



The Messenger

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Important Information for the Entire FUMC Community Regarding the Closure of FUMC Weekday Preschool

by Rev. Debbie Gara

On April 3rd, the Church Council voted to close the FUMC Preschool at the end of this term, June 27, 2008. The Council heard recommendations from the Preschool Advisory Board, the Board of Trustees and Finance Committee. While the Advisory Board voted to remain open while evaluating and addressing the needs for renewal, both the Finance Committee and the Board of Trustees voted to close the school as soon as possible.

This decision was made after much prayer and consideration. In recent weeks a series of events, beginning with the closure of one of our classrooms by the state Social Services for a licensing violation and several additional citations, led to a thorough evaluation of the program. During this time it became more and more evident that there are many areas of the program in need of improvement. It became clear that these were not reasonably accomplished while remaining open and that the church is not currently able to sustain the ongoing revenue loss and substantial facility needs of the program at this time.

Please be assured that the welfare, safety and care of children have not been compromised in this process.

Whenever there is a major change or an end to something that has been an important part of people's lives, there can be stress, grief and misunderstanding. This is particularly difficult with a shortage of good child care for many working parents, and with the loss of

employment that comes as a result of this closure.

It might appear that FUMC does not embrace this ministry to children. This is entirely false. The truth is that the ministry and leadership of the church have come to recognize that in order to establish a quality licensed early childhood program in the future, we must regroup, prepare thoroughly, and begin with a fresh start.

We do not know when that rebirth may be, but we trust that as we continue to walk with God and envision our future together at FUMC, as we embrace our Core Values calling us to community, witness and service and spiritual discipleship, we will find the ways to reach out in this way again.

This is a difficult and painful time for the parents, children and staff of the preschool and for our church. We encourage prayers for all of those who are most affected by this difficult situation.

Thanks be to God for all of the caring and dedicated staff who have been a part of the Epworth and FUMC Preschool ministry for over 20 years. We are so grateful for the service the preschool has provided for our church and the larger community.

We pray that God will guide us through this time and give us wisdom as we consider future endeavors.

FUMC Social Service Ministry on Brink of Closing

from Brenda Carrigan

Thank you and probably good bye. The Social Service Ministry has reached the end.

With your help and generosity, we survived the crisis of financial insolvency. You opened your hearts and checkbooks and saved us from closing. We have a greater crisis in that there aren't enough dedicated volunteers to keep our doors open any longer. We have 3 regular, dependable workers, but we need

at least 6 and a couple of "on call" people to keep serving our clients the one day a week we're open. We have food available, and a budget to provide the bus passes to our existing clients, but no one to pass them out. I will be having a meeting with our Senior Pastor and the chairperson of the Missions Committee very soon to decide the next step for this ministry. If you have any suggestions, please call Brenda Carrigan at (626) 244-4906.

Let's Celebrate Together on Sunday, May 4th!

Have we been hearing about "Core Values" lately, or what? Yes, indeed! And they are just that important. Here they are: **Dynamic Worship, Inviting Community, Spiritual Discipleship, Witness and Service.**

On Sunday, May 4th, we will make a full-blown presentation of the Core Values in all their glory. In many ways it will be a very special Sunday.

- It is Confirmation Sunday, and a large group of our youth will be confirmed after their extended preparation. They are the living witnesses to our vibrant future.
- It is Communion Sunday, when we join together to open our souls to the in-pouring of the Spirit of God through our Lord Jesus Christ.
- It is Friends and Family Sunday, and you are invited especially on this special day when we process as a vibrant congregation into a festive luncheon in Fellowship Hall.
- It is a day you don't want to miss!

Be sure to join us at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, May 4th, at First United Methodist Church where we will enjoy *Dynamic Worship*, reach out in friendliness as an *Inviting Community*, growing every day in our *Spiritual Discipleship* that leads us into *Witness and Service* beyond ourselves in the community and the world.

For further information, contact Kara and Luis Montes at (323) 344-9696.

United Methodism 101: About Connectionalism

United Methodists often joke about the many organizational layers of church life, but as members of other denominations have been heard to say: "If you want something done, get the Methodists to do it." Followers of the Wesleys are indeed "methodical" about the ways they approach mission and ministry.

One reason United Methodists are able to accomplish great things is the church's emphasis on "connectionalism." It is

common to hear United Methodist leaders speak of the denomination as "the connection." This concept has been central to Methodism from its beginning.

The United Methodist Church, which began as a movement and a loose network of local societies with a mission, has grown into one of the most carefully organized and largest denominations in the world. The United

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Secular Books on Your Faith Journey

by Ruth MacPherson, Church Librarian

Some church libraries have scruples about collecting secular or non-religious library books, tapes, and periodicals. An article in the last issue of *Congregational Libraries Today*, "How to Use 'Secular' Children's Books in Your Library" was the inspiration of a workshop discussion in the local CSLA chapter's last meeting.

In the libraries of our chapter, most of us have been collecting lots of "secular" books – for children, youth and adults. It depends upon a library's collection policy whether or not a book or item is accepted. For FUMC Library, it's difficult to imagine our collection without secular books to supplement our religious collection.

What are guidelines to consider when church libraries collect non-religious books for children and youth? The article suggested:

- Are **illustrations** appropriate to the story and function of the text?
- Is the **book's content** appropriate for the intended age level?
- Consider the **quality of language** in text.
- Look for **values** in the story that can be brought out without being obviously "teachy/preachy." For parents, grandparents, teachers and librarians, reading to children is a personal opportunity to interpret faith and values using books



which don't mention the words "God, Jesus, church, Christian" etc.

Do you remember the controversy when books of Rowling's *Harry Potter* and C.S. Lewis' *Chronicles of Narnia* first came out? Since then, it has been discovered these books are full of

Christian symbolism. People of faith carefully evaluate secular material for values, not just for entertainment. Sometimes commentaries help us understand Christian-related principles in controversial secular reading. In FUMC Library we have:

- *Wizards, Wardrobes and Wookies* by Connie Neal [261.5]
- *Looking for God in Harry Potter* by John Granger [823]
- *God, the Devil and Harry Potter* by John Killinger [248.4]
- *Decoding daVinci* by Amy Wellborn [813.5422]
- *Cracking the daVinci Code* by Simon Cox [813.5]

Come by our library before or after Sunday morning worship.

How is Your April Library Scavenger Hunt progressing?

Remember your paperwork for this is due in the FUMC Library, Sunday, April 27th.

The "oven" is planning Ms. Ruth's cookies and Betty's brownies for you.

Classic-Style Radio Hour Presented by FUMC Theatre Arts



Come for dinner; stay for FUMC Classic-Style Radio Hour. Friday, May 9th 7:00 pm in Fellowship Hall. Bring canned goods for Friends in Deed.



Mission Team to Mexico Now Forming



A work-study team to Mexico is forming and there is still room for you! Our missionaries, Terry and Muriel Henderson, have invited us to join them from August 9th to August 17th.

No knowledge of Spanish is needed although it is helpful.

Please contact the Church Office at (626) 796-0157 or see Rosalie Niemann during the Coffee Hour for more information.

Attention YOUNG ADULTS!

Please join us for an evening out! We will meet in the church parking lot **Saturday, May 3rd at 6:30 PM** and walk to Paseo for a casual dinner at Islands. We will be talking about the future of the Young Adults group, and planning the calendar for months to come! Contact Denise Campbell with questions: 626.298.2545 or deniseca@usc.edu

M is for Mission

by J.P. Harris
Stewardship Chairperson

Mission is the center of stewardship, not money, and the mission of our church is growing. As our mission grows, the need to support that mission also grows.

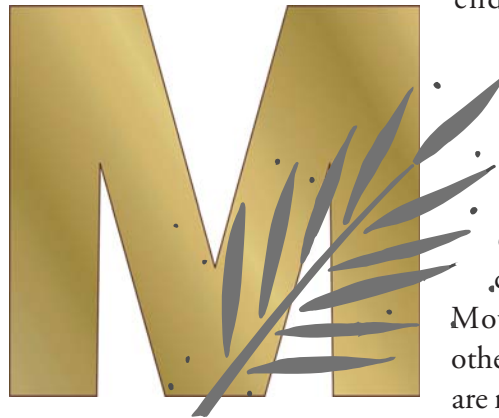
But what, exactly, is our mission? The Book of Discipline tells us that, "the mission of the Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ. Local churches provide the most significant arena through which disciple-making occurs." It goes on to describe our mission as being to proclaim the gospel and to welcome people into the body of Christ, to lead people to a commitment to God through Jesus Christ, to nurture them in Christian living by various means of grace, and to send them into the world as agents of Jesus Christ.

Our primary mission then is to spread the word of Jesus Christ through our community and the world by our outreach. But just how do we do that? The primary method we employ is through our presence in the community. The most visible example of our presence is, of course, our beautiful church facility here in Pasadena and Camp Sky Meadows in the San Bernardino National Forest. Our forebearers have entrusted us to protect and maintain these gifts, which in and of itself, is no small charge.

But more important than the physical assets of our church are the programs and services we provide to our church family and the community at large. Our many church schools, Bible study groups, choirs and assorted musical ensembles, the provision of

social services to those in need, the vital missions undertaken by UMCOR throughout our nation and around the world, and of course, our weekly worship services are the mission we all support through our offerings, tithes and gifts.

During these difficult economic times, many in our congregation struggle to make ends meet. When an imbalance occurs between the income and the outgo, the first things usually eliminated are those expenses that are considered optional. Movies, dinners out and other types of entertainment are normally at the top of the list. The key to making these



decisions is identifying what, precisely, is optional. At times like these, we all need to be reminded that our giving of our first fruits to God, through our church, is not an optional deed. The gifts our Lord has provided us, even when they have been momentarily reduced, should be the first thing we acknowledge before we worry about other earthly obligations. It is during times like these our Lord continues to support and nurture us, to see us through to the better times ahead. He does not give up on you: you should not give up or abandon Him. Keep faith with the Lord, Jesus Christ and know that He is your rudder on these turbulent seas. Your faith in Him will bring you safely into port. Do not lose sight of the mission, but support it, just as others have supported it during times of even greater difficulty. Do not slacken in your faith but be resolute, knowing that the Lord will provide!



Honor a loved one. Sign up for Altar Flowers. Call the Church Office to reserve your date!

Auditions Next Month for the Fantastical, Magical Musical, *Seussical*



The wonderfully popular hit musical, *Seussical*, directed by Denise Campbell, will thrill audiences of all ages this summer at FUMC's Great Hall Theatre!

Show dates are Wednesday, July 30th, nightly through Saturday, August 2, 2008! FUMC's Theatre Arts Committee is the show producer.

This summer's performances mark the 38th consecutive year of FUMC's Youth Drama program. All youth of the church, their friends, and all others in Pasadena and surrounding communities, are enthusiastically welcomed to participate.

As is the tradition, there are no tuition fees for joining the fun due to the ongoing generosity of many supporters, the Friends of Drama, the Pasadena Methodist Foundation, and hard working volunteers — parents of cast members and numerous other FUMC youth drama devotees!

Participation is encouraged for youth — from incoming seventh graders, up and including early college age! An introduction to musical theatre, teamwork, self discipline, self confidence, trusting, and growing are all wonderful benefits our kids derive from being a cast member! And, in every show, there's lots to do for all including leads, chorus members, those who work in tech, scenery design or lighting—everyone! Join in!

Auditions will be held Saturday, May 31st, from 9:30 a.m. to noon in Great Hall. All are encouraged to attend auditions, but only those seeking a solo or small group singing part, or major speaking role are required to sing individually at this audition. Please bring your audition music — there will be a capable accompanist to play for you. Just a short piece is requested for audition.

Confirmation Sunday, May 4th

One of the most special times in the church year is Confirmation Sunday when we welcome into our church family young men and women who have been preparing for Christian discipleship. We hope you will be with us in church Sunday, May 4th, as these confirmands become members of First United Methodist Church:

Michael Nicholas Bernal
Jack Laurence Birkenbeuel
Valiant Joey Calantas
Sean Christian Ehrlich
Samuel Oscar Gerber
Daniel Andrew Hain
Bryan Mu-Chung In
Lia Teagon Lohr
Gianna May Pilato
Laura Elizabeth Lussier
Nicole Marie Lussier
Hajime Miyasaka
Iris Marie Roberts Sharp

It will be a fun and joyous day for all of us!

Dr. Frank Trotter

United Methodism 101

continued from page 2

Methodist structure and organization began as a means of accomplishing the mission of spreading Scriptural Holiness over the land. John Wesley recognized the need for an organized system of communication and accountability and developed what he called the "connexion," which was an interlocking system of classes, societies, and annual conferences. (UM Member's Handbook, p. 24)

No local church is the total body of Christ. Therefore, local United Methodist churches are bound together by a common mission and common governance that accomplish reaching out into the world. United Methodist churches and organizations join in mission with each other and with other denominations.

From [United Methodism 101](#), an online introduction to the UMC.



Sunday School Big Red Barrel Donations for May

May has three letters and so does our mystery word. What do you need to open when you are hungry? A can of food would help.

We will collect personal manual can openers.

JUNE 15TH
at FUMC

10:00 a.m.
Morning
Worship



Bishop Mary
Ann Swenson
will preach

•••

FUMC
celebrates
Father's Day

•••

Choir
Appreciation
Sunday

•••

See you there,
and remember to
invite others.

Ecumenical Council of the Pasadena Area Churches Thanks FUMC for Help with Bad Weather Shelter

Dear Rev. Trotter and Friends at First United Methodist Church:



Thank you very much for your generous and caring service to the Bad Weather Shelter during the 2007-2008 season. If there is one thing I am sure about, it is that our clients and staff were WELL FED this year. I really appreciate your dedication, hard work and generosity. As you know, it was a particularly

rainy winter, and I am so glad that we could provide shelter and a hot meal to the homeless once again.

By the end of April we will have completed the Bad Weather Shelter report for this season and will send you a copy.

Thank you again for your dedication and loving care.

Sincerely,

Pat O'Reilly, Executive Director

Pasadena Humane Society May Bring a Friend or Two to Visit with Hilltoppers on May 19th



UMW Hilltoppers will meet May 19th at 1:30 PM in the Church Lounge. We will have a representative from the Pasadena Humane Society telling us about their animal protection organization and possibly bringing us a friend or two for a visit. All women are invited to come for an interesting program and fellowship. For further information, call Irene Atkinson (626) 795-2393.

Pasadena Methodist Foundation Scholarships Reminder

A reminder to all *new applicants and current recipients* of academic scholarships from the Pasadena Methodist Foundation: you must apply for your scholarship request **annually**. The deadline each year is June 1st and we will not be able to accept any applications for scholarships for the Fall 2008 school year after June 1, 2008. Please pick up your renewal application in the Church Office and return it to the Church Office no later June 1, 2008, at 5:00 p.m. For further information, contact Evelyn McGee in the Foundation Office on Wednesdays.

Dinner and Theatre: A Spring Event on May 9th

Friday evening, May 9th, the FUMC Theatre Arts Committee will present a short evening of radio plays with a light dinner.

Our radio plays will take us time-traveling from the 1920s to the 1930s to the present. Dinner will be first come, first served.

The event will be in Fellowship Hall and will begin at 7:00 p.m.

All monetary donations will go to the Chapel Fund. All attendees are asked to bring canned food items which will be donated to the Friends in Deed food pantry. See you there.

Calling Faith Friends

As we seek to find greater ways to be an Inviting Community, to Witness and Serve, the Evangelism Hospitality Committee is seeking to enhance the process for new members at FUMC. A Faith Friend is one who is paired with a new person or couple to help in the process of understanding and participating in the life of FUMC. This could mean invitation to groups, sitting together, checking in regularly... being a friend! Faith friends would be chosen in similar life stages. If this is a Ministry you feel you can serve, please contact Rev. Debbie Gara. You will be blessed.

What is Pentecost Sunday?

May 11, 2008 is the Day of Pentecost. It is the fiftieth and last day of the Easter Season when the church received the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2).

While baptizing with water, John the Baptist prophesied of the first Pentecost where Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire (Matthew 3:11). Jesus confirmed this prophesy with the promise of the Holy Spirit to the disciples in John 14:26. He showed Himself to these men after His death on the Cross and His Resurrection, giving convincing proof that He was alive.

Jesus told the disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the gift from the Father, the Holy Spirit, from whom they would receive power to be His witnesses to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:3-8). After Jesus' ascension to Heaven, the men returned to Jerusalem and joined together in prayer in an upper room.

On the Day of Pentecost, just as promised, the violent wind filled the house and tongues of fire came to rest on each of them and all were filled with the Holy Spirit. They were given the power of communication which Peter used to begin the ministry that Jesus had prepared him for.

After the coming of the Holy Spirit, the disciples did not stay in the room basking in God's glory but burst out to tell the world. This was the beginning of the Church as we know it.

Today, in many Christian churches, Pentecost Sunday is celebrated to recognize



the gift of the Holy Spirit, realizing that God's very life, breath and energy, lives in believers. During this service, John 20:19-23 may be the core of the message about our risen Savior supernaturally appearing to the fear-laden disciples. Their fear gave way to joy when the Lord showed them His hands and side. He assured them peace and repeated the command given in Matthew

28:19-20 saying, "as the Father has sent me, I am sending you." Then He breathed on them and they received the Holy Spirit (John 20:21-23).

The celebration of Pentecost Sunday reminds us of the reality that we are all God-breathed with the unifying Spirit that was poured out upon the First Church in Acts 2:1-4. It is a reminder that we are co-heirs with Christ, to suffer with Him that we may also be glorified with Him; that the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good (1 Corinthians 12:7); that we are all baptized by one Spirit into one body (1 Corinthians 12:13) and the Spirit which raised Jesus from the dead lives inside believers (Romans 8:9-11).

This gift of the Holy Spirit that was promised and given to all on the first Pentecost is promised for you and your children and for all who are far off whom the Lord our God will call (Acts 2:39).

Sources: United Methodist Book of Worship and www.gotquestions.org

Mother's Day, May 11th

The Mother's Day holiday, as observed today in the United States, celebrates motherhood generally and the contributions of mothers to society. It falls on the second

Sunday of each May. It is the result of a campaign by Anna Marie Jarvis (1864-1948) who, following the death of her mother on May 9, 1905, devoted her life to establishing Mother's Day as a national, and later, an international holiday.

Fill a
Diaper
Bag



Entheos Needs Volunteers to Help Fill Diaper Bags

Entheos continues filling diaper bags for the Pasadena Prenatal Clinic.

We hope to donate two diaper bags per month. The items that are of greatest need are newborn clothes, non-mercury thermometers and baby blankets. We welcome other items such as socks, t-shirts, pacifiers, spoons, wipes, burp cloths, disposable changing pads, small toys and any size baby clothes. No bottles; the clinic tries to encourage breast feeding.

Sue Clairday needs volunteers to fill a diaper bag. If you are interested, please contact her at (818) 790-8849 or sclairday@charter.net

APRIL

FUMC CALENDAR of EVENTS:

24-27	Senior High Mission to Mexico	
26-27	Confirmation Retreat	Camp Sky Meadows
26	9:00am Pathfinders' Church Work Day	Main Kitchen
28	7:00pm Christian Believer	Adult Lounge
	7:00pm Jesus in the Gospels	Church Lounge
29	10:00am Social Services Ministry	Great Hall
	7:00pm Boy Scout Troop 27	Scout Room
	7:00pm Camp Committee Meeting	Fellowship Hall
	7:00pm Capital Needs Committee	Church Lounge
30	7:30pm Adult Choir Rehearsal	Choir Room

MAY

01	7:00pm Church Council Meeting	Church Lounge
03	10:00am Confirmation Rehearsal	Sanctuary
04	10:00am Morning Worship/Confirmation	Sanctuary
	11:30am New Members Class	Church Lounge
	11:45am Girl Scout Troop 529	Rms 200 & 300
	1:00pm Con Viva! Vocal Ensemble	Chapel
05	7:00pm Christian Believer	Adult Lounge
	7:00pm Jesus in the Gospels	Church Lounge
06	7:00pm Boy Scout Troop 27	Scout Room
07	9:00am Pasadena Homeless Prevention	Great Hall
	6:00pm Board of Trustees Meeting	Church Lounge
	7:30pm Adult Choir Rehearsal	Choir Room
08	5:00pm Spring Drama Rehearsal	Fellowship Hall
	6:00pm Preschool Advisory Board	Church Lounge
09	12:30pm Aldersgate Forum	Church Lounge
	7:00pm Spring Drama Production: Classic-Style Radio Show	Fellowship Hall

Weekly & Ongoing FUMC Events

SUNDAYS

9:00am	Sunday School for all ages
10:00am	Sunday Morning Worship
11:30am	Youth Handbell Choir
5:15pm	Youth Choir
6:45pm	UMYF Dinner & Program
	Fellowship Hall

TUESDAYS

10:00am	Social Services Great Hall
7:00pm	Boy Scout Troop Scout Room
7:30pm	Adult Handbell Rehearsal
	Bell Room
7:30pm	AA Meeting
	Adult Lounge

WEDNESDAYS

10:00am	Foundation Office open 'til 6:00pm
7:00pm	Young People's AA Meeting
	Adult Lounge
7:30pm	Adult Choir Rehearsal
	Choir Room

FUMC Prayer List

Please remember persons on our prayer list in your regular prayers...

We lift up to God these prayers for healing

Charles Bohannon	Jeff Morrison
Wayne Brubaker	Martha Poindexter
Stephen Bumb	Family
Lem Carlos	Norm Schmidt
José Casillas	Chris Smith
Patrice Daniels	Tim Smith
Alfred Dimacali	Mrs. C. Stanfield
Caitlin Federico	Jack Stewart
Casey Gonzales	Theresa Stewart
George Griffith	Ted Stoneburner
Peggy Hendricks	Kathy Summers
Holly Dale Howard	Ladd Thomas
Sylvia Jacoby	Corrine Walker
Denese Leath	Russ Walker
Evelyn Mac Dougall	Tom Wegener
Helen & Jerry Masiello	Diana Yam
Jeff Masiello	Timothy Yim
Bronnie McNabb	

for a healthy pregnancy for an expectant mother and her child.

for the resolution of conflict for the people of Iraq, Tibet, Kenya, Darfur, Sudan, Israel and the Gaza.



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Non-Profit Organization

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