



JANUARY 2009

MLK PARADE WITH AGAPE

We are excited to announce that First Church will be participating in the MLK Parade at 10:00 am on January 19. Guess what? We need you to join us! The Bible says, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven (Matthew 5:16). First Church, this is an opportunity to do just that! In addition, we will be marching with our friends from Agape Bible Fellowship. You can sign up to walk in the parade after all three services starting today, January 4. You can also sign up before the 11:00 am service in the Narthex.

ALCOTT ELEMENTARY

On Tuesday, November 18, Sally Stewart, a volunteer at our partner school Alcott Elementary, was given a special award at the Student Council-led awards assembly. After the teachers handed out awards for perfect attendance and honor roll, Sally was presented a mantel clock by her "Little Sister" Lynesha Altenour and counselor Lucile Thierry. Sally was thanked for the many precious moments she has given to Alcott Elementary. In addition to being a "Big Sister," Sally was responsible for bringing author Michael Wallis to the school. Students and teachers were thrilled to meet the famous author who was the voice of the sheriff in the animated Disney film, *Cars*. To find out more about volunteering at Alcott, talk to Sally.

BOOK OF THE MONTH

Resident Aliens

By Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon
(Chosen by Rev. Ryan Moore)

"A provocative Christian assessment of culture and ministry for people who know that something is wrong"

Co-authors of this book are Stanley Hauerwas professor of theological ethics at Duke Divinity School and William H. Willimon bishop of the Southwest Alabama Conference of the United Methodist Church.

The purpose of *Resident Aliens* is to show how the Christian church loses its moral compass when it does not follow a model based on the life of Jesus Christ thereby becoming more and more accommodative to the ways of a secular world.

These difficulties in the church are outlined from Constantine to the Enlightenment right up through our present day. The church from time to time or from place to place may develop a "conservative" or "liberal" bias; however, the authors believe that what is more important is the church's failure to learn from the example of Christ's personal relationship with his people as revealed in scripture. The theological linchpin of their argument is the Sermon on the Mount. Christian ethics is not about being a fundamentalist or rationalist but, according to the authors, it is about following a dusty footed Jewish teacher as He, God, encountered His people some 2000 years ago.

The final part of the book describes the frustration and burn out that many Christians experience in a somewhat lonely life of faithful Christian witness.

Reviewed by William E. Diggs