



THE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH CONNECTIONS

First United Methodist Church

Mexia, Texas

February, 2008

... “A Mission-Minded Church”

There are various categories of churches these days – declining churches, maintaining churches, churches in survival mode, growing churches, etc. Churches, like many other organizations, go through life cycles and based on the age of the congregation are at different stages. In thinking of our church I do not think of it in terms of a “maintaining” church. We are not here to “maintain” what we have and simply survive. Jesus didn’t say to his disciples, “Go and maintain” or “Go and survive”. He said, “Go and make disciples.” We are here to grow and serve. If someone wanted to describe our church I hope that somewhere in the description would be the phrase “mission-minded congregation”. In other words, our church is not a church that is focused inward on itself, but outward in service to others in the name of Christ.

A student in Union Seminary, New York made a trip one summer to the Far East and found his former professor, now retired, working in a soup line in a poor city. The student was shocked to see his former Greek professor ladling soup for the poor. “Professor,” he said, “you are a distinguished translator of the New Testament what are you doing in that soup line?” His reply was, “I’m still translating the New Testament.” All of us have a job to do in this church and all of us have been called to serve and witness in the name of Jesus Christ. Thank you for all you do to serve in the name of Christ!

In Christ,

Rev. Brad Brittain

Message from Children’s Coordinator, Cheryl Hancock...

We are off to a fun start! The Peacekeeper's had a "Hot Dog supper/Game night" on January 19th instead of the Lock-in. We had 5 children in attendance. Hot Dogs, chips/dip and cookies were enjoyed by all. We played several games including a scavenger hunt, egg/spoon race, egg toss and creating our own gooey concoctions. Winding down the night we had hot chocolate and popcorn with our movie and large screen video games. Thank you to Jill Flatt and Kent Kendall for your help.

On February 16th we will be going to Waco bowling. If you want to go with us please contact Cheryl at (254)625-3155 or call the church office. We plan on leaving at 9 a.m. and returning to Mexia around 2 p.m.

Message from Program Coordinator, Charlotte Posey...

Wanting to know what is next on the agenda?

SCHOOL LUNCHESES

Last Friday, January 25, several ladies from our church served lunch to Sims Intermediate employees. It was a day full of blessings for the employees and the servers. Thank you to Kathy Nutt, Star Yelverton, and Jackie Tidwell for helping me to serve the lunch. Thank you to Sherry Miller, Cheryl Hancock, Carol Ann Dawley, and Jackie Tidwell for providing delicious desserts. Thanks Brad for your attendance and for being the "taster!"

We will continue this ministry as we serve the employees of Mexia Junior High School on February 12 and Mexia High School on March 12.

If you would like to help us either by baking a cake or by serving on these upcoming dates, please contact Charlotte @ 625-0550 or by calling the church office (562-5567.)

VALENTINE BANQUET - FEBRUARY 15

Our church will be having a Valentine's Banquet on Friday evening, February 15th. The time for the banquet will be 7:00 p.m. We are having a great catered meal. It will be delicious!

We are asking that you bring a wedding or engagement photo of yourselves to display. That ought to be fun. Our entertainment will be a great time as well. Four "lucky" couples will be playing our version of the "Newlywed Game!" The grand prize winners will receive a gift. You won't want to miss the fun. This banquet would be a great opportunity for you to invite your neighbors or a new friend. Get some tickets and bring them along.

Tickets are \$10.00 per person. Call the church office and make your reservations now. (562-5567)

PAT PITTMAN COOKING DEMONSTRATION OF SOME OF HER BEST DISHES

Ladies, on March 29th, we are looking forward to a wonderful treat. Pat Pittman will be doing a cooking demonstration of some of her yummiest dishes. The great news is that we get to eat what she cooks!

We are beginning to take reservations for this event as well. So call the church office and let us know that you would like to be included for this event. Again, the date for this is Saturday, March 29th at 10:00 a.m. We will be giving you more details closer to the event. We can only take 40 reservations, so don't delay!

Message from Preschool Director Sherry Miller...

We are happy to have Ms. Rae Lynne Stanford assuming a new position at the Preschool which was effective on Jan. 1, 2008. Rae Lynne is now our Lead Teacher downstairs. She spends time each day with all the younger age groups helping provide quality age appropriate experiences and activities. She has created a new "center room" downstairs where small groups of children will be able to enjoy additional special learning times. She is available to help any children, parents, and staff members with anything that involves these younger groups at FMP.

News from Epiphany

Feb. 23 AND 24 are the dates of the next Epiphany at the Mexia State School. The Lay Leader for this event will be Kent Kendall. Our pastor, Brad Brittain, will be the Spiritual Director. Kent is currently arranging his team who will serve in various capacities to make this event possible. The Epiphany is an outreach ministry to selected youth who reside at Mexia State School to bring the love of God and the promise of forgiveness to these young men.

The Epiphany team asks for the prayers of our FUMC congregation.

Organ Refurbishing Project

We are in the process of refurbishing our organ. So far we have raised \$3,870 towards the project. The total cost for refurbishing the organ is \$7,500. Thank you to everyone who has contributed so far and to those who will contribute in the future. Our goal is to have the project completed by mid-March. If you would like to make a special gift to this project simply note "Organ Project" in the memo line of your check. Thanks again!

Birthday Sign Ministry

The past year our church has participated in a birthday sign ministry in which we placed birthday signs in members' yards to recognize and celebrate their birthdays. A special thank you goes out to all those who helped with this uplifting ministry. We have concluded this ministry as of the end of January. We hope you enjoyed it and found it meaningful.

Get Well/Sympathy Card Ministry

When requesting prayer for someone that is ill or has lost a loved one, please provide us with an address and we will not only pray for that individual but will also send them a card. We would like to let these individuals know that they are in our prayers and that our congregation is praying for them.

Also, if you know of someone whose day needs brightening by a card or a phone call, please let us know (providing address and phone number, also). You can leave the information with Mary in the church office or contact me. Thanks for your help.

Pam Crider 254-562-5149 (home) jacksonoak@yahoo.com (email)

Thank You's

To My Christian Friends

Thanks for your cards, telephone calls and mostly your prayers. Hope fully I'm on the road to recovery.

Thanks, T.G. Temples

Dear Church,

Thank you for sending me the News's Letter each month. I sure enjoy getting the news. I am doing fine and love living in Austin.

Happy New Year, Francis Lenamon

Dear Church Family,

Once again I would like to show my appreciation for the scholarship you have given me. I have received the second installment and it is already helping tremendously. Thank you very much for the scholarship and all that you have done for me.

Sincerely, Kortney Kelsey

A Special Thank You to the Dorcus Sunday School Class. They have 6 to 8 members present each week who are ready to give of their time, talent and money. In 2007 they gave to the following causes: \$50 to Mexia Academic Fund, \$100 to Caritas, \$25 to Drug Free Signs, \$53.44 to the FUMC Bucket Mission fund, \$50 to the Women's shelter, \$40 to the Staff Christmas gift. Already in 2008 they have given \$1,000 to the Organ fund and \$50 to the Tool Shower. Thank you for all you do.

Thank you Sandy Imes. If you have not already done so please stop by the office and see our new curtains. Sandy's generous donation allowed us to get new curtains for the main office and Brad's office. Thank you for your generosity.

Confirmation Class – Sunday, February 3rd

We are beginning our Confirmation Class on Sunday, **February 3rd** at 9:30 a.m. in Rev. Brittain's office. If you have children 5th grade and up who have not been confirmed, please register them in Confirmation. Confirmation is the process where children discover more about the Christian faith and accept for themselves the gift of God's grace in Jesus Christ. Call the church office to register 562-5567.

Ash Wednesday Worship Service

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Lenten Season in the Christian Church. As always, we will be having our Ash Wednesday service on Wednesday. Ha! Ha! All kidding aside, we will be having a special worship service at 6:00 p.m. on **Wednesday, February 6th** in the sanctuary. All families are encouraged to attend and take part in our journey throughout Lent.

Alcoholics Anonymous Meetings

Every Thursday at 7:00 p.m. there will be an AA group meeting in the Board Room of our fellowship hall. If you or anyone you know is need of an AA group, please come and join the group on Thursday evenings. Alcoholics Anonymous is a wonderful ministry that has helped many people overcome an addiction to alcohol. The first group meeting will be **Thursday, February 7th**.

Faith Seeking Understanding Theology Class

I have always wanted to teach a "mini" theology class in church and offer members an opportunity to dig deeper into what we believe and why we believe. We will be studying the book "Faith Seeking Understanding" by Daniel Migliore. It is an excellent resource for those wanting to delve deeper into faith. Our first class will be **Sunday, February 10th at 6:00 p.m.** The class will meet for six weeks. If you would like to attend come by the church office and pick up a book in advance. We will be discussing the first two chapters of the book on February 10th so it is important that you have your book in advance and read in advance. (I'm sounding like one of my seminary professors now! I better stop!) I'm looking forward to growing with you in this class.

McCurdy Mission Trip Informational Meeting

Last year a group of seven adults from our church went on a mission trip to McCurdy School in Espanola, New Mexico. We had a great time working together on the trip and getting to know one another. Many members of our church have expressed an interest in attending the mission trip this summer, therefore we are going to have a **meeting on Sunday, February 10th at 7:00 p.m.** to discuss and answer questions about the trip. This year the mission trip will be July 5 through July 11th. It is a great time and well-worth attending. It is an opportunity to not only help with a great cause and ministry, but also a time to bond with other church members.

Valentine's Banquet

Friday, February 15th at 7:00 p.m. we will be having a Valentine's Banquet. Coffee Cabaret will be catering the meal and the cost is \$10 per person. This is not a fund-raiser. It is simply a time to get together for fun and fellowship. In addition to the meal, we will have entertainment in the form of the Newlywed Game. You don't want to miss that part of the program. It's going to be interesting! For tickets call or come by the church office.

Breakfast at the Church – Sunday, February 17th

On **Sunday, February 17th** breakfast will be served in the fellowship hall beginning at 8:30 a.m. Special thanks to Sandy Imes for all of her hard work and dedication in preparing our meals not only on Wednesday evenings but on special occasions such as this. Thanks Sandy!

Stephen Ministry

The Stephen Series is a complete system for training and organizing lay people to provide one-to-one Christian care to hurting people in and around our congregation. In Stephen Ministry congregations, lay caregivers (called Stephen Ministers) provide care to the bereaved, hospitalized, terminally ill, separated, divorced, unemployed, relocated, and others facing a crisis or life challenge. Stephen Ministry is not specific to the United Methodist Church and since its inception in 1975 it has helped over 1 million people. Our church is exploring the option of beginning a Stephen Ministry. If you have any interest in becoming a Stephen Minister in our congregation and providing one-to-one care to those in need, please come to our informational meeting on **Sunday, February 17th at 7:00 p.m.** We will answer questions you might have as well as provide information on when and how you can be trained to be a Stephen Minister. This is a great ministry and is something our church needs now and in the future.

Special Called Church Conference – Feb. 18th

On Monday, **February 18th** we will be having a Church Conference at 6:00 p.m. to vote on the proposed sale of the current parsonage and subsequent purchase of a new parsonage. Our Trustees have been working on this project for the past year and now have an offer on our parsonage to present to the church, as well as a proposal to purchase another house in Mexia to serve as the future parsonage. The Trustees have already presented the proposal to the United Methodist Church Waco District Board of Location and Building. The Board of Location and Building unanimously approved the project. The sale of the current parsonage and purchase of the new parsonage will not be official until the church votes on the matter on February 18th. Before the official vote on the 18th, we will have a question / answer session on Sunday, February 10th immediately following the 10:30 a.m. worship service for those interested in learning more about the specifics of the project and the overall process of how a church sells / purchases a parsonage. If you have any questions regarding this project, feel free to contact our Trustee chairperson Joe Paschal or Rev. Brittain.

Epiphany – February 22-24

We are excited about the upcoming Epiphany at Camp Rip with the Mexia State School Boys. The Epiphany weekend is a great experience in which volunteers from FUMC Mexia and other churches in the area gather together to share the love of Christ with the boys from the State School. We will have a meal and meeting on Friday, February 22nd at Camp Rip beginning at 6:00 p.m. The actual Epiphany program will be on Saturday, February 23rd and Sunday, February 24th. If you have never been a part of the Epiphany experience and would like to come out and visit, we encourage you to do so. Thanks to all of our Epiphany volunteers!

Tool Shower A Success

Thank you to everyone who donated tools and or money to the tool drive for our new mission trailer. We are planning to use the mission trailer both here in our community and on mission trips in the future. Thanks again for all who put this together. In addition to the tool donations, we received over \$900 towards the project! Thank you!



Welcome New Members

Matt Alston
Transfer from Marlin, TX

Ann Burgoon
Profession of Faith

February Birthdays

1st-Art Nutt, 2nd-Joe David Wilson, 7th-Andrew Brittain, Theda Oberholtzer, Rebecca Ray,
11th-Chris Shivers, 12-Sherry Manning, 13th-Buddy Williford, 16th--Roy Baccus, Walt McKeever,
18th-Brook Simmons, 19th-Noma Nell Thomas, 20th-Diane Burks, 21st-Billy Howze, Don Lipsett,
22nd-Greg Goodrum, 24th-David Maner, 26th- Lois Willett, 27th-Penny Gray,
28th-Richard Morgan, T.G. Temples.

February Anniversaries

2nd-Pat and Wendy Simmons, 21st-Billy & Louise Howze

In Memory

Edna & Ernest Franks	Mr. & Mrs. Bob Franks
Hal Nussbaum	Bette Thetford Holloway & Louise Martin Mr. & Mrs. O.Y. Goswick
Charlie D. & J.W. Tyner	Joe & Nancy Bounds

Attendance for January

	<u>SS</u>	<u>Worship</u>
01/06	53	129
01/13	58	144
01/20	56	130
01/27	31	107

Menus for February

Wednesday Night Dinners
 2/06 Chili
 2/13 Ham
 2/20 Hamburgers
 2/27 Taco Salad

Sunday Breakfast
 2/17 Biscuits, Sausage & Gravy

Update on the Commitment Cards

Committed: \$46, 436.00

Received: \$21,902.00

Any Member of FUMC can submit an Article for the FUMC Connections Newsletter. Deadline for submitting an article for the March Newsletter is **February, 25th**

Epiphany “fund raising” Lunch

The Epiphany team will be having a “*fund raising*” lunch on *Sunday, Feb. 3*, right after church. We will serve Chicken Spaghetti, Salad, Bread, and dessert and invite the community and the congregation to join us for lunch. Donations will be accepted and these donations will help pay the expenses for the Epiphany weekend of February 22nd & 23rd.

42 & Bridge Tournament

Mark your calendars for Sunday March 10th right after the service. The youth of our church will be holding a 42/Bridge Tournament. For the low price of \$10 you can enter the tournament, be eligible for door prizes and enjoy a fine lunch. This is a fund raiser for our youth so come out and enjoy an afternoon of fun, competition and friendship.

Men’s Retreat at Still Water Lodge

This May a group of men from our church will be going on a men’s retreat. We are going to Still Water Lodge in Glen Rose Texas. Still Water Lodge is a new facility owned by Glen Lake Camp. The retreat will begin Friday evening, May 16th and conclude Sunday, May 18th. This retreat is designed to offer individuals time to relax and get to know one another better. There is not a set agenda for the retreat. Activities on Saturday will include golf at the Squaw Valley Golf Course, fishing, reading, taking naps, cooking out, etc. On Sunday morning we will worship together before coming home. If you would like to attend this retreat, register at the church office. The cost is \$125 per person and scholarships are available upon request.

Your Church Staff

Brad Brittain, Pastor

Dr. Richard Morgan, Director of Music

Walt Harrison, Minister of Youth

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 –5:00 p.m.

Friday

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