

# GENESIS

Serving Members and Friends of The First United Methodist Church of Homosassa

MARCH 2007

Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors

Volume 11 Issue 3

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Patience Nave

## Music Department

Mary Kay Messenger

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Dayna Middlebrooks

## Parish Visitation

Sharon E. Smith

## Night Security

Michael Rodgers

## Custodian

Dale Evans



Do you love butterflies?

Light...floating on the wind...bright and colorful!

It's almost magical when one chooses to land on you.

They celebrate beauty and joy, life and light.

Each spring the butterfly appears to remind us that there is new life and reason to celebrate.

The butterfly is also important as a symbol. Last fall, a caterpillar died—or at least seemed to do so. It wrapped itself in a cocoon—a tomb if you will—and was quickly lost among the leaves and twigs and forgotten.

But with the spring that which was dead comes forth alive.

Out of the ugliness of the caterpillar comes the beauty of the butterfly. Out of the dry and silent cocoon comes the shout of joy proclaimed in the butterfly's flight.

Similarly, Easter is a time of celebration, of new birth and the promise of life eternal.

It is the fulfillment of God's promise to us that death will not triumph.

It is the time when, for the Christian, the wonder of God's promise is experienced afresh - the newness of life, the beauty and the triumphant shout of joy - "He is not here; he has risen, just as he said." (Matt. 28:6a)

Easter is the celebration of Jesus walking out of the tomb where he had been placed in death just two days before.

It is new life in the face of death and hope in the face of disappointment.

It is the culmination of God's plan of salvation for all humanity, a plan that had been in existence from before the beginning of time.

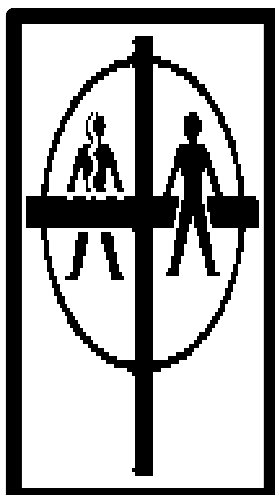
Easter is our free gift of love and grace and forgiveness, offered to us because God so loves his human beings.

Come and celebrate with us throughout the unfolding events of the Easter season.

Come and grab hold of this promise of God and see how the One who made the promise can make a marvelous difference in *your* life.



*Mark*



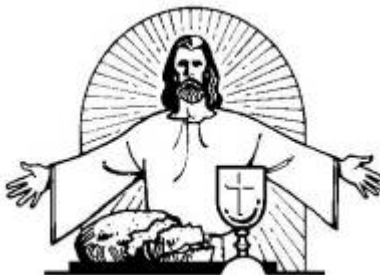
We are a  
Stephen Ministry  
Church

## "Everyone Becoming a Disciple of Christ"

The purpose of an organization's mission statement is to give it direction, focus, and motivation. It clearly states why an organization exists and what it intends to accomplish in the future. This mission statement of the First United Methodist Church of Homosassa was adopted on January 27, 2005.

### Within The Church

- Worship Services
- Music Ministries
- Men & Ladies Ensemble
- Children's Choir
- Handbell & Chimes Choir
- Christian Education
- Adult Sunday School
- Children's Sunday School
- Youth Ministry
- Lenten Soup Supers
- Fine Arts Program
- Disciple Ministry
- Prayer Ministry
- UMW Circles
- Tape Ministry
- Blood Bank
- Visitation Care Group
- Golf Outings
- Wednesday Night Dinners
- Disaster Relief Programs
- Small Groups Ministry
- United Methodist Men
- United Methodist Women
- Biblical Travel Ministry
- Counters
- Attendance Tracking

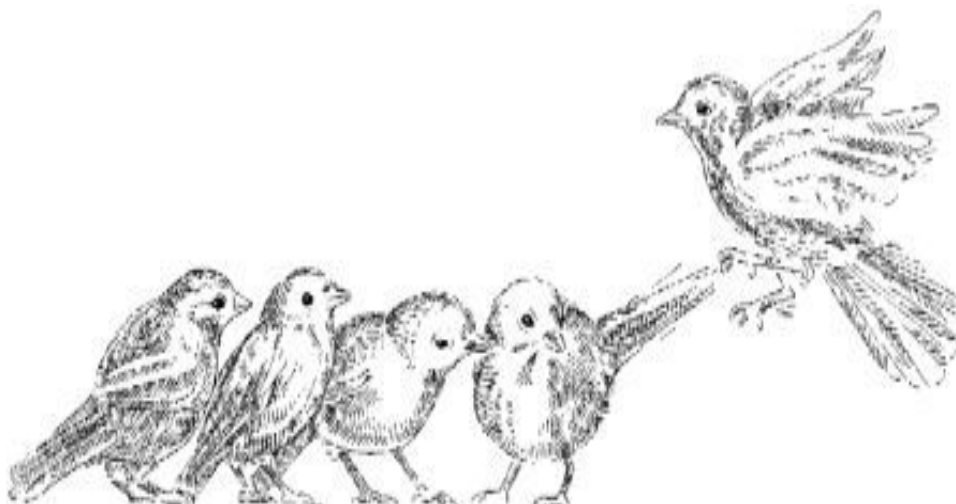


### Special dates

World Day of Prayer, 3/2/2007  
 Second Sunday in Lent, 3/4/2007  
 Purim, March 3-4, 2007  
 Third Sunday in Lent, 3/11/2007  
 Daylight Savings Time Begins,  
 March 11, 2007  
 (See Pg. 15 for story)  
 St. Patrick's Day, 3/17/2007  
 Fourth Sunday in Lent, 3/18/2007  
 First Day of Spring, 3/21/2007  
 Fifth Sunday in Lent, 3/25, 2007

### As Outreach

- Thrift Shop
- Food Pantry
- SHARE
- Holiday Baskets
- Nursing Home Ministries
- Cancer Survivors
- Current Affairs
- Healthy Body & Healthy Spirit
- Volunteers In Mission
- Habitat for Humanity
- PAWS (Pets Are Working Saints)
- Crop Walk
- Salvation Army Kettle Ministry
- Discretionary Giving Committee
- Brownies
- Boy / Girl / Cub Scouts
- Clown Ministries
- Missions Ministry
- Prison Ministry
- Children's Home
- Hospice Bereavement
- After-School Tutoring
- Angel Tree
- Stephen Ministries
- Angels With Wheels
- Prayer Blanket Ministry



# OUR CHURCH WELCOMES

The season of Lent is a time when many people who may not have been active in the life of the church are drawn to church to hear the message of hope and resurrection.

They may hear that message from the Scripture or the sermon or in the music. But they may also hear that message in a friendly hello from the person sitting next to them.

During this season of Lent, be a hope-bearer for guests who visit our church. Say hello, introduce yourself. Offer a welcome bag. Extend an invitation to share a cup of coffee in the Hospitality Center.

We welcome because God welcomes us into the message of Easter. It's a glorious thing!

~ Julie Neve

## ***Get Lent....Protestants do the sober season.***

**By Andrew Santella**

If you grew up, as I did, thinking of Lent as the Time of the Frozen Fish Sticks, you can't help but be surprised by the expanding enthusiasm for the pre-Easter season of penitence and fasting.

Lent, it seems, isn't just for Catholics anymore. Over the last few years, more Protestant churches have begun daubing ashes on the foreheads of the faithful on Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent in Western Christianity (February 21st this year).

Fasting, long familiar to Catholics as a Lenten fact of life, is increasingly popular with evangelical Christians striving for spiritual awakening. A few mainline Protestant churches even conduct foot-washing services on Maundy Thursday - the traditional commemoration of Jesus' washing the feet of his disciples—that takes place on the Thursday before Easter. Which seems like a sign that Protestants may be starting to beat Catholics at their own game.

The showy practices typical of Lent—fasting and vigils, ashes and incense—once helped define the split of the Reformation. When they broke away in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, most Protestant churches left behind anything that smacked of Catholic practice. (Though a few "high-church" denominations—Episcopalians, for example—remained partial to ashes and other staples of Catholic ritual.) So, what's at work when Protestants and Catholics find common cause in fasting and foot-washing? While no one's ready to declare an end to 500 years of ecumenical disagreement, the widening appeal of Lent reflects the interest among believers of all kinds in traditional ways of worship.

The fast and the ritual wearing of ashes predate Christianity - Job repents "in dust and ashes" in the Hebrew Bible. In the early church, it was a common to prepare for the celebration of Easter with a two- or three-day period of penitence and fasting. Originally, the fast was for new Christians preparing for baptism. But it became a way for all church faithful to commemorate Jesus' suffering and by the fourth century had expanded to 40 days. In the Middle Ages, believers limited themselves during Lent to no meat and just one meal a day. Some fasts were more extreme. According to the Catholic Encyclopedia, some church members abstained not just from meat, but from eggs, milk, cheese, and any "fruit covered by a hard shell." The ritual of putting ashes on the forehead grew out of a public confession ceremony for Christian sinners that preceded Easter. It became a prescribed practice throughout the church by the 11<sup>th</sup> century.

Though the rules for fasting and abstinence have relaxed over the centuries, Catholics still see Lent as a sacred time of self-denial, prayerful contemplation, and, yes, breaded cod. Adult Catholics are expected to fast (usually defined as eating one meal a day) on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Catholic-school kids see their lunchroom hot dogs replaced with meat-free fare. Many Catholics still "give up something for Lent" - chocolate or alcohol, for example. But the emphasis is as likely to be on almsgiving or acts of charity, in hopes of making the world or one's self better rather than simply abstaining from pleasure.

The Swiss Protestant reformer Ulrich Zwingli mounted one of the first protests against Lenten traditions in 1522. Zwingli defended Zurich printers who insisted they needed their daily meat to have the strength to do their work properly. He complained that the rules of Lent had more to do with obeying Rome than with obeying the Gospel, which, after all, said nothing about whether or not to eat sausages in the weeks preceding Easter. Martin Luther cautioned against fasting "with a view to meriting something by it as by a good work," arguing that Catholic teachings gave believers the false idea that fasting could cancel out sin and win points toward salvation. In his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, John Calvin criticized Lent as a "superstitious observance."

Protestants remained conflicted about Lent into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Ashes and fish sticks were the stuff of Catholic life, and Catholics were very much the other team. Evangelical Christians in particular skirted Lent because it smacked of high-church liturgical rule-making. In 1960, *Christianity Today* ran an editorial describing Protestant believers torn between the obligation to "do something" about observing the most sacred season in the Christian calendar" and the "sense of indignation that stirs within the Protestant breast, even to the pitch of revolt, at what the Church has done with Lent in the past." These Protestants could not separate Lenten traditions from their disdain for Rome and its elevation of "manifold regulations" over scripture.

So, how did Catholic Lenten traditions spread across the border? For one thing, the boundaries between traditions are not what they used to be. Crossing them is a steady traffic of believers and seekers. Want to meet someone who was raised Catholic? Try an evangelical megachurch, or the local United Church of Christ. About one-third of believers change churches at least once, according to commonly cited studies. Inevitably, all this changing of churches ends up changing the churches, as people bring bits of their worship traditions with them. Catholic liturgy has appropriated pop music and hand-holding in evangelical style. So, maybe it's not that surprising that more Protestants are now dipping into the well of Catholic ritual and devotions. In that sense, Lent may be part of a trend: Check out the Ecumenical Miracle Rosary, which recasts Catholic devotional beads for Protestant use by eliminating those troublesome Hail Marys.

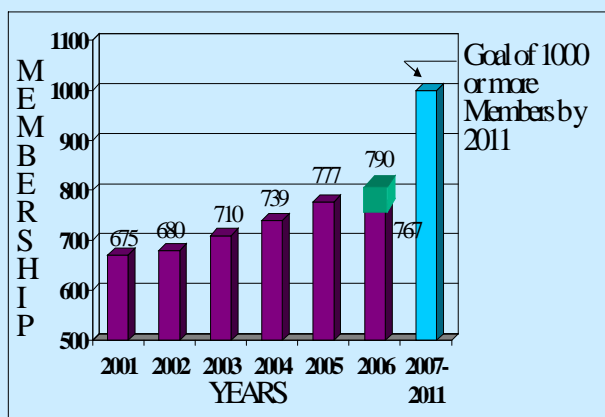
Observing Lent is also part of a Protestant move in the last generation toward more classical forms of spiritual discipline. The hugely influential 1978 book *Celebration of Discipline*, by Quaker theologian Richard J. Foster, encouraged churchgoers to rediscover fasting and meditation in "answer to a hollow world" and as a way to turn toward God. Some questioning Protestants started making like monks, practicing silence and solitude. All this was made more palatable by the improved relations between Catholics and Protestants that followed the Second Vatican Council reforms of the 1960s.

## CHURCH COUNCIL PRESENTATION - December 2006

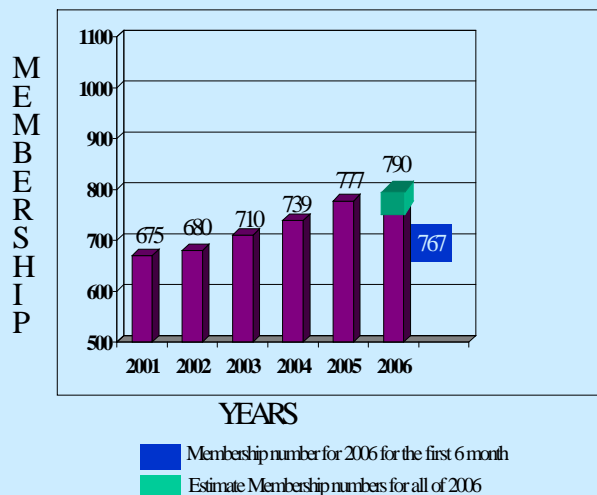
*On June 29, 2006 we held a church wide meeting to discuss what missions/ministries/programs/dreams that FUMC of Homosassa should be involved in for the next five years.*

*During the meeting more than thirty ideas were generated and we were able to consolidate the top five in order to lay the groundwork for our mission statement "Everyone becoming a disciple of Christ".*

### HOMOSASSA METHODIST CHURCH MEMBERSHIP GOAL BY 2011



### HOMOSASSA METHODIST CHURCH MEMBERSHIP TREND



### Passionate Spirituality - Group Leaders- Jan Wise and Walt Dilling

**PASSIONATE SPIRITUALITY** for a Christian is an intense desire to know God—not just to experience his blessings or do his work, not just to know about him, but to know God himself in a deeply personal way. If this becomes a priority in this church, all the other things will fall into place. God promised, “You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.” (Jeremiah 29:13) Our goal is to encourage at least 50% of our church to be involved in this seeking.

- At least 50 % of congregation engaged in seeking to know God
- More small groups with a Biblical emphasis (We have 15 now—6 Sunday School, 9 “small groups”)
- More involvement in prayer groups (similar to the men’s prayer group that meets Wednesdays)
- More involvement in foundational study groups (Disciple, Christianity 101, periodic 4-week studies)
- Leadership involved in at least one Bible refresher course a year
- Discovering ways to draw our Sunday church attendees into more of the spiritual life of the church

Financial Needs: Minimal unless no classroom space available – then building costs.

### Community Involvement - Group Leaders- Jack Schrock and Shelby Weingarten

The initial focus of the Community Outreach committee has been to encourage greater participation by our congregation in our on-going outreach efforts. In addition, we have started, in conjunction with Wonderful Wednesdays, delivery of meals to shut-ins. Hosting flu shots and arranging for life-line screenings is a focus for 2007. Future projects will look toward providing scholarships to students for church camps and/or college. We will explore funding through some existing district programs.

- 2007 Meals on Wheels, Flu shots for the Church membership, and Life Lines
- 2008 summer camp scholarships (Bible summer camps), College Scholarships.
- 2009 Children’s Scholarships
- 2010 Soup kitchen

Financial Needs: Minimal

### **Worship Types and Times- Group Leaders- Bill Gilbert and Jim Potts**

The focus of this committee is develop a blended worship of different types and times as requested by the church body. In order to develop these different types of worship there are initial equipment needs including visual sound screens, projectors, mikes, software and other equipment.

#### Financial Needs:

- 2007- \$39,000- Projectors and Screens, part time Technician
- 2008- \$11,600- Solo mike
- 2009-\$11,200- Choir mike
- 2010- \$65,000- Assistant Pastor and more audio equipment

### **Covenant with Foreign Church - Group Leaders-Marcia Bader and Pat Layman**

2007 - Marcia Bader and Mark Whittaker had spoken with the Mission Committee about the group sending at least one person on a Mission this year with a Church Conference Mission. Depending on the Faith Pledge, that the Mission group asks the Congregation for in January, the group might need up to \$1000.00 to accomplish this goal.

- 2008 Support Conference Mission Programs – could maybe be done with Faith pledges.
- 2009 Teams going on Mission trips
- 2010 Help a Covenant Church

Financial Needs: Minimal

### **Under 18 Programs - Group Leaders-Steve Skelly and Chuck Dixon**

Our Goal is to build upon the current programs and continue the growth of Sunday School programs, VBS, Youth Fellowship, Sacred Dance, and Youth Singers. We will continue to seek ways to become more relevant to children and youth in our local community by continuing to work with the school system, offering aid to teachers and coaches, providing academic and tutoring support at the church, and working with the computer committee to provide computers to low income students. We will continue our local community service mission at Bluebird Springs through the county Adopt a Park program. As the fellowship hall and youth are completed, we will launch additional programs and outreaches to expand our ability to relate to and reach children and youth.

- 2007 & 2008 - Continue current programs while adding youth mission-trip and Methodist camp opportunities
- 2009 & 2010 - Continue current programming while launching outreach oriented youth events and programs in the new youth center.

Financial Needs: Minimal to moderate



### **Month of March**

The entire month of March falls during the liturgical season known as Lent and is represented by the liturgical color purple — a symbol of penance, mortification and the sorrow of a contrite heart.

### **What is Ordinary Time?**

The rhythm of the liturgical seasons reflects the rhythm of life — with its celebrations of anniversaries and its seasons of quiet growth and maturing.

Ordinary Time, meaning ordered or numbered time, is celebrated in two segments: from the Monday following the Baptism of Our Lord up to Ash Wednesday; and from Pentecost Monday to the First Sunday of Advent.

This makes it the largest season of the Liturgical Year.

In vestments usually green, the color of hope and growth, the Church counts the thirty-three or thirty-four Sundays of Ordinary Time, inviting her children to meditate upon the whole mystery of Christ — his life, miracles and teachings — in the light of his Resurrection.

If the faithful are to mature in the spiritual life and increase in faith, they must descend the great mountain peaks of Easter and Christmas in order to "pasture" in the vast verdant meadows of tempus per annum, or Ordinary Time.

Sunday by Sunday, the Pilgrim Church marks her journey through the tempus per annum as she processes through time toward eternity.





### March 11: Decision Time for our Building Program

Our church building program is at a critical cross-roads.

We have been anxious to begin construction on the third and final phase of this program

for several years, but have been waiting to accumulate additional cash to keep the mortgage we will need to a prudent level.

It has now become clear that this approach is not working.

The problem is quite simple. Construction costs are escalating so fast that the amount of cash we need for a down payment keeps moving out of reach.

We estimate that the cost of Phase 3 is increasing at the rate of \$115,000 to \$120,000 each year.

Our building income from the current 3-year pledge campaign is only slightly more than that, so we are gaining very little on our goal.

Building materials are in great demand throughout the world, especially in developing countries like China, India, and Brazil.

Steel, concrete, lumber and other materials represent about 40% of total building costs, and have been increasing at rates between 5% and 15% annually.

We expect these costs to continue to escalate as these countries continue to develop. These rapidly increasing costs offset the money we are accumulating for construction.

But we have an opportunity right now to break out of this vicious circle.

We recently retired our Phase 2 mortgage and we are now debt-free.

If we can raise \$200,000 in cash by the end of March, we will add that to the nearly \$570,000 we expect to have accumulated for construction by the end of this year.

That would provide a down payment of about 1/3 of the total cost of Phase 3 and monthly payments we can afford, based on a 20-year mortgage.

We then plan to make future mortgage payments from 3-year pledge campaigns until our church membership grows to where the mortgage payments can be come a line item in the Operating Budget.

That's why your Building Committee decided to launch a campaign to raise \$200,000 in one-time, cash-only gifts.

If successful, we could begin construction within a year, giving us the use of these new facilities four or more years sooner than if we just continue to wait, and we'll save over a half million dollars in inflated construction costs in the process.

You've been hearing about this campaign for the past month.

Now the time has come to decide whether we move ahead with Phase 3 construction soon, or place Phase 3 on hold for an indefinite period of time.

At Sunday worship on March 11, you will be asked to bring your gifts for this campaign to the altar.

We will need a substantial number of gifts in the \$500 to \$5,000 range, along with those of both smaller and larger amounts.

We hope you will embrace this challenge, and respond enthusiastically with a personally-significant gift.

Remember that we are not asking for pledges, but for one-time, cash donations.

Cash may be any form of payment that we can utilize immediately – cash, check, money order, electronic fund transfer, transfer of stocks/bonds/mutual fund shares, withdrawal of IRA or 401K funds, etc.

Please call the church office if you'd like information on any of these options.

So, March 11 is decision time.

If we are successful in this campaign, we will move ahead immediately with architect's drawings and engineering specifications for phase 3.

We'd expect to solicit bids by the end of this year, and if satisfactory, call a church conference shortly after bid opening for membership approval.

Actual construction could begin early in 2008.

Our dream is within reach.

With your help, we can begin immediately!

*Your Building For Tomorrow Committee*



Sunday, 2/11/2007 - God's Clods (our clown ministry) delivers the retired Phase II mortgage papers to Pastor. Mark.



Pastor Mark & Bill Gilbert, "burn the mortgage" using modern technology - a shredder.

Phase I 30-year mortgage was paid off in 9 years.

Phase II 15-year mortgage was paid off in 7 years.

### Education Corner

#### Patience Nave

Vacation Bible School will have a new face this year--both in the director and in the format! Kim Bennett will direct the one-week program. It will be at night, for three hours, and the whole church family is invited to participate. It's going to be fun, and we hope that many will come.

We have known for some time that we need to do more things that allow the adults, youth, and children to work together on something. We need to let the children and youth know they are important to us, and this is a great opportunity to do that. Also, we'll probably come away feeling a bit younger as we enter into some fun with them!

Please give serious consideration to being a part of this cross-generational week. It could become a very important part of the growth in youth ministry for which we have been praying.

Sunday School still needs a teacher for the young people, middle and high school. I know there is someone out there whom God would have to work with these youth.

Please call me if you would consider this opportunity.

### The United Methodist Fine Arts Committee Invites You To

## A Spring Music Concert

Performed By  
*The Nature Coast Singers*  
under the direction of  
Carol Ayer  
with accompanist  
Kathy Hackmer



A delightful montage of classical, Russian sacred,  
and traditional spiritual music  
will be presented for your enjoyment  
including  
"Alleluia" by Bach  
"A Gaelic Blessing" by John Ritter  
"In Still Of Night" by Brahms

Come and enjoy a Sunday afternoon of beautiful music!

March 18, 2007 3:00 pm  
United Methodist Church Of Homosassa

Nature Coast is a not-for-profit corporation  
with the purpose of promoting the  
appreciation and performance of  
classical and sacred music.  
Nature Coast supports and provides funding  
for scholarship programs in the field of music.

The Concert is a free-will offering, no ticket purchase required.

### Walking on the Path

(Note: This month's devotional was written by guest author, Richard Stanard, and prayer by Robin Van Cleef.)

*"The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, 'Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.' "*  
John 1:29



Most of us have little or no direct experience with a real lamb. Pictures show a lamb precious in appearance: snow white fur, pink skin, floppy ears, the pink nose, a sweet little face.

I have a photograph of a lamb resting comfortably in the arms of a little girl. This photograph gives me new insight of Jesus as the Lamb of God. As I study my photograph, I ask myself: "Who could possibly want to hurt such a precious, helpless, defenseless creature as is this lamb? What would it take for the lamb's master to allow harm to befall this innocent, trusting creature?"

Though Israel two thousand years ago could not see this, we know from Scripture that Jesus is God's lamb (I Cor 5:7), more precious by far than the animal in my picture!

Yet God allowed His Lamb to be harmed unmercifully over an unimaginably protracted period of time till death claimed him. But death could not hold Him, and this empirically shows us that, with God's loving omnipotence, death's power, though strong, is not to be feared.

So how do I find this loving omnipotence? The formula is almost too simple: it is my heavenly father God's unconditional gift to me, and all I need do to feel its power is to by faith embrace it and carry it with me in my heart (Eph 2:8).

Prayer: Lord, in this Lenten season, I sense my need of You. Yet I'm not quite sure how to reach You.

I heard somebody say, "Read your Bible," but too often the words are like bullets that ricochet off my brain.

I heard somebody say, "Pray," but my prayers, hurled heavenward, fall back to earth like lifeless stones.

I heard somebody say, "Meditate," but my wandering mind was lost in a desert of random thoughts.

Lord, speak to me through Your Word, and let it penetrate my mind, my heart. Lord, speak to me through my prayers, and turn the lifeless stones to bread. Lord, speak to me in the midst of meditation, that I may see, amid life's seeming wilderness, the way, the truth, the life.

A prayer for Lent by Robin E. Van Cleef

## THE MARCH WIND DOTH BLOW

A cold snap gives us a good reason to curl up with a good book -- and it's a way to open our minds and renew our spirits as the Lenten season approaches:

1. "Runaway Lives" by Tom Smiley is a book that gives logical reasons why lives spin out of control and practical steps to restore order and sanity to life.

2. "Great Stories Remembered" compiled by Joe L. Wheeler. This is a collection in easy-to-read print of many short stories.

3. "90 Minutes in Heaven" by Don Piper, a true story of death and life. Don Piper's car was crushed by a semi-truck. Medical personnel said he died instantly. Ninety minutes after the wreck, while a minister prayed for him, Piper miraculously returned to life on earth with only the memory of inexpressible heavenly bliss. The experience dramatically changed his life.

4. "A Wild Ride Up The Cupboards" by Ann Bauer, a novel about a child who at 4 years of age starts to withdraw from the world as he drifts into autism, and follows his parents' struggle to sustain their marriage. This drama poses provocative real-life questions. How much should a mother sacrifice for her children? Is it ever worth sacrificing a marriage for a child? How much intervention is too much?

5. "The Dream Lives On!" by Rose Sims. In the tradition of Catherine Marshall, this is the inspiring story of one woman's far-reaching vision for her nation and for the church. She had worked tirelessly with her husband for 27 years

to reopen and renew small rural churches. When he was dying, he challenged Rose to carry on his vision for the country church. Rose persisted through single parenthood, with a son in trouble with the law, the terminal illness of a second spouse, and professional setbacks. Her story is filled with insights and wisdom for those with the courage to live their dreams.

6. "A Life On the Road" by Charles Kuralt. This is a blast from the past for those who remember this popular TV program. Mr. Kuralt takes us with him down those roads with humor, warmth, affection and an eloquent insight into America and the people who enriched his life during his travels.

7. "A Listening Ear - Reflections on Christian Caring" by Paul Tournier, a well-known Swiss physician and counselor. It's most important to learn to listen - to really take time to listen to people and to God. It helps people to talk honestly about their distress, frustrations and rejections. You'll find a renewed spirit for your own life when you listen and care.

8. "Duty to Die" by Janice Thompson, a gripping novel that examines the question, When does the "right-to-die" become your legal duty? In this story, the Hippocratic Oath is replaced with the Oath of Duty. The government has more than enough power to ignore the rights guaranteed in the Fourteenth Amendment. Armed only with moral courage and a gift for subterfuge, medical student Aaron Landers puts his life on the line to rescue "Defectives" from the ruthless Duty Police. The growing underground rescue movement could be exposed and Aaron could be facing his own "humane" execution.

9. "The Kite Runner" by Khaled Hosseini is a story of two young boys who are friends in Afghanistan and an incredible story of the culture. Written by an Afghan-American, it is brilliantly and sensitively written. There is some raw cruelty and some parts are hard to read. It shows how childhood choices affect our adult lives. It's not so much a story of Mideast politics as a story of life in a beautiful country torn asunder. An intimate account of family and friendships, betrayal and salvation.

10. "Aging, Ailments, and Attitudes" by Cathy Lee Phillips. This book takes a humorous and poignant look at the process of aging. If you are lucky, you will experience progressive lenses, night sweats, fine lines and new ailments. The author says aging is a gift that is denied to some so why not allow a good dose of faith and laughter to ease some anxieties of growing older? We have the love of an eternal God that will see us safely to the end of this life....and beyond.

Don't forget to browse the DVD selections. Our latest movie is "A Walk to Remember," a family edited version. Mandy Moore plays Jamie, a preacher's daughter, whose self-confidence doesn't depend on the opinions of others. When she meets Landon, his life is changed when he finds trust, hope, goals, faith and unconditional love, remarkable steps on a walk to remember.

Best Wishes from  
Your Library Staff  
Helen Lefave and Barbara Jackson



The quote of the month is by  
Jay Leno:

"With hurricanes, tornados, fires out of control, mud slides, flooding, severe thunderstorms tearing up the country from one end to another, and with the threat of bird flu and terrorist attacks, are we sure this is a good time to take God out of the Pledge of Allegiance?"

- Blessed are those who can give without remembering and take without forgetting.
- The irony of life is that, by the time you're old enough to know your way around, you're not going anywhere.
- Frustration is trying to find your glasses without your glasses.

I've had two bypass surgeries, a hip replacement, new knees. Fought prostate cancer and diabetes. I'm half blind, can't hear anything quieter than a jet engine, take 40 different medications that make me dizzy, winded, and subject to blackouts. Have bouts with dementia. Have poor circulation; hardly feel my hands and feet anymore. Can't remember if I'm 85 or 92. Have lost all my friends. But, thank God, I still have my driver's license.



**United Methodist Women  
CELEBRATES CALL TO PRAYER  
AND SELF DENIAL**  
by Myrna Evans



On Tuesday, March 20, the United Methodist Women will culminate their observance of a week of Prayer and Self Denial with a Fellowship Meal and Love Feast.

The breakfast featuring a variety of special breads will be interwoven with the program beginning at 9:30.

A guided meditation will be distributed at the February Renewal Brunch and at the March Circle meetings for use during the week prior to the program.

The theme this year is "Simply Loving" and the offerings will be allocated to the Retirement Benefits Fund which provides pensions and healthcare for retired deaconesses and missionaries for whom the Woman's Division is responsible.

Those who will benefit have served for many years, usually with very small salaries, in mission schools, children's homes and a variety of church agencies.

The "Love Feast" is a ceremony which is included in the United Methodist Book of Worship. While its origins were in the early Christian church, its modern usage was introduced by the Moravians in Germany. It is a fellowship meal which includes sharing of food, prayer, conversation and hymns. It can be led by a lay person and expresses oneness with Christ and one another. We will use it to express our oneness with those who have served in our behalf.

**Please plan to join us. All women are welcome.**

**Circle Duties for the month:**

- Thrift Shop ~ Faith Hope Circle
- Wednesday Lenten Soup Suppers ~  
March 7: Ruth Circle  
March 14: Helping Hand Circle  
March 21: Faith Hope Circle  
March 28: Dorcas Circle

*A letter from your Editor...*

*I had walked into my office thinking, "the whole month of March is in Lent. Ugh! How gloomy...ashes and penitence...put on a black shroud and let the sorrow, remorse, regret and teeth-gnashing begin!"*

*The words "spiritual renewal" came into my head, and I immediately "Googled" the phrase on my computer in hopes that enlightening and enriching materials would deliver me from my bout of pessimism.*

*How surprised I was to be presented with: "A Look At Hell" by Pastor Bill Hybels.*

*Pastor's Hybels stated that "Hell is a spiritual reality that can be countered only by the Cross of Christ. We end up in Hell if we reject the person and work of Jesus. The truth has three implications:*

- *For unbelievers: fall to your knees and repent.*
- *For believers: rejoice over what you have been spared from.*
- *For this church: what we do matters because we're a rescue operation for humanity."*

*Was this a karmic interlude between our Pastor Whittaker's series of Lenten sermons about "The Kingdom of God" and the up-and-coming Holy Week's "The Passion of The Christ"?*

*Enlightenment and enrichment came from My Boss (the earthly one) and my copy-editor.*

*Pastor Whittaker's take on this article was, "While it is all true, it is a limited and narrow view of the gospel that does not talk about or presume grace."*

*Also, our Church's Shepherd expressed his focus on "loving and celebrating people into the church"...not threatening them with hell-fire and brimstone.*

*From my copy-editor, Jan Wise,*

*I received the following:*

*"The purpose of Genesis is to:*

**NOTIFY** its readers of what has happened, what is happening and what is scheduled to happen.

**EDIFY** believers by printing material that encourages and strengthens their Christian walk.

**GLORIFY** God by being one of his instruments of communication at Homosassa Methodist Church and wherever else he may choose to spread the word through this publication."

*My hope is that "Genesis" offers you insights during the mourning and penance, to find hope, and to look for the myriad of ways hope appears in our everyday lives. Look for the presence of the Spirit amongst us.*

*Your Sister In Christ, Judith*



Sitting L-R: Maureen Samstag, Donna Ludwick, Jackie LaMountain, Pat Blake, Betty Bennett, Peggy Benson  
 Standing L-R: Kay Bast, Kim Bennett, June Oltendorf, Laurie Stainton, Lib Gaines, Betty (from W. Virginia)  
*My apologies for the fuzzy photo, Ladies. \*Judith\**

### **BAZAAR WORKSHOP January 25th, 2007**

All circle leaders attended the initial planning meeting of the UMW Bazaar Committee's Work Shop to launch the menu of crafts and projects to be assembled and created for our major financial event of the year, the Annual November Bazaar. Dorcas Circle will have the Crafts; Faith Hope Circle - Kitchen Items (Soup Mixes, Jams & Jellies, Homemade Horse Radish); Ruth Circle will present the Bazaar Luncheon; Mary Martha Circle will be in charge of Trash & Treasure; Helping Hand will do the Bake Table & Candy; Peggy Benson will once more assemble her Christmas Shoppe.

All proceeds go to the United Women's Channels of Global Ministries to be used for providing clean water and nourishing foods, paying for medical care, supporting missionaries, printing Christian education materials, assisting in community development, and supporting other responses to human needs.

This traditional event initiates the kick-off of the Church's holiday season. Many in the area look forward to discovering special Christmas gifts for men, women, children, friends, and even their pets.

For the next eight months women of the church will be hand-crafting one-of-a-kind gifts, useful household gadgets, home décor, jewelry, stocking stuffers, clothing, and much too much more to list.

Under the direction of Pat Blake, Chairman, the Bazaar Workshop will meet every second and fourth Thursday of the month in Room 106.



***Prayer for Creative Work:** O most Glorious and Blessed God, I present myself and this work into Your hands. Do with it as You will. Guide my thoughts. Hold my hands, that You alone are writing, painting, carving through me, producing whatever You wish. I prostrate myself into Your most loving embrace in thanks that You give me talent, inspiration, discipline to do Your work. Amen. - Sophy Burnham*

**"MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK."**

**Come join us on Thursday mornings, and see what we are up to....**

**~ Judith Huffer, Publicity Chairperson ~**



**P.S. The boss (Pat Blake) asked me to include a 'shout-out' for JELLY GLASSES (any size or shape).**

**We have fruit that is being harvested now, and we need to get started with preserving our jellies and jams.**





## WELCOME BASKETS

What can you do for someone who is a new neighbor on your street, unfamiliar with the area and has not attended here for the first time?

FUMC will now offer Welcome Baskets for this very purpose! We have contacted local merchants in the area who have agreed to donate items of interest and education to FUMC as a part of this new ministry.

Items that FUMC will be donating are a tri-fold with committee, ministry, small group and other important information, worship times, a pen and a CD talking about FUMC and even a special "come worship with us" invite.

Vendors participating are Homosassa Springs Florist, Kash N Karry, Pizza Hut, Homosassa Wildlife Park, Manatee Office Supply, and the Chamber of Commerce.

In the Narthex today you will see a display table with examples of items to be included. More items will be added as the list of vendors grows.

The Thursday morning Ladies Prayer Group will be putting these baskets together as part of their mission statement.

All we ask is that you take 'one' basket to a new neighbor to welcome them to the area.

The decorating committee will once again be decorating the church with lilies for Easter Sunday services.

We will be taking orders on three Sundays:  
March 18,  
March 25 and  
April 1.

As we did with the poinsettias, you will need to fill out the flower order form that will be next to the flower order box in the narthex.

The Easter lilies will be \$10.00 each. Please fill out the form completely, then staple your check made out to FUMC or cash to the order form, and place it in the flower box.

You may pick up your flower after the 11:00 AM service on Easter Sunday.  
Thank you in advance for helping to make our church extra-special for Easter!

~ Your Decorating Committee. ~



## PRAYER BLANKET MINISTRY

There is a great deal of love, concern, and prayer that is instilled through the creation of a prayer blanket for a particular person whose physical, mental, or emotional "body" is not functioning adequately.

The Visitation Committee has embraced this Ministry as a very meaningful outreach to:

1. Members of our congregation
2. Persons who attend our faith community
3. Relatives of members or attendees.

Many requests are made to the Visitation Committee to have these blankets created. We want to remind you that in order to continue this successful Ministry, we need to follow the guidelines established by the Visitation Committee as enumerated below.

1. Each request for a Prayer Blanket will be submitted to the Visitation Committee for approval. Unfortunately, not all requests can be granted.
2. The order in which the Prayer Blankets will be completed will be determined by the Visitation Committee. Special consideration will be given to members of First United Methodist Church of Homosassa, and those in critical need.
3. Only one Prayer Blanket can be completed each week.

The coordinator for this Ministry is Ann Eckman. Requests for a Prayer blanket, or for more information, should be directed to Ann by calling 382-3671.

## Maundy Thursday Services

April 5, 2007 at 7:30 pm

God's gift of Jesus Christ involves his walking out of the tomb on Sunday morning.

The resurrection is important - critical - but without Jesus' obedience even unto death, it would never have happened.



Maundy Thursday is our opportunity to remember with awe and to wonder anew at the love which enabled Jesus to go to the cross. The service is about Jesus' willingness to die for us so our sins might be forgiven and we might be judged "not guilty" by God in spite of our guilt.

It is a service of shadows that starts with the worship center well-lit. Then, as the service moves forward, the lights are dimmed following each brief meditation and musical presentation. At the conclusion, the shadows of death cover the room, and we leave in the quiet of the tomb to await the light and glory of Easter morning.

It is a beautifully moving service, and we invite you to come and bring your friends and neighbors to share in this experience.

~ Pastor Mark ~



### Another Story of Stewardship In the 5<sup>th</sup> Dimension

Giving Appreciated Stock is a great way to make a significant contribution to the church and also gain a double tax benefit. First, you receive a charitable income tax deduction for the fair market value of the gift. And the deduction can be carried forward for up to five years if needed. Second, you avoid paying capital gain tax on the long-term appreciation.

Gene and Gerry Generous are faithful and enthusiastic members of their church and want to support it with a special gift of \$25,000. Rather than withdraw that amount in cash from their savings, they began to look at other alternatives. Their stock portfolio was one. After talking with their tax advisor, they realized that they could substantially reduce their income tax that year if they gave the gift in shares of stock rather than cash.

A company that had done very well over many years was XYZ Enterprises. Gene and Gerry had more than enough shares so that they could make their gift and still have some left in their portfolio. So they contacted their broker and arranged to have \$25,000 worth of stock shares transferred directly to their church. The church issued them a letter of acknowledgment and thanks and promptly sold the stock at the market value.

Since Mr. and Mrs. Generous are in the 25% tax bracket, they will receive a charitable deduction in the amount of \$6,250. And since the shares of stock cost them only \$5,000 many years before, they also avoid paying tax on the \$20,000 capital gain, resulting in another deduction.

Gene and Gerry Generous certainly lived up to their name. And they are pleased to have made a significant gift in such a "win-win" way. The church benefited from their generosity and they benefited from a large tax deduction.

To learn more about tax savings through charitable gifts or to make an appointment to talk with someone about giving appreciated stock to the church, call the office (628-4083).

~ Submitted by the Permanent Endowment Committee ~

### A LENTEN VERSE

"Remind us, Lord, that we are dust.  
And, when reminded, lead us to remember that most  
wondrous miracle--that in your hands, dust lives!"

2 Cor. 5:20-21.

### HOLISTIC SMALL GROUPS

#### New Group To Launch Soon!

No matter who you are, we have a Holistic Small Group for you:

- Men's Prayer with Clarence Kohler,
- Marilyn's Siegel's Bible Study,
- First Place with Diane Gibbs,
- Chronic Pain Support with Lisa Specht,
- Cancer Survivors with Anna Cooley,
- Current Events Discussion Group with Bill Ackeman
- Living In Christian Community with Jan Wise & Elizabeth Smith.

Call the church office for dates and times, or check online calendars at [www.lumc.org](http://www.lumc.org).

How about starting your own group for Single Adults? or Motorcycle Enthusiasts? Or Golfers? or Tennis Players? or Parents of school aged children?

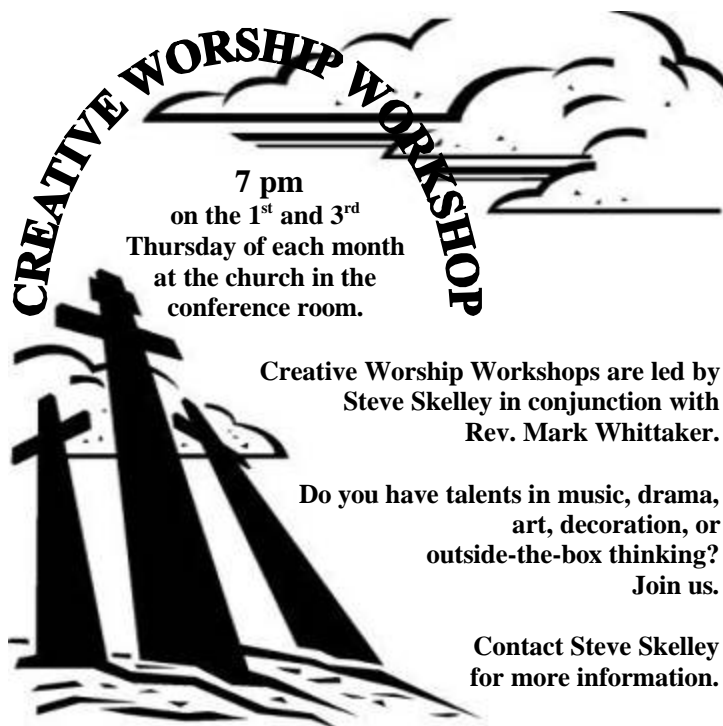
Contact Steve Skelley at the church office or by email at [StevenSkelley@yahoo.com](mailto:StevenSkelley@yahoo.com)

### CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

The Cancer Support Group meets  
every fourth Tuesday from  
1PM to 2PM in Room 203.

The next meeting is March 27 .  
We laugh, we cry, we share, we care.

Call Anna Cooley 382-4132 or  
Merl Hoar 382-4555



**CREATIVE WORSHIP WORKSHOP**

7 pm  
on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Thursday of each month  
at the church in the  
conference room.

Creative Worship Workshops are led by  
Steve Skelley in conjunction with  
Rev. Mark Whittaker.

Do you have talents in music, drama,  
art, decoration, or  
outside-the-box thinking?  
Join us.

Contact Steve Skelley  
for more information.

# WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Michael & Marion Rogers  
6411 Flanders Lane  
Crystal River, 34429  
Michael from Huntsville, TX  
Marion from Amenia, NY  
352-302-7659  
352-302-7660

Mel & Linda Gordy  
6 Linder Circle  
Homosassa, 34446  
Mel from Melbourne, FL  
Linda from Marion, OH  
382-0683

Ernest Miles  
6315 W Country Club Drive  
Homosassa, 34448  
From Millbrook, NY  
621-8074

Wayne & Krissy Brown  
72 Cypress Blvd. W  
Homosassa, 34446  
From Sellenberg, IL  
502-931-0327

Gunter & Carole Deyo-Fahl  
55 Greentree Street  
Homosassa, 34446  
Gunter from Dinslaken, Germany  
Carole from Goshen, NY  
382-3259

Ron & Marie Witham  
6079 W. Grant Street  
Homosassa, 34448  
From Milo, ME  
207-314-2412

Jim Behuniak  
7080 W Village Drive  
Homosassa, 34446  
From Homosassa, FL  
464-3348

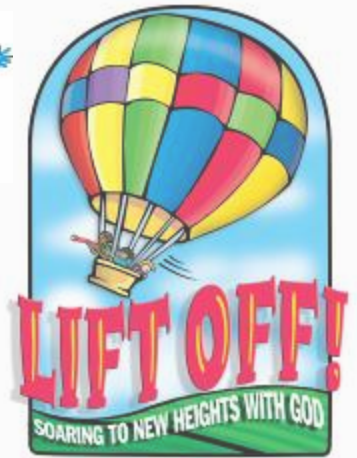
Eve Walsh  
7008 W Bedfordshire Loop  
Homosassa, 34446  
From Poughkeepsie, NY  
382-3060

Bill & Neretta Brobst  
8117 S Coconut Palm Drive  
Homosassa, 34448  
Bill from Aliquippa, PA  
Neretta from Pittsburgh, PA  
621-3736

Calling All  
Sky Scouts!



Join us for  
Vacation Bible School



Dear Church Family,

We are inviting all children, youth,  
and adults to be a part of the  
excitement at our Vacation Bible School,

**"LIFT OFF! SOARING TO NEW HEIGHTS WITH GOD."**

With this hot-air balloon-theme VBS, the children will become Sky Scouts and learn about the sport of hot-air ballooning as well as connecting what they learn to reaching new heights with God.

The Bible stories presented at High Fly Bible Time illustrate the Flight Plans and encourage further exploration of the Bible. The children will extend their learning through every activity: making their own special memories in Pilot Projects, singing fun tunes at Sky Songs, experiencing science activities at the Launch Lab, participating in recreational activities at Rip Line Rec, and enjoying tasty snacks and preparing mission packets at the Cloud Café, where the motto is "Serve and Be Saved."

These are the five flight plans for soaring to new heights with God:

- I WILL FOLLOW
- I WILL TRUST
- I WILL LISTEN
- I WILL REPENT
- I WILL SERVE

A youth and adult Bible Study will be offered while the children are enjoying their activities.

- For Youth - "Crosswinds" - a Spirit-driven Experience.
- For Adults - "Lift Up My Soul" - Taking Flight On the Winds of Faith.
- A curriculum for "two's," toddlers, and pre-k will be available.

Come and enjoy this high-flying adventure with us  
June 11 - June 15, 2007  
6 PM TO 9 PM

To register for our hot-air balloon adventure, or to find out more,  
call the church office at 628-4083 or  
Kim Bennett, VBS Director, at 382-3941

### Prayer for Young People:

God our Father, you see your children growing up in an unsteady and confusing world: Show them that your ways give more life than the ways of the world, and that following you is better than chasing after selfish goals. Give them strength to hold their faith in you, and to keep alive their joy in your creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



**MARCH BIRTHDAYS**

1	15
Glenn Harwood	Gerry Green
Stan Sobolak	17
2	Barbara Gilbert
Gladys Bevan	Pat Burns
Helen Vaught	Joanne Holcomb
Larry Stainton	18
James Haskell	James Graham
3	Pat Kern
Henry Mangels	Jerry Winters
5	21
Frances McCrady	Shelby Weingarten
6	Blanche Ashlock
Priscilla Oleson	Charles Peters
Eleanor Bennett	22
Ida Bradley	Ed Wrenn
Janet Watson	Brenda Loper
7	Linda Clawson
Alan Shimp	Wendy Miles
Fran Smith	23
Shirley Dunkle	Zip Bender
Pam Cleary	Jim Price
8	24
Edna Forney	Emily Walker
Daisy Janke	25
William Busby	Gene Ludlow
Glenda Gable	Vera Irish
9	Bill Yuhasz
Dolores Briggs	26
Pat Rada	Jerry Cole
Margaret Woods	Janet Tanner
Margo Blum	Barry Reichard
10	Mary Jane Houchins
Richard Barrett	27
12	Ray Ritter
Shirley Cromer	David Benthussen
Rolland Custer	Timothy Sunderland
William Squires	29
13	George Cole
John Guthrie	Judy Lee
Pat Barton	30
14	Larry Rogers
Nan Lawrence	31
Lorraine Wood	Peter Magamoll
Mary Lee Millikin	

**MARCH ANNIVERSARIES**

5
Marilyn & Clarence
Kohler ~ 52 yrs
Jackie & Sheldon
LaMountain ~ 14 yrs
9
Dayna & Ron
Middlebrooks ~ 11 yr
11
Lavonne & Kevin
Brennan ~ 1 yr
12
Joyce & Robert
Leaming ~ 16 yrs
13
Mary & Fred
Casper ~ 53 yrs
17
Sandra & Donald
Tam ~ 5 yrs
18
Elly & Arthur
Case ~ 62 yrs
Nell & Bill
Lent ~ 58 yrs
20
Katherine & Vernon
Tidswell ~ 9 yrs
Ann & Donald
Parkinson ~ 3 yrs
23
Faye & Ozzie
Schmitt ~ 61 yrs
24
Patience & Wallace
Nave ~ 56 yrs
Pat & John
Rada ~ 56 yrs
27
Janet & Peter
Magamoll ~ 64 yrs
30
Regina & William
Parks ~ 63 yrs
Barbara & Robert
Bellcase ~ 49 yrs
B.J. & Duane
Smith ~ 60 yrs

**Nursing Centers**

<u>Barrington</u>
Ken McGuire
<u>Brentwood</u>
Evelyn Bash
Rene Dube
Betty Pettit
Ann Specht
<u>Cypress Cove</u>
Louise Brechka
Jack Mallett
George Mestjian
Willie Smith
Elta Whilden
Julia Wilkinson
<u>Sugarmill Manor</u>
Harvey Albere
Del Parker
Grace Payne
Ray Short
<u>Diamond Ridge</u>
Marjorie Cook
Maddie Wallace
<u>Hospice At Home</u>
Dea Miller
Wallace Nave



When using FUMC for small groups, meetings, etc., we ask for your help in making sure that the building is secure after you leave.

**REMEMBER:**

**STOP**

Check that all lights and fans are off. **LOOK** to make sure that everyone has their belongings and has left the building before you... **LOCK** the doors!

Thank you!



Michael Rodgers, Night Security

**MEDICAL EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE**

Did you know that the church has some medical equipment that can be loaned out?

Do you have a relative, friend or neighbor who uses a walker or a wheelchair?

Does someone you know need crutches for awhile?

We can probably provide those. Just ask Dale Evans or Sharon Smith what might be available for that person to use, or call us at 628-4083, for more information.

Sharon Smith,  
Parish Nurse

Reporter interviewing a 104-year-old woman:  
"And what do you think is the best thing about being 104?" the reporter asked.  
She simply replied, "No peer pressure."

-----  
The nice thing about being senile is  
you can hide your own Easter eggs.  
-----

My memory's not as sharp as it used to be.  
Also, my memory's not as sharp as it used to be.

-----  
It's scary when you start making the  
same noises as your coffee maker.





## SHARE of Florida by Tom & Nancy Pearo



We are well into our seventh year with SHARE.

Volunteers have put in many hours and some of their own money to keep this program going.

Everyone is doing their part to make it work. From registration team, to truckers, and food handlers, everyone is vital to the overall success of SHARE.

Most are there every month. Others come when they can or when there is a special need like in November and December when we need to have two lines.

Families that take advantage of the low prices for food and vegetables are grateful.

They know that to buy the same foods in the supermarket would cost them at least twice as much.

Our efforts help so many, making us want to keep SHARE going.

We need to get the word out to everyone in the area and "word of mouth" is the best way.

So if you know a neighbor or friend, co-worker or anyone who has a few mouths to feed, please tell them about SHARE.

Take a newspaper to them and show them how to get started.

You'll be doing them a favor and us, too, because we can't continue without buyers, and the more we sell, the better the bargains are for everyone.

### MARCH BASIC

Basic Package guaranteed retail value of \$36 or more....You pay only \$18!

- \* Birdseye Viola Garlic Chicken Meal
- \* Boneless Skinless Chicken Breast Fillets
- \* Sliced Canadian Bacon
- \* Italian Rope Sausage
- \* Italian Meatballs
- \* Maple Sausage Links

\* Indicates 1 item each sold at Non Select Sites for \$12.00 as "Double Meat."

Plus a variety of fruits & vegetables

### MARCH SPECIALS

Spiral Ham \$21.50  
8-9 lbs.

Pasta Pack \$14.25  
16oz. Tri Color Tortellini,  
13oz. Monterey & Swiss Pierogies,  
18oz. Stuffed Shells,  
18oz. Stuffed Manicotti,  
12 oz. Sun Dried Tomato Rigatoni,  
13oz. Cheddar Pierogies

NOTE: Due to market conditions food items may be subject to last minute changes.



### Daylight-Saving Time Starts March 11

Nearly two years ago, President Bush signed a sweeping energy bill that will lengthen daylight-saving time by four weeks starting this year.

As a result, Daylight Saving Time will start on the second Sunday in March (March 11) instead of the first Sunday in April. It will end on the first Sunday in November (November 4) instead of the last Sunday of October.



Calligraphers for occasional beautiful writing. Benefits out of this world!!

Contact Theresa in the church office.

Facilitators -- contact Steve Skelley in the church office or Marilyn Watson -- one of us will gladly find you a group to hang out with!

Folders needed for Church Bulletins on Friday mornings. Come on in at 9AM and join us for coffee, pastry, and jovial company. With "many hands" we are done - lickey-split - and off to Friday errands.

Contact Jean Busby at 628-9149 if interested.

Food Pantry: In need of volunteers and a new coordinator. This very rewarding ministry reaches the most needy in our community by providing groceries and fresh bakery products to those that come needing help. Last year we provided 495 bags of groceries to needy families. Please consider being a part of the dedicated team that keeps this ministry alive. Contact the church office to volunteer, donate food or to pick up the donations.

Anyone with a passion for prayer -- additional prayer groups now forming. Please contact Marilyn Watson @ [marilynwww@netscape.com](mailto:marilynwww@netscape.com) or 382-3751.

## Dear praying friends,

Joe is headed off to Florida with Pastor *Ogaat* (pronounced Oh-got) later this month, so it is a busy time of planning right now in addition to our usual full-time ministries. We are so thankful to have you standing behind us in prayer!

### PRAISES

- Our **finances** are a huge praise this month. We received quite a few large gifts recently, which has kicked our mission account well out of negative territory for the first time in nine months. Praise God! Thanks to all those who were so generous and all those who continue to display generosity each month.

- We have gained quite a few **new supporters** in the past couple months: five couples/individuals and one church, totaling \$450! Praise God for all those willing to commit to regular support. We now have monthly financial pledges totaling 100% of our reduced budget. (The only negative financial news is that we now have to raise another \$1,000 a month to be fully supported since the Thai baht has increased 15% in a year. We have lost \$300 of buying power because of the dollar's slide here.)

- Caleb had a great **soccer season**, scoring three of his team's four goals in the season-ending tournament. He was easily the highest scorer for the year, and we lost track after a few games!



Team & Moms

Pastor *Ogaat* had a smooth interview Monday for his **American visa**, which he successfully received. Embassy interviews are usually successful but rarely relaxing!

### PRAYERS

- Joe and Pastor *Ogaat* will leave Chiang Mai on Feb. 17 to **attend the missions conference** at our home church, Northside Baptist in St. Petersburg, Fla., USA. They will return March 3. Please pray for safe travel; the Spirit's leading in many speaking engagements; open hearts to our message; good visits with friends and family; Joe's translation abilities; and especially for Elaine and the children as they remain in Chiang Mai.



Ogaat family

- Please pray as Joe and Pastor *Ogaat* brainstorm during those looooooong layovers in Taiwan and L.A. about **plans** for Cool Shade of Life Church. We want to be a loving and effective witness for the Lord here in our neighborhood and with others this year. Joe also would like to start considering options for training new Thai church leaders.

- Some of **Elaine's** 2<sup>nd</sup>-grade students are struggling with learning disabilities and other problems. Please pray for wisdom in knowing how to handle these sometimes overwhelming needs.

- Also, **staff** needs at Grace International School for the 2007-08 school year are frighteningly large. Please pray for hearts to be open to serving the Lord at the school.

(If you or someone you know is interested, just go to

[www.gisthailand.org](http://www.gisthailand.org)

and check out the box on the home page. They need teachers, specialists, administrators, computer geeks, you name it!)

- Please pray for our **Thai language skills** to continue to progress as Joe teaches adult Sunday School and Elaine teaches children's Sunday School every week. Joe also has to translate into Thai for an English-speaking pastor this Sunday. (He promises not to change the whole message! ☺)

It wouldn't be a Henry "prayers" list without a financial item. This time, our mission would like us to attend its **annual retreat** in April, but we don't receive enough monthly support at this time to fund this, so please pray that the Lord would provide the \$1,500 we need to attend if He desires.

*In His love,  
Joe, Elaine, Brittany,  
Justin, Caleb & Jamie*

**To contact the Henry Family in Thailand, their postal address is:**

**Joe & Elaine Henry & family  
224/445 Soy 20  
Mubaan Kwan Wiang  
Hangdong 50230  
Thailand**

**Email: [jebjcj@croam.net](mailto:jebjcj@croam.net)**



## "FROM RUSSIA....WITH LOVE"



The weekend of January 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> we were blessed with a visit from Kevin and Laura Wooster our Russian emissaries.

Much to our delight, on Saturday night at the covered dish dinner held in their honor, they shared some great stories and experiences the whole family had while serving in Siberia and Moscow.

Once again, on Sunday morning at all three services, Kevin and Laura thanked us for our generous support in their appointments.

### St. Patrick



SATURDAY  
MARCH 17, 2007

Remember St. Patrick's faith when you step out into unfamiliar territory. The encircling Words on his Breast Plate were:

*"Christ with me,  
Christ before me  
Christ behind me  
Christ within me."*

A father wanted to read a magazine but was being bothered by his little girl, Shelby. She wanted to know what the United States looked like. Finally, he tore a sheet out of his new magazine on which was printed the map of the country. Tearing it into small pieces, he gave it to Shelby, and said, "Go into the other room and see if you can put this together. This will show you our whole country today." After a few minutes, Shelby returned and handed him the map, correctly fitted and taped together. The father was surprised and asked how she had finished so quickly. "Oh," she said, "on the other side of the paper is a picture of Jesus. When I got all of Jesus back where He belonged, then our country just came together."

~ Sheldon LaMountain & Art Stuckey

## This Pastor Has Guts!!

(An email sent to me. \*Judith\*)

This was a Prayer given in Kansas at the opening session of their Senate. It seems prayer still upsets some people. When Minister Joe Wright was asked to open the new session of the Kansas Senate, everyone was expecting the usual generalities, but this is what they heard:

"Heavenly Father, we come before you today to ask your forgiveness and to seek your direction and guidance. We know Your Word says, 'Woe to those who call evil good,' but that is exactly what we have done.

- We have lost our spiritual equilibrium and reversed our values.
- We have exploited the poor and called it the lottery.
- We have rewarded laziness and called it welfare.
- We have killed our unborn and called it choice.
- We have shot abortionists and called it justifiable.
- We have neglected to discipline our children and called it building self-esteem.
- We have abused power and called it politics.
- We have coveted our neighbor's possessions and called it ambition.
- We have polluted the air with profanity and pornography and called it freedom of expression.
- We have ridiculed the time-honored values of our forefathers and called it enlightenment.

Search us, Oh, God, and know our hearts today; cleanse us from every sin and set us free. Amen!"

The response was immediate. A number of legislators walked out during the prayer in protest. In 6 short weeks, Central Christian Church, where Rev. Wright is pastor, logged more than 5,000 phone calls with only 47 of those calls responding negatively. The church is now receiving international requests for copies of this prayer from India, Africa and Korea.

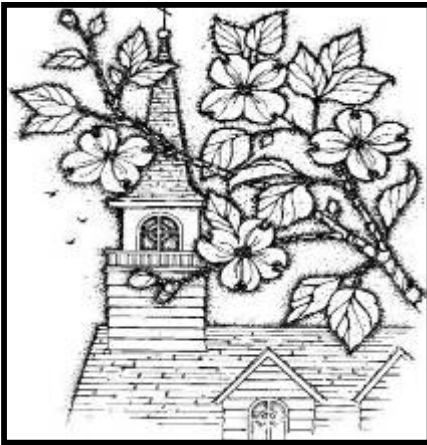
Commentator Paul Harvey aired this prayer on his radio program, "The Rest of the Story," and received a larger response to this program than any other he has ever aired.

With the Lord's help, may this prayer sweep over our nation and wholeheartedly become our desire so that we again can be called "one nation Under God."

~ Submitted by Sharon Deutsch

## OVERHEARD IN PASSING

"I would rather live my life as if there is a God, and die to find out there isn't, than live my life as if there isn't, and find out there is."



## STEPHEN MINISTRY

### Shall We Chat?

With whom can you safely share your deepest feelings...when the biopsy report indicates cancer, when communication with your teenager evaporates, when you arrive in Citrus County—perhaps not by choice—experiencing loneliness or isolation?

Several Stephen Ministers stand ready to provide weekly one-hour visits, plus phone support as needed, as your individual “care giver.”

These trained volunteers maintain confidentiality and embrace you with Christian love while walking beside you, the “care receiver.”

They do not judge, solve problems, or take away the challenges; they do provide empathy and understanding for a few weeks, months, or longer.



Contact Diane (382-7242),  
Kay (382-4908),  
or the church office  
if you would like to “chat.”

## CHRIST'S PASSIONATE LOVE

Undoubtedly many of you have watched *The Passion of The Christ*. And most of us who haven't still know the story of the crucifixion so well; we know how much our Lord endured on our behalf. Then again, maybe it's so familiar we don't recognize all the pain and suffering. Or maybe we don't really let it have its full impact because we don't want to picture Jesus' agony. Avoiding the reality of His suffering robs us of fully comprehending the vastness of His passionate love for us – each of us.

As we wander through the desert of reflection and self-examination which is Lent, we know that at the end of the journey there is the ultimate sacrifice Christ made for you and me, when He took on the sins of the world and died on the cross.

So at the end of our Lenten journey there is this great display of His love for each of us which leads *me* to some questions about *my* love for Him.

Do I love Jesus? -- *really* love Him?

Do I show my love for Him in worship?

Do I worship Him or just come to church?

Do I spend time with Him daily?

Do I study His Word to know Him better?

Am I seeking His Holy Spirit to change me into the person He created me to be?

Does my love for Jesus show in my life - every day - in all I do?

What am I doing so others will know Jesus? -- or know Him better?

I pray we all finish our Lenten journey rejoicing together at the resurrection, renewed in our awe of what Christ did for us and more in love with Jesus than ever.

Marilyn Watson

## YOUTH MINISTRY

We now have 17 middle and high school youth at 1<sup>st</sup> UMC Homosassa! We are very happy that Meredith & Jay moved to the area.

I am asking each family of youth to host *one youth special event* in 2007.

We should be able to have at least one special event per month if we all chip in and work together. We can help pay for these events from our youth funds so it doesn't have to cost each family a thing. Host a cookout or a party or a dance. Plan a trip to the beach or a zoo or Cape Canaveral or a water park (we have a church bus and drivers available). So far, only one family has responded.

We can do better than that, can't we?

Contact me, Steve Skelley, at [CitrusCountyTeens@yahoo.com](mailto:CitrusCountyTeens@yahoo.com) or 572-9532. I'll be glad to help you with your youth event.

Don't forget to visit the Youth Ministry website at [www.CitrusCountyTeens.org](http://www.CitrusCountyTeens.org). Your picture may be there!

## Youth Ministry Schedule

~ Sunday School ~

- 9:30 – 10:30 on Sunday mornings in the library

~ Youth Fellowship ~

- 12:00 – 2:00 pm on Sundays  
Meet in the Youth Room.  
Lunch in 114 followed by special events.

## Recycle Your Empty Ink Cartridges

Bring in your empty printer ink cartridges and place them in the recycle box on the soda machine near the fellowship hall.

Recycling these cartridges saves the environment and earns us money to support ministry to local youth and to pay for food, clothes and schooling for Ralph and Adriana, our mission children in Central America.

We made almost \$70 last month!



### The Columbarium

Our new church Columbarium and the Memorial Garden surrounding it provide a beautiful setting and appropriate final resting place for the earthly remains of some faithful members of Christ's church.

Niches are available for purchase at \$1,200. (Payment plans are available.)

The price includes niche space for the cremated remains of one or two persons, brass urns, brass name plates, opening and closing, and perpetual care.

Call the church office for more information, or talk to a member of the Columbarium Committee.



## Give The Gift of Life!

# Blood DRIVE

**CRITICAL SHORTAGE OF BLOOD  
IN CITRUS COUNTY!  
Donors Desperately Needed!**



The Bloodmobile will be in the church parking lot, under the trees facing W. Bradshaw St. on:

**March 11, 2007**

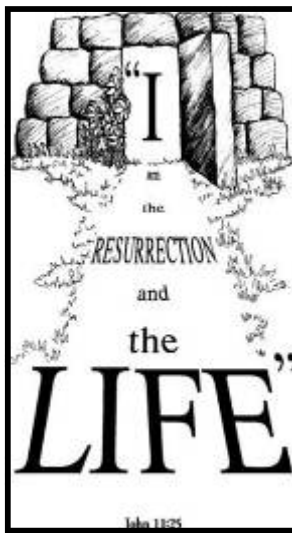
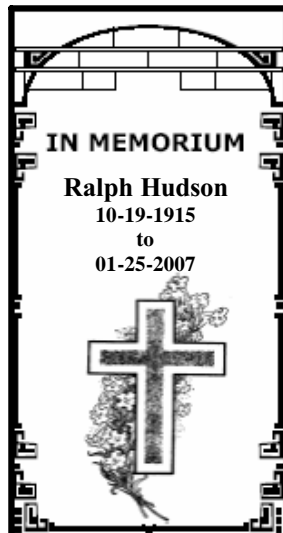
**7:45am to Noon**



**These sentences actually appeared in church bulletins  
or were announced in church services:**

*(Editor's clarification.... "Not from our church.")*

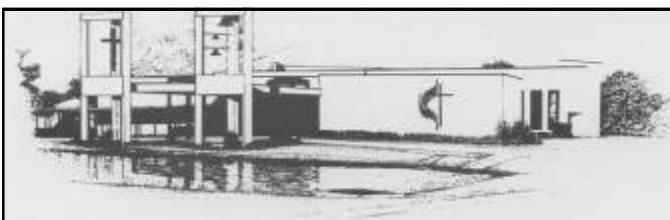
- The sermon this morning: "Jesus Walks on the Water."  
The sermon tonight: "Searching for Jesus."
- The peacemaking meeting scheduled for today has been canceled due to a conflict.
- Don't let worry kill you off - let the Church help.
- The Rector will preach his farewell message after which the choir will sing: "Break Forth Into Joy."
- Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.
- Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered.
- The church will host an evening of fine dining, super entertainment and gracious hospitality.
- Potluck supper Sunday at 5:00 PM - prayer and medication to follow.
- The pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday.
- Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 PM. Please use the back door.
- The eighth-graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the Church basement Friday at 7 PM.  
The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.
- Weight Watchers will meet at 7 PM at the First Presbyterian Church. Please use large double door at the side entrance.
- The Fasting & Prayer Conference includes meals.



Almighty God, we remember this day before thee thy faithful servant, Ralph Hudson, and we pray that he may share in the eternal victory of Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

**First United Methodist Church  
of Homosassa**

8831 W. Bradshaw Street  
Homosassa, FL, 34448



**A Stephen Ministry  
Church**



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**First United Methodist Church of Homosassa**  
**"Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors"**

**Rev. Mark Whittaker**  
**Pastor**

**Sunday Schedule**

**Morning Worship: 8, 9:30 and 11AM**

**Nursery at all services**

**Sunday School for all ages: 9:30AM**

**Methodist Youth Fellowship: 12-2PM**

**Office Hours: Weekdays**

**8:30AM to 4:30PM**

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*Soli Deo Gloria*

