

March 14, 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**

Sunday Schedule

9:00am
Sunday School*

9:45am
Fellowship

10:00am
Worship*

*Child Care Provided

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.



Welcome Anna Katherine Bulloch!

Anna Katherine is the granddaughter of Debby Bulloch-Strabala and Bill Bulloch, great-granddaughter of Bertie Grace Calhoun and Louise Bulloch and daughter of Rusty and Jill Bulloch. Anna was born February 2 and weighed 7 pounds 14 ounces.

Evangelism and Family Life would like to thank all those who helped make the 2007 New Member Luncheon a success. Lainie Hoskyn did a wonderful job on the power point presentation. Thanks to all those for the beautiful introductions. Madeline Lucke, thanks for your help in the kitchen. You are invaluable! Thanks to those who cooked and to those who came. We gave our new members a warm Grand Avenue welcome.

Susanne Braithwaite
Evangelism

Carolyn Moore
Family Life

THANK YOU!

Because of your generosity, \$760.00 was collected for the Dumas Tornado Relief Fund.

SEVEN SUGGESTIONS FOR LENT

1. Be present, as far as possible, at every service of the Church. The benefit will be to others as well as to yourself.
2. Read the Scriptures regularly and meditate upon what you read. Too many treat the Bible as a book of the past.
3. Pray until prayer becomes a habit, turning to God at all times as naturally as the flower turns to the sun.
4. Keep a strict watch over the door of your lips this Lent. If you cannot speak well of others, say nothing.
5. Deny yourself some luxury and add the cost of it to your Easter offering. The cost of self-denial should be given, not saved.
6. Let self-examination be a daily duty. It is not a question of where you stand, but whether you are moving.
7. Make your Lent positive, not merely negative. Undertake some practical work for good and carry it through.

(Borrowed from the Newsletter of First UMC of Lewisville, Arkansas, published 3-22-87)

MEETINGS THIS MONTH

Trustees 3-19-07 @ 7pm

Finance Comm. 3-20-07 @ 7pm

Admin. Council 3-20-07 @ 7:30pm

2007 Wye Mountain Daffodil Festival to be held March 10th - 18th, from 9am till dusk. Everyone is invited to attend. There will be a craft show and a lunch of pork BBQ with a choice of apple or peach cobbler. Admission and parking are free. Please come see the 7 acre field of daffodils. Wye is about 30 minutes west of Little Rock on Highway 113. Go west on Highway 10, Cantrell Road, to the end of Lake Maumelle, then turn right on Highway 113, then go 6 miles and there it is on the left. Watch for the yellow signs. For more information see www.wyemountainumc-daffodilfestival.com or call (501) 330-2403

SINGLES NEWS (UPCOMING EVENTS)

Saturday, March 17: **Wye Mountain Daffodil Festival.** Sponsored by Wye UMC. Lunch is pork BBQ and apple or peach cobbler. No admission. Cars leave the church lot at 9:00am.

Sunday, March 18: Lunch in Stuttgart following morning worship.

Wednesday, March 28: **Aida** performed by the Bulgarian State Opera Company. FREE! Warfield concert at Lily Peter auditorium in Helena. Aida is an opera in which emotions run wild. The conflict between two nations plays out amid shifting sympathies and intrigue, and the love triangle resolves in a tragic but noble conclusion. Verdi's music is ravishingly beautiful and exotic. With a company of 100 including an orchestra, this Opera Verdi production is magnificent! Led by Ivan Kyurkchiev, of international fame, it is beautifully performed. Opera Verdi is one of the leading opera companies. An evening to remember! Bus leaves the church parking lot at 5:30pm.

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

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 or call 501-723-4580 to register.



Join us March 25 during Morning Worship to celebrate the baptism of Darren James Walker, Jr., infant son of Darren and Lindsey Walker.



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.

UNITED METHODIST MEN MEETING TIME CHANGE

The UMM will meet Tuesday, April 3 at 7:00pm in the Fellowship Hall. \$5.00 is the suggested (not required) donation for dinner. This change is due to the Maundy Thursday worship service at 7pm in the Church.

CAMP TANAKO UPDATE

The United Methodist Men will once again provide **Camp Tanako Scholarships** to the children and youth who attend or visit Grand Avenue (member or non-member). The scholarship amounts (partial or full) will be determined based on the number of requests and will be awarded after the UMM meeting on Thursday, May 3, which is the deadline to submit a scholarship request. PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN YOUR CAMP TANAKO REGISTRATION FORM TO THE CHURCH OFFICE. You will be contacted after the May 3 meeting if you will need to include a check with the forms that will be mailed by the Church Office to Camp Tanako. Registration forms are currently available in the Church Office.



April 1 is Palm Sunday and the beginning of Holy Week. Palm Sunday will be observed with appropriate hymns and traditions. Children are invited to participate in the procession by gathering at the front door prior to the 10:00am service. Palm crosses will be blessed during the service and distributed after worship.



Maundy Thursday, April 5: There will be two services with Holy Communion and a brief homily. The 5:15pm service will be a spoken service while the 7:00pm service will also include two hymns. This service commemorates the institution of the Sacrament of Holy Communion at the last supper Jesus shared with his disciples. Casual or business dress is appropriate.

The Church Office will be closed April 6 in observance of Good Friday.

The schedule for Easter Sunday: 9:00am - Sunday School; 9:30am - Easter Egg Hunt; 9:45am - Fellowship Time; 10:00am - Morning Worship. Those who gave Easter Lilies may take them home after the service.



PRAYER LIST

Jim Rogers; Joyce Roth; Rita Cress; Rollie Rich; Jim Gingerich; 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; Brenda Crum; Robert Lisko; John Fauerbach; Linda Fischer; John Robert Graves; Jackson Carmean; Bailey Simpson; Bethany Jackson; 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 ultimate sacrifice.

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

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).

Do you remember the story of Manasseh from the Old Testament books of II Kings 21 and II Chronicles 33? Manasseh was one of Judah's most evil kings. From what a height the nation fell when Manasseh became king! He practiced sorcery and witchcraft, burned his sons in idol worship and even installed idols within the Jerusalem temple itself. He was the one who led his people into practices more evil than those practiced by the Canaanites who had lived on the land before them. Manasseh even ordered the murder of God's prophets with Isaiah probably being one of the prophets killed by his order! But not only was Manasseh evil, the whole people of Judah eagerly plunged into evil practices along with him.

God's judgment eventually came upon Manasseh. II Chronicles 33 tells us: "... the commanders of the army of the king of Assyria . . . took Manasseh captive in manacles, bound him with fetters, and brought him to Babylon" (v. 11). However, this is not the end of the story! Manasseh underwent a heartfelt repentance while in captivity. "While he was in distress he entreated the favor of the Lord his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his ancestors. He prayed to him, and God restored him again to Jerusalem and to his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord indeed was God" (II Chr. 33:12,13). Upon returning to Judah, Manasseh spent the final years of his rule attempting to bring Judah back to serving God, but regrettably, he could not undo the impact of his forty-five years of evil example. Nevertheless, Manasseh dies as a vivid illustration of God's grace abounding for the greatest of sinners.

There are two important points I would like to share with you from this text. The first point is that God is indeed a gracious God who is more ready to forgive than we are to repent! His grace, his favor, his unconditional love is truly amazing! The second point is a call to faithfulness. We live in an age where militant atheists and militant secularists are well organized and well financed in their assaults upon Christ and his people, just as Manasseh was well organized in his attacks on the faithful of his nation. Christian truth is being challenged as nothing more than one opinion among many and Christ is said to be no more special than anyone else. These individuals are earnestly trying to woo Christian youth and adults away from our Lord! Of course, it would be very easy to let our emotions run wild and viciously strike back at these people without remembering the words of Jesus: "Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you;" "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous" (Mt. 5:11, 12, 43, 44). No, being mean spirited and rude in striking back isn't the way for us to respond. It is not a good witness for Christ! A more appropriate response is found in the book of Revelation, which is the current Bible study offered by the Pastor: "Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and hold fast to the faith of Jesus" (Rev. 14:12; see also Rev. 13:10c). Our response is to stand firm, to endure, to know what we believe and to live what we believe. It also helps to remember Jesus loves and even died for these very people persecuting him and his people. After all, he is their Savior too!

-George E. Rook

ARKANSAS CONFERENCE RELEASES MORE DUMAS TORNADO NEWS

Many persons have asked questions about how to get aid to Dumas, UMCOR and UMVIM, and about ecumenical cooperation. Below are the most common questions and answers.

Q. How much of my apportionments go to support UMCOR disaster response?

A. None of your apportionment dollars are used to support UMCOR. The United Methodist Committee on Disaster Relief is supported through the One Great Hour of Sharing (march 26), one of the six special offerings of the general church. Gifts to this offering underwrite UMCOR's "costs of doing business." That means 100 percent of every dollar you designate for one of the specific UMCOR projects can be spent on that project--not on home office administrative costs.

Q. A friend in Dumas indicated that they have not seen any UMCOR trucks. When will UMCOR arrive?

A. Your friend is correct. The UMCOR regional representative, Christy Smith, came to Dumas on February 27. Ms. Smith surveyed the damage, met with local community representatives including Rev. Glenn Pettus and made a report on behalf of our conference to UMCOR's national coordinator, Rev. Tom Hazelwood. Rice Depot and the Arkansas Food Bank Network were contracted by the conference to receive and distribute items to Dumas. Since the tornado, both organizations have brought truck-loads of food, water, baby formula, diapers, and adult personal care products to Dumas and Back Gate. In some instances these two agencies have done deliveries to seniors and other persons who have not had access to transportation. Therefore if you see Rice Depot or Arkansas Food Bank Network, you are seeing United Methodists at work in disaster.

Q. Why are other groups helping to rebuild and United Methodists only helping to clean-up?

A. United Methodists work in concert with local church and community leaders. Clean-up is the first priority. Until persons have completed all of their paperwork with the insurance companies and in the event that a disaster is declared Federal, with FEMA, we do not want to prohibit a homeowner/landowner from receiving the maximum amount of insurance or other damage coverages. When you reconstruct prematurely, you may restrict or in some cases invalidate resources coming to the homeowner/landowner. When the local folk determine that it is time to reconstruct, then UMVIM teams will assist.

Q. I heard that the Salvation Army and the Red Cross are already gone. Why?

A. In a disaster, Red Cross and Salvation Army are first responders. They come in at the same time as Federal officials and the National Guard. They establish food and medial stations and are short-term disaster providers. UMCOR and UMVIM can not respond until invited by the local church officials, but are long-term providers. UMVIM/UMCOR will be there long after many agencies are shut down and gone home. We stay as long as the local folks need us.

Q. You keep talking about partnerships. Why can't we Methodists just do our own thing without relying on others?

A. First of all it's biblical, "Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counselors there is safety." (Proverbs 11:14). Secondly, it keeps us from duplication of services and efforts. A depot has been established in the old hospital at Dumas. Governmental services (food stamps, unemployment, etc.) have been established at the United Methodist Church. Services to persons who do not speak English are operating out of the Catholic church. Faith-based groups have established a web listserv are communicating with each other daily. Every other business day, the statewide faith-based groups are conducting an open conference call. Finally, by collaboration, cooperation, at trust we are able to do much more than we would be able to do separately.

Q. As of today, March 8, 2007, what are the most pressing needs in Dumas?

A. 1.) Prayer. An ecumenical service of prayer and thanksgiving will be held in Dumas at 2 p.m. on Saturday at the site of the Fred's. Let us be in prayer with the community for continued healing. 2) Persons willing to deliver items to sick and shut-ins (go to the old Hospital in Dumas for assignment). 3) Persons who are willing to help in 30 days, 90 days, and six months - after Dumas is no longer headline feature. 4) Calls of support to the Arkansas Senate and Congressional delegation to have Dumas declared a national disaster so that FEMA assests may be received in the community.

For additional information about this update contact Rev. Maxine Allen, Minister of Missions and Ethnic Ministries, (501) 234-8045 or mallen@arumc.org