

March 1, 2007

# GRAND AVENEWS

George E. Rook  
Pastor

Chuck Law  
Director of  
Music Ministries

Sarah Alt  
Youth Director

Wanda Mayfield  
Organist

Heather Sanders  
Secretary



**Be There.**

**Be Hope.**

**March 18,  
2007**

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## Sunday Schedule

9:00am  
Sunday School\*

9:45am  
Fellowship

10:00am  
Worship\*

\*Child Care Provided

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Phone Number  
870-673-6317

Fax Number  
870-673-3697

Email  
gaumc@centurytel.net

## LIFE-CHANGING MINISTRY—A RESPONSE TO GOD'S LOVE

You and your congregation can join United Methodists worldwide by making a special offering through One Great Hour of Sharing to support humanitarian aid through UMCOR. You can be assured that when catastrophes cause suffering, your church, impelled by Jesus' love and compassion, will be in the lead to ease the pain.

## THE 2007 OFFERING SUNDAY MARCH 18—ESSENTIAL TO UMCOR

Gifts to this offering underwrite UMCOR's "costs of doing business." That helps us keep our promise that 100 percent of every other gift you make to a specific UMCOR project can be spent on that project—not on home office costs.

UMCOR is a good steward of God's gifts. Offering gifts over and above those used to cover administrative costs are channeled where they're most needed. UMCOR's specialized ministries—responding in disaster, fighting hunger, alleviating poverty, providing relief supplies around the world, and offering hospitality to immigrants and refugees—all assist the most vulnerable people whose need is greatest.

## NO WORLD SERVICE FUNDS COME TO UMCOR

UMCOR receives no World Service funds or any other apportionments. Your gifts mean we're right there with hardworking families, people who are affected by storms or war, disaster or disease.

"The One Great Hour of Sharing offering on March 18, 2007, is a gift of stability to UMCOR," says the Rev. Paul Dirdak, the agency's chief executive. "Our ability to respond and remain until the job is done is in direct proportion to the generosity of United Methodists at this time of offering."

## YOUR GIFTS WORK THREE WAYS

### Keep the Lights On

Most gifts coming to UMCOR have been designated for specific programs—and those programs receive 100 percent of those gifts. So part of the One Great Hour of Sharing offering plus a small percentage of other general donations support UMCOR's cost of doing business.

### Fill-in Fundraising

Donations to the One Great Hour of Sharing offering also assist UMCOR programs that have not been fully funded through designated Advance gifts.

### Answering Jesus' Call

United Methodists' donations often become the springboard for additional funding.

The compassion of Jesus makes all things new. As Christians we're called to do the same: to offer the hands, the heart and the hope of the church wherever people are suffering. Your gifts to the One Great Hour of Sharing, channeled through UMCOR, enable the church to answer that call.



**Confirmation Class Reminder:** The Confirmation Class will not meet Sunday, March 4 because of the New Member Luncheon.



**SUNDAY MARCH 4th** we will honor eight new members to Grand Avenue at our New Member Luncheon after church. This will be a potluck and our new members will be our guests.

Our new members are Bea Ratekin, Drew Alderson, Darren Walker, Heather Sanders, Morgan Blake, Phyllis Orlicek, Ryan Eagle and Mikah Eagle.

**Mark March 4th on your calendar and come meet and greet our new members.**

*Spiritual Renewal at  
Bayou Meto United Methodist Church  
March 4th & 5th  
7:00 p.m.*

*“God Is Good”*

The Bayou Meto United Methodist Church will host a two evening Spiritual Renewal event on Sunday, March 4 and Monday March 5. Services will begin each evening at 7:00 p.m. with congregational singing.

Rev. Lavon Post will bring the message on Sunday evening and Mr. Barry Joe Wilson will speak on Monday. The speakers will bring messages on the healing power and goodness of God.

The choir of First United Methodist Church of DeWitt will perform on Sunday evening and Mrs. Laney Eldridge will be the featured vocalist on Monday evening.

Bayou Meto United Methodist Church  
Rev. Jackie Gregory, Pastor  
1095 Hwy 276  
Bayou Meto, Arkansas  
Pastor’s Phones: Study 946-1636; Cell 501-412-7019

Sunday School 10:00 a.m.  
Worship 11:00 a.m.

An eight session study of Revelation will be taught by the Pastor beginning Wednesday, March 7 at 10:30am in the Fellowship Hall and, with the exception of Holy Week when the class will not meet (April 4), continue each Wednesday through April 26. The Wednesday sessions will be repeated the following Sunday, with the exception of Easter Sunday when the class will not meet (April 8). You may register to attend this study by calling the Church Office (673-6317). A suggested donation (but not required) for the student booklet is \$6.50. This study is open to anyone from the seventh grade on up.

## LAY SPEAKING EVENTS

The Southeast District still has five courses offered for Lay Speaking for **March 25 and April 1st**. The cost is \$20.00 which covers the meals and materials for the two afternoons (2:30-7:30) and will take place at Monticello First UMC. Courses will include the Basic Course, the Basic Refresher (4 hours), The Basic Youth Course, and two Advanced courses for Certification: A Preaching Workshop and a class on Restoring Methodism. To register or for more information contact:

Jimmie Boyd, 1110 Wooley Road, Rison, AR 71665 Ph. 870-357-2688 or email [jb1110@tds.net](mailto:jb1110@tds.net)

The North Central District is offering a Lay Speaker Retreat at Mount Eagle Christian Center beginning **March 9 at 6:00 through March 10 at 4:30pm**. The cost is \$46.00 which includes lodging, 2 meals (breakfast and lunch) and course materials. Everyone who is interested in Lay Speaking ministry is invited to attend.

This is the 4th year for this retreat and everyone who has attended has loved it! You don't have to dedicate 5 Sunday afternoons in a row attending a two hour session in a city far away. You only have to drive to the location one time so you save lots of time and gas money!

Courses offered this year:

Basic Lay Speaking Course - Led by Rev. Bill Buchanan

Two Advance Courses offered:

- #1 Major United Methodist Beliefs - Led by Dr. John Farthing
- #2 Worshipping with United Methodist - Led by Rev. Blake Bradford

Please contact [lu@mounteagle.org](mailto:lu@mounteagle.org) or call 501-723-4580 to register.



**Daylight Savings Time begins March 11.**

**Set your clocks ahead one hour Saturday, March 10 before you go to bed!**



### UMW Bake Sale

Saturday March 31st

9:00-10:30am

FELLOWSHIP HALL



The United Methodist Women are ready to fill your pantry and freezer with homemade treats like cakes, cookies, pies, candies, casseroles and much more. If you have ever attended one of our Church's potlucks, you know what good cooks we have at Grand Avenue. Please join us for a cup of coffee and a cookie and don't forget to bring your checkbook.

**Wednesday Children's Program to Present Spring Musical**

Please make plans to come see our Wednesday Children's Music Ministry Spring Program on April 29th at 3:00pm in the Sanctuary.



**New Youth Hand Bell/Instrumental Group to be formed** - We are lucky at Grand Avenue to have a wonderful bunch of excited elementary youth. I am going to be starting a new small group of 3rd and 4th graders to start and work with them in hand bell ringing. Orff Instruments and drumming beginning in the next few weeks. This group will start small and like an oak tree, will grow and expand.

**Chancel Choirs to Present "Testament of Praise" - The Life of Charles Wesley**

The combined choirs of Grand Avenue and First United Methodist will present "Testament of Praise" by Charles Wesley. Arrangements and orchestrations of these familiar hymns celebrating the life and gifts of Charles Wesley will be **May 6 at 3:00pm at First United Methodist Church**. Please make plans to attend this special celebration of music and fellowship. Guest musicians, soloists and narration will top off the afternoon and will have something for everyone to experience.

**JOIN THE CHANCEL CHOIR**

Your choir is always looking for new members. If you find yourself singing in the shower or to the radio you should be in the choir. Everyone can participate and reading music and having a perfect ear are not requirements to join the fun and fellowship. Please consider singing with us on Sundays. We would be glad to have you!

Camp Tanako registration forms are available at the Church Office. Information about the 2007 United Methodist Men Scholarships will be released later.



The UMW "Grand Heritage" Cookbooks are here. They are \$18 and can be purchased from the Church Office, The Jacobs Co., or from any member of the Cookbook Committee.

**DIGITAL PHOTOS NEEDED**

The church office needs digital photos to display on our church website. Exterior and interior photos as well as any "outings", anything church related will do. In addition to email, we will also accept photos on disks or memory cards. [gaumc@centurytel.net](mailto:gaumc@centurytel.net)

**THANK YOU!**

Because of your donations, the children's Christian Education Program has reached it's goal of raising \$400 to purchase a new 32" TV/VCR/DVD set.



## Lent

The season of LENT is a time to slow down and take a moment to look at our lives and the world around us. The Holy Scriptures invite us to see ourselves and the world through God's eyes. What is precious? What is beautiful? What needs attention? When we begin to seek God's perspective, we recognize God more quickly; we celebrate grace more easily; we see the injustices of the world more readily.

Seeking God's perspective is an ongoing task. It is a process begun by you, cultivated in community, and expressed through Prayer-filled action.

via-**Episcopal Relief and Development**



*Sympathy is extended to John Savers on the death of his nephew, Shawn Parrish, who died in a traffic accident. Shawn is the son of Buddy and Marsha Parrish.*

*Sympathy is also extended to the family of Dan Monk, who died February 23 of complications following transplant surgery at UAMS in Little Rock. Dan, who was forty-four years old, visited Grand Avenue several times last spring and early summer, and sat about three or four pews from the back on the north side of the sanctuary. Sympathy cards may be mailed to: The Family of Dan Monk, c/o Mike Monk, 305 Michelle, White Hall, AR 71602.*

### PRAYER LIST

*Jim Rogers; Rollie Rich; Joyce Roth; Rita Cress; Mary Bledsoe; Becki Wilson; Tammy Wilson; Willa Lambert; Sherry Tuminello; Gene Smith; Elizabeth Richardson; Ray Holsted; Beth Ragan Adams; Fern Bock; Clarence Thomason; Tim Walton; Michael Acklin; Fred McCuistion; Joey Hillis; Sam Scales; Robert Lisko; John Fauerbach; Jackson Carmean; Bailey Simpson; Bethany Jackson; The family of Shawn Parrish; The family of Dan Monk; The citizens of the Dumas area; Cathie Jones; Casey Jones; Ellen Southall; Sylvia Mills; Clio Clary; All our sick and shut-in; President George Bush; Congress and our Leaders; The Leaders of our Allies; Members of the US, UK and Coalition Armed Forces and their Families; The families of those who made the*

Grand Avenue United Methodist Church  
803 S. Grand Ave.  
Stuttgart, AR 72160

Non-Profit Org.  
Standard Rate Paid  
Stuttgart, AR 72160  
Address Service  
requested  
Permit No. 42

### **MEETINGS THIS MONTH**

**Trustees 3-19-07 @ 7pm**

**Finance Committee 3-20-07 @ 7pm**

**Administrative Council 3-20-07 @ 7:30pm**

#### **GROUPS & GATHERINGS**

- YOUTH:** The Youth Music Group (grades 5-12) meets each Sunday from 5pm to 6pm. in the Choir Room (contact Chuck Law at 673-6317 or 672-2019);  
The United Methodist Youth (grades 7-12) meets each Sunday at 6pm to 7pm in the second floor Youth Wing (contact Sarah Carmean at 501-450-2984 {cell}).
- TWEENS:** The "Tweens" group (grades 5-6) meets in their room every Sunday at 6pm (contact Lainie Hoskyn at 659-0089).
- CHILDREN:** The Children's Music Group (grades K-4) meets each Wednesday from 3:30pm to 5pm in the Choir Room (contact Chuck Law at 673-6317 or 672-2019).



This is what we know at this time...

- We are grateful that no lives were lost in the tornado that struck Dumas and the surrounding area.
- The United Methodist church in the Dumas area nor the parsonage received any damage.
- No fatalities were reported. There are at least 40 injuries. Two children were med-flighted to Arkansas Children's Hospital.

## WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

We have received word from conference officials regarding volunteer groups, including United Methodist volunteers, arriving in Dumas.

***Dumas officials have specifically asked that volunteer groups not come to the area until further notice. Officials are coordinating efforts with various agencies. Conference and UMCOR representatives are on-site and will notify the conference office as soon as a plan of action is released.***

The area is still under National Guard supervision and any groups arriving will be turned away. If you have a group interested in volunteering, contact Don Weeks, UMVIM Coordinator at [dweeks@arumc.org](mailto:dweeks@arumc.org) or by phone at (501) 681-2909. Don, in addition to Rev. Maxine Allen, will notify groups when they will be allowed in the area.

***If you want to help in other ways***, the Arkansas Rice Depot and the Arkansas Foodbank Network are both accepting non-perishable, easy-to-open (pop top) items and bottled water for distribution in Dumas.

- Arkansas Foodbank Network, 8121 Distribution Drive, Little Rock, AR 72209, (501) 565-8121 or (877) 565-8124 (tollfree). Local foodbank agencies can also accept items; contact the Little Rock office for local centers.
- Arkansas Rice Depot, 3801 W. 645th Street, Little Rock, AR 72202, (501) 565-8855 or [end-hunger@ricedepot.org](mailto:end-hunger@ricedepot.org)

**Contributions towards the tornado relief can be made through Grand Avenue. Make your check to GAUMC and designate the memo corner "Dumas."**

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## LENTEN SUGGESTIONS FROM YOUR CHURCH LIBRARY

Searching for a book to read during Lent? Here are a few suggestions from our Church Library that are currently on display and available from the library desk.

**Walking The Bible: A Journey By Land Through The Five Books Of Moses** by Bruce Feiler (published in 2001) and based on the recent PBS series. This book is easy to read and quickly draws the reader into the writer's fascinating experiences.

Also available by Bruce Feiler is **Abraham: A Journey to the Heart of Three Faiths** published in 2002.

**Just As I Am: The Autobiography of Billy Graham** is currently available as is **The Purpose Driven Life: What On Earth Am I Here For?** by Rick Warren.

Several beautifully illustrated books include **The Story of Jesus** by Reader's Digest, **Prayers and Poems of Inspiration** by Ideals and **The Cross** by Max Lucado.

**In The Footsteps of Jesus: 2000 Years Later** by Wolfgang E. Pax was republished in 1999 from the original book published in 1970. Your Pastor owns a copy of the original edition and read it while in high school. This beautifully illustrated book is accompanied with an interesting and informative text surrounding the life of Jesus, the locations where he lived and taught, and the shrines and churches associated with these historical sites.

The Grand Avenue Church Library has many books similar to these that might interest you. The Library also owns a large collection of commentaries to help in understanding biblical texts and a selection of concordances to help locate biblical passages. Lent is an excellent time to experience what your library has to offer in assisting your spiritual formation.

## LENT BEGINS FEBRUARY 21

Dear People of God: The first Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church to prepare for them by a season of penitence and fasting. This season of Lent provided a time in which converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism. It was also a time when those who, because of notorious sins, had been separated from the body of the faithful were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to the fellowship of the Church. Thereby, the whole congregation was put in mind of the message of pardon and absolution set forth in the Gospel of our Savior, and of the need which all Christians continually have to renew their repentance and faith.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word...

-The Book of Common Prayer

## QUESTIONS ABOUT LENT

### What is Lent?

It is the liturgical season which begins Ash Wednesday and ends with Holy Saturday. It consists of forty days (Sundays excluded), It is thought that the word "Lent" comes from the word "lengthen" since it occurs when the daylight hours are lengthening.

### How did Lent get started?

In the Early Church, baptisms usually took place on Easter Eve. A forty day period of final instructions and fasting for the candidates preceded the baptisms. The number related to Jesus' forty days of meditation and fasting in the desert. Eventually this preparatory period was extended to all Christians.

### What re the main themes of Lent?

The Book of Common Prayer (pg. 264) stresses that it is a season of preparation to celebrate the death and resurrection of our Lord. That preparation consists of penitence and fasting, prayer and self-denial, as well as reading and meditating on Scripture.

-From "Ask Me About" by the Rev. Canon Warren E. Crews

Two things: one is about Lent and one is about the current fraud of a newly discovered tomb of Jesus. First, this thing about the newly discovered tomb. I want to begin by saying how grateful I am that reputable archeologists are among the first to speak up and say this is a fraud, even as others are labeling it a grab for money based on sensationalism. Americans love sensationalism! No, this is not the tomb of Jesus and no, these are not the bones of Jesus. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem was long venerated as the location of Jesus' entombment and resurrection before the church was built as a shrine above the tomb and as a protector of the site. (The Church and tomb were in later centuries vandalized and looted by Moslems).

Christians have from the very beginning been confronted with the rejection of Jesus' resurrection by nonbelievers because this is one of the glorious truths of our faith that makes others uncomfortable in their decision to reject Jesus as their Savior. They need Jesus! Those representing the current fraud reveal in their own "less than quality lives" a need for Jesus. In fact, they are to be pitied for rejecting Jesus, which many do even in Stuttgart where names appear on church membership rolls of people who do not think Jesus is important enough to be worshiped or studied, and that his Kingdom isn't important enough to be supported by active participation and financial support. These people have also rejected Jesus.

It seems that every year around Easter some new controversy arises that is reported to undermine Christianity. We were recently confronted with the newly discovered gnostic gospel challenging Christian beliefs. This writing was known and rejected by the early church. The early church wrote against this book, which is why I remind Christians there are no "lost books of the bible" only rejected ones. We now have a copy of this gnostic gospel to read for ourselves and can understand why it was rejected by the earliest Christians for its deficiencies. Then, there was the "Da Vinci Code," which is said to be FICTION. Many readers regarded this FICTION as truth and as fact when it isn't. I was amused when a morning news anchor visited Da Vinci's "Last Supper" and was asking about details in the painting that supported the "Da Vinci Code" only to have the art historian say this was a false and inaccurate interpretation of the painting. I was also amused by archeologists saying time and time again the "Da Vinci Code" is fiction - not truth.

All of these attacks on Christianity are opportunities similar to those used by Paul to proclaim the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. I am hopeful you know and are learning more about your faith so as to proclaim Jesus as the Savior of the World. He is even the Savior here in Stuttgart. The question is now whether each one of us is a good believer. Are you? Are you committed in your faith? Are you living as a good disciple? If so, I will see you at worship this coming Sunday and I will see you active in the life of Grand Avenue.

For my second point, I want to share with you an excerpt from Olive Wyon's book Lord of the Journey (1943): "If we could see beneath the surface of many a life, we would see that thousands of people within the Church are suffering spiritually from 'arrested development'; they never reach spiritual maturity; they never do all the good they were intended to do; and this is due to the fact that at some point in their lives they refused to go further; some act of self-sacrifice was required of them, and they felt they could not and would not make it; some habit had to be given up, some personal relation altered or renounced, and they would not change their ways; they refused to take the one step which would have opened up for them a new and vital development" (via "The Message" of Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, Little Rock). This observation by Wyon ties into the message of spiritual growth that is so much a part of Lent and it also ties into my first point where I closed by challenging each of us to be informed, active disciples of Jesus. With this comment, I now close. Have a blessed Lent so as to be prepared for experiencing a blessed Easter!

- George E. Rook