

THE GOOD NEWS

Volume 31, Issue 6

February 9-February 15, 2012

We've all heard the term "a blessing in disguise." It refers to something which (on the surface) looks to be painful, tumultuous, or just plain bad for us, and says it might actually be a good thing. Why is it that we often see blessings in our lives only in looking back? Obviously when we are in the middle of a time of hardship, there is no way for us to see or understand the learning, the change, or the growth that may come from it.

John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, believed strongly in what he called "prevenient" grace. It was his theological term for the idea that God blesses us and provides "the grace that goes before us." Essentially he was saying that God is present and moving in our lives even before we are aware that God is present and moving in our lives. That's always been a comforting thought to me, and it may give all of us some ability to trust in blessings that we cannot yet see.

In the recent *Why?* Series, we emphasized that God works through people. Sometimes the people around us are those "blessings", and they can guide us toward strength, hope and meaning even when we cannot see the way.

In Bakersfield, I coordinated a caring ministry program called Stephen Ministry. A number of people in the congregation participated in this program where they met with, and listened to, and cared for people who were going through crisis situations. Obviously, not everyone is able to do this kind

of ministry, and so our leaders specifically looked for folks in the congregation who had gifts of listening, and empathy, and caring.

I remember there was one man in particular, who was very kind and able to put himself in another person's shoes (so to speak). He was a good listener, and he had a lot of compassion. But although we recognized these traits, we were not sure that he could see them in himself. Year after year we tried to encourage him to be a part of the program, but he consistently declined. Apparently he didn't think he was worthy. He didn't believe he could possibly do such a thing. Counseling with others during crisis situations was simply too threatening for him.

Well, I knew the leaders who were part of that program and they were dedicated and persistent, yet also encouraging. And perhaps their continual urging was God's way of prompting this man to make use of his gifts. A few years after I

left that church, I remember reading in their newsletter that this man was joining the program.

Was that an easy thing for him to do? I'm sure it was not. I'm sure it required some stretching and some risk on his part. But as he would probably be the first to tell us – his life became immeasurably richer and stronger because he followed God's prompting through people. As we enter this Lenten season, let's continue to seek God's blessings and guidance in the support and encouragement we find in one another.

In Christ,

Joe

HELPING WITH WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY

Liturgist

Greeters

Fellowship Hosts

Ushers

Acolytes

Sextons

Nursery Attendant

Sound Technicians

Flowers

Pat Knapp

Chris & Kathy Coffin

The Coffin & Lake Families

John Aud (Capt.), Will Lockhart, Randy Huth,

Dan & Sue Pedretti

Megan Speckman & Lauren Watson

Randy McCoy & Karen Burch

Alex Salgado

Gary Thomas & Michael Kingsley Hurst

The Somers Family



1501 Geer Rd.
in Turlock

SR. HIGH YOUTH
Sierra Service Project Fundraiser

Strings Italian Café
Drive Thru Dinner!

WEDNESDAY
FEBRUARY 29th
4:00-7:00 pm

Pasta with Meat Sauce
Green Salad
Bread and a Brownie

Tickets are available from Senior High Youth or in the office for \$10 each. One half of all proceeds will go toward the Sierra Service Project Mission for 2012.

Confirmation Class Begins Soon

Confirmation is the process where a young person is invited to "confirm" their baptism through thoughtful study and reflection about their own relationship with Christ.

Beginning in just a few weeks, Pastor Joe will hold a 10 week confirmation class. This class is especially for 7th, 8th, and 9th graders. Youth participants will explore all aspects of our Christian beliefs, and young people will be given the opportunity to make specific decisions regarding their faith. On May 27 (Pentecost Sunday), in a special ceremony at church, those who choose to do so will be received into church membership.

The 2012 Confirmation Class will begin on February 26, at 5:30 pm in the conference room in the Asbury Building. Please call Dawn Mallory or Pastor Joe (668-3000) for more information.



Newcomer Orientation

If you're brand new with us, or have been attending in recent weeks, and would like to know more about this church community (i.e. who we are, and what we're all about) join Pastor Joe for an informal time of refreshments and sharing.

We call it "Coffee with the Pastor" and it is simply a way to learn more about our church, and our ministries. Pastor Joe will explain the meaning of church membership, and those attending will have the opportunity to join the church as members if they desire. It is also a great way to meet some others who are new to this church family.

We will be meeting on Sunday morning, February 19, at 9:30 am in the Florence Porter Room. The coffee's on, so come and join us! Childcare is available. Call Pastor Joe if you have questions (668-3000). Hope to see you there.

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE



Once again we will observe the beginning of the Lenten season with our traditional **Ash Wednesday Worship Service**. This service is a reflective time which sets the tone for the entire season of Lent. The mark of the ashes will be offered to those who wish to come forward – a symbol of our humanity, our dependence, and our desire to renew our relationship with God. Plan to join us in the sanctuary for this special service of prayer and repentance on **Wednesday, February 22, beginning at 6:30 pm.**

From DAWN MALLORY, Director of Christian Education

WORSHIP DANCE

We will start a new session of Worship Dance beginning this Sunday, February 12, at 9:30 am in the Social Hall. This dance group is open to all children in grades 1 through 6 and no prior dance experience is necessary. We will be dancing to a song that tells the story of Naomi and Ruth. Come learn how to worship through dance. *Megan Speckman*

BLANKET SUNDAY

Thank you to our Sunday School Classes for meeting our blanket challenge. We collected over \$60. That means we will send 12 blankets to those in need. Great job! This month our coins will go to help our Prayer Shawl Ministry.

JUNIOR HIGH NEWS

All junior high youth are invited to play laser tag this Sunday, February 12. We will leave the church at 2:00 pm and return around 5:00 pm. Cost for 2 games of laser tag at Laser Quest is \$15. Please RSVP to Dawn Mallory prior to Sunday so we can get an accurate reservation. Thank you!

NEW BOOK STUDY CLASS

Donna Artrip's Book Study will be offering a new class beginning Sunday, February 12, at 9:30 am. The class will look into Methodist Pastor Adam Hamilton's *Seeing Gray in a World of Black and White*. This series prompts participants to take a more thoughtful look at the political, moral, and religious issues that divide us. This series has a DVD component so they will be meeting in the Florence Porter Room. Participant guides have been ordered and will be available soon for purchase at a cost of \$8. If you enjoyed the *Why?* Series, you may want to check this class out. Childcare is available in the Nursery during this time.

STRING'S ITALIAN CAFÉ FUNDRAISER

Leap day means one more dinner to cook, so let us help you out. Our Senior High Youth will be holding a Strings fundraising dinner on Wednesday, February 29, from 4:00 pm - 7:00 pm. Tickets will be for sale starting this Sunday. Your TO-GO meal will include pasta with meat sauce, salad, bread, and a brownie for dessert. This is a great meal to leap over hump day and help our youth get to their mission trip with Sierra Service Project. Tickets are only \$10 with half of the proceeds going to our youth. On the day of the dinner, just drive up to Strings at 1501 Geer Road and our youth will deliver your meal(s) right to your car. Tickets will be available from our youth as well as in the front office.

SENIOR HIGH NEWS

Thank you to everyone who brought snacks for our fundraiser. Thank you to our congregation for purchasing the snacks. We earned \$175 towards our SSP trip. Thank you!!!

We have a few important dates to keep in mind:

Sunday, February 12- Bowling - Yosemite Bowl, 1:30 pm-4:30 pm. Cost: \$10 for 2 hours of play and shoe rental.

Sunday, February 19-President's Day Weekend - **NO** Youth Groups.

Wednesday, February 29-String's Fundraiser - 4:00 pm - 7:00 pm.

In His Name, Dawn

NOTES FROM CINDY - YOUR PARISH VISITOR

Where is our rain? We keep hoping and praying for it but the rain just hasn't come. I've been hearing things like "it's the opposite of an El Nino" and "the jet stream is way too "high" to come down and bring us rain." Does anybody remember when they coined the phrase "El Nino?" I sort of remember the term in the nineties but it seems every year now the terms of "El Nino" or "La Nina" pops up. I just wish it would rain. Keep praying.

My husband and I watch a lot of shows on PBS. We've recently started recording shows when we are away or if the shows come on at a horrible hour. One show we check out a lot is "Independent Lens." They have had some really good and informative shows. I saw a listing for "Have You Heard From Johannesburg?" and recorded it. It is a film by Connie Field and PBS has made it into five installments on "Independent Lens."

Two years ago in December a member of FUMC died. Her name was Nosisi Mbuli. I failed to meet her on several occasions and when she went into the hospital she died before I could meet her. Praba Koomson was a good friend and Pastor Dave and Pat knew Nosisi. In fact, Nosisi had been a part of FUMC's choir. As I watched "Have You Heard From Johannesburg?" I immediately thought of Nosisi. I attended her memorial service and was totally fascinated by the story of her life. Like so many youth in 1976 she left her town and went to Soweto to support the anti-apartheid movement. Nosisi was able to gain asylum in Angola after the riots and soon found herself as a rebel soldier in Angola.

It took Nosisi eight to ten years to gain asylum in the U.S.A. She finally came to the U.S. with her two-year-old son whose father had been killed in Angola. Nosisi made her life in Oakland where there are a lot of people from South Africa. I don't remember exactly how she got to Turlock but she was here for only a few years.

Praba did a wonderful job on the memorial service on December 30, 2009. Some South Africans attended and sang some of their native songs and had really interesting and informative statements. One young man sitting a few rows in front of me would raise his arm with a clenched fist every so often. Later there was a memorial service in Oakland, which Praba, Pastor Dave and Pat attended. I would have loved to have been "a mouse in the corner."

If you ever get a chance to see the whole show, please watch it. It will really enlighten you on a very historical period. It is amazing what goes on in this world and I quite often don't have a clue.

Many thanks to Praba for going over her memories of Nosisi with me.

Until Next Time. . .

Cindy

Forthcoming Events at FUMC—Starting Thursday, February 9, 2012

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2012

7:00 am—Early Bird Bible Study
 3:30 pm—Girl Scouts
 6:30 pm—TCLC
 6:30 pm—Missions
 7:00 pm—Worship

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2012

8:00 am—Pinewood Derby (SH)
 9:00 am—O.A. (Asbury)
 7:00 pm—Serenity A.A. (Asbury)

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2012

8:30 am—Worship Service
 9:30 am—Adult Bible Studies
 9:30 am—UMM

10:30 am—Worship Service
 10:30 am—Sunday School

2:00 pm—TCLC

7:00 pm—Youth Groups

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2012

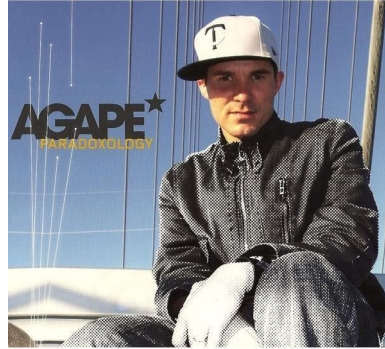
6:30 pm—Scouts (SH & Asbury)
 7:00 pm—OA (Asbury)

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2012

9:00 am—Knitting Fellowship
 2:00 pm—Reading Club
 5:30 pm—Handbells
 7:00 pm—Scouts

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2012

10:00 am—Bible Study
 1:30 pm—UMW Wednesday Circle
 4:00 pm—Whole Staff Meeting
 7:00 pm—Choir



ATTENTION
 Jr. and Sr. High
 Youth Groups!

Christian Hip Hop Artist AGAPE Concert!

Saturday, March 3rd, 7:00 pm

St. Paul's United Methodist Church, Manteca

TICKETS ARE \$10 ADVANCE PURCHASE

Seats are Limited – Contact Dawn Mallory for Details ASAP!



Please keep the following folks in your prayers

Dale Pinkney @ *Doctor's, Manteca*; Virginia Bailey @ *Emanuel*; Fred Greenlee @ *Turlock Rehab.*; Lin and Anne Griffith @ *Cypress*; Ethel Cullens, Eula Walton @ *Brandel*; Don Hall @ *Sequoia*; Margaret Church @ *Covenant Care*; Seth & Dorothy Pace, Barbara Norton, Francis Maley, Betty Thomas @ *Paramount Court*; Alberta Stauber @ *Mary A. Home*; Betty Cockrell, Doris Applegate, Leroy Hagen, Laura Collard, Janet Brown, Lisa Michael, Bob Webb, Elmer Marriott, Rick Kitamura, Ed Wheeler, Trudi Tillner, Noreen Ramos, Bob Cooper, Carole Garton, Mary Fiorini, Tom Giacomelli @ *Home*.

Dear FUMC Members and Staff:

Once again, the *Friends of the Turlock Public Library* are happy to report a successful outcome to our annual book sale, which the church is generous enough to host. The sale grossed **\$5,913.75** - almost \$400 more than last year, so that we can pass on a substantial amount to the library.

As revenues shrink in our diminished economy, the Turlock Public Library needs every penny from our book sale to offer children's programs and to buy books and other items not included in the Stanislaus County budget.

As you may know, all the books sold were donated by area residents. We also sell these books in our two book stores, located in the library and at 126 W. Main Street. Books may be donated throughout the year. Please call Turlock Library (664-8100) for information.

With many sincere thanks for your warm-hearted support for our community enterprise,

Friends of the Turlock Public Library



The Loose Coin offering for the month of February 2012 is for the Prayer Shawl Ministry. A total of \$95.00 has been donated so far this month. Thank you for your generosity!

FEBRUARY	5	12	19	26
Attendance	224			
Loose Coin Offerings	\$95.00			
General Income	\$12,132.00			

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
1660 ARBOR WAY
TURLOCK, CA 95380
(209) 668-3000
Email fumcturlock@sbcglobal.net



This Sunday at

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

1660 Arbor Way ~ Turlock, California 95380 ~ 668-3000

FEBRUARY 12, 2012

*Developing a friendly
environment that encourages
learning and ministry in
the name of Jesus Christ.*

8:30 a.m.	Worship Service
9:30 a.m.	Adult Studies
9:30 a.m.	U.M.M.
9:30 a.m.	Worship Dance
10:30 a.m.	Worship Service
10:30 a.m.	Sunday School
7:00 p.m.	Youth Groups

We're on the Web - www.fumcturlock.org