

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Deming, New Mexico

January 2007

“Then the star appeared again, the same star they had seen in the eastern skies. It led them on until it hovered over the place of the child. They could hardly contain themselves: They were in the right place! They had arrived at the right time!”

Matthew 2: 9-10, The Message

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

(The Pastor's Report as given
at last month's church
conference.)

Change is always challenging. The Scriptures may tell us that God is doing a "new thing," but they do not tell us that it will be easy.

For the last few months, as the Baskett family has settled into our new home and our new community, we have been blessed by getting to know this congregation. Everyone has been welcoming and gracious, and we thank you.

Some of the key areas in which I intend to focus for the next year or more are:

Facilitate continued healing in the congregation.

Develop a stronger sense of mission among the congregation. It will be important for us to grow in our understanding of mission and ministry locally and globally. The more we understand how we fit into the connected ministry that is United Methodism, the more we will be able to embrace joyfully the work to which Christ calls us.

Support the leaders and their ministry groups so that they can work effectively. Everyone will be encouraged to participate in the "Equipping Disciples for Excellence—2007." In addition, the pastor will work with each ministry group to develop strategies in their ministries that will help the

congregation as a whole to fulfill our mission.

Develop ways to welcome and involve new disciples into the congregation.

Foster a Biblical sense of stewardship in the congregation. In developing a stronger sense of mission we will also need to grow in our understanding of stewardship, so that we can accomplish the ministry before us.

Other areas of responsibility include serving on the Annual Conference Board of Ordained ministry, and mentoring two candidates toward ordained ministry.

In addition, I am a part of a mentor group that meets three to four times a year to hold one another accountable for our ministries, as well as to support each other. This is always a time of rest and renewal for me.

My continuing education for this year will include the "Equipping Disciples for Excellence" training in the El Paso District. I will also look for other appropriate educational events both inside our Conference, and beyond.

Lastly, at our church conference, we honored our music ministry as a "Pillar of the Church" for all of their hard work, especially when we were between music directors. Ferne Wolf was particularly honored as the "face" of this ministry.

Thank you to everyone who gives of themselves to this congregation and its ministries.

New Year
Blessings to all of you!



Each month we will be featuring some of ministries and missions that are supported by our tithes and our offerings, locally and beyond our community.

This month we will look at the District Mission fund for the El Paso District. One area that benefits is Operacion Hogar. This is a ministry that provides site built homes in Juarez and outlying areas for families who typically live in their vehicles or shacks made of cardboard. When we support Shared Ministries and Goals, we are helping to provide the materials needed to build these homes.

Your gift does make a difference in the lives of people!



ANGEL TREE THANKS!

We just want to take this time to say “thank you” to everyone who participated in last month’s angel tree program. We thought it appropriate to share with you just how your generosity has made a difference in the lives of these children.

- the church gave gifts to a lady who called us Angels and gave us a gift in return;
- the church gave gifts to a boy who

desperately needed a coat and due to pride, wouldn't let the school give him one;

- the gifts given to the mother of little children said they always looked forward to these gifts because they knew they could open them early because they were from their Dad;
- gifts to one eight year old who has never met his father because he has been in prison all of this time but knows he is still remembered by him;
- a lady who still sews beautifully at the age of 90+
- a 7 or 8 year old little girl, who, when told that the bag of beautifully wrapped gifts was for her from the parent who was incarcerated, got wide-eyed and exclaimed, “For me?!”.

Methodists in Mission. By staying connected to one another, we connect on a much wider basis with God’s people. Just as a stone dropped into a pond creates ripples, so too does your generosity create ripples that we may never know about. Still, lives are enriched and changed.

Next year, in addition to the Angel Tree program, we will be participating in other opportunities to remember others during the holiday. Our tithes, offerings and special gifts such as Angel Tree enable us to create ripples in the lives of others - ripples that God uses to make a difference!



May 2007 be a New Year full of **blessings, new beginnings and new opportunities** for us to fulfill our mission statement: *“Prayerfully we make disciples!”*



Dylan Anderson
 Bill Blake
 Joe Bob Brown
 The Burkles
 Breece DeBoutez
 Dylan Everman
 Lois Kelly
 Carol LeDuc
 Mary Ethel Miller
 Al Nason
 John Plant
 Don Rohrbaugh
 Howard Roth
 Brian Schumacher
 Seymour Family
 Shirley Skaggs
 Myrtle Thomas

Family Members &
 their units serving the
 armed forces (some
 overseas):

David Chestman,
 Travis Dodson, Joel
 Hunt, Shaun M. Jones,
 Jennifer/John Lively,
 Jennifer/Jarrold
 McGee, Josh
 Roberson, Lucas
 Serna, Greg Stube,
 Danny Symonds, Van
 Welch

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, January 4, 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.

The Office will be closed on Monday,
 January 15th for a staff retreat. Please be in
 prayer for the staff as they come together to
 seek God's will for mission and ministry to,
 among, and with the people of God.

Our January **Bread Basket Offering** on
 Sunday, January 21, will benefit Deming
 Helping Hand. This organization helps to
 provide services to many need families,
 some of whose income is too much for
 social services but not enough to make ends
 meet. Your generosity will enable them to
 continue their ministry to the residents of
 our county.

We have **updated our prayer list**. Please
 advise, in writing, the name of anyone or
 any family who should remain on our list.
 Thank you for keeping this vital ministry
 current.

The Trustees Committee is investigating a
 bar code system in order to **help inventory
 church property** (part of being good
 stewards of our resources). If anyone is
 interesting in helping with any aspect of
 this project, please contact the church
 office. We do not have a start date yet but
 would like to begin putting things together.
 Thank you.

FROM THE MAILBAG

“12/20/06

Dear FUMC Family,

Your thoughts, prayers, calls and cards were very much appreciated during the time of my injury, surgery, and rehab. Please continue to pray for healing. I am so fortunate to know so many caring people.

Much love to all,
Joyce Bell”



OPPORTUNITY FOR PRAYER

Did you know that each Sunday morning, during the first service, there are people who spend that time praying for you, for the services and the Sunday School classes, for the general and specific needs of our congregation?

Having done this, I can tell you it is a privilege to be in prayer during first service. Two people gather in Beth's office and we pray, we are blessed by being able to pray and by being able to listen to the sounds of the service as we're praying.

Would you like to be a part of this ministry? The rotation works out to once or twice every few months. If you're interested in praying on Sunday mornings, or would just like more information about this ministry to our congregation, please contact Sue Holdridge at 546-3225.

METHODISTS IN MISSION

One of the best things I can do to help me remember how very blessed I am, even in the midst of personal troubles and turmoil, is to reach out and help someone else.

There are many, many opportunities for us to participate in mission trips, both in our own backyard (Juarez, Mexico) as well as overseas trips. If you'd like to learn more, visit the New Mexico Conference website at www.nmconfum.com. Click on the "Volunteers in Mission Opportunities" link at the bottom of the left hand column. There, you'll find all kinds of information about ways we can become involved in helping others.

Another good website for those with more time on their hands, who would like an educational opportunity to go with their mission trip, is Primetimers. This program of the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist church provides educational and mission service experience to older adults. You can visit their website at <http://gbgm-umc.org/vim/features/primepro.htm> to learn more information.

Finally, if you are going to be in the Arkansas area in mid-January, you might want to visit our Jurisdictional camp, Mt. Sequoyah, in Fayetteville. The camp needs a hand doing honey-do's to spruce things up for the start of camping season in the spring. You will find this information by re-visiting the NM Conference VIM Opportunities link and scrolling down to bottom of that page.

Together, we can make a difference!

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN (UMW) NEWS

UMW PURPOSE

“The organized unit of United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.”

What you have just read is the reason that United Methodist Women exists and has existed for many, many years. If you are interested in this organization, or have questions, come to one of the meetings. The UMW meets the third Saturday of the month at 2:00 p.m. in the chapel for a general meeting and a program. They then move to the Fellowship Hall for refreshments and fellowship. ALL women (young and old) are invited to attend any meeting.

IT’S TIME ONCE AGAIN for Bithell Farms frozen fruit sales. Look for order blanks in the back of the sanctuary beginning February 1st. Orders need to be placed with Murray Baskett (546-9104) no later than February 29th. This is a great way to stock up on frozen fruit and the proceeds help benefit a number of UMW mission projects.

We’re having another RUMMAGE SALE on Saturday, February 3rd from 8:30 am to noon in the gym. You may bring items for the sale starting on Monday, January 22nd (not before please). Please place your

items in the gym on the north wall, but please, DO NOT BLOCK doorways or closet doors!

We also welcome help on Friday, February 2nd to help set out and price rummage sale items. Show up at 8am at the gym. Many hands make light work!

January 20th will be our first regular meeting of the year, at 2 pm *in the Fellowship Hall*. The program, “Getting to Know You”, will be presented by our own Murray Baskett. Remember, ALL women are invited to come and get better acquainted with Murray. Refreshments will follow.



UNITED METHODIST MEN

Have you ever wondered just how to invite people to attend church? Well, the UMM have just given us one way to do just that - business cards! (See the related article, “The Plan”, beginning on page 8.)

Thanks to Eldin Jontra, business cards have been printed that list our Sunday services and Sunday School times, the church address, phone number, website address, and our core beliefs (The Apostle’s Creed).

This is a great way to introduce people to our church. So come by the office and pick up a few to hand out to people you meet and those you know.

And remember, ALL men are invited to the monthly men’s *breakfast* (yum) meeting on the 3rd Sunday, at 7am, in the Memorial Classroom; January 21st this month!



**TAKE
NOTE**

As another year comes and goes we vow to stay faithful to those New Year's Resolutions. Do we ever finish the year the way we started the year? Now is the time to make a commitment to the music ministry at FUMC. We need your talent. You are what makes our church special. It is your music that raises worship to the highest of highs.

Come on and join the fun. We are looking for a few more good musicians. Remember, we are singing an Easter Cantata this year. You will not want to miss participating. We are starting early.

Happy New Year.

Joe

All ensembles will begin practicing the week of January 8th.

- Monday 5:30-6:30 Bel Macto
- Tuesday 3:00-5:00 Soul Kids
- Wednesday 5:30-6:30 Four Him
- Wednesday 7:00-8:00 Chancel Choir



125th ANNIVERSARY

Did you know that our church will celebrate the 125th anniversary of its founding here in Deming next year? In conjunction with that, we are planning a special pictorial directory. So mark your calendars NOW for March 21-24 for your picture. More details next month!!

FROM BETH

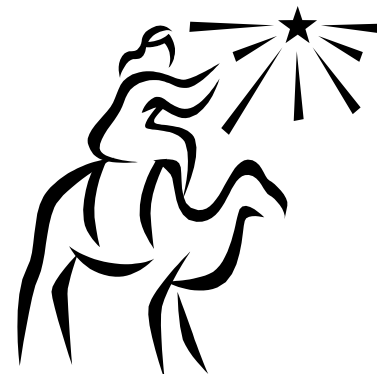
Happy New Year! It seems strange to write those words because in truth it's December 11, 2006. The Christmas program was last night and I wanted to let all of you who attended know that as I looked out on the congregation singing Silent Night and Joy to the World I saw so much more than faces.

I saw and remembered the struggles and victories some of you endured this past year. Many of you have shared those with me and my life has been enriched because of your doing so. In looking back on all that 2006 brought to each of us, we can remember God's never surprised as we are and He's never caught off guard. "He who keeps Israel neither sleeps nor slumbers"—I take comfort in that promise.

Maybe I should have written this at Thanksgiving because as we look forward to 2007 I am so grateful for each of you. Whether it's in visiting with you in your home, talking to you at church or on the phone I feel you have invited me into your life and I am blessed. Thank you.

May we each grow in faith, knowledge and the wisdom of the Lord in 2007.

In Christ-Hope,
Beth Stevens



EDE - EQUIPPING DISCIPLES FOR EXCELLENCE

“To Share God’s Hope - Here, There, and Everywhere.”

That is the theme for THIS YEAR’s El Paso District Spiritual Enrichment/Leadership/Training Event to be held on Saturday, January 27 at Trinity-First UMC in El Paso.

To Share God’s Hope. So many times we feel ill equipped to share God’s hope, to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. But we need not feel ill equipped. EDE has us covered!

There are a number of *wonderful* workshops scheduled throughout the day. Some are specific to committees so, if you’re newly appointed to a committee, you won’t want to miss those workshops. Others are gems we highlighted last year, or ones waiting to be discovered by you!

We want to thank the United Methodist Women who have graciously earmarked funds to enable the church to pay the registration fee for those desiring to attend EDE! Plus, child care is provided. All we ask is that you return your registration form to the office by January 13 so that we can mail them all at once.

Still confused? Pick up a brochure from the small bulletin board outside of the sanctuary and then come see Claire, Keath or Beth. Take a chance. Sign up for a workshop. Invite a friend to go with you. You’ll be glad you did!

THE PLAN—TELL EVERYONE

From the General Board of Discipleship:

I was recently asked, “How can I best promote our church’s upcoming fall program? What the best means of advertising and promotion?” There are many, and we’ve all used most of them over the years, but there is one method that is far and away the best of all of them. It works all the time in all places. It works almost immediately upon being put into action, and it continues to work over long periods of time. It takes little preparation and not training. It doesn’t take a committee working on it to put into action. There’s no need for record keeping. And best of all, it’s completely free - no cost to the church! If a church implements this plan of promotion, there’s no more need for ads in the newspaper or on TV. Forget about littering the neighborhoods with church signs. Don’t spend time composing and sending out press releases or trying to arrange for media interviews.

Here’s the plan: every person in the church — child, youth, and adult, church member and staff—tells someone outside the church family about your church and invites that person to visit. *It must be every person.*

Member’s can’t elect NOT to do it thinking that other will. It takes EVERY person’s commitment. Do it once a week, every week. Pick a new person to talk to each week, and after a period of time, follow up on a person you’ve already talked with and do it again. That’s it - one person talking to another person once a week.

(continued on page 9)

THE PLAN—TELL EVERYONE

(continued from page 8)

Invest 60 seconds per week in the future of your church.

I'm not talking about a heavy-duty door-to-door witnessing campaign or a Bible-thumping, end-times street evangelism program. I'm simply talking about a one-minute conversation with a friend, neighbor, co-worker, supermarket check-out clerk, postman, friend on the playground, teammate on the Little League or bowling team, someone you sit next to on a bus or in a restaurant. Don't make an appointment for the talk, just work it naturally into the conversation. Tell them briefly about one good thing that's happening at your church — the choir, your Sunday School class, the new bell choir, summer camp, youth retreat, after-school day care, the Christmas musical, a mission project, remodeling or new construction, the pastor's sermon. Just share one good thing in three or four sentences and invite that person to join you on the following week. Don't push. Don't demand an answer. Extend the invitation and move on. If the conversation allows for it, say more about your church, what's good about it, why you attend. This is not dishonesty or manipulation. It's not plotting and scheming to ambush your friend or neighbor. It's a friendly and honest conversation. It's also the most powerful and effective means of advertising and promotion the church can do. Word-of-mouth promotion, community spin, personal endorsement and recommendation.....all of these are better than anything you could pay for. A church

that benefits from this kind of outreach is a church that is probably strong, vital, growing. It's a church with a reputation in the community that draws people to it.

And a second benefit from this kind of witnessing congregation — the people are transformed. In the act of telling and inviting others, they become more committed. They are more faithful in their attendance. They increase their giving and thus the church is enable to do more. Outreach projects multiply. They create more opportunities in the church for worship, education, training, nurture, evangelism. They take better car of their facilities. And we hope that all of that takes place so that new people become new disciples of Jesus Christ and all people grow in their faith.

Adult and youth Sunday School classes can talk about this "plan" one week. Parents can talk to their children at home so they can understand and perhaps invite a friend to come to church next. This something that should become a part of everyone's weekly activities outside the church building.

The problem, of course, is that this is not flashy. It doesn't bring everyone together all at once for a high-energy emotional gathering followed by a church dinner. There's no applause, no door prizes or drawings, and no ribbons or rewards for being the best. But if it takes those things to get it going, then forget it. Your church isn't up for it, and it would be false advertising.

By Dean McIntyre, Dir. Of Music Resources, General Board of Discipleship

FROM THE BISHOP'S DESK

I am deviating somewhat from my normal pattern in this article to encourage your contributions to the Advance Special to support the United Methodist ministry to persons with HIV/AIDS. I hope you will prayerfully consider this challenge and need.

World AIDS Day is today, December 1. The necessity of addressing this world wide crisis confronted me during the Council of Bishops meeting in Maputo. This pandemic forces the Church to extend God's love, care and the best medical care available to those living and dying with AIDS/HIV. My reluctance to address this disease arose out of my strong disapproval of the lifestyles that often spread this terrible disease. If individuals chose to follow the Christian ethic of celibacy in singleness, and faithfulness in marriage, the disease could be significantly curtailed. I erroneously associated ministry to those suffering from this disease with support and approval of a lifestyle, contrary to the Church's teachings and practices.

I listened as my colleagues from Africa described the disastrous destruction this disease brings to so many people and their churches. Young adults are dying daily. Children are left without parents and many babies are born with the disease. They pleaded for us to do all within our power to help address this catastrophic pandemic.

The bishops in Africa made clear statements of affirming the church's position and encouraging their members to live a lifestyle consistent with the church's

teachings. They also affirmed the necessity of ministering to those individuals who ignore and reject the church's teachings. We must never allow the actions of others to prevent us from loving and responding as we believe our Lord responded to those in need.

Suddenly the lights came on for me. Throughout my ministry I unapologetically ministered to individuals suffering from alcoholism. I knew as a pastor and as the church we must not condemn, but rather must recognize the depth of God's love for these persons and do everything possible to heal, restore, and care for persons suffering from alcoholism. I strongly affirm the church's position of abstaining from the consumption of all alcoholic beverages. Yet, I could not and would not allow my convictions to prevent me from ministering to one of God's children who practiced a lifestyle I felt was contrary to scripture and the teachings of the Church. I must extend my intentional ministry to those with HIV/AIDS, as well.

Therefore, I invite you to join me now in this effort. General Conference approved an Advance Special to assist in this world wide ministry. Last June at the Northwest Texas Annual Conference session, the members voted to encourage every local church to raise at least \$1 per member to address this disease and those suffering from it. I encourage you to make this contribution and minister to those impacted by this disease.

Grace & Peace,
Max

