



Good News!

The Newsletter of the Memorial United Methodist Church of Clovis

March 2007

Open House? Where?

March 18 is a special Welcome Sunday at Memorial United Methodist Church. We are encouraged to attend and bring a friend or a few friends to be with us on this very happy day. We will have door hangers for everyone to hang on doors in our neighborhoods.

The welcome cards introduced in church are always available for you to give to friends. They are like little gifts to hand to someone we know and say, "Hi _____, I want you to have this." (Hand them the card) Then say, "This is where we attend church. You are always welcome." Remember the "You are always welcome" part!! Happy welcoming experiences to you!!

If anyone has ideas on how to make the Welcome Sunday special, your enthusiasm is fantastic so please contact Gloria McClanahan. Just call me and wish our team well and pray for this wonderful event.

You might be surprised at how good it feels to help someone have a better life, find a place to grow closer to our creator, be loved and loving. It only takes an invitation.

This message is from your new Attendance Team!!

Mature Adult Ministry Team Meets March 3

People interested in Mature Adult Ministry and Worship will gather Saturday morning at 9 a.m. in the Lose Library. Come and find out more.

Day Light Savings Time March 11

Spring forward 1 hour before you go to sleep Saturday, March 10 and you will be in time for church on Sunday March 11, 2007.

Homeless Ministry Team Meets March 11

The Homeless Ministry Team meeting is Wednesday, March 11, 2007 at 2 p.m. in the library. We are planning a pack back project and homeless food bag project. See more details under Micah ministries.

One Great Hour of Sharing Special Offering March 18

One Great Hour of Sharing offering will be taken on the fourth Sunday in Lent, March 18, provides major support of the United Methodist Committee on Relief, which aids in ministries of food, shelter, health and peace.

Joy In the Morning Sunday, March 25

Bring your favorite dish for brunch after worship. Our agenda is food and fellowship.

Hmong Youth Revival March 31

We will be hosting Hmong youth from all over the conference Saturday, March 31, 2007 for a day of worship, fellowship and Hmong Youth Association elections.

Easter Offering Benefits Our Katrina Covenant Churches

Our Easter Offering for 2007 will be add to our Christmas Offering efforts to furnish a nursery for one of our three Katrina Covenant Churches in Louisiana. The Easter offering envelopes will be in the Easter 2007 letter. Watch for it and plan to make this Easter full of hope for our families of small children in Louisiana!

Job Opening: Fundraising Team Chairman

The team is waiting! Need an enthusiastic person to calendar events throughout the year and basically steer this ship of happy exciting people through at least two events—we'll do the work, we just need a leader who will coordinate our plans with the other church events and who will be a key person for project people and program people to contact when funds are needed. Please contact Denice or Rick Hutchinson as soon as possible. Thank you!!

THANK-YOU NOTES

The family of Gladys Manuel wishes to express a sincere thanks to our church family and friends who reached out in sympathy and love when Gladys joined her family in heaven. Your many kindnesses were greatly appreciated.

* * * * *

Thank you for all the cards and get-well wishes.

They really do help,

God Bless,

Sharon Babcock

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)*

Palm/Passion Sunday, April 1

Children and youth are invited to gather at 10:15 to be in the Palm Procession in the narthex. A dramatic reading of the Passion narrative will be the message for the morning and the church will be stripped as we conclude worship.

If you would like to be a reader this Sunday, speak with Pastor Denice. We will rehearse Saturday, March 31, 2007.

Holy Thursday Last Supper Drama and Communion and Simple Supper.

Holy Thursday, April 5, 2007, will begin with a simple supper of foods Jesus would have eaten with his disciples in the social hall at 6 pm. Followed by inspiring evening service at 7:00 p.m. as the disciples depicted in Leonardo DaVinci's Last Supper step forward to share with you their inner thoughts about following Jesus. The Disciples will serve communion at the conclusion of the drama.

Good Friday Observances at Academy and Memorial

Good Friday you may choose to observe Good Friday with a Tenebrae service at the Academy Church at 6 p.m. or a service at Memorial at 7 p.m.

Easter Sunday Sunrise and Victory Celebration Services

Rise early and watch the sun peek over the hills at the Academy church for sunrise worship at 6:30 a.m. or join in the pageantry of our celebration service with victory procession at 10:30 a.m. at Memorial. Children, youth and teachers are invited to gather in the church entrance hall for the procession.

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

THRIFT SHOP NEWS

We were open February 2nd and 3rd. Things are lookin' up again. We again had a \$700 weekend. Friday was a bit slow this time but Saturday made up for it. But as I said last month we so need kitchen items. We did receive some and we thank you for that but we also sold most of what we got in. So come on ladies start cleaning out those cupboards and see if there isn't something you no longer use and that someone else would just love to have.

And guess what? I'm not going to give you even one complaint this month. Just thank you for always coming through for us when we are in need. We are very aware that we couldn't do it without you.

We could use more volunteers. If you can give a few hours either on a Tuesday (we work the first and third Tuesday of the month) or a Friday or Saturday morning or afternoon, please consider giving us a hand. We now have 2 volunteers that aren't connected with our church and we are thankful that they are so generous to come and help us out. And we have needed them.

And again, we will take your donations anytime if you want to call one of us (Margie or me). We are both in the church directory and or the Clovis phone book.

Submitted by Pat Frey

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN'S NEWS

March 5 – Board meeting, 9 am, Library
March 14 – Red Bird Circle, 9:30 am, Library
March 20 – Meeting, 10 am, Social Hall.
Program: Shine, Shine, Shine (Jean Hill and Mary Vollman. Luncheon Hosts: Wesley Circle. Bring own service. All women welcome!
March 23/25 – ECCO Retreat
March 28 – Wesley Circle, 1 pm, Social Hall

GRIEF RECOVERY

Because we are individuals we look, feel and react to grief differently. There are no set rules on grief. Grief may strike immediately upon the passing of a loved one or many days afterward. Grieving is personal. The griever may feel rage at self for words or deeds said or unsaid, done or undone. A period of loneliness can be a wrenching experience. The MUMC grief recovery team is here to assist you during this period of your life. Contact the church office for phone numbers. Your call will be kept private.

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)

Help for the Homeless

The Homeless Ministry Team is in the process of developing a list of sundries and toiletries we will be collecting for the homeless. We will need such things as travel size toothpaste, tooth brushes, wash cloths and hand towels, etc. Watch for the list.

Meanwhile, check with family, friends and neighbors and begin collecting up old but useable back packs. Kids generally get new ones each year and the old ones often get stuffed into a closet and forgotten about. Please be sure that zippers work and straps are intact—ink marks are okay.

Plans include providing foods the homeless can use without having cooking facilities and will include small metal can openers. The team will be contacting the Clovis Police Department Community Officer in hopes of supporting them in their work with the homeless with these

projects and to find out more about what our community is doing for the homeless and how we can help.

Congregational Care

Giving Special Care to Others

HOME CARE NEEDED

Edgar Ede is looking for live-in help. If you know of someone who could help, please call Edgar's son, Edgar Lawson via the church office.

SPECIAL FRIENDS

There we were around the table in Lose Library on the 2nd Tuesday of February: Dee Carr, John Tallmadge, Max Cannon, Pat Frey, Evelyn Haulman, Janet Bonzo and I in our monthly meeting to report and coordinate pastoral care ministries with members and friends facing critical events and issues.

We prayed, sang "Jesus Loves Me" and meditated on Pauline Middleton's thoughts on the eighth Psalm: "A Little Lower than the Angels". It ends "EVERYBODY IS SOMEBODY!"

We added one person to our Special Friends, 2 to our Watch List and removed four who had died. We reported 22 on-site visits, 52 telephone visits and 68 cards sent in addition to Pastor Denice' pastoral ministry, especially loaded with grief calls and memorial services this month.

We prayed for each others' concerns and people on the Special Friends lists. We gave thanks for successful surgeries and raised up those recovering from surgery.

We set our next meeting for (the 2nd Tues.) March 13 at 1:30 in the Lose Library. We invite you to visit us and consider this ministry.

Cordially in Christ,
Laurence Hill,
Coordinator through February 28, 2007

YOUTH NEWS

Sunday 03/04/07 5:00 - 7:30 p.m. Youth Movie Nite

Sunday 03/11/07 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Meeting (Bungalow)

Sunday 03/18/07 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Meeting (Bungalow)

Saturday 03/24/07 8:00 - 12:00 p.m. Poverello House Work Day

Sunday 03/25/07 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Meeting (Bungalow)

Coach's Corner

We are making progress on our priorities for 2007. Our priorities are:

1. Reach a New Generation with a Contemporary Worship Service.
2. Reach Senior Adults with a Vital Elder Ministry
3. Staff for Growth
4. Increase Our Visibility in Our Community with Advertising
5. Plan a New Facility for Thrift Shop/Recycle/Administration and Youth Ministries
6. Sponsor a Missionary

Our Missions Team and UMW have selected Carol Partridge, UM missionary to Macedonia for our Covenant Partnership. Sue DeFranco has created a wonderful, informative educational display about Carol and Macedonia which is on a table in the entrance hall of the church. Look for it. The 2006 Christmas boutique raised the funds required for this year's commitment.

Under the leadership of Gloria McClannahan and team, we have launched a campaign to reach out and increase our visitors to our church with the "Our Hearts and Doors are Always Open for You" invitation cards and our open house target Sunday, March 11, 2007. Door hangers will soon be available for all us to use in our neighborhoods as well. New lighting on the monument sign and repainting of the letters has spiffed up our sign. Plans are in the works to add the worship and church school times.

The Mature Adult Ministry Team will have met by the time you receive this newsletter and you will be hearing more about plans to meet the needs of senior adults.

As for the priority to reach a new generation, we are in the process of writing and submitting a grant to the Fresno Mission and Church Extension Society as part of our plan to provide a contemporary worship service and a part time staff person to coordinate and develop supportive ministries that will meet the needs of families, youth and children. We will need publicity mailings and a pianist etc. We are fortunate to have a strong youth program and will be working on ways to expand and reach out to youth in our community. We will be gathering all of the younger generation here at church for a meal and sharing session around the new service soon.

In conjunction with these last two priorities, the Korean church has offered us the donation of a church van which would greatly facilitate our outreach capabilities as well as our Hmong ministry. For example we have members at senior residences such as Yosemite Gardens who cannot now get out to worship because they have no transport.

We also have youth who cannot get out to youth activities, worship or Sunday school for the same reason. How nice it would be to offer CSUF students who need a ride to church a pick up! We will be looking at the costs involved, the feasibility, insurance, maintenance, licensing, and possible ways of funding etc. etc. in the weeks ahead.

We will be reworking our Sunday morning worship schedule to accommodate a traditional service of worship and a contemporary service of worship. A survey will be coming out in the weeks ahead for your feed back with suggested service times.

The priority to replace the Thrift Shop is yet to be tackled. If you are interested, please let me know. We want to have our plans in place by March of 2009 when the mortgage on the social hall is paid off. Boy! Won't that be a day to celebrate! Those of you who had the foresight to build the social hall and educational wing with the play yard have provided for the future that is our present! May we follow your example and provide for the future ministry a head of us all!

With hope and anticipation,
Pastor Denise Leslie

Leslie's Salt Shaker

I think I'm coming back to life again—it's nice to see the lilac beginning to bud out in the yard and the bulbs beginning to bloom. Spring isn't far off. God's plan for renewal is a gift each year the warming weather opens for us. How reviving it is.

But there are still at least three weeks of blustery weather ahead of us with time for introspection during the season of Lent. Each Sunday I will be inviting you to add a spiritual discipline to practice. The First Sunday of Lent I challenged us all to join Jesus in fasting—not for 40 days—but for 1 meal a week or if medically and physically able for 3 meals; and to put the money that would have been spent on these meals into an offering envelop marked Homeless Ministry to be placed in the offering plate on Palm/Passion Sunday.

Fasting is an ancient practice of the church which helps us remember our dependence on God from whom all good gifts come. It also helps us focus on the reality of hunger in our world as we experience what it feels like to be genuinely hungry. In the absence of food may we seek the will of God for us in meeting the needs of our neighbors. This is what Jesus did.

Giving something up for Lent—such as food or a regular pleasure is a way to sharpen our awareness of the reality of life without God's goodness at work in the world. When we give something up we can do it as an act of contrition as well. Offering something to God through self-denial is away to acknowledge our self-centeredness and misdirected living and how we regularly block out the need of neighbor, the suffering of others because we are so insulated in our affluent busy lives.

And finally the spiritual practice of self-denial is another way for us to recall the self-giving of God in Christ who willingly gave all for us. As members of his body our tactile awareness of deprivation is a small way of recalling his

wounds, his stripes, and his suffering death. A death others suffer daily in places such as Darfur, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Nigeria, Palestine, Iraq and in the homes of American families whose sons and daughters have paid the ultimate sacrifice in war.

Then, when Easter dawns we will have trod the way to the cross having meditated on its full implications for the way we live and for the work we are called to in this world. Our alleluias will be heartfelt and fearless joy.

Christ is Victor!
Pastor Denice Leslie

INVITATION

*You are invited to
Join the Celebration
The Fresno District Mission and Church Extension
Society and
The District Council on Ministries is planning
A celebration of church growth
When: March 11th, 2007
Where: St. Paul's United Methodist Church
Who: Every United Methodist in northern Fresno
District is invited.
Dinner will be provided by the
Fresno Christian Fellowship
Plus Special Music with
Jim & Jean Strathdee!
Come, enjoy good food, a Spirit filled evening with
the Strathdees
And be a part of our annual celebration of church
growth.
This year we will recognize 18 churches in the
northern part of the
Fresno District which have increased average
Sunday Worship Attendance
During the last three years.*

*Officially this is the Annual Meeting of the
Extension Society but unofficially,
And much more importantly,
It is a celebration of growing churches in our
District.*