

FROM THE PASTOR'S HEART

I don't want to alarm you, but the New Year is coming! Ye gads! 2010 already! I can only vaguely remember the year 2000. It seems to me we made a big deal out of it. Y2K is now a decade old. I hate it when I think about how fleeting life is. All my life I have listened to "old people" say things about how fast time passes. I just can't understand why such things would now be coming out of my mouth. Oh well . . .

Life is a journey through time into eternity. I like church's with classy names. I learned of one in Round Rock, Texas called "Journey of Faith UMC." I saw it in a mailing I get from the national Reconciling Ministries Network. The RMN is an organization of UM laity and clergy devoted to inclusiveness in our church. Although I am not much of a joiner, I guess you could say I am a "member" of the RMN, at least a sympathizer. I believe in the inclusiveness of all manner of people in God's Church. The slogan that will soon be displayed on our new sign in February, will declare "Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors." Now that is something to live up to.

Even though I like good church names, I seldom like church mission statements. Most are too wordy, too detailed, too long and too boring to be of much use. Church mission statements and novels are America's most common forms of fiction. Only churches that have forgotten God's mission need mission statements. That's extreme, I know, but I think we should all just settle for UM Discipline paragraph 120. "The purpose of the Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."

That said, I was impressed with Journey of Faith UMC's "Welcome Statement." I can see the value of a "Welcome Statement." Here it is:

"Journey of Faith United Methodist Church is a grace filled community which offers a safe place to ask the tough questions of life in an atmosphere of unconditional acceptance.

As a United Methodist Church we are proud to be a church with open hearts, open minds, and open doors and we invite you to become a part of God's amazing grace through our church family. Wherever you are on your journey of faith, you are welcome in this place. We proclaim this statement of welcome to all who have known the pain of exclusion and discrimination within the church. We celebrate our diversity and recognize the sacred worth and dignity of all persons regardless of sexual orientation, gender, race, age, ethnicity, physical or mental capacity, education or economic or marital status.

At the same time, we recognize there are differences of opinion among us. We do not seek to erase our differences. We welcome all in our journey together in faith toward greater understanding and mutual respect."

I believe this statement reflects the Spirit of Jesus and the intent of the Gospel. I am not so much interested in Audubon Park UMC formalizing a statement as I am in living in the spirit of welcome and inclusion that such a statement articulates so well.

Moving intentionally in the direction of inclusivity would be worthy of our journey into the new year.

See you in Church, APUMC!

Pastor Carl

WORDS OF THANKS:

To Our Audubon Park Church Family:

We would like to thank those of you who came to Hilda's memorial service. We would also like to thank Naomi Circle for the reception they held after the service. It was so comforting to know she was so well loved. Thanks for all the calls, the cards and concern. We feel blessed to belong to a family such as this, Thank You.

-David, Brenda and Madison Banks

Just wanted to thank the congregation at Audubon Methodist Church for blessing us on Thanksgiving with a wonderful gift basket. It truly was a blessing that we are very thankful for.

(From a Thanksgiving Family)

Dear Mickey and Audubon Park UMC:

Thank you once again from the bottom of our hearts for all your hard work and generosity toward providing Thanksgiving meals for so many of our families in need. It made all the difference! We so appreciate your support!

-Melissa Alfstad and Finch Community

When fall and winter arrives almost everyone is busy with the hustle and bustle of the season. During these times we are asked to tithe, give to the needy, and remember to share with others the "Reason for the Season". It truly amazes me how our congregation at APUMC steps up to the plate when it comes to reaching into the coffers to help provide for the many programs with cash and exceptional volunteerism.

I have had the honor of hosting the Thanksgiving Food Basket Drive for the past two years and I can attest to a fabulous team of volunteers, and the overwhelming giving that our congregation provides. Because of all of your efforts we were able to feed 38 families (218 people) a complete meal and pass on a bit of hope to those we served.

Many of you may be thinking "this article is a wee bit late," but like my Mom used to say: "It's never too late to say Thank You".

Please accept a sincere "Thank You" to all of you that made the 2009 Thanksgiving Food Basket Drive a marvelous blessing for our Audubon community.

-Mickey Moreau

A huge thank you to all you helped make the Christmas Families Project a success this year. We supplied presents to a total of 7 families consisting of 12 adults and 21 children. Food vouchers were given from Safeway and many beautiful blankets, hats and scarves were given as well. A special thanks for the elves who showed up to the wrapping party to help Rebecca and Cole with this project!

-Rebecca Stolberg

A big thank you to Mickey Moreau for replacing the lock on the church office door over the Christmas weekend!

Reminder:

The 2010 offering envelopes are ready to be picked up in the Narthex. If you do not see your envelope there, please call the church office, 325-4541.

Meeting Katherine Parker

by Ann Fritz, Inland District Mission Secretary

This month, I want to share with you some correspondence I have had with a missionary serving in Cambodia. **Katherine Parker** comes from a family with deep roots in United Methodism on the West Coast. Two grandfathers, a great-grandfather, an aunt and several cousins have served as United Methodist clergy in various administrative capacities within the UMC. Active in church since childhood, Katherine has always sensed the desire to be involved in mission. After hearing of opportunities through the GBGM Youth/Young Adult program, she began service as a Mission Intern in August 2000. Her overseas assignment was with the Asian Rural Institute in Nishinasuno, Japan. After 18 months Katherine returned to the United States to serve with the Practical Farmers of Iowa in Ames. She completed her service in May 2003. She served as a delegate to the Western Jurisdiction and General Conference. She was also a local church volunteer for mission trips. With her knowledge and experience in agriculture, she was assigned to Cambodia to work in the Community Health and Agriculture Development (CHAD) Initiative. I e-mailed Katherine recently and asked how she spends Christmas in Cambodia and she responded to me,

I know a few other westerners here, but I am planning to spend Christmas with my Cambodian friend Heng. The international churches had a combined worship service yesterday. We will attend a lessons and carols service on Christmas Eve at the Anglican Church. There is no English language Methodist congregation in Cambodia. Since Cambodia is not a Christian country, my friend Heng has to work on the 25th, so I will be going alone to the Christmas day service of the combined Cambodian language churches of Phnom Penh.

The next day I will go out to the province of Kampong Thom to meet with the pastors there to disburse funds for two new rice banks, and join with them for worship on Sunday

One powerful message of Christianity in this place is that God loves us even before we know God. I believe we are called to use our lives and our vocations for the glory of God and as an expression of faith, so it is an honor and privilege that I can share this work through the church and as an expression of not just my faith, but as part of our collective work as the body of Christ.

Katherine will be coming to the Pacific NW Conference area in the fall of 2010, and it is my goal to have her come to the Inland District to share her story with as many of our churches as possible. She is available for a covenant with the PNWC.

Thy Will Be Done

“For me, signing my name to a will which contains a charitable gift is a form of prayer. Having a will is important to me because it ensures the smooth transfer of my assets to my loved ones and the causes that have given my life meaning.

Legacy giving is the ultimate form of giving without expecting something—anything in return. My will is my last ‘act and deed’ and that’s why I made sure it reflects my wishes and values.” (A Donor to Charitable Institutions)

New Women’s Book Study Group

This book study for women will use the book

Comfortable in Your Own Skin: Making Peace with Your Body Image by Dr. Deborah Newman. The focus will be on issues of self-esteem, body image, and beauty myths in our culture. This life-changing book is filled with “aha” moments, biblical truths, and insight into God’s perspective on our bodies and beauty. Discover that developing a healthy body image begins with identifying who you are in Christ. Some of the discussion topics include: what is body image, how to overcome a negative body image, what God says about our bodies, accepting your body, and seven lies the world tells us about our bodies.

This group will be starting on Mon, Jan. 26th at 7 pm at the home of Cathy Fink. (11905 N. Anna J Drive – about 5 minutes north of Whitworth). It will run for 7-8 weeks, ending March 15th. Please call Cathy or Jan at the church office (325-4541) no later than Monday, Jan. 11th to let us know that you are planning to come so that we can order enough books. The book will cost \$15.

New Boundaries Class:

Do you have a hard time saying ‘no’? Do you feel that you are pulled in too many different directions? Do you find that your needs and wants are all mixed up?

Then maybe the “Boundaries” class is a good fit for you. The class will start on **Sunday, January 10th, at 9 a.m.** in the parlor. Taught by Bob Kem. There is a sign up sheet in the Parlor.

What Does It Mean To Be United Methodist?

January 3 – February 7, 2010

Adult Discipleship Hour

9:00 – 10:00 AM Sundays

This is a GREAT class for those considering Membership/Discipleship in the UMC AND for those who “snuck in” without getting this basic information AND for long-time United Methodist in need of a refresher course!

Our focus will be on United Methodist Heritage, Theology, Organization, Mission, Sacraments, & How UM’s, especially APUMC’s DO Church.

TO ALL ENTRYWAY SWEEPERS:

The following people are scheduled to have this sweeping duty in the coming weeks:

January 3 Mike Gilbreth

January 10 Estel Harvey

USHER SCHEDULE:

Below are the ushers for worship in the upcoming weeks:

January 3 Jack Shimek

January 10 George Hartman

GREETERS:

The following are to be greeters in the near future:

January 3 Betsy Hartman & Leslie Spitzer

January 10 Retta Nickell & Karen Peacock

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS:

January 3 Phyllis Todd

PRAYER ROOM:

January 3 Mary Bynum

January 10 Claire Story

HOME-BOUND COMMUNION:

Sunday, January 3

We will continue our service to homebound persons and invite you to take part in this meaningful time.

If you have any questions or would like a team member to come to your home for this service, please call Olga Trunce at the church office at 325-4541.

Sunday, January 3

9:00 a.m. Discipleship Hour

10:30 a.m. Worship

Monday, January 4

\6:30 p.m. UMW Executive Board Meeting

12:30 p.m. Study of Acts: Church

7:30 p.m. AA Meeting

Tuesday, January 5

9:00 a.m. Downtown Food Bank
9:30 a.m. Quilters
Noon– Clergy Meeting: Parlor
7:00 p.m. Trustees Meeting
7:00 p.m. Boy Scouts

Wednesday, January 6

7:00 a.m. Study of Acts at Little Garden Café
10:00 a.m. Overeaters Anonymous
10:00 a.m. Needlework Group
7:00 p.m. Choir Practice

Thursday, January 7

6:00 p.m. Stephen Ministry Supervision
6:15 p.m. Jubilee Bells

Saturday, January 9

9:00 a.m. Lamplighter Meeting at Don &
Carolyn Wilson's home
Noon– MIDIS Group: Parlor
5:30 p.m. Shepherding Group: Parlor

Sunday, January 10

9:00 a.m. Discipleship Hour
10:30 a.m. Worship
2:00 p.m. Studebaker Club