



GOOD NEWS

The Newsletter of Clovis Memorial United
Methodist Church May 2008

QUICK LOOK



Congregational
Life,
Page 2

Special Friends,
Page 2

Thrift Shop
News,
Page 2

UMW News,
Page 3

Youth,
Page 3

Stewardship and
Administration,
Page 4

From the Pastor,
Page 6

Calendar,
Page 7

Birthdays,
page 8

SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE PREFERENCE SURVEY ENCLOSED! Please return your survey promptly. The survey asks you to select the time and service style you prefer. Surveys may be mailed to the office, or placed in the offering plate. Deadline for returns is Sunday, May 18. Please put your name on your response so we will know we have heard from you.

INVITATION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT-SHORT TERM DISCIPLE BIBLE STUDY: Beginning Sunday, May 4, 2008 you are invited to join Pastor Denice Leslie for this study in her office at 9:30 a.m. Her office is the second door on the right in the church office hallway.

ANNUAL STAFF APPRECIATION LOVE OFFERING MAY 4 & 18: A love offering will be received Sundays May 4 and 11, 2008 for our annual staff appreciation. An envelope will be in the bulletin these Sundays or you may mail your gift to the church marked "Staff."

BISHOP SHAMANA'S FAREWELL AND DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT INSTALLATION AND CELEBRATION: Plan now to attend this celebration Sunday May 10, 2008 at St. Paul's UMC. The program begins promptly at 2 p.m. Our Bishop will be present with us as we bid her farewell. Fan the Flame worship attendance awards will be presented. Our new D.S. will be installed. It will be a party!

WEAR FLAME COLORS ON MOTHER'S DAY: The celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit, Pentecost, falls this year on Sunday May 11, 2008 which is also Mother's Day.

COMMUNICATIONS PERSON NEEDED: If public relations is your passion, this ministry is for you! Speak with Pastor Denice Leslie for more details.

BIG HAT DAYS THANK YOU! Thank you to everyone who worked the Pepsi booth during Big Hat Days. The booth sold 2,319 bottles and made 778 dollars in profit. We are manning the water and Pepsi products booth at the 1st Clovis Car Jamboree held at Bicentennial Park at Sunnyside and Sierra Avenues on Saturday, May 3. Call LaDonna Snow or the church to sign up for a two hour service.

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

GET CONNECTED THROUGH THE LEADER NETWORK:

Looking for people for your ministry team, study, fellowship or circle? Eager to welcome new folks and share the joy of discipleship through service with others? Many new comers (currently over 20) are awaiting an invitation from you to join in fellowship and service in Christ's name. Reach out and embrace new disciples. The Leader Network is where you receive the information you need to connect with those new to the life of the church. The next meeting is Wednesday, May 28, 2008 from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in the Social Hall. The Network exists to network, connect, coordinate and support ministry consistent with the mission of the congregation: To show and tell Jesus' love everywhere.

SPIRITUAL LEADERS WORK THROUGH MISSION ALIGNMENT FRAMEWORK:

The Spiritual Leaders are hard at work building a foundation for their work for spiritually supporting and guiding our congregational ministry. They have created a frame work for helping ministries define their purpose and carry out our mission of Showing and Telling Jesus Love Everywhere. The frame work is a series of questions designed to focus our conversation on how scripture informs what we are doing, how a particular ministry carries out the congregation's mission of showing and telling Jesus' love everywhere; how the example of Jesus is reflected in what we are doing, and identify core values of the congregation that are being lived out in a particular ministry. The Spiritual Leaders look forward to conversations with each of the ministries in our congregation. Their first conversation was to respond to the questions of the frame work to inform their ministry of spiritual direction

SPECIAL FRIENDS: April 8th found John, Janet, Dee, Pastor Denice, Evelyn, Max and Lorraine thinking of ways the Special Friends group helps fulfill the mission statement of Memorial UMC, as we joined together in a reading of that statement. The mission statement was followed by a prayer and the reading of Psalm 139:1-8. Joni Erickson Tada's devotional, "The Enemy's Strategy", reminded us that our bodies are "fearfully and wonderfully made" and should be used as powerful weapons against the devil as he seeks our spiritual defeat, emotional malignment, and physical frustration. Our voices joined in the hymn 'Take My Life and Let it Be'. We shared our special joys and concerns and the joys and concerns of our special friends. As new business we reviewed the four areas of information requested by the Network Group involving the workings of the church. During March our services to friends included 14 visits, 27 phone visits, 66 cards, and 3 notes. We closed with the poem "We Ask in Thy Name" from Showers of Blessings by Helen Steiner Rici, and a reminder of our next meeting in the Lose Library, Tuesday May 13th at 1:30 pm. Could this be your mission, too?

Blessings, Lorraine May

THRIFT SHOP NEWS: March is over and with it, another Thrift shop weekend. Time really flies when we are having so much fun. It was, however, a great weekend with proceeds of \$1127. We were excited to say the least. And we again thank God for all our blessings. With all His blessings, our first quarter donation to apportionments is \$2500. Keep us in prayer, that each following quarter will be as good. We are doing well with volunteers stepping forward to help. Both with work days, where we sort, mark, hang and go through old merchandise and on the days we are open. Thank you to all you faithful volunteers! We are looking forward to another open weekend in April. We have a good start with lots of good "treasures". Stop by on one of the days and just say "hey". We really love it when a member of the congregation stops in. And we promise not

to coerce you to staying to help. Thank you for keeping us in your prayers. We know God hears all of them and has generously blessed us so please don't stop. Also, again, remember us with all the neat clean things you're throwing away. Thank you again for all your support.

-Submitted by Pat Frey

BRIGHT IDEAS: As you know, the Administrative Support Team has instituted a program for members to bring forth suggestions, comments and yes, constructive criticism. It has been named "BRIGHT IDEAS" and the mail box in the narthex is the place for those comments. The Ad Support Team will review the comments at each meeting and take appropriate action. At our March meeting we reviewed about 15 comments. About half of those were subject to immediate action and the rest were referred to the committee in charge of the particular area affected. It is felt this has been a very successful start to an important program and encourage the congregation to continue to use this vehicle. It all comes under the heading of providing a more meaningful experience to the mission of Memorial United Methodist Church.

-John A. Erb, Chair, Administrative Support Team.

PIE CAMPAIGN: Thank you to everyone who has pledged and contributed to the Pay Indebtedness Early Campaign. We have received pledges totaling over \$7,000 to help pay off the balance of our loan on the social hall. For 17 years, we have been paying an average of \$2,650 a month on this loan. With the contributions that have already come in, we were able to make an extra payment of \$5,000 on principal only. This is the equivalent of the principal of almost two payments. This means that if the contributions continue to come in and all the pledges are fulfilled, we will be able to retire this loan this year. Let's see if we can make some more extra payments and retire it earlier in the year, rather than later.

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKEND COUPLE'S RETREAT, MAY 16-18:

In first-ever research, a new report quantifies a minimum \$112 billion annual taxpayer cost from high rates of divorce and unmarried childbearing. The human cost to women, children and men is even higher. The church also bears a heavy burden of supporting broken families. We encourage all couples to put time and treasure into their relationship at a Marriage Encounter Couple's retreat May 16-18, at the Best Western Venetian Court Hotel in Rancho Cordova, (near Sacramento) under the leadership of Rev. Jerry & Sue Angove, and Glenn and Gwen Tilton. Couples will learn practical tools to create a more intimate relationship between husband and wife by learning to practice God's love on a regular basis in their own lives. There is a \$75.00 registration fee and the rest of the expense for the program materials, hotel room, and meals are paid by your generous donations. To register, contact Gary & Phyllis Varney (916-371-5019, gpvarney@yahoo.com) or go online (www.encounter.org).

YOUTH

-Sunday 05/04/08 5:00 p.m. Parents Time Out/PTO (Fellowship Hall) 5:00 p.m. Youth Movie Nite (Bungalow)

-Sunday 05/11/08 NO Youth Group - Be nice to your moms today!

-Sunday 05/18/08 5:30 p.m. Youth Group Meeting (Bungalow)

-Saturday 05/24/08 4:00 p.m. Gross Olympics Lock-In

-Sunday 05/25/08 NO Youth Group

-Saturday 05/31/08 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Poverello House Work Day

UMM BREAKFAST MEETING May 3, 2008:

Breakfast will be prepared by Howard Cook and he will not tell me what it's going to be so you'll have to come and see. There will be a worship study facilitated by Rick Hutchinson immediately following breakfast. The Methodist Church is a church with Open Hearts, Open Doors, Open Minds so bring a friend and enjoy the fellowship.

UMW NEWS MAY 2008:

May 5th – Board Meeting at 9am

May 14th – Red Bird Circle 9:30 am in the Library

May 20th – meeting at 10am in the Social Hall – program by Pauline Middleton, luncheon to follow – Red Bird circle hosts, please bring your own service. All women welcome!!

May 28th – Wesley Circle at 1pm in the Social Hall

SARA THE SECRETARY AND OFFICE

VOLUNTEERS: Everyone is so busy – sometimes it seems like there just isn't enough time! This includes our hardworking staff and volunteers. Please refrain from asking the secretary and volunteers to coordinate ministries. They are there for administrative purposes only (making copies, reminders, sending out pre-made letters, printing out minutes and agendas, etc...) and are not equipped to contact people to coordinate ministry events. If you need more volunteers in your ministries that can do these things, please contact Pastor Denice or Rick Hutchinson, Equipping Team Chair.

NURSERY NOTE: The toddler nursery needs a DVD player. If you have one that you no longer use, or if you know someone who has one that they no longer use, please contact Dorrie Osback-Rose.

HOW TO PLANT YOUR GARDEN

First, you Come to the garden alone, while the dew is still on the roses....

PLANT THREE ROWS OF PEAS:

1. Peace of mind
2. Peace of heart
3. Peace of soul

PLANT FOUR ROWS OF SQUASH:

1. Squash gossip
2. Squash indifference
3. Squash grumbling
4. Squash selfishness

PLANT FOUR ROWS OF LETTUCE:

1. Lettuce be faithful
2. Lettuce be kind
3. Lettuce be patient

4. Lettuce really love one another

NO GARDEN IS WITHOUT TURNIPS:

1. Turnip for meetings
2. Turnip for service
3. Turnip to help one another

TO CONCLUDE, YOUR GARDEN MUST HAVE THYME:

1. Thyme for each other
2. Thyme for family
3. Thyme for friends

WATER FREELY WITH PATIENCE AND CULTIVATE WITH LOVE. THERE WILL ALSO BE MUCH FRUIT IN YOUR GARDEN BECAUSE YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW.

THANK YOU – We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the members of the Memorial congregation for all of the love and support shared with us during a difficult time. The kindness showed by Paul Joseph, Denice, and Pat helped us find ways to remember the special person that Warren was, and honor his wishes. We received many beautiful cards from members of the congregation and other friends. The luncheon, organized by Pat, provided an opportunity for us to honor Warren's wish to break bread together. Thank you for helping us to celebrate the person we loved.

-The Carr family

Stewardship and Administration

CLERGY COMPENSATION INFORMATION

- Questions were raised at the Network meeting regarding clergy compensation during the Finance Work Team's budget presentation. The following information is important to understanding clergy compensation:

Clergy are considered self-employed for social security purposes. This means they pay 15.4% of compensation, both the employee and employer portion of social security on the total of salary + housing allowance (or the fair rental value of a parsonage) + utilities in addition to an average tax bracket of 10-20%.

The church does not provide nor deduct taxes or social security from clergy compensation although conference guidelines are for churches to pay clergy the employer amount above salary.

Unlike other self-employed people, clergy are not permitted to write off business expenses on Schedule C, so churches provide a professional expense allowance on a reimbursed as used basis for mileage, professional resources, annual conference, continuing education and the like.

Clergy on average have three years of graduate education above a four year college degree. The average debt for graduate education for clergy, as for lawyers and doctors, ranges between 30,000 and 140,000.

Pastor Denice Leslie has four years of graduate education beyond college and Pastor Paul Joseph will have five years beyond college once he completes his Doctor of Ministry degree. Both have Master of Divinity degrees. Pastor Denice has an additional three years of internship.

Both pastors are paid at the conference's minimum salary scale. Pastor Denice has 27 years of experience and is paid at minimum for fifteen years experience. Pastor Paul Joseph is paid at minimum for eight years of experience.

It is informative to know the average clergy person in Fresno is paid a low of 42,000, an average of 62,000 and a high of 92,000 for 25 years of experience. Also, teachers in Fresno with 25 years of experience average 92,000 a year in salary and receive above salary full medical, dental and vision. Your pastors' compensation packages fall in the average range.

Speaking of medical, your pastors are provided with a Health Savings Account Kaiser plan which saves the church 6,000 over the cost of the conference health care plan. No dental or vision is provided.

As for housing, UM clergy are either provided with a parsonage or provided with a housing allowance to cover their full mortgage payment as well as a utilities allowance.

When the Leslie's purchased their own home Pastor Denice reduced her salary line to add to her housing allowance in order to have the church provide half the cost of their mortgage payment monthly. The amount of her housing allowance has not changed. The utilities allowance has not been increased in the past eleven years. The housing allowance is tax deductible but not for social security purposes.

Clergy are permitted to estimate a ceiling amount of expense for providing a home within (not in addition to) salary which, if supported by receipts, provides another tax deduction (not for social security) up to the set amount.

Pastor Paul Joseph's compensation has been provided entirely through a grant from the annual conference for new church development paid for by apportionment funds.

Clergy typically receive one day off a week and, like teachers, work an average of 50-60 hours a week. Pastor Denice's day off is Monday. Pastor Paul Joseph seldom takes a day off.

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)*

FAVORITE HYMNS BEGIN MAY 4: Thanks to the hardworking office crew, the recording of favorite hymns is now complete. Favorite hymns will begin appearing in worship beginning Sunday, May 4, 2008. If you have not had an opportunity to submit yours please turn in your requests to the office.

WORSHIP PLAN TEAM'S PROCESS: Ever wondered how Sunday worship is planned? It begins with scripture, a theme and the upcoming season of the Christian Year or holy (holiday) days. Then music and other acts of praise or prayer are selected. Visuals for projection, banners, paraments, flowers, technical needs for additional presentations, logistics, instrumentation, congregational

participation, supplies and other materials are all planned out and assigned. Evaluation of past services, review of what has worked and new options are all discussed. Plans and details are recorded in minutes and on worship plan sheets for each service. This process takes from two to three hours once a month at the Team's monthly meeting. Individuals, staff and worship support teams take it from there.

Scripture readers, ushers, greeters, acolytes, communion servers are lined up. The pastor puts the liturgy together with reminder notes to the "crew". The worship coordinator checks in on Sunday with every one to be sure everything is in order. Technicians rehearse the presentation for the upcoming Sunday on Thursdays when the Praise Team and Chancel Choir rehearse. The visuals for the sermon are researched and coordinated with the sermon. The sermon is uploaded to the Web Site. Sunday morning the sound technicians make sure mics have new batteries and those up front are properly "mic'd." Many people make worship happen each Sunday. Many amazing and wonderfully dedicated folks! Thank one when you see them!

FROM THE PASTOR

LESLIE'S SALT SHAKER: Do you love to sing? Sew? Craft? Garden? Renovate old furniture and equipment? Write? Paint? Sculpt? Act? Make believe? Design? Color? Build? Work with wood? Decorate? Make life beautiful, comfortable, hospitable—entertain??

Did you know you are a product of the Holy Spirit? It is the work of the Spirit to bring all that is creative, new and life enhancing in to being! Jesus' resurrection releases his Spirit to the fullness of God's activity in the whole world, and within each and every created being.

Variety, energy, enthusiasm, light bulb aha moments, new relationships, and that compassionate motivation to right a wrong or improve the quality of life---all of these are

the province of the Holy Spirit's power among and within and for us and all of creation.

Jesus said the Holy Spirit will teach us everything, and remind us of all that Jesus has said. It is the Spirit enlivening work to bring us joy in living, serving, and deepening our understanding about the purpose and goodness of life and our place in it all.

Come, Holy Spirit, Come!

COACH'S CORNER: Have you met our new District Superintendent, Mariellen Yoshina Sawada? She is a ball of energy and enthusiasm. It is a real joy to hear preach or present. On Saturday, April 19, 2008 Mariellen met with pastors and lay leaders to review the vitality of the district. In that process she identified the many ways in which ministry is happening in local churches followed by a clear eyed look at the realities of decline in local churches.

Then she introduced us to a book titled, *Vital Signs*, written by Dan Dyck and selected by the Council on Congregational Development of our Conference and assigned by our Bishop for every congregation to use for a self-assessment of vitality. Our D.S. has given us the assignment of reading *Vital Signs* with every leader in each congregation. This tool is based on research of United Methodist congregations and as such specifically addresses the needs for revitalization of Untied Methodist congregations.

If you are a leader in the church you will receive a copy soon. If you are not a leader but would like to a copy and to participate in the assessment please give me your name.

This month I will continue to present the larger context of the current reality, the work of the council and the Council of Clergy Development in various groups and ministry meetings and where Memorial fits in to this picture. The Council on Congregational Development will resource conference churches in this process and provide help in addressing needs.

With hope and anticipation,
Pastor Denice