

# Good News!

The newsletter of the Memorial United Methodist Church of Clovis

November 2003

## MERCY RIVER GOSPELERS SING ON CONSECRATION SUNDAY

Sunday November 2, 2003 is Consecration Sunday concluding our annual financial stewardship drive. Rev. Scott Allred is preaching on "The Tithes." Gospel singers *Mercy River*, formerly *One Accord*, will be here for a truly inspirational worship celebration as we dedicate our tithes and offerings for a new year. Our annual all-congregation dinner follows in the Fellowship Hall. Cooks Barbara and Roger Grams and crew will provide us with a delicious meal. Once again our faithful UM Youth Fellowship will serve us. There is no charge for dinner.

## THANKSGIVING MUMS

We will be purchasing chrysanthemums for Thanksgiving Sunday November 23. Please fill out the insert in the worship bulletin and name those in whose honor or memory you are giving them. Or you may call Evelyn Haulman with your order and mail your check made out to MUMC to the church. Please mark your check: "Mums." Mums may be taken home following worship.

## UNITED METHODIST STUDENT DAY

A special offering will be taken on November 30 in honor of U.M. Student Day. The offering will be used to provide loan and scholarship funds for United Methodist college, university and graduate students.

## NEW HMONG MEMBERS TO BE RECEIVED NOVEMBER 16

We rejoice in the continued growth of our Hmong Congregation with the reception of a group of new members on Sunday, November 16. Please be in worship to give them a warm welcome. A special reception will follow in the narthex.

## WARM TREE PROJECT

For many years now homeless folk served by the Fresno Rescue Mission have had their hearts and bodies warmed by the generous giving of Memorial UMC. By popular demand our poor little tree branch will again grace the narthex beginning the first Sunday in Advent, November 30th. Help us brighten our Advent Tree by surrounding it with gifts of caps, gloves, scarves, socks, blankets, and other items that provide warmth. Small toys, children's and devotional books, and personal care items are also appreciated. Things are needed for men, women, and children. Please wrap your gifts, label them with size or any other pertinent information, and put under the "Warm Tree." Gifts should be brought to the church no later than December 21st. For more information on this project, please see Sue DeFranco.

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## "LAS POSADAS" ADVENT EVENT

During this year's Advent season, we will hold a special series of Sunday night events, based on the Mexican Christmas tradition of "Las Posadas," or "The Inns."

Traditionally, "Las Posadas" is a nine-day re-enactment of the journey of Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem, and their need to find shelter before the infant Jesus is born. As the Holy Family travels to different houses each night, they are refused entrance until a homeowner finally recognizes them. They are then welcomed into the home with songs, prayer, and good food. Children break a piñata to celebrate the triumph over evil through life in Christ.

Our "Posadas" celebration will begin on Sunday, November 30. Each Sunday night in Advent, we will meet together at the church at 5:30 p.m. and travel with Joseph and Mary to find shelter. There will be some walking involved (no more than three blocks), but please don't let that stop you: arrangements will be made so that everyone can join in.

Everyone is invited to participate in any and all of the Sunday events. We especially encourage you to attend on Sunday Dec. 21, the final night of our "Posadas." There will be a special Advent service held that evening in the sanctuary, with music and scripture readings, followed by a party in the fellowship hall. Watch the weekly bulletins for more information to follow!

## HMONG LANGUAGE WORSHIP KICK OFF NOVEMBER 30

The first Hmong Language Worship service will be held on the first Sunday in Advent, November 30, 2003, at 2 p.m. in the sanctuary and every Sunday thereafter. This will be a teaching service. Sunday school classes for children, choir practice and adult classes will follow the service in the Social Hall from 3 p.m. until 4:30 p.m.

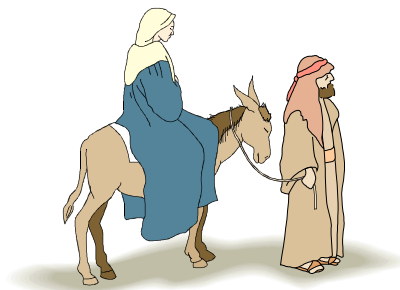
## THANKSGIVING OFFERING

Our Thanksgiving Offering this year will be used for our local chapter of the National Interfaith Hospitality Network. Nationally, the Interfaith Network provided shelter, meals and comprehensive assistance to over 13,000 homeless families last year, 60% of whom were children and one half of those 6 years or younger. Comprehensive assistance included helping 80% of the families to find permanent housing. 600 adults were assisted in job search or job training.

The Fresno Area Interfaith Hospitality Network is just getting started, but we are making progress. Several churches, including Baptist, Armenian, Presbyterian Japanese Christian, as well as several United Methodists Churches, have volunteered to be in partnership to bring this vital outreach program to our area. With God's help we will soon be bringing needed services to homeless families in our area.

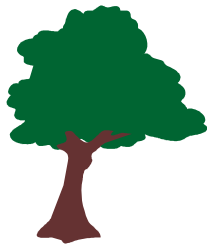
## ADVENT DINNER IS COMING

Each year we enter the season of Advent/Christmas with a festive celebration and huge potluck dinner on the first Saturday in December. This year the date is December 6, 2003 at 6:30 p.m. If you would like to host and decorate a table, please sign up in the church lobby or speak with Pat Frey. Our MC for the evening will be Pastor Newell Knudson. The Fellowship of the Ring will play for us and we will see what else this lovely evening of food, fellowship, carol singing and goodwill brings us! Hopefully YOU! Mark your calendars.



**"GROWING SPIRITUAL  
REDWOODS"-SIGN UP NOW FOR  
FRESNO DISTRICT TRAINING DAY!**

We are so fortunate! This is our opportunity as a congregation to receive discipleship training from internationally respected United Methodist church consultant, Rev. Tom Bandy, who will be coming to our district for our annual Fresno District Training Day November 8, 2003 from 9:30 a.m. to approximately 4 p.m. And it will be right here at Memorial!! Normally a top drawer, too often "clergy only" opportunity like this means shelling out big bucks and traveling or flying a long distance! The cost for this training day is just \$20.00 which includes lunch and you only have to drive to church! This is truly a bargain and a wonderful opportunity for us as an entire congregation to have a SHARED learning experience together! Not just your pastor or one or two of us trotting off someplace and coming back and trying to convey to you what we learned! I treasure this opportunity for us and pray you will join with me. I am counting on you to be there. Of course we will be needing help that day with registration check ins, serving lunch, ushering, technical support and the book table so please pray about your involvement and meanwhile register soon. Space is limited! Child care will be provided. Registration is required. Please see the enclosed flyer for more information and the registration form. Don't be bashful if you can't afford the registration fee: adult education funds are available for scholarships, simply return your registration to the church office instead of the district office if you need a scholarship. I don't want anyone staying away for lack of funding!!



**JOIN THE SCRIPTURE MEMORY  
CLUB**

Do you wish you had more scripture at the tip of your tongue? Scripture is our defense, our resource, our inspiration, our guide, our help in time of need. Join us. We will watch over each other in love and encourage one another! No regular meetings! We will get together to get organized (before and one after worship) on Sunday morning, November 9, in a corner of the sanctuary with Mariamma Mathai.

**Care Ministries**

Giving Special Care to Others

**THE SPECIAL FRIENDS TEAM**

From 10/14/03 meeting our worship theme was "Wounded Healers" as eight Team Members gathered: Pastor Denice Leslie, Pauline Middleton, Pat Frey, Evelyn Haulman, Dorothy Carr, Max Cannon, Bob Anderson and myself. Denice described Henri Nouweon's book "The Wounded Healer" in which he shows that, as with Jesus Christ, our woundedness enables us to identify with suffering people and help them to be healed. We heard Scripture on this theme: Isaiah on the Suffering Servant (53:1-5) and Philippians 5:2-8: Christ humbling himself and serving us. All of us reported wounds that we have had which humbled and taught us. We sang the spiritual "There is a Balm in Gilead!"

We reported on 25 visits in addition to Denice's pastoral calling, 15 telephone calls and 14 cards/notes. We planned to pray for and send cards to several seriously ill people. We lifted in prayer persons with illness and grief. Our next meeting will be (second) Tuesday, November 11 at 1:30 pm in the Conference Room. Come visit us!

*Laurence Hill*

*Special Friends Team Chair*

## THANK YOU NOTE

Many thanks to all for the calls, visits, cards and prayers during my recent illness. Each day I'm much better. God Bless,

Louise Smith



## MORE THANKS

until there is a life-changing happening, we may take friendship for granted. During the past few weeks we have learned the true meaning of church friends beyond the Sunday morning time together. Our Pastor Denice and many of you have given us wonderful loving support. Our sincere appreciation for the prayers, cards, calls and genuine caring during this difficult time.  
Ralph and Nancy Enloe

## 2004 MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

If you feel the leading of the Holy Spirit to serve in these ministries speak with Pastor Denice or the person listed with the ministry.

1. Partners In Evangelism(PIE): This is our welcome ministry with worship visitors. PIE members rotate Sundays checking the attendance registration and green cards for guests and then making a door step call to deliver a sweet bread and packet of information about our congregation. Research shows that visitors who receive a call after worship are 80% more likely to return to worship. Leader: Max Cannon.

2. Family Ministry: Work with our Family Life Coordinator, Michelle Hernandez in meeting the needs of our young couples and families with young children. Leader: Michelle Hernandez.

## A NOTE FROM THE TRUSTEES

There has been a tendency to store items in hallways. This practice, even on a temporary basis, presents an exit problem in the event of a fire, and a trip hazard during daily activities.

All items must be stored in an appropriate closet, shelf or other fixture. Please remember that the furnace room, electrical room and water heater room are not proper storage facilities. This includes the furnace room in the Thrift Store. Your support in alleviating this hazard is solicited.

## THE BIG BOUTIQUE IS ALMOST HERE!!!

Friday November 14 & Saturday November 15 are the days we open. Please sell lots of quilt tickets to all your friends. Bring any craft donations on Wednesday November 5 or November 12, Thursday November 13 or any Wednesday before. Don't forget to make some treats for the Country Store. Thank you for all your support. THIS IS GOING TO BE THE BEST BOUTIQUE EVER!! BRING YOUR FRIENDS, HAVE LUNCH!! DO YOUR HOLIDAY SHOPPING!!

## THRIFT SHOP NEWS *by Bev Daly*

We made \$742 in October. Our next open days are Nov 7 & 8, 9:30 - 2:30. Our next work days are Nov 25 and Dec 2, 8:30 to 10:30.

## **UMW NEWS**

Board Meeting – November 3, 9 am, Library

Regular Meeting – November 18, 10 am Social Hall

Election of officers/Pledge Service  
Red Bird Circle Hosts. Bring own service. Everyone Welcome  
Bring a gift for a young woman to be delivered to Mary Elizabeth Inn in San Francisco for Christmas.

Red Bird Circle – November 12, 9:30 am, Library

Wesley Circle – November 12, 1 p.m., Library

Bible Study Leader – Laurie Hill

Membership open in all groups. Come and visit us!

### **WHAT IS A PRAYER QUILT?**

Can you touch a prayer? Can you pull it close and feel its comfort? You can if it's part of a prayer quilt.

The idea behind these quilts is simple, yet powerful. A heavy thread is used to take stitches through the quilt layers, and the ends are left free to be tied with a square knot. As each knot is tied, a silent prayer is offered for someone in special need - someone who has asked us to pray for them. The quilt is then given to that person. What makes each quilt so special is not the pattern, color or workmanship, but the fact that prayer is symbolically tied into each one. These comforters are a statement of faith, and a testimony to our belief in God and in the power of prayer.

Prayers & Squares, the Prayer Quilt Ministry, began in 1992 at Hope United Methodist Church in San Diego, California. Since then, the ministry has expanded to include chapters in churches of many different denominations across the country and in Australia and the Marshall Islands.

Through Prayers and Squares, thousands of quilts have been distributed, each a special gift of love. They have been made for sick babies, for cancer and AIDS patients, for adults and children facing surgery or difficult family situations - for many reasons, but each for someone in special need of prayer.

This is a UMW Mission Project. For more information, call Jean Hill.

### **SCRAPBOOKING NIGHT**

Get out your pictures and share some memories. Join the scrapbooking group on the third Friday of the month in the Fellowship Hall. The fun starts at 6:00 and child care is provided.

### **ANNUAL CHARGE CONFERENCE MEETING DECEMBER 8**

Our annual meeting will be held Monday evening, December 8, at 7 p.m. in the Sanctuary. We will approve nominations, our appointed pastors compensation packages and hear other reports. Our District Superintendent Vickie Armor-Healy will be present. Please call the church if you need transportation.





## BROWN BAG SUNDAY COMING

The beautiful season of thanksgiving is upon us and it's time for our annual "Brown Bag" food collection to benefit the Clovis Salvation Army. Ordinary brown grocery bags have been transformed into works of art by our Growing Our Spiritual Family and Sunday School kids and will be available for you to pick up beginning November 2nd. Drop a can or package of non-perishable food into the bag each day in November as you give thanks for the many blessings God has bestowed on you. Then bring your bag to worship on November 23rd, Thanksgiving Sunday, where we will consecrate the gifts we have brought. If you would rather give a cash donation, that is always appreciated. Envelopes for this offering will be available near the bags. Make your check payable to the Salvation Army. For more information, see Sue DeFranco.

## INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY NETWORK DESIGNATED FOR 2003 THANKSGIVING OFFERING

Our Interfaith Hospitality Network shelter for families homeless due to crisis is slowly but surely coming together through the tireless efforts of Susan Lowery, President, Mary Vollman, Vice President and Kathy Matoian. A day center residence is now available and our goal of recruiting 12 congregations is steadily moving forward. The United Japanese Christian Church just signed on. March of 2004 is the target date for opening. Start-up costs include equipment. Council voted to designate INH as the recipient of our Thanksgiving Offering for this year. Please know that when you make your offering you will be helping a poor working family get back on its feet with housing, employment and counseling.

## Christian Education

*"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable."*

### UPDATE ON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

We started off this year on a really good note. We had our Kick-Off Sunday with the youth band playing, the puppet team doing a story, a craft project and a treat for the children. We have 26 students enrolled and we have averaged 20 each Sunday.

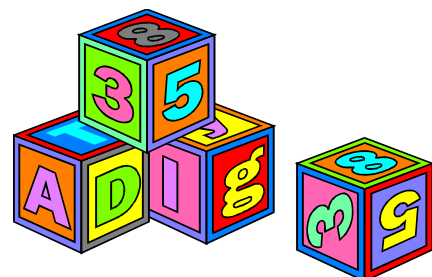
In Oct the puppets were our all-stars. In Nov we will have Max Cannon as our all-star. We now have 4 teachers for k-2 and 3-5, and 2 teachers for our 6-8 and 1 for high school. I am hoping that we can get a couple more teachers to help out in the 6-8 and high school classes. With 4 teachers in the lower classes the teachers teach one Sunday a month, and are able to go to their own Sunday class the rest of the time.

We are still collecting money for the heifer project and have a trip planned for March to the heifer farm.

Dorrie Osback  
Christian Education Superintendent

### CHILD CARE NEEDED?

If you need childcare for any meeting, event or program, please contact our Childcare Coordinator and Supervisor, Dorrie Osback. Please give at least a week advance notice.





# Sunday School

# Coach's Corner

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL 8:45 a.m.  
ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:00 & 11:15 a.m.

Our Sunday School starts at 8:45 with music, then we go to out classes and learn different things about the Bible.

## Youth Group News



### NOVEMBER YOUTH CALENDAR

- Saturday 11/01/03 8 am Poverello House Work Day
- Sunday 11/02/03 Help with Consecration Dinner - NO MEETING
- Sunday 11/09/03 5:30 - 7:30 pm Meeting (Bungalow)
- Sunday 11/16/03 NO MEETING
- Saturday 11/22/03 9:30 am - 1:30 pm "Pew Detail" Work Day/Lunch at Carl's Jr
- Sunday 11/23/03 5:30 - 7:30 pm Meeting (Bungalow)
- Sunday 11/30/03 5:30 - 7:30 pm "Las Posadas" All-Church Event

All Saints Day always begins the Holiday Season for me. On All Saints we remember the faithful who have crossed the Crimson Line since our last observance of this special day. With the reading of the names of the honored dead we also affirm the resurrection power, glory and faithful love of God at Christ's table. The ancient Celts say the veil between this world and the other world is thin at this time of year. It is a time to entertain angels unaware! The other day I saw a man sitting at a small table outside the cafeteria at St. Agnes. His resemblance to my deceased father was so striking I said to myself, "That's my dad and I am going over there and have a conversation with him."

I believe God graces us with moments like this to keep us connected to those who have contributed to our lives and helped make us who we are. This holiday season may we give thanks to God for the many ways we have been blessed through the lives of others, living and gone on to be with God. And if tears come may each one be a special memory and occasion for thanksgiving.

In hope and faith,  
*Pastor Denice Leslie*

# Give Thanks