

Good News!

The newsletter of the Memorial United Methodist Church of Clovis

March 2003

2004 ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN FRESNO

The Annual California Nevada Conference session of the United Methodist Church will be held here in Fresno in June of 2004 at the convention center. We will need many local volunteers to host generally over 1200 people on the floor plus volunteers, including over 400 lay members plus clergy who will be in attendance. This will be a wonderful opportunity for us to participate in the worship services, including conference Sunday and special inspirational evening events of the conference, and to witness the legislative work of the members on the conference floor from the visitor's section.

Volunteers are needed for manning registration tables, setting up display tables, arranging meals for groups, serving as pages (who distribute materials during plenary sessions) on the floor of the conference etc. Let Jean Hill or Max Cannon, our Lay Members, or Pastor Denice know if you would like to help. District Superintendent Vickie Healy is coordinating our organization of local volunteers.

CALIFORNIA DREAMIN' ON A SUMMERS DAY! CAMPING AT PISMO BEACH ANYONE?

No, not in the middle of winter—some balmy summer day! If that sounds pleasant to you, share your interest with Roger Pachelbell. We're making plans!

SNOWFLAKE DESIGNS AWARDED FAMILY BUSINESS AWARD

Congratulations to La Donna Snow, proprietor of Snowflake Designs for receiving the Family Business of the Year Award for 2003. The award is based not only on the success of the business, which makes gymnastic leotards, but for their outreach to employees with special needs. Snowflake Design regularly hires through the Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministry and through the Marjorie Mason Center. La Donna and her husband Rick minister to the needs of women who are often emerging from abusive relationships and who are starting over in their lives. It's their ministry!

MINISTRY OPENING IN FELLOWSHIP ACTIVITIES

Would you enjoy coordinating fellowship events for the congregation? Events such as an evening potluck, the Advent Dinner, Fat Tuesday/Ash Wednesday Dinner, a church picnic, etc.? If so please speak with Pastor Denice. We have the position of Fellowship Activities Coordinator open for 2003.

LEADERSHIP SPIRITUAL RETREAT

Keep our leadership in prayer as they retreat for a special day of spiritual enrichment after the manner of St. Francis of Assisi here at church on Saturday, March 15 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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Congregational Life

News of the church life and the groups that meet for fellowship and support.

"For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." Matthew 18:30

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Board Meeting – March 3, 9 a.m., Library
Regular Meeting – March 18, 10 am, Social Hall
Speaker: Miss Moala Hingano from Sanger Methodist Church. She will talk on how the youth built a library in Tonga. Luncheon following. Bring your own table service. Bring a small, soft, stuffed toy to give to Sierra Villa people for spring.

Red Bird Circle – March 12, 9:30 a.m. Library
Wesley Group – March 26, 1 p.m., Social Hall

CHURCH WOMEN UNITED

Church Women United is offering scholarships for \$500 to high school Seniors and college-level students. Check forms in office for details. Deadline is April 15, 2003. For more information, contact Loretta White.

ATTENTION: METHODIST WOMEN

A great weekend for renewal, inspiration, and fellowship at 3 Rivers Retreat
March 7-8-9, 2003
\$125
Partial scholarship available
Forms in office
See you there!

UNITED METHODIST MEN NEWS

Be sure to attend the UMM Breakfast on March 1 in the social hall. We're having a special speaker from the City of Clovis. It will be a 20-minute Power Point presentation about various aspects of growth and other activities that are taking place here in Clovis. Don't miss it. The breakfast starts at 8 a.m. Bring a friend.

PASTOR DENICE ADDRESSES UMM FELLOWSHIP MEETING

Pastor Denice Leslie was the special speaker for the United Methodist Men's breakfast fellowship meeting on Saturday, February 1. She spoke about practicing spiritual disciplines, especially nurturing areas of spirituality one is weakest, and provided plenty of written materials to chew on in the days to come. She encouraged the men present to start regular Bible study, personal prayer life, and covenant groups, like the T-Quest. UMM is grateful to Pastor Denice for her valuable instruction at this time as we are about to enter the season of Lent.

UMM meeting approved a recommendation from the Executive Committee to fund mission projects in the church's 2003 budget, up to a maximum amount of \$500.00. The projects to be funded will be determined later.

Funding mission projects is in addition to "in-kind donations" United Methodist Men contributes every year. During 2002, UMM paid for various facility needs at our church, like repair of appliances, cutting off tree branches, etc—for a total of \$1382.20. The primary source of UMM funds is the proceeds from recycling donated newspapers, cans, etc. We are grateful to Max Cannon and his associates who haul these discards to recycling center month after month, converting them to cash to be used for kingdom purposes, while promoting recycling to tend to God's creation.

Men's breakfast fellowship meetings are held, unless otherwise announced, in the Social Hall at 8:00AM on the first Saturday of the month. A home cooked breakfast with all-you-can-drink coffee is served for \$3.00. It is a great time to get to know fellow church members and be encouraged and strengthened in your Christian walk. All men in the church are invited. Next two monthly meetings will be on Saturdays, March 1 and April 5.

JOIN THE BOUTIQUE GROUP

Who? Anyone who likes to craft, sew, quilt, crochet, or knit, ANY kind of crafting.

WHAT? Do your own thing or participate in group projects.

HOW? We offer instruction, patterns, ideas, encouragement, materials, and Friendship.

WHEN? 9:00-11:30* Come every Wednesday or as often as you can. *(We turn into the "out to Lunch Bunch" at 11:30).

WHERE? Church Social Hall

WHY? To make articles to sell at the annual November boutique, a major fund-raiser for MUMC.

We would LOVE to have you.

For information, call Barbara Nielsen or Bev Daly.

"WHAT WOULD I BE GETTING MYSELF INTO IF I VOLUNTEERED AT THE THRIFT SHOP?"

When? # 1. 1 or 2 Tuesday mornings a month for 3 hrs, more or less.

Doing what? unpacking and tagging donations.
AND/OR

#2. 1st Friday of the month, morning or afternoon for 3 1/2 hrs.

or the Saturday following, morning or afternoon for 3 1/2 hrs.

Doing what? bagging customer's purchases or just being on hand in the shop.

OR

#3. Any of the above, part-time fill-ins, when regular workers are on vacation or ill.

Thank you.

-Bev Daly

THRIFT SHOP NEWS by Bev Daly

We did \$719. during the last 'Open Days.' The next work days will be March 25 and April 1, 8:30 am. Join us if you can. The board has voted to make a beginning pledge of \$1000. to the Social Hall rug fund. We will make another pledge later, depending on our income. Come in and check out our new lights and changes

MARGARETE HUDSON STATUES GRACE PRAYER GARDENS

Have you noticed the lovely Margaret Hudson statues nestled into the sanctuary prayer gardens? They have been given in loving memory of Nellie Wamsley through the memorial gifts of her friends and family. We thank Donna Wamsley and the family for such thoughtful contributions to our prayer gardens.

DONATIONS-IN-KIND

In addition to the generous cash contributions that our members gave in 2002, we were blessed with numerous donations-in-kind which helped keep our church facility and programs running. The United Methodist Men trimmed \$900 from landscaping costs for the church by paying for tree pruning services. The men's group and individual members also provided over \$650 in building maintenance. Members contributed over \$760 toward items to beautify our worship services, keep our thrift store functioning efficiently and provide supplies and staples for our kitchen. The library, evangelism, finance, Growing Our Spiritual Family, music, Sunday school, office equipment, Micah ministries, congregational care, and United Methodist Men also benefited from items donated by caring individuals. The total recorded donation of in-kind items exceeds \$3,100, but there are countless other donations from those given to the thrift store and the boutique through coffee hour goodies through computers and even pens for the office which help our church carry out its mission.

To all fellow members of the Clovis United Methodist Church,

My name is Mariamma K. Mathai. For the last two years I have been worshipping with you. My family and I were transferred from St. Luke United Methodist Church of Fresno. I have become a Church Council member for the year 2003 and I just had the orientation with other members of the council on January 8, 2003. I am a member-at-large, representing all the members of the church. The purpose of this letter is to request your prayers for me and for all the elected leaders of our church. Below is a suggestion to follow:

Personal Needs

Humility: Ask God to give your leaders true humility, which includes having a servant's heart, being teachable, admitting wrongdoing, being willing to receive positive criticism, and reliance in God.

Wisdom to know God's Agenda: Pray that your leaders remain sensitive to God's leading, and that we will live and work according to God's priorities.

Positive Relationships: Ask God to help your leaders be patient with themselves and others, to interact positively with difficult people in the congregation, and to treat everyone with love and respect.

Spirit-filled Life: Pray that your leaders will have love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Family Needs: The demands of ministry can take a toll on the family life. Pray that your leaders would make family his/her top God given priority.

Provision for the families' needs: Ask God that they will be blessed with good health and material resources so that joyfully they can serve the Lord.

Spiritual Needs: Time alone with God: To be anointed by the power of the Holy Spirit, the leaders need to spend time with God by praying and studying Scripture. Pray that your leaders will put on the full armor of God, as listed in Ephesians 6:10-18, and that they will be given protection from the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the price of life (1 John 2:16).

Congregational Needs: Especially for the Pastor. Pray that your pastor will have a heart for the lost and that she will make evangelism a priority. Pray that your pastor will continue to grow in her spiritual life so that she can equip the congregation to grow and develop into a mature Christian life.

Let me hear from you about your concerns and prayer needs. I look forward to serving you.



SPIRITUAL LIFE RESOURCE SALE

This month we are planning a sale of books and other resources for nourishing our spiritual journeys from the Upper Room. The sale will be on a Sunday after worship. Watch for more information in the bulletin insert. Consider giving yourself or someone else a special Easter gift! We have two volunteers to help with the sale. If you would like to help, please speak with Pastor Denice.

JANUARY INCOME

Our total income for January was \$17,142.61. This includes about \$1,100 given for designated purposes such as the Pendergrass Memorial fountain upkeep, youth activities and building repairs. Income received for our budget is at about 92% of the anticipated amount. We are still receiving new pledges, which are augmenting under funded programs.

Care Ministries
Giving Special Care to Others

JOIN THE SPECIAL FRIENDS TEAM

Our mission is to offer Christian care giving to those in crisis or with special needs. We do this by prayer, visiting, telephoning, and sending cards. We have become a channel for our Sunday School supplying original cheer cards and little gifts for the shut-ins. If you think God may be nudging you to join us, please call me. We meet on the third Wednesday at 2 p.m. in the Lose Library (Feb. 19 and March 19).

- *Rev. Laurence Hill*

NEED A RIDE?

Clovis Roundup bus service is available on Sundays to bring you to church. You must call 324-2760 by 5:00 p.m. on Friday for your reservation. The one-way cost is only \$1

OPPORTUNITIES TO GIVE CHRISTIAN CARE:

1. SPECIAL FRIENDS. This is our own program for offering caring through visiting, telephoning and cards to members and friends in particular need. We also deliver gifts and cards made by our Sunday School children. We need people to join us by contacting me, Laurie Hill. The Special Friends Team meets on the second Tuesday (March 19) at 2:00 in the Library.
2. ST. AGNES HOSPITAL "Foundations in Health Ministry and Pastoral Care" course on Saturdays March 15 & 29 for 9 hours each. Graduates may serve in our parish, community or hospitals. \$40.00. Limit 30. Call St. Agnes @450-3227. Info on our office Bulletin Board.
3. KAISER PERMANENTE PROGRAM "spiritual Care Volunteers". Visit 2-4 hours per week. Free training. Info on our office bulletin board. Call Chaplain Ren Adama.

DIRECTORY UPDATES AVAILABLE- PHOTO DIRECTORY TASK FORCE NEEDED

You will find directory updates in the church lobby or on the counter in the church office. Our pictorial directory is no longer current. We have so many new folks who are not in the directory we need a new one. We need volunteers to serve on a task force for a new directory. Please speak with Kayte Van DeMark, our Communications officer, if you are interested.

Micah Ministries

Local & World Missions

"What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

(Micah 6:6)

Worship Ministry

News from the teams that support the Sunday worship services.

"Make a joyful noise to the LORD...

Serve the Lord with gladness!" (Psalm 100)

EMPTY BOWLS BANQUET

March 18, 2003

5:30 – 8:30 pm. - \$30 per person

Contact Evelyn Haulman.



GOSF NEIGHBORHOOD PARTY

Sunday, March 16 bring a potluck dish and join Growing Our Spiritual Family for an evening of food and games, from 5:30 to 7:30 pm.

DAY OF PRAYER FOR PEACE

A recent e-mail came to me, as it has to others, with the following idea: As most of us are aware, there is a chance our country may be going to war very soon with Iraq. The number three in the scriptures represents the holy Trinity. With March the third month of the year, it has been suggested that we make March 3, 2003 (03-03-03) a day of fasting and prayer for our country and for peace in the world. Faith is the doorway that all miracles come through, but prayer is the key that unlocks the door. God is an awesome God who hears the cries of his children. Will you join Christians all over the world in a special day of prayer for peace?

Lorraine May

TWO ASH SERVICES THIS YEAR

If you are unable to attend the Ash Service at 6:30 p.m. on Sunday evening March 2 following our annual Fat Tuesday Breakfast Dinner at 5:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall, you may attend a second service scheduled for Tuesday, February 4th at the Healing Service at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary.

The imposition of ashes is a symbolic action that reminds us of our creatureliness and human limitations as we begin our journey with Jesus to the cross and beyond to the empty tomb this Lent/Easter Season. You are invited to consider practicing a Lenten Discipline such as service, fasting, forgoing something you are fond of for the purpose of drawing one's attention to our dependence and need for God in our lives. The ashes are made from the burning of the previous year's palms and those burdens we wish to lay aside written on small pieces of paper and burned during the service.

ELECTRONIC AGE REQUEST FOR WORSHIPPERS

Please remember to turn off cell phones, pagers, and watch alarms when you come to worship so they will not pose a distraction to you or others. Thank you.



HOW WE COMMUNICATE WHAT WE BELIEVE THROUGH OUR SANCTUARY FURNITURE

Did you ever think about how we witness to our faith through the physical things we put in our worship space? When we come into worship our space should witness to three things: God's word in scripture, the sacrament of baptism and the sacrament of communion. How do we make this witness? By appropriately using each item of furniture designed for its special witness.

First, the baptismal font should always be up where we can see it and not left off the platform or pushed way back by the choir rail. Second, the communion table should either be used every Sunday for communion OR it should bear the emblems of the Lord's Supper: a chalice and plate or pitcher, chalice and plate. The candles may be on the communion table as well or free standing on either side or placed on a table behind the communion table along with the flowers for the day. It is always appropriate to have real flowers or plants near the cross or down in front of the communion table.

Third, the bible should always be on the lectern where it is read every Sunday, not sitting on the communion table or any other table off to the side. We have a special bible in this congregation that is no longer read in worship as we have a newer translation we use. This bible has sat open for many years on the communion table in a place of honor. Rather than place it on the lectern where it will be worn from being used inappropriately as a stand for the current bible, it is most appropriate to place this historical bible open and elevated on the table behind the communion table along with the flowers.

Until recently we haven't had a table behind the communion table for this purpose. Having the new table means that even on Communion Sundays we can (and should) have flowers as well as the open bible in place although flowers may always be appropriately placed on the floor in front of the communion

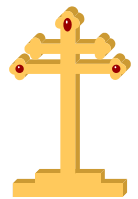
table. Unfortunately, the new table is about 10 inches short and needs to be elevated so the flowers and the bible may be seen at a height above the communion table. The renovation committee is working on an appropriate way to raise the new table. We hope to have this work completed before Easter in April.

Any one wishing more information may be interested in reading the book *United Methodist Altars*. Leave word at the office if you would like to borrow it. Changes in our worship space use of furniture is one of a number of changes that have come to us along with our new services for communion and baptism; and seasonal services such as Ash Wednesday over the last 20 years as we are benefiting from liturgical renewal and research into how the early church worshiped and why.

LENTEN STUDY GROUPS AND LENTEN DEVOTIONAL: *THE WAY OF FORIVENESS*

Small groups begin meeting this month for an 8 week study of the Christian practice of forgiveness. Small group leaders are Lynette Jordan, Mariamma Mathai, Nancy Enloe and Denice Leslie. Also, George Elgin is leading a study on the healing ministry of the church called "Blessed to be a Blessing." If you have not had an opportunity to register for a group call the office as soon as possible so we may place you.

Also, we have available this year the annual Lenten Calendar of Devotions for 2004 in both the small pocket size and in the large print. Pick one up Sunday March 2 in the lobby of the church. It is formatted like the Upper Room devotional. A .65 donation is requested by not required. We prefer every devotional find its way into someone's life—so pick up to give to someone else.





Music Notes

FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING

Our Chime Choir, Fellowship of the Ring, has rehearsal every Sunday at 4:30. All members as well as newcomers are invited to come. For more information, see Jeanette Erikson or Sue DeFranco.

COME SING FOR EASTER!

The choir will be preparing for Easter. All who would like to sing for this season are invited to join us in rehearsals on Thursdays at 7:30 p.m.

Christian Education

“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable.”

DO YOU KNOW . . .

. . . that the profile of our church building is the symbol of a fish? Early Christians identified each other with the sign of the fish and today you still sometimes see that same symbol on cars, businesses and even in the yellow pages. It is one way we, as a church, can witness to our neighbors.

. . . why adobe was chose as the building material for our church? The bricks represent our mortal limitations and need of God’s love and acceptance. Gen: 2:7 – The Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living being.



Sunday School

*CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:00 a.m.
ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:00 & 11:15 a.m.*

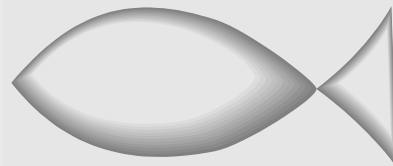
Our Sunday School starts at 8:45 with music then we go to out classes and learn different things about the Bible. The k-3rd and 4-6th graders are doing all kinds of fun craft projects. We could use baby food or small jars with lids, fabric, yarn, buttons and other craft materials you might have and not be using. If you want to donate please call or see Dorrie. Thank you.

Dorrie Osback

Sunday School Superintendent

CHILD CARE NEEDED?

If you need childcare for any meeting, event or program, please contact our Childcare Coordinator and Supervisor, Dorrie Osback. Please give at least a week advance notice. Childcare is provided on an available basis only. Dorrie will let you know if no childcare provider is available for the time you request.



Youth Group News

You Are Cordially Invited . . .

. . . to join a great group of Christian young people!

Who: All Seventh through Twelfth Graders
Welcome!

When: 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Most Sunday nights
(Check the Youth calendar for other events of interest)

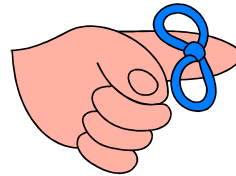
Where: The Bungalow
Memorial UMC, Pollasky and Scott,
Clovis

What to Bring:

- #1 - Your Own Unique Self
- #2 - A desire to find out more about the good things God wants for you
- #3 - The willingness to put God's commandments into action

R.S.V.P. - No need, just show up!

If you have any questions, or if you would like to receive the youth newsletter, please contact Connie Alfaro, Youth Pastor.



MARCH CALENDAR YOUTH

- Sat. Mar. 1, 11:00 - 1:30 p.m. Work Day at Poverello House
- Sun. Mar. 2, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Youth Meeting (Bungalow)
- Sun. Mar. 9, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Youth Meeting (Bungalow)
- Sun. Mar. 16 NO YOUTH MEETING
- Sun. Mar. 23 4:00 - 7:00 p.m. Movie Matinee
- Sun. Mar. 30 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. All About You Night (Bungalow)

THANKS

A special thanks to the youth who made 58 Valentines to share with our friends at Sierra Villa and with our shut-in friends. Each card was well received and enjoyed!

THANK YOU NOTE

Greetings, we want to acknowledge the significant support we received from your Sunday School youth that sponsored a food drive for those in need in our community. That food blessed and touched many lives. Your congregation also supported our Christmas kettles that produced \$33,243.53. Those funds will support our outreach program.

One Last Thought

These sentences actually appeared in church bulletins or were announced in church services:

1. Bertha Belch, a missionary from Africa, will be speaking tonight at Calvary Methodist. Come hear Bertha Belch all the way from Africa.
2. For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.
3. Next Thursday there will be tryouts for the choir. They need all the help they can get.
4. Eight new choir robes are currently needed due to the addition of several new members and to the deterioration of some older ones.