



Newsletter for September 2010

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B BBQ Thank You *posted September 1*

Once again we had another successful Duck Day BBQ thanks to all of you! There was not a head count as of the newsletter deadline, but the receipts look good and everyone seemed to have a good time. Your participation in all aspects of this event – including eating! – is deeply appreciated. Thank you one and all!

I magine No Malaria *posted September 1*

You are cordially invited to an informational training on *Imagine No Malaria*, a denomination-wide ministry focused on eliminating malaria as a source of death on the continent of Africa by 2015. Bishop Whitfield is extremely supportive of this ministry and has high hopes for the New Mexico Annual Conference to raise the bar for other conferences in terms of participation levels.

To gain the greatest level of support and participation for this ministry it is critical to invite lay members, who have an interest in global missions, healthcare, or social justice and believe in the connectional power of the church. Members of a congregation's mission teams or committees, administrative council members, and youth leaders have been very interested in this ministry in other annual conferences. However, you are more than welcome to invite anyone from your congregation. Our goal is to have 12 interested lay representatives from each congregation attend this training. There are several dates and locations from which to choose.

St. Mark's UMC, El Paso, Tuesday, September 7; Light Dinner at 6:00, Training at 6:30

St. Paul's UMC, Las Cruces, Thursday, September 9; Light Dinner at 6:00, Training at 6:30

Trinity-First UMC, El Paso, Tuesday, September 14; Light Dinner at 6:30, Training at 7:00

First UMC, Odessa, Thursday, September 16; Light Dinner at 6:30, Training at 7:00

While our conference is quite knowledgeable about malaria and Nothing But Nets, *Imagine No Malaria* is a comprehensive effort of our denomination to fight malaria in a sustainable manner. Through prevention, which

encompasses Nothing But Nets, treatment communication, and education, this disease can be eliminated as a source of death within a very short period of time. The training will focus on these topics:

Malaria
The UMC Response -- Imagine No Nets
Engaging Local Congregations

Please RVSP by:

Friday, September 3 for the meeting at St. Mark's UMC, El Paso
Tuesday, September 7 for the meeting at St. Paul's UMC, Las Cruces
Friday, September 10 for the meeting at Trinity-First UMC, El Paso
Monday, September 13 for the meeting at First UMC, Odessa

Feel free to join in the short, 30 minute *Imagine No Malaria* on-line **webinar** as a guest. This occurs on Tuesdays at 9:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. CST. <http://umc.adobeconnect.com/inmoverview>.

We will need to know the number of persons attending so that an adequate amount of food will be prepared for the dinner. You may send your RSVP to Leia Williams (615-525-0049 / lwilliams@umcom.org) or to Beverly Wood at the District Office (915-584-9494 / delpasol@elp.rr.com).

How to Go Green *posted September 1*

This month, we're talking about energy-efficient appliances. The energy efficiency of the major appliances in your home, such as dishwasher, air conditioner (don't we wish!), washer, dryer and refrigerator, is perhaps the most important factor in determining how much electricity you use. Replacing older appliances (10 years or older), with newer energy-efficient models, can reduce carbon dioxide emissions and save money.

Energy Star labels on appliances indicate that the product complies with energy efficiency standards. These labels also help consumers compare the product's estimated annual energy consumption with similar models.

Refrigerators and freezers account for about 20% of the electricity used in a home each month. Whether or not you replace appliances, you can help reduce costs and keep it running more efficiently with these steps:

1. Try a lower temperature setting. Most fridges and freezers have a temperature setting that ranges from 1 to 10. Turning the setting down a couple of notches, say from 10 to 8, shouldn't have a noticeable impact on your food's freshness.
2. Keep the refrigerator and freezer stocked. Cooling an empty fridge or freezer actually requires more energy than cooling a full one.
3. Check the insulation around the doors. If cool air is escaping, replace the insulation.
4. Keep the coils cleaned. Keep in the coils dust free helps the unit run more efficiently. It is also a good excuse to get after those under the fridge dust bunnies.

Most refrigerators and freezers manufactured during the past 10 years have an energy-saver feature that automatically adjusts the internal temperature to maximize efficiency and food preservation. Check to see whether your fridge has an energy-saving feature, and if so, make sure it's on.

Join us next month for more tips!

Radical Hospitality Training *posted August 31*

Pastor Ernie Vineyard will be leading an event on Radical Hospitality in the Fellowship Hall on September 18 from 9:00 to 11:30 AM. Last July, Ernie attended training in Albuquerque led by United Methodist Communications. The idea was to get several people ready to lead trainings in their area on becoming a more welcoming congregation.

Everyone in the congregation is welcome and is encouraged to attend this enlightening and enjoyable training. Being a congregation that attracts newcomers is not just about the pastor, the music, the worship leaders, or the ushers. It's about an intentional attitude of hospitality. Come and let's learn together how to make our congregation better at extending the love of Christ to those who enter our doors.

Bible Study on David *posted August 31*

Please join the Community Wide Bible Study "Transformed, Anointed and Redeemed", a study of David taught by Beth Moore, Priscilla Shirer, and Kay Arthur. It is a six weeks study and will begin on October 7 at First United Methodist Church. The class will be held on Thursdays from 9:00 to 11:15 am. Workbooks are \$15 and the registration deadline is September 23. To register please call Phyllis Mudd or Suanne Delk.

Seasoned Citizen Retreat *posted August 31*

Information on the Seasoned Citizen Retreat in October is available on the Sacramento Methodist Assembly website. You may download the descriptive brochure and registration form there.

UMW Information *posted August 23*

Last month we took a traveling tea party to surprise Nina Spencer, a member of our Church but now in Casa de Oro in Las Cruces. We had a great time, lots of fellowship and fun. If you know of anyone who would like a visit (they do not need to be a member of UMW) please let Jo Kruger know (cell: 545-8979).

MANY THANKS to all who donated, helped or purchased at our very successful rummage sale. We really appreciate members of the Congregation who pitched in and helped. With leftovers, we were able to help three places in the community - LCORA Thrift Shop, Helping Hand, and Savoy Truck Stop who plans a BIG YARD SALE during the Duck Races on Friday and Saturday in the old Push and Pedal building on Hwy. 11 - they are raising money to purchase fire equipment for the truck stop.

Twenty-four attended our annual potluck/picnic August 21st at the Wolfs. A short meeting, fellowship and delicious food were enjoyed. Pastor Ernie and Corrie joined us as our guests.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THE New Mexico Conference UMW 38th Annual Meeting-FUMC Artesia. Registration forms are available. Deadline for registration is October 7.

Our regular Fall programs start in the Chapel again at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 18. Jo Kruger will bring a program on Immigration-"Love as God has loved". All ladies welcome.

Some of My Thoughts *posted August 22*

Imagine a secret visitor enters a worship service on a Sunday morning and begins recording his/her impressions, feelings, and experience. Dr. Bob Farr, Director of Transformational Ministries for the Missouri Conference of the United Methodist Church, pays individuals who are not Christians and do not attend a congregation to become such a secret visitor. He worked with a company that utilized such a program in assisting secular businesses to improve their performance. Together they thought of numerous aspects one might experience on entering a church sanctuary for the first time. Did the church have sufficient signs to tell a visitor how to find the worship center, the rest rooms, the nursery, and the fellowship gathering before or after worship? Could the visitor fully participate by following the bulletin, or did the congregation assume certain parts were known by all participants?

Dr. Farr indicates most congregations were extremely surprised at the results of the visits. The response of most church leaders was to deny the validity of the visit and the observations from the secret visitors. They had difficulty seeing themselves as failing to exhibit radical hospitality. It was only when they re-examined themselves with more objective eyes that they began to see more clearly: there were multiple areas crying out for improvement if they wanted, really wanted, to welcome persons who did not know Jesus Christ and did not have a church background.

This week I read a brief summary of St. Francis' encounter with the leper. The details of his passing a leper colony several times previously and avoiding the leper escaped my memory. It was only after he had a vision from Jesus saying to him, "Francis, all that is sweet and lovely to you will become bitter. All that you have avoided will turn to great sweetness and joy." Francis was riding the trail when he was awakened from his dream and saw a leper standing in his pathway. His first reaction was to avoid the leper. Upon remembering his vision, he dismounted and embraced the leper with a kiss.

Many people in our society are modern day 'lepers.' They may be the drug addicts, the homeless, the unemployed, the alcoholics, the poor, the immigrant, the beggar, or the stranger. They are the ones we avoid. They are also the very ones that become Christ coming to visit us. They often irritate us, produce fear and anxiety in us,



and appear less worthy of our love and care. They can be Christ's secret visitors opening the doors to deliver God's blessing to us.

Christ's secret visitor may enter a worship service this week. Or, he may enter an office, a classroom, or a meeting this week. Will we extend the radical hospitality that Jesus has extended to us? Will we extend the radical hospitality we would extend to Jesus?

Jesus comes to us in ways we least expect and anticipate.

Grace & Peace, Max



Volunteers are needed to plant the seeds of love *posted August 19*

Amercure Hospice is seeking volunteers:

- Comfort Companions
- Heart Music (Music has no language barriers and is soul food!)
- Active Listening
- Patient/Family Support
- Gift of Presence
- Community Outreach
- Special Events

If you have some time to share or simply would like more information, please contact Angelique Mesa at Amercure by phone (546-4664) or by email (demingbereavement@amercure.com).

Thank you for sewing with heart for someone who needs a thread of strength.

To New Mexico Pastors and Lay Leadership *posted August 17*

The **United Methodist Women** strongly encourage all of their members to constantly be involved in the support of mission, the study and learning, and the development of their spiritual life. Their **Conference Spiritual Retreat** scheduled for March 18-20, 2011 at Sacramento Methodist Assembly will be unusually strong. Glory and Jacob Dharmaraj will be providing the leadership for the retreat. Rev. Jacob Dharmaraj, his wife Glory Dharmaraj, and Bishop Ernest Light joined in writing a book entitled *Many Faces One Church*. It focuses on making cross cultural appointments.

Most of our communities present great opportunities for ministering to persons representing several racial and cultural groups. The New Mexico Conference is a multi-cultural and multi-racial society. Many of our congregations reflect our communities and others are striving to make this transition. This study will help to open the doors for us to fulfill the Great Commission Jesus gave to us to make disciples of all nations.

Mrs. Jo Ann Buckley, Conference President of United Methodist Women, is urging not only United Methodist Women to attend this year's Spiritual Enrichment Retreat, but also suggests that pastors and laity (men and women) join their members for this event. She believes the Dharmarajs are exceptional leaders from whom all of us can learn and benefit.

All portions of our Conference are seeking ways to help bring congregational transformation in order to be more effective in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. The Conference United Methodist Women are seeking a different way to accomplish this mission.

Check the NMAC website Leadership Training pages under the Equipping tab, and the Calendar pages for brochures and registration forms, as they become available. Meanwhile, spread the word and mark your calendars!

A Message from the General Board of Church and Society *posted August 12*

Register for *Lighten the Burden III* AIDS Conference NOW! Deadline: Sept. 20

Lighten the Burden III, the third international AIDS conference sponsored by the United Methodist Global AIDS Fund committee, will be Oct. 14-16 at the Radisson Central Hotel in Dallas, Texas.

The conference will feature national and international speakers, each bringing his or her own unique perspective to the AIDS pandemic. Featured speakers include:

Dr. Musa W. Dube, theologian and biblical scholar, the University of Botswana;

Dr. Pauline Muchina, senior partnership adviser, UNAIDS;

Bishop Minerva G. Carcaño, episcopal leader of the Desert Southwest Annual Conference;

Jeffrey Crowley, director of the White House Office of National AIDS Policy (invited); and the Rev. Tyrone Gordon, St. Luke UMC, Dallas.

Conference workshop sessions include discussions of:

"Looking at AIDS through Cultural Context,"

"AIDS & Communities of Color – How can the church respond?," and

"Resourcing Local Churches & Annual Conference AIDS Ministries."

At least three opportunities will allow you to visit organizations in Dallas that provide for the needs of the HIV positive and those with AIDS. These visits will be between 1-4 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 14. Please indicate your interest in participating in these visits on the registration form.

AIDS Interfaith Network is a multicultural, faith-based organization serving more than 2,000 people living with AIDS. They provide transportation, an adult day center, meals, pastoral services, translators, prevention education for minority women among many other services.

Bryan's House is a special-care facility for children affected by HIV or AIDS, children with other special health needs, and their families. It offers a full range of medical, educational and psychosocial services 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Its nationally acclaimed program is innovative, compassionate and cost effective. Decades ago when the program began, Bryan's House provided care for babies infected with AIDS. They trained caregivers who worked with those babies.

AIDS Arms offers a broad spectrum of services and has a long history of care for those living with HIV/AIDS. A unique program addresses those in prison who are HIV positive. The organization conducts programs on AIDS prevention in many prisons throughout Texas. It also has trained former prisoners to be trainers in the program. Dr. Don Messer, executive director of the Center for the Church & Global AIDS, is a Lighten the Burden III workshop leader. He hopes this conference will help "awaken the sleeping giant called The United Methodist Church" by helping find practical ways to be involved in education, prevention, care and treatment.

"In doing so, we will fulfill the command of Christ to 'heal every sickness and cure every illness,'" Messer said. Your presence is vital! To register for Lighten the Burden III, click here (<http://www.umglobalaidsfund.org/>) by Sept. 20.

Questions? Contact Donna Brandyberry, General Board of Church & Society, dbrandyberry@umc-gbcs.org (<mailto:dbrandyberry@umc-gbcs.org>) or (202) 488-5641.

Peace to you all.

The Rev. Cynthia Abrams

Director, Alcohol, Other Addictions & Health Care

Aldersgate Renewal Ministry *posted August 11*

An Aldersgate Renewal Ministries event, *Life in the Spirit Seminar*, will take place at Santa Cruz UMC, Espanola, from 7 pm - 10 pm Oct. 15, and 9 am-7 pm Oct. 16. The LISS will also lead Sunday morning worship at Santa Cruz UMC at 9:30 am Oct. 17.

Sponsored by Santa Cruz UMC, Velarde UMC, and Northern NM Group Ministry. Cost is \$15/person or \$20/couple (sharing a book). Saturday lunch and dinner provided. No childcare is available.

This Seminar helps Christians to understand the person and work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the individual and the Church, the body of Christ. Participants discover the potential and the power of the Holy Spirit to guide and direct them into the fullness of life which God offers believers through Jesus Christ.

Contact for more information: cepa@cybermesa.com

Some of My Thoughts *posted August 7*

What makes a church vital? The Call to Action Task Force commissioned by the Council of Bishops and the Connectional Table secured the services of an outside consulting group to look at the direction we needed to take as a denomination in the next four years. I found the report extremely challenging and revealing. The consulting group identified congregations with less than 35 in average worship attendance and congregations with several thousand in average worship attendance that they considered to be vital. The consulting firm looked at six factors in determining vitality. (The report can be found by going to the Connectional Ministry Home Page—Call to Action Report, http://www.umc.org/site/c.lwL4KnN1LtH/b.5792195/k.86F6/Call_to_Action.htm). Methodists seldom agree on anything. If we gathered 20 people together, we would not agree upon the criteria for a vital congregation. Most of us want to think of our congregation as vital and we begin to look for elements that confirm our assumptions. I recently learned of an Annual Conference that pays unchurched people to attend worship services and report on their experiences. The results were predictable—the pastors and the church leaders denied the visitors observations and experiences. They preferred their subjective view of themselves rather than a rather objective view of an outsider. They wanted to be complimented rather than told the truth. Vitality is expressed by the various ways congregations move the focus off of the members and focus on the needs of those in their community who are not part of any congregation. Vital congregations recognize the presence and power of Jesus Christ in their daily lives and find ways to witness to Jesus' transforming power. They intentionally find ways to build relationships with people outside the Christian community. Instead of asking, "What would make us happy?" these congregations ask, "How can we let other people know about this abundant life in Jesus Christ?"

The role of the pastor in vital congregations is different. These pastors are empowering and equipping lay persons for leadership and ministry. They are not spending 80% of their time taking care of the church's members. They spend more time preparing their sermons and constantly ask themselves how the guest will be impacted by the message. "Will the message invite persons to follow as one of Jesus' disciples? Will it encourage them to live in God's Kingdom? Will it attract them to lead a different life than they lived the previous week?"

Vital congregations are filled with people who joyfully give more of their financial resources to be utilized for the honor and glory of God. Many people give because they believe it is their duty, or the church has a need, or a project or ministry appeals to them. Members of vital congregations give in response and with thanksgiving for all they have received from God, and their desire to see the lives of others transformed as their lives have been transformed. They give joyfully and generously.

When congregations are vital, average worship attendance goes up, church membership expands, budgets are exceeded, small groups expand, baptisms are common, and worship is exciting.

Is your Church *vital*? It can be, through the empowerment of God's Holy Spirit, and your willingness to become what God wants you to be.

Grace & Peace, Max



Trip to the Holy Land *posted August 7*

To everyone who loves the **Holy Land**, join me on a **special pilgrimage next March** called "*Living Stones Mission, Holy Land 2011: Your Journey to Understanding, Peace and Reconciliation, 10 days of Biblical Discovery.*"

This tour will be meaningful both for those who have never been but have dreamed of doing so and for those who long to return. In addition to seeing the anticipated holy sites, ancient ruins and memorials such as Yad Vashem (Holocaust Memorial), we also will visit the following special places of ministry with Palestinians: Ibillin in Galilee where Bishop Chacour (author of *Blood Brothers*) has established schools and other ministries; a children's hospital; the Christian Peace Center, Sabeel, in Jerusalem; and the Bethlehem Bible College. We also will have the privilege of worshipping at the East Jerusalem Baptist Church. This is an opportunity to meet Palestinian Christians in person.

The lecture series on the tour: Peace and Reconciliation, Palestinian Needs, Ministry of Hospitals, Schools etc. and Holocaust Remembrance.

Departure date, March 4, 2011. I would love to take a busload with me.

Blessings as you consider this opportunity,

--*your tour host, the Rev. Carol Lee Tuck.*

If you would like more information or would like me to mail you a brochure, please call me at 575-571-5250, e-mail revsistuck@aol.com, address 2904 Majestic Ridge, Apt. A, Las Cruces, NM 88011

Heritage Tour 2010 to Explore Churches in the El Paso District

The 2010 United Methodist Heritage Tour, sponsored by the NM Conference Historical Society, will take place in the El Paso District this year, on September 25th and 26th.

The caravan tour, in which you drive your own car and are responsible for your own expenses along the way, will begin at the 100 year old church at Sierra Blanca. From there it will make stops at Van Horn, Toyah, Pecos (lunch), Wickett, Monahans, Grandfalls, and Imperial. The group will then spend the night at Fort Stockton and attend services there. The following day includes stops at Saragosa, Balmorhea, the Fort Davis National Historic site, and Fort Davis.

There will be a booklet distributed to all those who participate sharing a little of the history of each church and community, and at each stop the group will seek to learn more from those at the church.

“These are really voyages of discovery,” Will Steinsiek, the Conference Archivist, noted. “They add to our knowledge of both the past and the present, and hopefully inspire both the church and ourselves to work toward the future with our great cloud of witnesses in mind.”

People are welcome to join or to leave the tour at any point.

Those who might be traveling from New Mexico and decide to stay in El Paso on Friday, September 24th are invited to take a special tour of Friendship Square, 6009 Tays St, at 3pm and then have dinner together.

For those who complete the journey and decide to stay, special accommodations will be available at the Bed and Breakfast in Fort Davis, and there will be an evening service at 7 pm in the old church sanctuary at Fort Davis, which was built in 1884. Fort Davis was also a stop on The Heritage Tour in 1993.

To join the Heritage Tour, please send a note to the NM Conference Center, 11816 Lomas Blvd NE, Albuquerque, NM 87112, *Attention: Archives*, or an email to nmarchives@nmconfum.com, indicating how many people will be coming.

Some of My Thoughts, July 29, 2010 *posted August 3*

The Connectional Table recently released a “State of the Church—2010” report. It presents several interesting statistics and enables us to better understand what is happening to our denomination within the United States and around the world.

Did you know that membership in the denomination is growing? Did you know that 360 new United Methodist congregations were planted in the past five years? Did you know that 30,000 bed nets were distributed to more than 8,000 homes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in April 2010? Did you know that in a survey conducted by GCFA and participating congregations April 26 or May 3, 2009 (involving over 8,600 worship attendees), 78% of the responders indicated a strong sense of belonging to their current congregation?

The above data is a small portion of the material in the report. I urge you to read it in its entirety. You can find the report by going to www.umc.org and clicking on *Connectional Table* and then click on *State of the Church*. I found it easier to print the report than clicking through the various parts of it.

Ben Zander in the video, “*The Art of Possibilities*”, states that one of the things that we must do to be at our best, is to break the downward spiral. It is so easy to drift into a negative view of life, a negative view of our church, or a negative view of our family. We must break that negative view and begin to see all that is positive that goes on around us. This does not mean that we ignore our problems and difficulties; but it does mean that we lay the emphasis on aspects that produce growth, vitality and strength. Think back on a recent conversation you may have had about your pastor, your congregation, or your community— did you leave thinking, “Why would anyone join this community?” Downward spirals can most certainly destroy individuals and organizations. On the other hand, was the conversation more positive, supportive, or strengthening? Hopefully, you left thinking, “I cannot imagine why anyone would *not* desire to join this community!”



Many great things are happening to the honor and glory of God. Join me in giving thanks to God for the wonderful things He is doing in our lives and in the world.

Grace & Peace, Max

Labor Day Campout *posted July 29*

Our annual Labor Day Campout, held at the Sapillio Campground in the Gila National Forest, will be September 3rd through 6th. The format will be a little different this year. There will be two evening worship services, Saturday and Sunday evenings, preceded by a potluck each evening. Pastor Ernie Vineyard will speak at either one or both of these services. Saturday's potluck will feature meat from the Duck Days BBQ. Hamburgers and hot dogs will be served Sunday along with potluck fixin's.

There will not be a cost for camp this year but please complete a registration form so the organizers can set aside enough space, etc. at the campground. Registration forms are available in the office or on the small table in the back of the sanctuary. Remember to bring chairs (and tables if needed) for everyone in your group as there will be no extras this year. A love offering will be taken for the church.

This is a wonderful time to experience nature, visit with friends, enjoy worship services and share a meal. Please our website, www.fumcdeming.com, for upcoming details on the campout.

Choir Music Weekend, October 22-24 *posted July 28*

Lake Junaluska, North Carolina. Choir Music weekend brings together choral training, hand bells, workshops on various subjects, worship and great fun in one of this country's most beautiful locations. Participants will learn skills and music that they can take home with them, along with many rich memories and lasting friendships. Find out more at www.lakejunaluska.com/choirmusic/

Church Picture Directory *updated September 1*

It has been four years since our last pictorial directory. We have scheduled a new one for October. We are asking everyone to participate, especially since we have a new pastor. Further details will be coming this month. If you would like to help by taking appointments after church services, or by being a host or hostess as people check in for their pictures, please call the office.

A new directory with everyone's picture will be invaluable to Ernie as he continues to put names and faces together so your calendars now for October 18 through 23 when pictures will be taken.

Retreat for Men *posted July 22*

Men's Spiritual Retreat 2010, *No Man Left Behind*, will take place on September 24-26, 2010 at Sacramento Methodist Assembly. Sponsored by the United Methodist Men of the NM Annual Conference, the Guest speaker will be Brett Clemmer, VP, 'Man in the Mirror.' Music by "Wings & a Prayer" of Epworth UMC Carlsbad; and there will be a Golf Tournament! The local UMM and the church office have registration forms. All men are encouraged to attend....Contact Marion Jordan wmjordan7@gmail.com at 505-881-8181 for more information.