August 10, 2009

Subject: Love Sex and God Rally for Youth

To: Concerned Community Leaders of Des Arc and surrounding Communities

Subject: Sexual Education Training for youth

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 Sr. High School and Jr. High School students. I have already contacted the other pastors in town to solicit their support and the support of the schools and also the support of the local health department. Together we are coming up to provide a Sexual Education training for all 13 – 18 year olds in the area. It will be based upon a book called Love, Sex and Godby Bill Ameiss and Jane Graver. I am right now developing the seminar on this subject and have asked a nurse practitioner from Des Arc and the Prairie 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.

The reason I am writing to you is that we need a “draw” to insure more kids will attend and as such we would like to provide “door prizes” for the students in attendance. If you or your company or business could either supply a prize that might appeal to this age group, or if you could provide a donation so that we can go purchase some it would be appreciated. We will try to insure that all donations be acknowledged appropriately. Thank you.

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