July 30, 2009

To:

Subject: Sexual Education Training

I was watching the news last night and the new teen pregnancy rate just came out. Arkansas ranked 47th out of 50 states in the number of teenage pregnancies. By the official records available

* 42.2 % of all students are sexually active in this state, (10.9 % of Elementary, 55.5 % of Middle school and 79 % of Senior High School students)
* 48.6 % of all students of sexually active students in this state become pregnant, (14.3% of Elementary, 66.7 % of Middle school and 82.8 % of Senior High School students)
* 19% of all students have had 4 or more sex partners and 41 % are not using any form of protection against pregnancy or STD and STI infections.
* In the United States there are 750,000 teen age pregnancies annually and in Arkansas there are 8,980. And our county has as high a percentage of these as any other in the state.

Several weeks ago several of my parents came to me and asked if I could pull together something on Sexual education for the cities High School and Jr High students. I checked and found one person that was willing to present this at a cost of $ 650.00. That is more than we can afford although I wish it wasn’t. That being the case I have run thru all of the curriculums available on the subject and have come up with the best that I can find called Love, Sex and God. I am right now developing a two part seminar on this subject. I have asked a nurse practitioner and the county health department to assist in this seminar and they are excited to be doing it. I have checked the football and basketball schedules and find that the best time open will be November 13 and 14. We will begin the seminar with STI and Contraception by the county health department on Friday evening. And continue with the subjects of Sex and Sexuality, What the Bible Says about Sex, Feelings / Decision Morals / Ethics and Physiology then end the seminar with a frank Question and answer period. We expect to finish about 5:30 that evening.

I am writing to you, to help you get behind this seminar, promote it, talk it up with your youth ages 13 – 18, and fully support this effort if possible. If you would like to preview what is being said and shown I will gladly work to show you the direction I am headed.

We will need the help of some credible adults to be small group leaders and some help with the lunch and snacks for breaks we will need to provide. If I purchase books they will cost about $ 11.00 each and this will be the only expense for the seminar, and this can be waived in extreme circumstances.

If you have any questions please call me at 256-3757.

Peace and grace to you.

Michael W. Topham

Pastor, Des Arc First United Methodist Church