding

At this time we are working with our insurance company, a local contractor, and structural engineers to ascertain the best avenue to rebuild. We first have to determine if the existing walls are safe to rebuild on and, if they are, what is the feasibility to doing so. The building and contents were insured but we are relatively sure that the insurance benefit will not cover tearing down the existing structure completely and building the exact same building on site. But again, that may not be necessary if the existing walls are structurally sound. We are committed to rebuilding a church building to be used by the David Haas Memorial United Methodist Church at our current location. We will keep the congregation informed as we find out further information.

## Ministry Opportunities

Rebuilding is not the only thing that is going on at DHMUMC. Methodist Children's Home envelopes have been distributed for those who are led to support this important ministry in our Conference. Our Bayou Vista Ministry meets on Tuesday, Dec. 6th from 10 to 11 am. We will be holding our monthly worship service at Bailey Place this Tuesday (Dec. 6th) at 2:30. All are invited to come worship with us and possibly see some old friends. We have another opportunity to minister at Bailey Place the same week. On Saturday, Dec. 10th we will meet at 10:30 to sing some Christmas Carols with the residents as part of Bailey Place's Open House. Even if you don't sing in the choir and even if you don't sing real well, we invite you to come participate in this fun activity. Fun (and food) is also planned for our annual Choir/Church Christmas Party at 6:30 pm on Friday, Dec. 16th at Leodocia Pope's home. All are invited. Spiritual nourishment can also be found at the home of Leodocia Pope on Sunday afternoons in Advent at 3:30pm in our Advent Bible Study, *Because of Bethlehem*. Even if you have to miss one of the studies please plan to attend when you can. We will be holding our annual Christmas Eve Service somewhere on Dec. 24th at 5:00 pm, hopefully in the new worship space in the educational building.



**GoFundMe**

Some people have asked how they could help during this trying time. If they would like to help financially they can visit the GoFundMe site or send a check directly to the church. A page with the news stories about the fire can be found on the website ([davidhaasumc.org](http://davidhaasumc.org)).