

THE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH CONNECTIONS

First United Methodist Church

Mexia, Texas

April, 2008



... *“A New Experience”*

I had never participated in a foot washing service until last Thursday evening at our Maundy Thursday worship service during Holy Week. To be honest, I was a little apprehensive about the whole thing. I asked myself, “Will the church think I’ve gone off the deep end? Will anyone show up? Will anyone come forward when it’s time to wash one another’s feet? Will they think that snake-handling is next?” As things turned out, I had nothing to be worried about. Those in attendance were not only receptive to the act of foot washing, but seemed to relish the opportunity. I was prepared to wash everyone’s feet, but lo and behold, others voluntarily began washing foot after foot. It was almost as if we had been deprived of serving one another, and then suddenly the flood gates of service had been opened.

The act of washing someone else’s feet and having your own feet washed as Jesus washed his disciples feet is a very humbling experience in and of itself, but the thing that sticks out most for me is that there are those among us who are hungry to serve. As a church community we need to create more opportunities where we serve not only those inside our church, but those outside of our church as well. I hope you will pray about where God is calling you to serve because whether you know it or not, we have all been called to serve in one way or another. God is calling you to serve. Are you listening?

In Christ,

Brad

Mystery Guest Preachers

The months of April, May, and June we will have mystery guest preachers in church. I will be swapping pulpits with three preachers on three different Sundays in April, May, and June. This is a great way to hear from different voices and encounter various perspectives on our faith. I hope this is a meaningful experience in which we all grow and learn from others.

Brad

Message from Program Coordinator Charlotte Posey....

Our church has just completed a new ministry project involving Mexia ISD. Are you aware that our church has touched every employee of Mexia ISD this year? It's true. We have ministered to our school district by serving lunch to all the employees at each campus. Again, I say thank you to all who went to each campus and served lunch, to those who prayed for this ministry, and for everyone who baked desserts. On March 12, we served the Mexia High School staff. Those serving or providing desserts were, John and Diane Burks, Sue Franks, Pam Crider, Jackie Tidwell, Brad Brittain, Mary Benson, Angel Nance, and John and Charlotte Posey. This ministry has been very worthwhile and appreciated. We look forward to doing it again next year!

UMW Circle News

United Methodist Women Day Circle: February 18th meeting.

We have been asked to help furnish cookies for the general conference that will be held this April in Ft. Worth. We have agreed to furnish 360 cookies. On Friday April 25th we will meet in the Fellowship Hall to package the cookies and on Saturday April 28th the Parley Wiggins Circle will deliver the cookies to Waco.

Lulu gave this month's program. The topic was "Giving makes mission possible." She read verses from Psalm 100 and from 1 Corinthians. She also read a prayer that I would like to pass on to everyone:

"I pledge my prayers as a reminder that every good and perfect gift comes from God, I pledge my time that I may respond to human need through study, action and reflection, I pledge my financial gifts to continue the legacy of sisters in Christ initiating the global ministries of the church through UWM."

New members are welcome. We meet the third Monday of the month at 10 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. For more information please call Hugh Ann at 562-7789. God Bless to all.

Sammie Carter, Secretary

Parley Wiggins Circle: Our normal meeting time is the second Monday of the month starting at 7 p.m. Our March meeting was at Cathy Ward's home with Jackie Tidwell presenting the program. Our April meeting will be a retreat near Athens, TX from the 4th -6th. Some of our recent projects include straightening and cleaning the display cases in the Church Foyer and Fellowship Hall. We are also collecting Box Tops for the McCurdy School in Espanola, New Mexico. The collection box is located in the church foyer near the East Entrance.

We have a new book in the Church Library:

PICTURING THE BIBLE ---The Earliest Christian Art

It tells the story of how the earliest Christians gave artistic expression to their religious beliefs. It explores the origins and emergence of Christian art from its beginnings in the third century A.D., when Christianity was an outlaw, clandestine faith through its growth as the state religion of the Roman Empire.



Thank you to Johnnie and Kenneth Christian for donating this beautiful book.

PRESCHOOL CELEBRATES 29 YEARS
“DOWN BY THE RIVER” FESTIVAL AND OPEN HOUSE
SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 2008
9 AM – 10:30 AM
DANCE RECITAL AT 10:45

First Methodist Preschool will celebrate 29 years in ministry on April 26, 2008. It will be an exciting morning at the Preschool and the parents, church family, and community are invited to join the fun.

The Open House emphasis this year is “Down by the River”. From April 14 – April 25 we will be having daily puppet shows where we will be learning about the beauty and importance of God’s Creation down by the river. The puppet characters include: Lori Beth (narrator and lover of the river), Grandpa Gus (a wise old fisherman), Cletus the Catfish (hard working friend of Grandpa), J. J. (always interested in catching the Big One), Polly the Frog (loving life as she hops around the river), Sam the Snake (quietly watching life on the river), and Pokey the Turtle (slowly and cautiously moving around the river and encouraging others). These puppet shows will be held every morning in the Preschool lunchroom during these two weeks from 10:00 a.m.– 10:30 a.m..

At the Down by the River Festival on April 26, 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m., there will be many activities including: Live Fish Tank, Bobber Float, Inner Tube Toss, Casting 101, Sam the Snake tunnel, Polly Frog Bounce House, Bridge over the Ooh-wah River, Turtle Races, Tackle Box Toss, Picnic Snacks, and MORE!

Following the festival the dance students will present their annual recital at 10:45 in the Fellowship Hall. Everyone is invited to attend. All the Preschool Staff Members will be present to direct the carnival activities outside and greet parents and friends throughout the morning.

The First United Methodist Church Free Fish Fry will be that evening, April 26, at 6 pm. Everyone is invited to come back for the Fish Fry and make it a day of family fun at FUMC.

PRESCHOOL STAFF MEMBERS PARTICIPATE IN SPRING TRAINING

Staff Members of the First Methodist Preschool will be participating in the Spring Child Care Conference on Saturday, April 5, 2008, at the First United Methodist Church in Fairfield, Texas. The conference is sponsored by the Limestone, Freestone and Navarro County Extension Service; First Methodist Preschool, Mexia; and Noah’s Ark Preschool in Fairfield.

The conference, Leap into Literacy, is presented this year by Jane Kitson, a.k.a. Mother Goose, National early childhood education consultant and published author. Ms. Kitson will discuss ways to incorporate rhythm, rhyme, and repetition to the Preschool curriculum. She will also focus on motor skills, auditory awareness, phonemic awareness, and initial sounds. Staff members will receive 7 hours of training credit.

Golfing -- Sunday, April 13

A group from our church will be going to play golf at the Big Cedar Golf Course near Fairfield. We will meet at the course to begin playing at 1:00 p.m. After we play golf we will meet at Gilberto's Restaurant in Fairfield for supper. If you would like to play simply show up at Big Cedar on the 13th. We will each pay separately at the golf course.

Nothing But Nets Bicycle Fundraiser

On Monday, April 21st a group of cyclists from Sugar Land will be staying at our church. This group is riding from the Houston area to Fort Worth to raise funds for the Nothing But Nets fundraiser for protective mosquito nets for people in Africa. Our church is one of the churches along their route that will be providing a place to sleep, supper and breakfast, and places to shower. This is a great way for our church to help in the Nothing But Nets campaign by serving those who have gone out of their way to make a huge difference. There are several areas we could use help with so if you would like to volunteer, please contact Brad in the church office at 562-5567.

Fish Fry

On Saturday, April 26th at 6:00 p.m. we will be hosting a free fish fry for our community. In addition to the meal, Gary Beard will be providing entertainment and we will have children's games as well. This is a wonderful opportunity to invite people from our community to be a part of the church. We have tickets in the church office that you can take to give away to those you wish to invite. We will have plenty of food so invite as many you want. Like last year, it is going to be a fun day.

Waco District Day at General Conference

General Conference for the United Methodist Church occurs every four years. The last time General Conference was held in our area was 40 years ago in 1968 in Dallas, TX. This year it is going to be in Fort Worth, TX. On Tuesday, April 29th members from churches throughout the Waco District will be going to volunteer to work at General Conference. Our Conference, the Central Texas Conference, is the host Conference for General Conference and is charged with enlisting volunteers to accommodate the huge crowd of people expected to attend. This is a great opportunity for us to see what General Conference is all about and how decisions are made in the United Methodist Church. If you would like to go on the 29th, give Brad a call at the church office 562-5567.

Alcoholics Anonymous Says "Thank You"

Every Thursday evening an AA group meets in our fellowship hall for their weekly meeting. Last week the group sent our church a thank you note for opening the church to their group. They truly appreciate your willingness as a church to serve in this capacity and want to invite any that might be in need of an AA group to join them on Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.

Epiphany

Our next Epiphany with the boys from the Mexia State School will be the weekend of May 3-4 at Camp Rip at Lake Mexia. Epiphany is an outstanding program in which we share the love of Jesus Christ with boys who desperately need to hear the good news. If you would like to come out and see what Epiphany is all about, you are encouraged to join us on the 3rd and 4th. We welcome volunteers and those who would simply like to observe. Special thanks to those who make Epiphany possible.

Texas Rangers Game

We are purchasing group tickets for the Texas Rangers game against the Cleveland Indians on Monday, June 2nd at 7:00 p.m. in Arlington. This is a special promotion from the Rangers whereby groups of 20 or more can purchase tickets for \$3 each. If you would like to go, call the church office and make your reservation.

Upcoming Summer Mission Trips

Members from our church will be traveling to New Mexico and Louisiana this summer for two different mission trips. The first trip will be to **McCurdy School in Espanola, New Mexico** the week of **July 5-11**. This is an adult mission trip that seven of our members participated in last summer. All seven had an outstanding time and are returning again this summer. We would love to take more with us on the trip! If you have an interest in going and finding out about what is involved in the trip, feel free to contact me at the office. The cost for this trip is \$250 per person, however we have scholarships available for those who need financial assistance. The deadline to register for the trip is Wednesday, April 30th.

The second mission trip we are taking this summer is to **Baldwin, LA and the UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) warehouse**. We will be joining other volunteers from around the country to sort relief supplies at the UMCOR warehouse. I have been to UMCOR once and found it to be a great mission trip and wonderful opportunity to serve. We are taking a group of youth and adults on this trip the week of **July 27-August 1**. The cost for this trip is \$185 per person, and again, if you need financial assistance or a full scholarship let me know. The deadline to sign up for this trip is April 30th.

There are a thousand other things you can do with a week in the summer, but let me assure there is nothing better than participating in a mission trip in the name of Christ with friends. I hope you will consider going with us.

Acquire the Fire Youth Rally

Over 20 youth and adults from our church went to Dallas in March for the Acquire the Fire "Battle Cry" Youth Rally. We joined thousands of other youth and adults from different churches. We had a great experience and learned a lot from our trip. The group particularly enjoyed the lively worship services that were held in Reunion Arena. Thank you to all the adults and youth who made the trip a great experience. We are looking forward to next year's trip.

Missions in Motion

A major emphasis in our church is our missions program. We are currently organizing projects in our community and outside of our community. Below are two different articles from Jay Posey and George Tidwell regarding our local missions and how you can get involved. As we did not hear from many volunteers we are running these articles again. *Please help by donating your time and talent.*



Parley Wiggins Circle— “May I Help You”

Do you need a light bulb changed and can't climb the ladder (or **shouldn't** climb the ladder)? Do you need a ride to the doctor? Do you need to go shopping and have no one to go with (or take you? And be honest with you?) Or, do you know of someone in the hospital in need of cheering up? Do you live out of town and need someone to put flowers on a loved ones grave? How about a shut in person who just needs a good cup of soup and a friendly visit, or a frozen casserole they can warm up later to help them on their road to recovery. If you feel like this is an area of the church you would like to volunteer, please call the church office. And if you or someone you know needs any of the above or other small needs, please let our church office know. They will put you in touch with one of the volunteers. There is no set charge for this ministry. It's all by donation to the Mission Fund only.



Are you a handyman?

If you can fix a commode without breaking more of the operating parts than were originally broken, you might be a handyman. If you can hang a picture on the wall without making a larger hole than the nail hole supporting the hanger, you might be a handyman. If you can change out a light bulb without shorting out the other bulbs in the fixture or topple the ladder you are standing on through an adjoining window, you might be a handyman.

Well, you get the picture. FUMC is seriously looking for members who can help with small chores around the houses of those who are not so trained. We have members of the church and community who could use your help, whether it is with a hammer, wrench, screw driver, paint brush, and/or carpenter's rule and square. The idea is not to remodel homes but it is to help our church family to do tasks that they lack skills for or which they should not do for safety's sake.



As a volunteer, your name, phone number and skills will be on a call list in the church's office to help others.

Welcome New Members

Steve & Kimberly Thomas and children Austin and Aleah.

April Birthdays

2nd—Jackie Tidwell, 4th—Mary Ann Ray, 5th—Ed Marcotte,
9th—Nancy Hughes, 12th—Lewis Blunt, Ginger Kott, 17th—Kathleen
Flowers, Linda Kegerries, 19th —Bob Wright, Ed Cunningham, Dan
Franks, Trey Fulmer, Mike Ray, 20th—Cindy Williford, 22nd—Lindsey
Beard, 26th—Michael Miller, 27th—Janise Shivers, 30th—Lula Goswick



April Anniversaries

5th—Wayne & Nancy Hughes, 7th—Buddy & Donna Williford,
20th— Nathaniel & Angel Nance



Menus for April

Wednesday Night Dinners:

- 4/2 Sloppy Joes
- 4/9 Lasagna
- 4/16 Taco Salad
- 4/23 Ham
- 4/30 Hamburgers

Sunday Breakfast:

- 4/20 Sausage, Biscuits & Gravy

Attendance for March

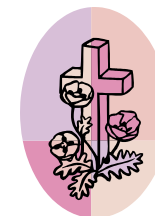
	<u>SS</u>	<u>Worship</u>
03/02	47	127
03/09	70	121
03/16	67	143
03/23	51	209
03/30	41	143

Deadline for submitting an article for
the April FUMC Connections is
April 24th

Memorials

Vera Posey

John & Diane Burks
Hugh Ann Bankhead
Ann Pendleton
Wynona & Don Lipsett



Billy Posey

Wynona & Don Lipsett
Upper Room
Adult Fellowship
Tad & Ima Burroughs

Walter Dreier

John & Diane Burks
Ann Pendleton
Buddy & Donna Williford
Wynona & Don Lipsett

Betty Fitzgerald

Paul & Marie Russell
B.D. & D.J. York
Wynona & Don Lipsett

Barbara Wylie

Dorcas Class
Hugh Ann Bankhead

Thank You

Thank you for the delicious lunch you provided for us. It was so thoughtful and we appreciated it.

Mexia High School, Special Education Group.

Dear First United Methodist Church,

On behalf of the entire staff at Mexia Junior High School, I would like to express our appreciation for the wonderful lunch that your church provided for us. Everyone raved about how delicious the meal was. Your members who prepared and served us were so pleasant and hospitable.

“Thanks” for your continued support to our schools.

Sincerely, Russ Meggs, Principal, Mexia Junior High School

Administrative Board Meeting – Monday May 5th

On Monday, May 5th, we will have an Administrative Board meeting at 7:00 p.m.. We will be outlining our programs for the summer, hearing reports from our committees, and discussing ministry possibilities. Every member of the church is a voting member of the board and is encouraged to participate.

**Update on Heating/Air
Commitment Cards**

Committed: \$46,436.00
Received: \$25,424.00

Organ Update

Amount Needed: \$7,500.00
Raised to date: \$6,120.00

Your Church Staff

Brad Brittain, Pastor

Dr. Richard Morgan, Director of Music

Cheryl Hancock, Children’s Coordinator

Charlotte Posey, Christian Education/Program Coordinator

Wynona Lipsett, Organist

Mary Benson, Administrative Assistant/Fiscal Coordinator

Mike Bolton and Barbara Owens, Building Maintenance and Cleaning

Office Hours

Monday-Thursday

9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. - 1:00 –4:00 p.m.

Friday

9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.