



The Messenger

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From the Top 10%

by Dr. Frank Trotter
November 11, 2007 Sermon

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Offering God the total commitment of our financial resources is, perhaps, one of the most challenging steps in our spiritual growth. I grew up in a family where learning to tithe was taught to me and my siblings from the time we were children. The top 10%, we were taught, belongs to God and we all learned how to calculate our allowances, and later our jobs, to determine how much we would place in the offering plates on Sunday – in my case, calculating the money I got from the paper route I had in the afternoons, the lawns I mowed in the summers, and the sidewalks I shoveled in the winter.

I remember when my mother laid 10 pennies on the kitchen table and told me that one of them belonged to God. “That’s not very much,” I thought. Then she laid 10 one dollar bills and pointed to the one that was God’s. “Still not very much,” I continued to think. But when she laid 10 ten dollar bills and pointed to one of them, it began to occur to me that this was going to take some thinking. “Why am I supposed to do this?” I asked her again. “Because the top 10% belongs to God.”

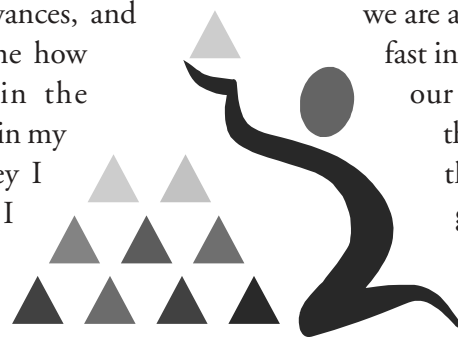
To tell you the truth, I’m proud to tell you that my mother’s voice speaks in my heart every time I write a check to the church. Because giving my best to God finally did become a matter of the heart in addition to an act of pleasing my pesky mother. There

finally came the day when I saw myself as a curious bystander who wanted to know more about this man Jesus. And there finally came a moment when I heard his voice saying, “Frank, I want to come to your house today.”

What do you do when the Lord Jesus Christ shows up at your front door? Well, if we are at all like Zacchaeus, we take a fast inventory of where we’ve placed our priorities and uttered more than a few “uh oh’s” (knowing that he knows exactly what’s going on). Then there’s some swift recalculations, and then – if we will allow it to happen, our heart responds to the presence of this Lord who loves us so much by opening up wide and offering our very best into his hands.

As a matter of my witness to God, I want to share with you that I pledge to give 10% of the salary our church provides me to the ministries of our church. As a matter of my witness, I want you to also know that it is no longer a compulsion but an utter joy, a freeing in many ways of our cultural greed for more and more of everything for ourselves.

What I hope for each of you, of course, is the same kind of spiritual journey, the same kind of awareness that Jesus is asking to come to your homes, too, with a message about the kingdom of God. I’m always filled with a tremendous amount of excitement about what is possible when a visit by Jesus re-orders our lives.



Missions Corner

The Missions, Peace and Justice Committee is delighted to be sharing pieces of our interaction with both our local community and the world at large to give you a deeper insight into the areas FUMC supports. Watch for this section of The Messenger for exciting articles and upcoming events as we move forward into the future.

From the Philippines: Afrie Songco Joye serving as a professor at Union Theological Seminary (UTS) in Dasmarrias

Teaching seminarians continues to be a challenge, a joy, and some frustration. The constant challenge comes in incorporating in my teaching content the Critical Asian Principles (CAP), which is to take seriously the “shared colonial experience, the plurality and diversity, the abject poverty, and the impact of globalization in Asia.” The joy comes in knowing that our students have had “aha” learning experiences.

One of my exciting and challenging experiences this year was teaching intensively the course “Theology and Ethics” to a group of lay and clergy in the Theological Education by Extension program. To teach making ethical decisions to a president of a state university with 11,000 students and 500+ faculty and staff, to a veterinarian, a president of a church-

related college, a young adult doctoral student who heads up a human resource development, and to three local pastors challenges us all to think critically in light of our cultural conditions and the gospel message. Those students left their homes Saturday in the early morning- around 4 a.m.- to come to UTS for their class. I traveled to their place also one time.

Their eagerness to learn has inspired me. In two years, when they complete all the requirements, they will receive the degree of Master of Ministry.

Additional work for me is the coordination of the South East Asia Graduate School of Theology (SEAGST) at UTS. Five seminaries in the Philippines, including UTS, are part of the academic program.

This April, we will hold the first biennial SEAGST gathering of the students in the Master of Theology and Doctor of Theology programs.

UTS is celebrating her centennial year. A centennial kick-off banquet was held on February 24th, which I coordinated. Close to 400 attended the celebration in the auditorium of the old UTS building in Manila. A joyous and memorable evening!



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Christmas Market is Coming



The Commission on Missions, Peace and Justice is again sponsoring the Christmas Mission Market on December 2nd, 9th and 16th. Through the purchase of shares, we join in partnership with highly reputable non-profit agencies that enable those in need to help themselves.

Honor a friend or family member by making a donation in their name to one or more of the following: Young & Healthy, Union Station, Ecumenical Council's Friends in Deed House, Pasadena AIDS Service Center, Ecumenical Bad Weather Shelter, FUMC Social Service Ministry, San Gabriel Valley Habitat for Humanity, Heifer Project, Give Ye Them to Eat (Latin America-Mexico). Handcrafted items from alternative trade organizations will also be available.

On Stewardship: A Personal Testimony

By Rev. Debbie Gara

I have always been a part of the United Methodist Church, raised as a P.K. (preacher's kid) with very positive experiences in the various churches my dad served in California and Arizona. My confirmation in 8th grade was a meaningful commitment, and even through my intense college years with waitress jobs on Sunday mornings and relationships that discouraged my church involvement for awhile, I knew that the church was a place that would have importance and commitment in my life and my family. Both of my husbands (Steve died in 2000) were/are committed to the UMC, and previous to the call to ministry and seminary in my late 30's we were one of those families who served on multiple committees, taught Sunday School, and rarely missed worship at Aldersgate UMC in Tustin, California.

My understanding of God's call to our stewardship of money was slower in coming. Over the years I heard the explanations and witnesses of what tithing was about and I thought I understood the concept, but not really. For too many years I thought that it would work to have the attitude of "After I pay the bills and get this and that (which I could always justify), I would give what was left to the church." I would try to commit a certain amount and didn't always give that amount because after I had paid for my first priorities, it was not there. So, I'd play the game of telling myself I would do it better the next month.

Somewhere in that blur of years when Steve had A.L.S., right after I was ordained, I managed to continue ministry only by the radical and abundant giving and support of



the church I was serving. They not only surrounded our family with care but sent us on trips and paid for the first years of each of my daughters' college tuitions. I gained a profound understanding of the gift of God's grace through and in all circumstances. In

addition to all that surrounded us in the love of the church family, my prayers for healing were met with a profound message that all would be okay but for the grace of God. I had the strength to move forward with fullness in life. It is hard to explain, but I often think that if not for my faith tested and met through the church and God, I might still be living in darkness.

It was in that deeper realization and experience of giving and grace that I realized that my not giving to God the first of my financial gifts meant my vocation of servant ministry was off balance. I am all about an organized life (or faking it) so I always make lists and prioritize my time. In my giving God what was left, I was giving God the message that my blessings from God were first to be used for what I wanted and next, maybe, for God. I was hurting myself, my faith and God.

When Dan and I were married, we committed to tithing, or giving 10% of our net income, along with our commitment and vows to one another for the rest of our lives. It is priority. With college tuition still a part of our lives, we get behind some months but it is always paid by the end of the year. In addition, we choose special outreach opportunities that come along, particularly when disaster strikes and our United Methodist Committee on relief (UMCOR) gives us each the opportunity to channel funds to persons who happened to be in a place we were not and their lives turned upside down.

Personal Testimony *continued on page 6*

Youth Choir Greens



It's not too late! The Youth Choir has extra greens available to order if you didn't have a chance previously. Remember, that the money collected will go to the 2008 Choir Tour youth.

To place an order, please contact Sue Tkocz at (626) 449-6464.



SpiritSeekers Sunday School Welcomes Special Guest on November 25th



You are invited!
SpiritSeekers Sunday School welcomes a special guest on November 25th at, 8:45 a.m. in the Church Lounge.

Gunther Katz will share his experiences as a survivor of the concentration Camp Gurz, which he entered at age 11 in 1942. Separated from his family, both of his parents were killed at Auschwitz. Gunther is an outreach speaker from the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles.

Please note the special start time of 8:45 a.m. and location in the downstairs church lounge so that we can maximize the opportunity to hear his story and respond with our questions.

Child care will be available in the Preschool room for young children 15 minutes prior to the normal Sunday School time of 9:00 a.m.

For questions or more information you may contact Dan Gara or Andy Goebel, co-facilitators of SpiritSeekers.

Preschoolers Story Time

Congregational preschool children with a parent or guardian are welcome to attend!

Library Story Time

- Stories
- Fun Songs
- & much more!

10:00am – 10:30am

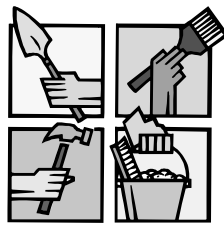
TUESDAYS

5 year olds

WEDNESDAYS

4 year olds

IN THE
LIBRARY



Mission to Mississippi Update

You are invited to attend an information meeting at Glendale First United Methodist Church, 134 North Kenwood Street, Glendale, CA 91206, on November 29th at 7 p.m. in Room 151 to discuss the trip and meet others who are interested in being part of the team that will travel to Mississippi to help rebuild homes and lives that were affected by Hurricane Katrina.

The Pasadena District team of 25 people will go together with a team from the Riverside District from April 12– 19, 2008.

Information and application materials are now available for those who are interested in being part of the District work team to Mississippi. You are encouraged to sign up early.

To receive your materials or ask questions, please contact Rev. David Palmer by phone at 818-243-2105 or by email at david@glendalemethodis.org or download the forms from the website at www.glendalemethodist.org from the Mission link.

Thank You!

Dear Dr. Frank Trotter, Rev. Debbie Gara, Rev. George Mann, and Rev. Richard Garner, We, the children of Howard Gorton, would like to extend our thanks for the loving words and prayers that were spoken at his memorial service. It meant a lot to us to know that he was loved by so many.

We also want to thank all who prepared and hosted the reception following the service. The food was wonderful and it was displayed so beautifully.

Dad would have been amazed at the outpouring of love on his behalf.

May the Lord bless you all.

Sincerely,

Robin, John, Debbie & Danielle



Congregation at FUMC, Thank you all for your prayers and wishes for my recovery. I am doing better and am so glad to be home, and will appreciate your continuing prayers as I strive to heal totally.

In Christian love,
Dorothy Lewis

United Methodist Men's Dinner Meeting Features Rabbi Marvin Gross

Please plan to attend and welcome the executive director of Pasadena's Union Station, Rabbi Marvin Gross. Rabbi Gross has led the Union Station Foundation since 1995, and has been the catalyst behind a period of unprecedented growth. Hear his compelling story of service and commitment at the Tuesday, November 27th dinner meeting of UMM beginning promptly at 6:30pm.

All men of the church and their guests are welcome! Join the wonderful camaraderie, time of devotions, dinner, song and program! We look forward to your company — please notify the Church Office at (626) 796-0157 with your RSVP!

Questers Christmas Party

All Questers are cordially invited to participate in this year's Christmas Party on Saturday, December 15th at the Brookside Golf Club at 6:30 pm for dinner. Musical entertainment will be provided by Kayla Staats and Andreas Montes from our youth group. Cost for the evening is \$40.00 per person. Please make your reservation by December 1st by contacting Irmgard Frey at (626) 796-4757. We welcome newcomers and guests!



Aldersgate Christmas Dinner December 14

The annual Aldersgate Christmas dinner and celebration will be Friday, December 14th at 6 p.m. in the Church Lounge.

Members of our youth choir "Sounds of the Risen Son" will serve the catered dinner and entertain as a fundraiser for their annual choir tour. Reservations are \$25 per person and are due to Eldon Osborn, Treasurer, by Monday, December 10th.

Hilltoppers Annual Christmas Luncheon on December 17th



UMW Hilltoppers will meet December 17th at 12:00 noon for the annual Christmas luncheon in the Church Lounge.

All women are invited to come and enjoy the Christmas spirit. If you can attend, please call Irene Atkinson at (626) 795-2393.

Christmas Caroling in the Chapel



Join us in the Chapel on Saturday, December 8th, at 7

p.m. for an hour of singing your favorite Christmas carols. We will be taking requests during this informal and enjoyable time together. Dr. Trotter will be playing the organ and Andreas Montes will be playing the piano. We look forward to seeing you (and hearing you!).

Dial 211 for Assistance



You can dial 211 in the greater Los Angeles area and get referrals to many social services, overnight shelters, medical clinics, abuse assistance, etc. for the area from which you are calling. They are also currently offering referral assistance for fire victims. The land line has been set up since 2005 and they recently added cell access. However, here is the direct number if 211 does not work from the phone that you are using: **800-339-6993**.



Sunday School Big Red Barrel Donations

December

This month the wind blows and the rains may come. If you are out in the weather, your skin and lips will most likely get chapped. What helps keep our skin and lips smooth?

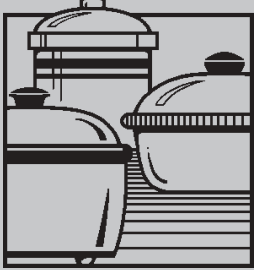
We will collect moisturizing cream & chapstick.

Scenes from Sunday School Harvest Party

Photos by Pam Marks

Pathfinders

Casserole
Sale



December 9th

after church
to benefit
our adopted
family



Moses was the theme for costumes.

Personal Testimony *continued from page 3*

The balance and wholeness this has added to life cannot be put into words. It is a discipline as well as a commitment, not to the church but to God.

There are creative ways to make this discipline even more successful, and we are now setting up to be a donor of securities,

meaning that we give shares from our trust account.

Faith is a constant journey, and I am abundantly grateful that today I can share this aspect of my journey and understanding of stewardship with you. Thanks be to God.

Culinary Maven Beguiles Aldersgate Class

Peg Rahn, our guest speaker at the Forum's October luncheon, really did not require any introduction to the members as she has been a church member with husband, Leroy (Lee) for over forty years. Her presence has proved a comforting and welcomed element in so many instances and circumstances. In her interesting and entertaining talk, with appropriate anecdotes, Peg described her fascinating and frequently heartwarming journey that literally propelled her from an initial career as a dental hygienist to a respected and inspirational voice as a stylist and analytical food and travel guide

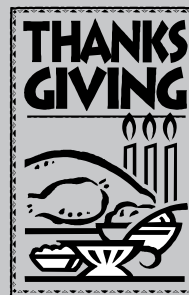


with a far-reaching, enviable reputation.

She has been responsible for the publication of numerous books and guides relating to her many specialties and ever-widening interest, including Better

Homes and Gardens, Frommer's Travel Guides and the Food Lovers' Guide to Los Angeles.

She was a familiar presence on radio (KABC/KMPC) and television (AM Los Angeles and KABC Eyewitness News) and continues her popular column in the Pasadena Star-News and the Suburban LA Newspaper Group.



Routinely grateful

When a national day of thanksgiving was established on the fourth Thursday in November, it was not because that was a particularly thankful day. It was intentionally chosen precisely because of its arbitrariness to remind us to say "thanks" on a daily basis for the bounties God has heaped upon our lives.

For Christians, every Sunday is a Thanksgiving feast day. Every Sunday at worship, we give thanks for the greatest event ever to hit planet Earth, the greatest "opening" in human history — the open tomb, testifying to Jesus' resurrection. Every Sunday is Thanksgiving Sunday. Every Sunday dinner is Thanksgiving dinner.

— Newsletter Newsletter, November 2007



Light from the Catacombs

by Pat Mann, FUMC Archivist



(l to r) 1966 Family Christmas Workshop; (2) Margurite Miller's inspiration (3) Hester Bulmahn helping at the crafts table in 1988



Churchwide Family Christmas Workshop

Marguerite Miller had an idea! She and Hester Bulmahn brought boxes, bags and arms-full of seed pods, tin, beeswax, etc. and created a huge pile on the floor of Fellowship Hall. From this pile of assorted items, the church wide Family Christmas Workshop was born. The workshop featured the making of: beeswax candles, cake and cookie decorations, Christmas wreaths, gift wrapping, tree ornaments, table decorations, Christmas cards and tin can decorations. Christmas music and refreshments made this an annual occasion by 1961.

For years, Hester and her mother, Irene Phernambucq, prepared the "Reindeer Dinner" which consisted of meatloaf, peas, jello and "r-cookies." One year, Dorothy Patterson cut out silhouettes of the children from black construction paper.

Now, in our 47th year, we are organized and are a very large family. Do those decorations bring back memories?

FUMC CALENDAR of EVENTS:



27	6:30pm	UMM Dinner Meeting	Fellowship Hall
	7:00pm	Adult Education Meeting	Church Lounge
28	6:30pm	Library Committee Meeting	Church Lounge
	7:30pm	Missions, Peace & Justice Committee Meeting	Fellowship Hall



01	4:00pm	AIDS Posada Walk	Sanctuary
02	11:15am	Christmas Market/ACAC	Fellowship Hall
	1:00pm	Advent Workshop	Fellowship Hall
03	8:15pm	American Guild of Organists, LA Chapter Recital	Chapel
05	4:30pm	Board of Trustees Meeting	Church Lounge
	6:30pm	Staff-Parish Relations Committee Meeting	Church Lounge
06	7:00pm	Vision Committee Meeting	Church Lounge
07	5:00pm	Youth Babysitting	PFUMC Classroom

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 Choir Room
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 Meetings Adult Lounge

WEDNESDAYS

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:

- Peter Beam
- Gabe Brown
- Wayne Brubaker
- Everett Dodge
- Curt Elrod



- George Griffith
- Peggy Hendricks
- Kyong Hong
- Holly Dale Howard
- Manick Samuel
- Doris Schatra
- Norm Schmidt
- Argie Taylor

for strength & comfort:

- Phil Carlson
- Barbara Gorton
- Lorene Ozsvath



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