



# GOOD NEWS

The Newsletter of Clovis Memorial United Methodist Church December 2008

"The Mission of the United Methodist Church is to make disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."

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### **SANCTUARY CLOSING BETWEEN SERVICES ON SUNDAYS UNTIL 10:50 A.M.:**

Our musicians and technical support teams really, really appreciate your respecting their need for peace and quiet in the sanctuary between services so they can focus in on preparations for the next service. Please take advantage of the warm and comfortable social hall and Fellowship Hour refreshments at 10:30 a.m. for time to visit with friends from both services. Then if you are a late service person, please enter the sanctuary about ten minutes prior to the service.

**ADVENT DINNER, SATURDAY, DEC. 6:** The annual tradition of a grand potluck dinner kicks off the Advent/Christmas Season, Saturday, December 6, beginning at 6:00 p.m. Sign up to be placed at a gay holiday table. You may also sign up to decorate a table. Call the office to sign up if you missed the opportunity at church. Troubadours will sing old Christmas carols; we will hear a Christmas story or two, sing carols and hear the words from scripture of that Christmas night so long ago!

**ALL CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING, SUNDAY DEC. 7:** Plan now to attend our annual "charge" conference Sunday, December 7 at 5:00 p.m. in the Social Hall. Our District Superintendent, Mariellen Yoshino will be leading us in looking at the vitality of our congregation. We will take care of business as briefly as possible and all reports will be in print.

**A CHRISTMAS CAROLING WE WILL GO! SATURDAY, DEC. 20:** Bring your mittens, mufflers warm jackets and voices and join in caroling from the hymnal at 5:00 p.m. We will serenade the homebound and our Sierra Villa "congregation." Bring a goodie or finger food to share after caroling in the Library.

**LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE, DEC. 21, 7 P.M.** The longest night of the year, the Winter Solstice, December 21, falls on a Sunday this year. That evening at 7 p.m. in the sanctuary we will have a lovely, quiet, meditative and inspiring service. If you are experiencing loss, stress, or would simply appreciate an opportunity to reflect on the meaning of the season, this may be a true gift of Christmas. Bring a friend. We will join with the Korean United Methodist Congregation for this service.

**ACADEMY CHRISTMAS EVE, WED., DEC. 24, 4 P.M.:** For a really memorable old fashioned candlelight Christmas Eve service, join us at the historic Academy Church at 4 p.m. Take 168 east, past Academy Ave. to Madsen (after Mendocino). Turn left on Madsen and follow the lane to the church which down on the left. Bring a flashlight just in case the electricity fails!

**MEMORIAL CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT COMMUNION SERVICE 11 P.M.** The quiet of late night Christmas Eve beckons us to worship the new born King with carols, scripture, special music and communion. In the sanctuary at 11 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 24 at 11 p.m.

## *Upcoming Events!*

### **ALL-CHURCH CHRISTMAS PROGRAM DEC. 14:**

Everyone is invited to attend our annual Christmas program on Sunday, December 14, at 3:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. The Nativity story will be told through song and scripture and costumes, with the help of our Sunday School and Hmong language speakers. This will be a wonderful time to share the story of Jesus' birth with your children or grandchildren. A family potluck dinner will be held in the Fellowship Hall following the program at 4:30 p.m.

## **Congregational Life**

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

**THRIFT SHOP NEWS:** Another Thrift Shop week end is over and we are jubilant! Our preliminary count for the week end is \$1086, with \$800 of that coming in on Friday so you can see how very busy we are on Friday mornings. At one point it felt like we had wall to wall people. But we are totally grateful for the income and for the volunteers who were there to help. We thank our volunteers again for all their help with special thanks again to Janet Bonzo who worked Friday afternoon and Saturday morning. We also thank Mac Magargee and Howard Vollman who show up faithfully every month to help open and close. We put a lot of things outside because we don't have enough room inside and without those two guys we would be in trouble. We were able to sell the large television gifted to us by the youth group and very fortunate to have the Stoddard boys come in especially to load it into our customer's van. Additionally, we were given a sewing machine but had to go get it. Don Haulman took time out of his day on Saturday to come with his pick-up and help Mac get it into us. We thank all of you from the bottom of our hearts. We could use kitchen things. Dishes, pots and pans mugs almost anything from your kitchen that you don't need or use anymore and want to get rid of. This was a plea last month but is still very appropriate again, maybe even more so cause we sold a lot of

what we had. And, of course we still need all the other things you bring each month and again extend our thanks to you for thinking of us. Blessings and again, please keep us in your prayers.

-submitted by Pat Frey

**SPECIAL FRIENDS:** Six members gathered at our new time and joined in the Mission Statement of Memorial UMC. Following a prayer the message Lord, Make Us Mindful, was shared from Women of Faith, reminding us to be mindful of our many blessings as we gather for Thanksgiving (p352) We sang "Now Thank We All Our God" and shared answering the question "What's God doing in your life?" We had a report on our Special Friends, removing names of recent deaths, adding a cell phone number and shared concerns about additions to our special watch list. During the past month, we have written 46 notes and letters, sent 90 cards, made 46 phone visits, made 25 visits, and Pat Frey made 53 hospital visits within St. Agnes. Our next meeting will be Thursday December 11<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 pm in the Lose Library. Closing thoughts were from Seasons of Friendship: "God be with you in the Autumn, When the birds and flowers have fled, and along the woodland parkway leaves are falling gold and red. When summer lies behind you, in the evening of the year – God be with you in the Autumn, there to fill your heart with cheer.

-Blessings, Lorraine May

### **UMW NEWS:**

- Dec. 1: Ex. Board meeting at 9 AM in the Lose Library
- Dec 10: Red Bird Circle at 9:30 AM at Judy Gross' home: 1564 Tollhouse Lane 324-8187
- Dec. 16: Christmas Tea Party from 2-4 PM in the Social Hall. Everyone is welcome! Bring your friends!
- Dec. 17: Wesley Circle meets at 1 PM at Evelyn Haulman's home 1943 Rialto Ct. Clovis 291-6814 Bring a \$5 gift exchange item.

**CHRIST MINISTRY 'TALENTS' CHALLENGE:** Pastor Paul Joseph, preaching on the Parable of

the Talents returned the offering to an astonished congregation one Sunday morning this month and challenged them to invest it for God. Melody Yang has taken up the challenge with a decision to make home made egg rolls! You may purchase delicious homemade egg rolls with sweet and sour sauce in handy take home containers after worship on Sunday, December 7. Save the date and think “yum”—“lunch!” on the drive home from church!

**THANK YOU TO THE PRAYER CHAIN:** One day my granddaughter Kelsi saw me receive a prayer request on the prayer chain. She asked me about it and I showed her the chart and how everyone on it will pray when there is a prayer request. She looked at it and said, “Wow!” She joined me in the one I just received and then said, “I know, could they pray for our dog who is dying?” I said I would see what I could do. I was a little hesitant to ask Lorraine for this request when prayer requests are usually for serious human situations. However, Lorraine didn’t hesitate. She thought it was important. Later I heard from other members of the prayer chain who said they sympathized, having lost pets themselves. I reported back to Kelsi and I am grateful for the amazing opportunity I had to witness God’s love. Gloria McClanahan

**THANK YOU CROP WALKERS AND SUPPORTERS:** A special thanks to our walkers who participated in the Fresno Area Community Walk for Hunger and to the many people in our congregation who supported them. We had a great time and enjoyed the wonderful hospitality shown by the Islamic Cultural Center, the hosts for this year’s event. An informal accounting puts our church’s contribution at \$1740. That’s super!! Kudos to Bonnie Harkins who was our top walker and raised \$965! Our Walk and similar events in other areas raise funds to alleviate the suffering of the hungry in our world and in local communities as well as raising public awareness of the proportions of this global tragedy.

**HOSPITALITY-SUE DEFRANCO:** After five years of preparing the Sunday morning Coffee Hour, I’ve

decided it’s time for me to retire. I’ve enjoyed this ministry, but I feel I must free myself to focus on what I feel God is strongly calling me to do- music ministry, worship support, and missions and outreach. I am hoping that a team of interested folk will form to take on this important ministry. When I took over the job from my daughter and son-in-law who faithfully did it for several years, Tara told me it was too much for one person, especially one who was involved highly in the worship services. She was right. Sometimes when I was running around like the proverbial chicken with his head cut off, it made for a crabby host. I apologize for that! I want to thank the many people who have provided treats over the years or stepped in when I needed a Sunday off. Wonderful people like Georgia Holman and John Tallmadge who did not allow the cupboard to be bare of cookies and Dee Karr, Judy Gross and other lovely UMW ladies who have been so supportive and made sure I was free to take a few Sundays off during the summer. Thank you for your patience with me when the coffee was cold, the lemonade was warm, or the cookies ran out.

**FOOD PANTRY:** Thanks for gracing the shelves of our Food Pantry with your Brown Bag donations at Thanksgiving time. We hope you will continue to bring non-perishable food items as it is expected that we will have an unprecedented number of requests for food during the coming months.

**0-90 MPH TEAM NEWS:** There's a new kid on the block, the 0-90 MPH Team. The "0-90" refers to the age group served by the team; the MPH stands for "Mission, Programs, and Hospitality." Well, it's not exactly new; the 0-90 MPH team was formerly known as the Young People’s Board, which organized events and resolved issues relating primarily to our young people (seventh graders through college students). But the members of that board found that they were discussing and planning things that also involved not only the parents and younger and older siblings of that age group, but every member of the church, no matter their age. With a slight shift of vision, the 0-90 MPH team was born! Our purpose is to provide direction and

support for the Sunday School and Holy Club youth group programs, and to plan and organize community and social activities for the church family as a whole. This includes events to bring together in fellowship the four congregations who call Memorial UMC home. The founding membership consists of Laura Williams, Andy Hansen-Smith, Connie Alfaro, and Pastor Denise Leslie. Currently, the team meets the third Thursday at 11:30 am at Laura Williams' house. If you are interested in working on this ministry with that lively bunch, or have ideas for future events or programming, please contact any one of us.

#### **PARISH NURSES - DEFIBRILLATOR PROJECT:**

The congregation has responded very positively to the request for funding for the defibrillator - the response was so good - that we were able to purchase two defibrillators - one for each gathering place. How wonderful! We are very grateful! The research has proven that having the little "magic" machine available has saved numerous lives. The installation will probably be complete by the time you read this newsletter. We have opportunity to train 8 people in the use of this equipment - free of charge, however if we have more than 8 people responding we can provide scholarships up to 4 more. We are requesting that 2 regular worshipers from each worship service. There are some of you already trained - that's great, but we want to be sure that we do have representation from each service. The dedication was on November 16, in memory of Doris Tallmadge and Barbara Walsh. We are thankful for numerous other contributors as well. Looking ahead we are planning another Healthy Heart Potluck late in February - with a special guest Cardiologist speaker. If there are other areas of interest in the health/medical field, please let us know - by leaving a message at the office or contacting Lucy Elgin. Also, any others interested in Parish Nursing - there will be a meeting in the near future - just leave your name and phone number at the office.

**BOUTIQUE NEWS:** We had another successful Boutique sale this year thanks to everyone! The

lunches were superb, thanks to Pat Frey and her helpers. The quilt went to John Tallmadge who donated it to the youth group. They will auction it off for the Heifer Fund. The afghan went to Marilyn Weyant, and the wall hanging to Shirley Monis. Congratulations! Our total for the two day sale was \$5888.29 before expenses - we will have the final count in the Jan. newsletter. Thanks again for making this possible! God bless you all.

-The Boutique Group.

## MINISTRY SPOTLIGHT

**SIERRA VILLA MINISTRY:** Our ministry at Sierra Villa Rest Home began about twenty years ago as an outreach of the Fresno Ministry at a meeting attended by Sue DeFrance and I. We were welcomed warmly by the owners, Sue Clinn and Jo Story. Each Friday afternoon we joined 20 or 25 elderly members for hymn singing, praying, scripture reading and a Bible lesson. When Sue returned to school, Emmett Eller became the group leader, and added gospel hymn tapes played on his boom box before giving the lesson. We were often joined by members of our church as supporters and several pastors and assistant pastors led the group and served communion. On special holidays we did crafts with them and our choir entertained them at Christmas and Easter. It became an all church ministry. Rather than hunt for songs in the hymnal, we selected their favorite hymns and made a songbook of the words for each to use. At various times, Marilyn Baltz, Norma Meek, Janet Bonzo and Sue have played the piano for the group singing. When Emmett passed away, Sue and I were once more the leaders. As a young child Tara became a part of our team, usually playing with the resident Siamese cat or entertaining us with her songs. We watched the facility expand in size and made new friends. About four years ago, Sue and Jo felt it was time to retire and sold the place to an Indian doctor who lives in the Bay Area, and visits during each month. Presently, there are about 30 residents at the home. Last Christmas the UMW wrapped gifts of socks, lotions and toiletries

for each one and a friend of Cecelia Acton's, who was part of our team, spent the afternoon with them as a perfect Santa. At the present time, Judy Gross and I are the ministry team and Pastor Denise joins us the first Friday of the month to bring the message and to serve communion. She has learned many of the hymns they love to sing. George and Lucy Elgin have visited also and brought their German Shepherd to the delight of the patients. The third Friday we have a party to celebrate Birthdays. When Norma Meek came to help with a party she renewed a friendship with a high school classmate, Helen. We were saddened when Helen passed away three weeks ago. On party day Molly Lovgren and Margie Magargee brought a Cosco decorated cake and served the members with a cake and drink treat as their mission. After years of faithful service Molly and Margie needed a change. Dorrie Osback-Rose volunteered to bake cupcakes which we frosted with cool whip. As the age of the residents increased and more Alzheimers friends joined us we decided a cookie treat was easier to serve than cupcakes. On party day Judy brings her Casio and we sing favorite songs along with the hymns. For Halloween their treat was a pumpkin shaped gingerbread cookie and a drink which they enjoyed. The Bible group has decreased to about 12 as we have lost many of our favorite friends. We now gather around tables in a corner of the dining room. Attention spans and communication may be a problem, but they still join us in singing they hymns they learned long ago. The Lord's Prayer is still a part of their worship along with patriotic songs. The ministry there has changed in many ways but we remember Jesus' words in Matthew 18:20, "For where two or three come together in my name, there I am with them." If this ministry interests you, come join us at 2 o'clock each Friday, at Sierra and Villa Avenues! With blessings, Lorraine May.

- ★ Saturday 12/06/08 at 12:00 pm Christmas Program Rehearsal, Sanctuary
- ★ Sunday 12/07/08 at 5:00 p.m. Holy Club Movie Nite, Bungalow
- ★ Saturday 12/13/08 at 12:00 pm Christmas Program Rehearsal, Sanctuary
- ★ Sunday 12/14/08 at 3:00 p.m. Christmas Program/Family Potluck
- ★ Sunday 12/21/08 at 5:30 p.m. Holy Club Youth Group, Bungalow
- ★ Sunday 12/28/08 at 5:30 p.m. Holy Club Youth Group, Bungalow

## 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)

**CHRISTMAS OFFERING DESIGNATED FOR A FAMILY:** The Micah Ministry has adopted a local family and designated the 2008 Christmas offering for their five children who do not have beds, or bedding. An offering envelop for your offering will arrive in your mail box with this year's annual Christmas letter. You may also provide a gift for one or more of the children in this family who otherwise will not have any visit from Santa Claus this year. See Warm Tree article for more details.

**WARM TREE MISSION OPPORTUNITY:** The chill in the air and shorter days remind us that it's time once again for our Warm Tree Project. Help us give a little comfort to the homeless of our area with a gift of warm-socks, gloves, jackets, blankets, scarves, etc. New or slightly used only please. We are making a special effort to reach out to women and children this holiday season, but are happy to have donations for men as well. Small toys, children's books, and personal hygiene items are also welcome. Please wrap your gift and tag with details like size so your donation may be distributed properly. Please bring your items and place them under the "Warm Tree" in the church narthex by Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup>. For more information see Sue DeFranco. The Warm Tree this year will serve as our Angel Tree. In addition to placing our winter

## YOUTH NEWS

### YOUTH CALENDAR:

- ★ Friday 12/05/08 Youth District Conference at Sanger UMC

weather warm gifts for the needy wrapped beneath it, you may take a tag from the tree and make Christmas happen for one or more of the children of the family we have adopted for Christmas this year. A variety of possible gifts (very real needs and Santa Gift Wishes) will be written on the tags. You may select one or as many as you wish to provide. Please put the tag on your wrapped gift so we can identify which child its for and stick under the tree by Dec. 24.

**POINSETTIAS! POINSETTIAS!** Watch the bulletin insert for a coupon to order a Christmas Poinsettia or call the church office to reserve one. They will be in the Sanctuary beginning Sunday December 14.

## FROM THE PASTOR

**COACH'S CORNER:** The *Imagine!* service continues to unfold. Your wonderful support and encouragement are so appreciated! We are looking now toward implementing our next step in letting the larger community know we are hear and meeting their needs. These plans include a first emphasis on attracting families and a part time Family Ministry person. Key to this next step is securing back up musicians and additional music leadership—both of which we are currently working on, in order to sustain the quality of the service. Also, we are working on efforts to involve more of the current *Imagine!* congregation in participating in worship leadership. In the meantime here is some food for thought which I want to share with you about four major shifts within today's Church. These shifts affect how we share the good news.

There's a shift from :

- 1) The machine to garden metaphor. The church is not a machine but a garden. It is more important to grow people than it is to grow churches. Instead of managing a church, you nurture people.
- 2) Volunteers to servants. Managing volunteers is history. Today the Church must recognize gift-

based servant hood based on a person's God given sense of call, passion and interests.

- 3) Coordinators to mobilizers. Rather than coordinating volunteers, the Church is mobilizing servants around their spiritual DNA. People must be given permission to exercise their gifts and call.
- 4) Control to permission-giving. The days of managing and controlling are gone. Today, the shift is from centralized to cellular, from top-down to bottom-up.

These shifts are helping us to live out our mission of showing and telling Jesus' love everywhere and fulfill our vision of servant empowered lay based leadership based on our shared values and beliefs. When this happens, discipleship happens, which after all is the purpose of the Church: to make disciples for the transformation of the world.

**LESLIE'S SALT SHAKER:** Shh! I'm going to tell you a secret most of the world around us doesn't know: Christmas begins Christmas Eve at midnight and lasts for twelve days!! It concludes on Epiphany Sunday the day we celebrate the arrival of the Three Wise Men (Jan. 4 this year) and the giving of their gifts to the Christ Child. So if you are feeling pushed, stressed, unprepared and like, "Yikes! Its almost December and.... (fill in the blank of what you haven't accomplished), *RELAX!* So what if the tree isn't up the day after Thanksgiving? So what if you have your Christmas party *during the real season of Christmas!* So what if you don't complete all your shopping until the day before! Or you miss the guaranteed mail to arrive by Christmas date! Or if you can't work in seeing everyone you love and desire to visit or call or gift before the 25<sup>th</sup>! Or you didn't get that Christmas Letter written and sent or the cards you bought on sale LAST year. Or if you haven't had one quiet moment to reflect on the mystery of the incarnation—God made real in the flesh and blood of a person we know as Jesus. Because.... You have time! God is so good! May your Christmas be blessed with love, light, warm memories, Christmas greetings near and far and smiles!



# December Birthdays!

Wanda Grimsley 12/01  
Rena Love 12/01  
Nancy Enloe 12/02  
Tammy Raddatz 12/03  
Muayeng Hurr 12/04  
John Her 12/05  
Sharon Hutchinson 12/05  
Erin Pachelbel 12/05  
Cecelia Acton 12/06  
Dick Gist 12/06  
Novelle Rogers 12/07  
John Monis 12/08  
Seela Xiong 12/08  
Mai Nou Lee 12/09  
Joua Annie Yang 12/09  
Brooke Yang 12/10  
Kaitlyn Yang 12/11  
Juliana Lee 12/14  
Jessica Stocks 12/14  
Andrew Stocks 12/15  
Jason Yang 12/15  
Meng Yang 12/15  
Kao Cha 12/16  
Geraldine Montgomery 12/17  
Hayes Van-Remington 12/19  
Bea Bannister 12/20  
Jacob Crosslin 12/22  
Gwen Emmick 12/22  
Gao Xong Hang 12/22  
Kristi Harkins 12/22  
Robert Markland 12/23  
Chang Hang 12/25  
Miriam Schell 12/25  
Kim Leslie 12/27  
Jeff Pond 12/27  
Kayleigh Smith 12/27  
Suke Cherta Lee 12/28  
Lois Ames 12/29  
Kevin Lee 12/29  
Sue Vang 12/31