

FROM THE PASTOR'S HEART....



THE EVANGEL
Audubon Park
United Methodist
Church
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"Haiti is a disaster on a good day", so said a person commenting on the tragic earthquake in the world's second poorest county. I think Bangladesh wins the dubious honor. We have all witnessed the horrendous effects of the disaster and the extra difficulties involved in rescuing and aiding a country whose limited infrastructure has been destroyed. As bad as New Orleans was devastated by Hurricane Katrina, at least America had the infrastructure in place to proceed with operations in a relatively timely manner. It wasn't as good as it should have been, but at least it wasn't Haiti.

I am so proud to be your pastor. You gave an additional \$2700 for Haiti relief through the United Methodist Committee on Relief on Sunday January 17. An additional \$700 was given on the 24th. As I announced on Sunday, we will keep any additional donations here and purchase the makings of emergency health kits to be joined with other UMC congregation's efforts and shipped at the expense of Manito UMC to the Salt Lake City, Utah UMCOR Depot. This will greatly help the effort by these essentials arriving already packaged. I have asked our Director of Christian Education, Bobbi Ehrgood, to create a mission learning opportunity for children and adults to assemble these kits on Thursday evening February 4th at 6:30 PM at the church.

Speaking of Bobbi, I am encouraged by what I am hearing from you about your desire to keep our position of DCE in place. Wonderful things have been accomplished under her leadership. I desire it to continue and Linda and I have increased our planned giving to help allow for it. We hope you will, too.

Let me address something I've heard some people have enquired about. What does Bobbi do? Why don't we see her up front on Sunday mornings? The Director of Christian Education oversees our children's Christian education ministry. You don't see her up front often because that is not her role. Her job is mostly behind the scenes designing our program, recruiting and coaching the many volunteer servants who actually do the ministry, overseeing the CE budget, and writing and otherwise obtaining curriculum. And we expect her to accomplish all this in only 20 hours per week. It can't be done. I am always on her case a little bit about putting in more time than we are paying her to put in. I don't believe in that. I have always hated the way most congregations abuse their employees by expecting to get more than they are paying for. She is more than willing to talk to people about our children's ministries. Have gone upstairs to see the creative classrooms she has designed? Are you knowledgeable about the new B.L.A.S.T Rotation Sunday School program? Do you know what B.L.A.S.T. stands for? Wait till you hear about our Vacation Bible School theme. It's literally "out of this world."

I want to encourage us all to step up and meet this financial need. We need to know whether we have our commitment to this by the end of this month. This Sunday, we will give out a document for us to record our revised estimates of giving. If you have not already communicated with our Stewardship people about this, please fill it out and hand it in. Our Church Council will also be discussing special alternative ways to fund our church budget.

We go forward. See you in Church, APUMC!

Pastor Carl

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