

# FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Deming, New Mexico

February 2007

“Only when we give joyfully, without hesitation or thought of gain, can we truly know what love means.”

Leo Buscaglia

## STAFF AT FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Rev. D. Max Whitfield - Bishop  
Rev. John McClean - District  
Superintendent  
Rev. Keath Baskett - Pastor  
Joe MacDonald - Music Director  
Gordon McIver - Lay Leader  
Claire Phillips - Secretary  
Beth Stevens - Assistant to the Pastor

*More people come to church for the first time through invitation than by any other method. We encourage everyone to **invite** your friends, family members and neighbors to come with you to worship on Sunday mornings.*

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## FUMC - DEMING MISSION STATEMENT

BUILDING UPON  
A FOUNDATION OF PRAYER  
FIRST UNITED METHODIST  
CHURCH,  
DEMING, NEW MEXICO  
EXISTS  
**TO REACH OUT**  
AND BRING A  
VARIETY OF PEOPLE  
INTO A  
GROWING RELATIONSHIP  
**WITH JESUS CHRIST.**

The pastor would appreciate hearing about anyone who is in the hospital, has experienced a recent loss, or perhaps would like a visit. Please call the church office if you are aware of such a situation. We'd rather get many calls about someone than none at all. Thank you.



## PASTORAL PONDERINGS

### "Making Our Faith Firm"

*After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. Luke 2:46*

One of the great joys of being a part of a congregation is when our children reach an age of accountability. Then they are ready to take more responsibility for their own faith. In Luke's Gospel we are told about a time in Jesus' young life (probably around age 12) when he slipped away from his family to spend more time in the temple, and to learn more from the rabbis and others who taught there. He was taking responsibility for growing in his faith.

One of the ways that we as a church make faithful disciples is by growing them. We teach our own children the ways of God, and salvation in Christ. One of the most important things that we do along the way is involving our youth in confirmation classes. The word "confirmation" means, "To make firm." The reason for confirmation is to help our youth to explore more deeply the Christian life, and to affirm the commitment to Christ that was made at their baptisms. When our young people make this public commitment, we recognize them as professing members of The United Methodist Church.

I am in the process of finding out who is interested in being a part of a

confirmation class. The requirements are simple: 1. Have completed the 6<sup>th</sup> grade; 2. Love the Lord and be willing to commit to growing in one's faith and discipleship. If you, or someone you know, is ready to take this important step in her or his faith, please let me know by contacting the church office.

See you in church!



### ***DID YOU KNOW?***

Did you know that our Director of Music Ministries, Joe MacDonald, is a certified candidate to become an ordained deacon?

Do you know what that means?

Well, stay tuned for *next month's* newsletter when Joe will tell us all about it!



Give away  
a hug a day!  
Why not  
start  
*today!*

## ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES

In the Christian community, we mark the rhythms of the year by the liturgical season. It seems only yesterday we finished Christmas and now we are approaching Lent, the season of preparation leading up to Holy Week and finally Easter!

Lent is the forty-day season from Ash Wednesday to Holy Saturday. Ash Wednesday, which can fall anywhere between February 4 and March 10, occurs forty-six days before Easter, but Lent is nevertheless considered forty days long, because Sundays in this period are not counted among the days of Lent. The traditional reason for this is that fasting was considered inappropriate on Sunday, the day commemorating the Resurrection of Jesus.

Ashes are administered on the foreheads of worshipers at an Ash Wednesday service as a reminder of the Biblical tradition of throwing ashes over one's head to signify repentance before God. This is also a reminder of our beginning as found in Genesis 3:19, "Remember, man, that you are dust and unto dust you shall return."

This year we will have two Ash Wednesday services on February 21st. The Chapel will be open at 7am for prayer. We will have a more extensive service that evening at 6pm in the Sanctuary with imposition of ashes. A simple soup supper (5:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall) will precede the service.

Please make plans to attend as we begin our spiritual preparations to remember God's wondrous gift to us of eternal life!

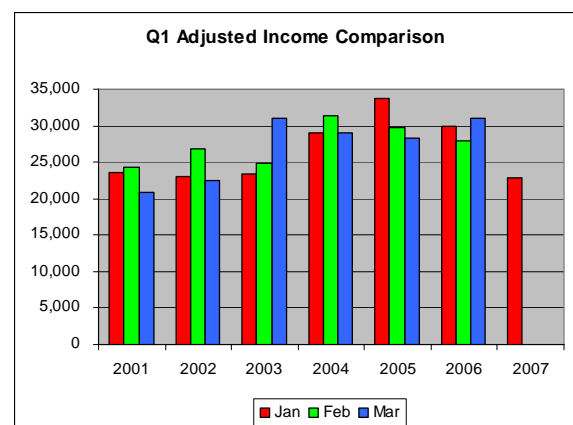
## Financial Stewardship

Stewardship is more than money, although many of us seem to equate them in a 1:1 relationship. So let's discuss the money aspect of stewardship.

A short presentation on the 2007 church budget was made on Sunday, January 21<sup>st</sup>, during both services. You heard that the Finance Committee prepared a budget that responsibly funded the many desirable Church programs; the Church Council has approved this budget.

Sadly, the church could not pay all its bills in January—the expenses were greater than income. Therefore, some expenses had to be pushed into February for payment.

A natural question might be "Why did this happen?" *Why* is difficult to answer since the church does not mandate annual pledges and does not use envelopes to record giving. However, a study of history (see graph) hints at an answer: giving in January 2007 was the lowest since 2002 (after adjustment for inflation).



Another might ask "What can be done so this doesn't happen again?" Easy: be frugal in spending and generous in giving. Please examine your stewardship; don't bury your talents but use them wisely and generously to reap the rewards of God.



Dylan Anderson	Shirley Skaggs
Bill Blake	Myrtle Thomas
Dawn Blalock	
Joe Bob Brown	Families dealing with
The Burkles	grief: The Betty
Helen Covey	Gottschalk family
Breece DeBoutez	
Dylan Everman	Family Members &
Jarrold Ferguson	their units serving in
Gerald Gaylord	the armed forces
Chris/Juan Gonzales	(some overseas):
Manny Gonzales	David Chestman,
Betty Gottschalk	Travis Dodson, Joel
Valerie Hamme	Hunt, Shaun M.
Hyatt Family	Jones, Jennifer/John
Lois Kelly	Lively, Jennifer/
Carol LeDuc	Jarrold McGee, Josh
Joan Mallery	Roberson, Lucas
Jeremiah Marquart	Serna, Greg Stube,
Martha Meyers	Danny Symonds, Van
Mary Ethel Miller	Welch
Al Nason	
Russell Petersen	
Ann/Brian Pettit	
John Plant	
Lynn Cox-Proebstel	
Mary Roberts	
Howard Roth	
Brian Schumacher	
Seymour Family	

Hospice patients and their families; our nation; our leaders; our armed forces, especially those serving overseas; our Sunday School: for increased attendance, people with a heart and passion for teaching to assist or substitute in our classes, for faithfulness.

## BITS 'N TIDBITS

**Enchilada Dinner** from 4 to 6 pm on Thursday, February 1, at the Oddfellows Hall on Gold Avenue (just south of Baca's). \$5 per plate includes your drink and a yummy dessert. You can dine-in or get a carry-out box. The proceeds benefit the Oddfellows scholarship programs.

Our **February Bread Basket** will benefit McCurdy School in Espanola which provides quality education to many underprivileged children.

**Reminder!** If you have something to post on the bulletin board, please give it to the church secretary. If she is not in, or the office is closed, place it on her desk or slip it under the office door. Your cooperation is requested and greatly appreciated.

**Kiwanis Spaghetti Dinner** on Friday, February 16, in the gym, with lunch from 11am to 1:30pm and dinner from 4:30-7pm. You can dine-in or carry out for only \$5/plate for adults and \$3/plate for children under the age of 10.

**"The Golden Girls"** will be presented by the Holy Family Altar Society March 2 (\$6 evening performance), March 3 (\$12 dinner performance, reservations required) and March 4 (\$6 afternoon performance) at the Holy Family Parish Hall. Tickets may be purchased at 1st NM Bank, the Chamber of Commerce or Head Masters Beauty Salon.

**Veronkia Barnes** has graciously agreed to be the church's publicity coordinator. She will be more than happy to help your committee get the word out about upcoming events and activities. She can be reached at 544-7215.

***From the Mailbag***

“Thank you for the prayers, kindness and love shown us during Claude’s long illness and death. It meant so much.

The Claude Johnson Family—  
Joy, Ken and Julie”

“Thank you so much to all the people that sang carols at my house. It was so uplifting and let me know people care. Thanks also to the young lady that gave me the card that night.

Love,  
Joan Krauser”



***SHARE THE LENTEN EXPERIENCE!***

February 21, 2007 is the beginning of the Lenten season and as we get ready, I would like to encourage you to use this time to connect with our community. Use it as an opportunity to meet new people as well as sharing memories with old friends. Take this Lenten time to invite someone new into your home to share a meal. It’s great to serve a very simple menu, perhaps soup, bread and fellowship! One suggestion is to invite a couple of people you know and a couple of people you could know better. You could do a Lenten devotion or ask one of your guests to be willing to share a few thoughts about this special time of year. The idea is to come together in fellowship and by keeping it simple, you might find you want to do it more than

once! To those of you who have participated in the Lenten Soup Suppers in the past, you know it can be very rewarding and I hope you once again share your homes, meals and time with others.



***NEW SHORT-TERM SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS!***

Beginning on February 18 and going through March 25, this new short-term Sunday School class will meet in the chapel to watch Ray Vander Laan’s DVD on the Death and Resurrection of Christ. The segments are approximately 20 to 30 minutes each, leaving time for discussion.

Ray Vander Laan is a historian and teacher. He truly makes the Bible come alive as he leads a group through the Holy Land. He not only takes us back to the days of old, he brings the days of old to us and shows how relevant they are in the present. If you are not already in a Sunday School class and would like to join us, consider yourself invited! If you have any questions, please call me at the office. If I’m not there, I will return your call.

Beth



***PERSONAL INVITATION***

Did you know the best way to bring new people into the church is a plain and simple one-on-one invitation? Not sure how to start? Stop by the office for a business card that lists our church services. It’s an easy way to extend that invitation!

## ***UNITED METHODIST WOMEN***

December was our pledge service for 2007. Pledging joins a member in supporting UMW's local, national and global missions. Thanks also goes to those who have supported UMW with "Love Gifts" during the year.

Where does the money go? United Methodist Women's mission giving is at work in 103 mission institutions here in the United States and in nearly 300 programs and institutions in more than 58 countries around the world. It supports mission service opportunities, mission education programs and nurture & develop programs for United Methodist Women members.

Our 2007 year books are available. Check our bulletin board for upcoming programs.

Our next meeting will be held on Saturday, February 17, at 2pm in the Chapel. The program will be "Call to Prayer and Self Denial". ALL women are invited to attend and then share in goodies and fellowship in the Fellowship Hall following the meeting.

**REMEMBER** - we are having a rummage sale on Saturday, February 3, from 8:30 am till noon in the gym. If you have time on Friday morning (Feb. 2) we could use help in setting up for this sale (sorting, pricing, etc.). Even just a small block of time (1/2 hour, an hour?) will be greatly appreciated. We'll begin at 8am in the gym.

Also, we have begun taking orders for the spring delivery of Bitthel Farms frozen fruit and seafood. The order forms are on the table in the back corner of the

sanctuary. The order deadline is Feb. 28th. If you cannot use a full order of fruit, find a friend to share it with! For more information, you may call Murray Baskett at 546-9104.

The proceeds from both of these fund raisers helps support the various missions and ministries of the United Methodist Women. You help touch lives, locally, nationally, and abroad, when you support the UMW in their various fund raisers.



## ***CRAFTY KIDS NEWS FLASH***

We made angels for our Christmas tree that was displayed during the Tannenbaum festival at the Deming Arts Council. An art lover bought our tree for \$20! We voted to send the money to the Human Society to feed the animals.

Last month we made a flowery spring wreath. This month, we will be taking the wreath to the nursing home. While there, we'll sing some of our favorite songs for the residents.

Even though our craft time is fun, it is also educational as we learn about God's love for us and how we can pass that love on to others.

Editor's note: Crafty Kids meet after-school on Thursdays until 5pm. It is open to all children ages K thru 5th grade.





## **TAKE NOTE**

February is here. This month brings many reminders. We remember our loved ones on February 14<sup>th</sup>, we remember the contributions of our African-American brothers and sisters with the singing of the wonderful spirituals that we sing throughout this month. Perhaps the most solemn event of this month is the Ash Wednesday. This day begins the 40-day vigil we keep until Easter Sunday. This is the time of the year that we are challenged to give up something for which we yearn. The thought is that each time we desire what we give up, we may be reminded that we keep our eyes focused on the cross remembering that Christ gave the ultimate sacrifice.

This year my family has decided to do something a little different. We will be adding something to our lives. We will have a family devotional every night through the season of Lent. I challenge you to do the same. Plan your family meeting and try to honor God together. Honor Him as a family unit. It is amazing the lessons that you can learn in your very own home. Stop and think about it. Many of us are in various Sunday School Classes. Families actually are divided on Sunday Mornings. The children go to their classes, adults go to their own areas. We do not study the bible together. Why not try?

In Grace and Peace, Joe MacDonald



Music Ministry Schedule for February:

Week of 4<sup>th</sup>: Regular rehearsal schedule

Week of 11<sup>th</sup>: Regular rehearsal schedule  
(SOUL KIDS perform at Willow Manor)

Week of 18<sup>th</sup>:

Monday - BellMacto 5:30-6:30 pm

Tenor/Bass Sectional 6:30-8 pm

Tuesday - SOUL KIDS 4:00-5:00 pm

Soprano/Alto Sectional 6:30-8p

Wednesday - Ash Wednesday Svc. 6 pm

Week of 25<sup>th</sup>: Regular rehearsal schedule



## **IT'S CELEBRATION TIME!**

Attention Ladies!

The next "Celebration" gathering will be Saturday, February 10<sup>th</sup> in the Fellowship Hall. We will meet at 9:30 for coffee, refreshments and fellowship with a program of praise, worship and a message following at 10 am. Come join us and hear Anne Westbrook tell us "How to Have Joy and Contentment." Women of all ages and denominations are welcome. Bring a friend; she'll be glad you did! A nursery will be available upon request.

For more information, please contact  
Cazandra MacDonald, 544-8161 or  
[cazandra@wildblue.net](mailto:cazandra@wildblue.net).

## ***OUR CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL!***

The Children's Sunday School teachers met recently and discussed upcoming programming. We're excited and we want YOU to know what is happening!

Effective immediately, the children will have their snacks in the Fellowship Hall at the end of the first service. At 9:25 am, a bell will ring and someone will announce, "Time for Sunday School". In order to make the most of our time for Sunday School, we ask that all children get to the Choir Room on time so that we can all begin together.

We are a Safe Sanctuaries Church and want to assure the safety of all children who enter our building. Therefore we continue to ask parents to please sign in their child (legibly please) on the clipboard in the Sunday School hallway. Then escort them to the Choir Room where we'll have 10 minutes of Fellowship time with song, prayer & announcements.

At 9:35, the children will be escorted to their classrooms. Class assignments are as follows: Pre-k & K will go with Suanne Delk, Grades 1-2 will go with Debbie Robertson and Cyndy DuBois, Grades 3-4 will go with Sally Cooper and Joyce Sweetser and Grades 5-8 will go with Jo Kruger.

Class will be dismissed at 10:15am. We request that *parents please be prompt in picking up your children* at the Sunday School wing, out of respect for our Sunday School teachers, many of who need to be elsewhere. Again, in order to assure the

safety of your children, we will not let them wander the church. You are asked to promptly come for them, and sign them out.

Here are the topics we will be studying in the next quarter:

January 14 through February 11: Watchdog series. This teaches our children to be mindful of things they do and things they say that can be hurtful to others. It also teaches them how to be mindful of things their parents tell them to do.

February 11 through March 4: BUGS! Children will learn how even God's smallest creatures are important and how they contribute to everyday life.

March 11-through April 8 : Lent & Easter. Children will learn important events of Lent & Easter.

We would love to have *your child* and his or her friends attend Sunday School! They will have lots of fun learning these topics through lessons, Bible verses, crafts, cooking, computers and movies.

Last year the children memorized the Doxology to prepare them to be our future worship leaders. Memory work to be learned this year includes the 10 Commandments, The Lord's Prayer, Books of the Bible and many other lessons that will be appropriate for their ages.

Don't forget our many *adult* Sunday School classes. We have a variety of class formats so there's sure to be something just for YOU!

**Sunday School - It's for life!!**

## ***THE FIFTH WHEEL***

Most, if not all, automobiles are built with 4 wheels and a compartment for a spare. The spare is generally in a rather obscure location, yet each to reach in case of an emergency.

Do you sometimes feel like a “fifth wheel?” Stay hidden in your comfy little hide-a-way?

If you are Single — and that encompasses: unmarried (formerly married but now divorced); single (never married); widowed (male or female), then maybe it is time for you to come out of your comfort zone and see what is going on in the world.

I know. You’re just plain scared to “get out of the boat.” Everyone is. It’s hard to take those first few steps out into the water, afraid of sinking. Peter did and he faltered too. But Jesus’ hand was outstretched to help.

And that’s what this little not to all “Singles” is about. We all like to be in a safe environment, surrounded by our own “specie” - people all in the same boat as we; others who understand what we’ve been through, our fears, desires and feelings of not belonging, even in the company of one time very close friends; and how, regardless of the size of our family, their love and compassion just does not fill the gap.

I’m one of the Fifth Wheels - been there, done that. I, we, the church want to help. Some plans for doing something are in the works, i.e., lunch out, coffee clutch, movies, dancing, picnics, trips (to the zoo, museums, concerts, symphonies), Bible

studies, and our own Sunday School class; all together with more thoughts, desires and ideas of things to do that you might think of.

If your interest has been sparked, and maybe you’re ready to get your feet wet, give me a call. We’ll get your name and phone number so that a meeting can be setup in the near future to put all of our thoughts and plans together.

I look forward to hearing from you soon. Being Single knows no age boundaries. All ages are welcome and provision for child care for single parents will be taken into consideration.

If you feel a bit insecure, there’ll be a life preserver on the boat so GET OUT OF THE BOAT and contact me this week.

God Bless!

Fran Koble-Chase, 546-0808 or 494-4237

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## ***POWER SURGE AUTHOR COMING TO NEW MEXICO!***

Michael Foss, author of the book *Power Surge* (distributed at Annual Conference and being read by members of our Ad Council) is coming to New Mexico next month during the week of March 12-15, from 10am to 4pm, at four locations:

March 12 - FUMC, Roswell

March 13 - St. John’s UMC, Albuquerque

March 14 - St. Luke’s UMC, El Paso

March 15 - St. Luke’s UMC, Odessa

The seminar is free and a donation will be requested to cover the cost of lunches. Make plans NOW to attend!

## ***FROM THE BISHOP'S DESK***

Samuel's journey to anoint a new king takes him to Jesse's home. Samuel is certain the eldest son is the one God has chosen, but God says, "No."

Jesse's sons pass before Samuel one by one and God refuses to accept any of them for this leadership role. Samuel inquires if this is all of Jesse's sons. Jesse reveals one son remains in the field watching over the flocks. David comes before Samuel and God demands that Samuel anoint David. Sometimes we must wait and watch for God to reveal God's choice.

Several of my bishop colleagues gathered in Austin for a continuing education event focused on how to lead the church in the twenty-first century. We discussed some of our hopes and fears about the election of General and Jurisdictional delegates at our Annual Conference sessions this summer. We arrived at several common conclusions.

We hope and pray we maintain unity and missional focus in our conferences as the members of the annual conference elect delegates. We pray our processes for elections will be fair, thoughtful, prayerful, and civil, and focus on the mission of the whole church and not single issues. We pray the processes will demonstrate respect for all persons and proceed with dignity. ("Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all." from Romans 12)

Sometimes we believe everyone must think alike. I do not believe that is possible and certainly not mandated by the Gospel.

However living as one in the body of Christ is essential. We are brothers and sisters. Our unity rests in our common allegiance to Jesus Christ.

Our conferences are diverse in terms of gender, ethnicity, age, years of service, and size of congregations and communities. Each of these brings gifts to honor our Savior and Lord. Our delegations should reflect the wonderful God given gifts of these conferences.

I challenge you to continue to hold one another in prayer, allow the Holy Spirit to guide and form our processes, and celebrate those raised up for leadership. We must move beyond the secular practice of electing leaders and involve ourselves in prayerful discernment to discover those chosen by God. Like Samuel, we need to be sensitive to the promptings of God's Holy Spirit.

The role I believe God bestows upon me is to responsibly remind the body of who we are and whose we are, to pray for the process, those elected and those not elected who wanted to be, and do all within my power to see the life of the community is maintained and strengthened.

I challenge you to join in discovering how we can change the election of delegates away from a secular, self-centered election process into a fair, thoughtful, prayerful, and civil process where we discern the will of God. When this occurs across the nation, we will have different General and Jurisdictional Conference sessions. The change begins in our hearts and lives.

Grace & Peace,  
Max

