



***United Methodist Church of the Dunes***

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**Red Bird Mission in Kentucky Will Bring and Display Authentic Handmade Appalachian Arts and Crafts For Fundraiser at United Methodist Church of the Dunes August 13-14**

**GRAND HAVEN, Mich., June 7, 2011** – One-of-a-kind, handmade Appalachian arts and crafts “made the old-fashioned way” by artisans who have passed down carving, painting, candle-making, craft-making, sewing and weaving skills from generation-to-generation in Kentucky will be featured at an upcoming Red Bird Mission fundraising event at United Methodist Church of the Dunes (UMC-Dunes) on August 13 and 14.

UMC-Dunes is located at 717 Sheldon Road in Grand Haven. The event will be held Saturday, August 13 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Sunday, August 14 from 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. The general public is invited and encouraged to attend the Red Bird Mission fundraiser.

Of special interest at the event are the many crafts made within an 80-mile radius of the Kentucky Red Bird Mission, in the heart of Appalachian country. Baskets made from honeysuckle vines and creek willows are a highlight. They are crafted as part of family traditions that were originally developed in an age when self-sufficiency was necessary in the isolated Kentucky mountains.

Another native art represented will be colorful woven and braided rugs, made entirely using scrap and upholstery materials. Handmade dolls, each with different features, will also be a highlight at the event. Also on display will be corn-shuck items that include a variety of authentic flowers. Plus, pottery, unscented and hand-crafted beeswax candles, jewelry, jams, jellies, note cards, history books, special recipe books, hand-painted gourds, woven place mats, and handmade brooms for use or decoration.

An assortment of wooden crafts honed into toys, games, utensils, cutting boards, cooking racks and furniture will showcase carving skills by the artisans. In addition, wood and cloth Christmas ornaments plus an assortment of nativity sets in colorful shades will be on display and available for purchase.

All proceeds generated from the event will benefit the Mission’s Faith Fund, which improves general living conditions for the underserved throughout Appalachia. The fund provides for home repairs, training for children needing a healthy start in life, feeding the hungry, and caring for the elderly with dignity and Christian joy.

“Red Bird Mission is celebrating 90 years of ministry established through the Faith Fund of the church women and we are so very pleased they are choosing to travel here to Grand Haven to display and sell their amazing and very unique arts and crafts,” said Vicki Reis, director of UMC-Dunes’ Mission Committee.

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Red Bird Mission is located in the southeastern Kentucky mountains. It is an agency of Red Bird Missionary Conference, which is part of the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church. The Mission has a school, medical center, community outreach, community housing improvement, and economic opportunities.

“By providing a market for Kentucky artisans, the craft program is a vital part of economic development,” said Vicki Reis, adding, “This source of income is important in an area where there is fifty percent unemployment.”

The United Methodist Church of the Dunes’ Commission on Missions and Social Concerns is sponsoring the event and assisting in every aspect of the display set-up. Vicki Reis serves as chairwoman for the event, with a committee of numerous mission volunteers.

UMC-Dunes has designated the entire weekend of August 13 & 14 as “missions weekend” at the church. The church’s mission members, along with Red Bird Mission representatives from Kentucky will be conducting both Sunday worship services at 8:30 and 10:15 a.m. at UMC-Dunes. The general public is welcome to attend.

Anyone interested in receiving further information about the event should contact UMC-Dunes at: 616/842-7980.

The purpose of the Red Bird Mission is to empower individuals and advocate justice by providing spiritual, educational, health and community outreach ministries.

The mission of the UMC-Dunes is “to be a church with outstretched arms demonstrating the caring of Christ to each other, the community, and the world by encouraging growth in grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, challenging and equipping all to be faithful disciples for the transformation of the world.”

Founded in 1873, UMC-Dunes moved to its present location at 717 Sheldon Road, Grand Haven in February 1962. The church provides a variety of community outreach ministries to women, children, men and families in the area, supports Family Promise and the annual CROP Walk, offers membership in its United Methodist Men and United Methodist Women groups, plus book and Bible studies, a weekly creative arts and crafts group, participation in Coast Guard Festival, plus Christian service projects to ministries in Panama and Haiti. Children’s, youth and adult educational programs, book study groups, arts and crafts groups, plus weekly Wednesday evening dinners are provided throughout the year. For further information about UMC-Dunes or church membership, contact the church’s administrative office at 616/842-7980.

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