



THE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH CONNECTIONS

First United Methodist Church

Mexia, Texas

September, 2007

... “His Magnificent Excellence!”

Greg Jones is the Dean of Duke Divinity School. Recently, he was asked to preach at an Episcopal church and gladly accepted the invitation. The Episcopal Church was excited to have him come and preach, but as they were putting together the bulletin for the worship service, they realized they didn't know what to call Mr. Jones. They asked themselves, “Should we call him Rev. Jones, Dr. Jones, or Dean Jones?” Finally, someone from the church called Mr. Jones and asked him: “What is your title? We need your title for the bulletin.” Jones was working on his sermon for the service at the time so he thought the man was asking for the title of the sermon. So Jones responded, “His Magnificent Excellence”. The man, surprised by Jones' request, replied, “What?” Jones repeated, “My title is His Magnificent Excellence.” The man from the Episcopal Church finally took that for his answer and went on about his business. When it came time for the service Dr. Jones took his place near the pulpit and opened the bulletin only to find the following words printed: “His Magnificent Excellence Jones”! Needless to say, he was more than a little surprised and amused by the whole thing.

This story is an obvious example of how we sometimes get our wires crossed. A lot of misunderstanding and conflict could be avoided in our relationships if we simply took the time to listen to one another and ask a few questions along the way. The next time we find ourselves guessing as to what he or she “meant” or “implied”, maybe we should do the right thing and specifically ask the person. A lot of pain and embarrassment could be avoided with a simple question: “Could you explain to me where you are coming from?” In case you were wondering, there is no miscommunication or crossed wires when it comes to our salvation in Christ. We don't have to guess where God is coming from. Here is how John put it in his gospel: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16

In Christ,

Brad

Message from Music Director, Richard Morgan....

Wow! Summer is over and fall activities are beginning with a vengeance! After a restful break through July, it is really wonderful to have the Chancel Choir back in regular rehearsals. We are already hard at work preparing some great music to enhance our worship services over the next few months.

By the way, everyone in choir wants you to know that there is never a bad time to join the choir. We always have our music in varying stages of preparation, so there is always something new that no one else has seen, and you will be on equal footing with our current members. If you join and we're about to sing something in worship that you don't feel ready for, keep coming to rehearsals, and whenever you feel prepared, then join us on Sunday morning.

One of the choir's best kept secrets is that not everyone reads music. Even our members who have had some training still learn the music one note—and one word—at a time. You'd be surprised how quickly you'd fit in, if you enjoy singing.

At every rehearsal we pray for you—whoever you are—who have not yet made that step to be part of our music program. We want and need you to come join us as we lift our voices in praise to our God who is worthy of our very best. Come, join the Chancel Choir!

Message from Youth Director, Walt Harrison....

Greetings! Well school is back in the swing of things. How cool was it that it did not start at the beginning of August? I hope that everyone gets back into their routine as quickly as possible, but I want you to consider adding something else to your weekly schedule.

Wednesday nights our church will be having a worship service that begins at 6:00 p.m. After the service is over, we will have a number of opportunities for you to plug into a small group. I ask that you consider the small group opportunity of helping as an adult sponsor for the youth. As most of you know during the year we have a large number of teenagers attending our youth program. There are a number of ways that you can plug into our youth program, but the most important thing that we need is you with us on Wednesday night. It takes a step out of your comfort zone, but I can promise you as you watch these young adults grow closer to our awesome God, you will be blessed. I encourage you to attend one of our sessions so you can see first-hand all the great things that are happening in the lives of our kids. Also, please keep the parents of our youth in your prayers.

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

The Peacekeepers group (4th & 5th grade) will be working on many outreach programs this fall, such as making things and taking them to local nursing homes and rehab centers. We will also be taking a monthly trip out of town for fun activities. Our handbell choir will also begin practicing on September 5th at 5:00. Come and join the fun!!

Message from Preschool Director, Sherry Miller...

FIRST METHODIST PRESCHOOL BEGINS FALL 2007

Public School is not the only place that is beginning a new school year. At First Methodist Preschool we are beginning our Fall 2007 which is also the beginning of our 29th year of ministry. It was Sept. 4, 1979 that the doors first opened here at the Preschool and our church committed to provide this Christian Childcare program. Thanks to the church and all the members who support this program and believe in this ministry to children and families in our community.

We are serving approximately 90 children ages 6 weeks to 5 years during the day and picking up 24 children after school Kindergarten through the 4th Grade. We have 20 staff members.

We look forward to our continued ministry and early childhood program here at our church. The children participate in a variety of activities in learning centers including art, music, science, manipulative, dramatic play, and transportation. We also have a daily chapel time based on a Bible story that includes music, flannel boards, activities, and books. Every class also enjoys outside time as well as snacks and lunch.

All of you are invited to come to the Preschool anytime to visit, volunteer, look around, or just enjoy the joyful faces that you will see there. You are welcome!

Message from Christian Education/Program Coordinator, Charlotte Posey...

What a great turn out we had for the first Men's Cake Bake Off /Lunch and Ice Cream Social. Allow me to thank all of you men for your participation. We had 13 cakes and a wonderful variety. You guys are really creative!. The most important thing is that we all had a fun time together. The judges had a difficult time making final decisions because the competition was so stiff. Here is the list of our winners:



Most Beautiful	Best Tasting	Most Layers	Most Unusual	Ugliest
Bob Henry	Richard Morgan	Randy Machacek	Clint Flatt	Walt Harrison

Thank you Sandy for preparing lunch. And a BIG thank you to Jim and Mary Benson for being brave enough to be our judges. Ladies, the ice-cream hit the spot. A wonderful suggestion was made that the winners sign their chef hats and when next year's bake-off is held, they will hand off their hats to the new winners.

September 9 is the Ministry Fair. Prayerfully consider where God might have you get involved and come to the Fair and learn about all the areas of service available to you. This Fall will be full of activities and opportunities for every member of your family. I hope you are looking forward to a new year at church, serving and learning together as we move from membership to discipleship together.

Vacation Bible School

Thank you to all the volunteers from First United Methodist Church and First Presbyterian Church for making VBS 2007 a success. There were 55 children plus parents that attended nightly.



Wednesday Night Worship

We are beginning a new worship service on Wednesday, **September 5th at 6:00 p.m.** We will worship every Wednesday from 6:00 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. in the fellowship hall. There will be lots of singing in a casual environment. This service will not only be available for those already attending and active in our church, but also for those who do not have a church home or who may have to work on Sundays. The sermons will be more of a teaching style and we will begin with a series on I Corinthians. In addition to singing, praying, preaching, etc., we will also share in Holy Communion together. I hope you will make this a part of your weekly routine and invite others to be a part of our fellowship as we all draw closer to God.

Wednesday Evening Women's Bible Study Begins Sept. 5th

The Wednesday evening women's Bible study group is thrilled to offer one of the newest Beth Moore Bible studies entitled *Daniel: Lives of Integrity, Word of Prophecy*. Join us as we learn together how the prophet Daniel faced unbelievable pressure to compromise his faith in a hostile culture and was constantly confronted by temptations and threats. During the study, we'll also explore thrilling prophecies from the time of Daniel through the second coming of Christ.

The group will meet at a new time and location each Wednesday evening -- 5:00-6:00 p.m. in the Boardroom. Student books are available at a cost of \$15.00. Please contact Gael McKeever at 729-2914 if you'd like more information.

Ministry Fair – September 9

On Sunday, September 9th we will have a Ministry Fair as a part of our 10:30 a.m. worship service. We will have tables set up in the foyer of the sanctuary so you can browse through the various ministry and mission opportunities available at our church. We want more people to be actively involved in the ministries of FUMC Mexia, and believe this would provide an excellent opportunity for all of us to learn more about the specifics of our current ministries. We want YOU involved! Your gifts for ministry are needed here! Following the worship service we will have a meal in the fellowship hall.

Acolytes Will Travel to Jewish Synagogue in Corsicana Sept. 16th

After morning worship on Sunday, Sept. 16th, the acolytes will share a meal in the Fellowship Hall then travel to Corsicana to visit the Jewish Synagogue. This is part of the acolytes' ongoing training on the importance and meaning of serving as an acolyte. Sue Franks has arranged for the tour which will include a discussion on how lights are used in Jewish festivals and ceremonies.

All acolytes, and those who would like to serve as acolytes, are invited to take part. Kindergartners on up are welcome. If you are interested in being an acolyte, please sign up during the ministry fair after church on Sunday, Sept. 9th. Permission slips for the tour of the synagogue will also be available at that time. Contact Gael McKeever at 729-2914 if you'd like more information.

LifeHouse Mission Project – September 22

On Saturday, September 22nd we will have a work day at the LifeHouse (across the street from the church office). The LifeHouse is a Christian-based ministry for men recovering from drug and alcohol abuse. We will be working to repair and/or update various sections of the building. There are a lot of areas at the LifeHouse that need attention. We will begin working at 8:00 a.m. Look forward to seeing you in mission on September 22nd.

Flood Bucket Mission Project

One of our mission projects for the month of September will be to collect flood buckets. Flood buckets contain all the essential supplies persons need to clean up after a flood. The flood buckets we collect will be sent to the UMCOR Warehouse in Baldwin, LA, where they are shipped all over the world to those in need. UMCOR stands for United Methodist Committee on Relief. This is a great opportunity for Sunday school classes and other small groups within the church to work together and build a flood bucket together. If you are interested in donating funds for the cost of a flood bucket, the cost per flood bucket is \$45. Below is a list of the supplies that make up each flood bucket. Thank you for helping others in need!

Flood Bucket Contents: 5-gallon bucket with resealable lid, bleach (two 1-quart or one 82 oz. bottle.), 5 scouring pads, 7 sponges, 1 scrub brush, 18 cleaning towels, liquid laundry detergent (two 25 oz. or one 50 oz. bottle), 1 household cleaner, 12-16 oz. bottle, disinfectant dish soap, 16-28 oz., 50 clothes pins, clothes line (two 50 ft or one 100 ft), 5 dust masks, 2 pair latex gloves, 1 pair work gloves, 24-bag roll of heavy-duty trash bags, 33-45 gallon (remove roll from box before placing in bucket), 1 insect repellent spray, 6-14 oz. can, 1 air freshener, 8 or 9 oz. Can.

***All items included in kits must be New and Do not include any personal notes, money, or additional materials in the kits.**

Charge Conference – Tuesday, September 18th

We will have our annual Charge Conference on Tuesday, September 18th at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. Charge Conference is our annual meeting where we elect officers for next year, as well as review what we have accomplished this year and set goals for next year. Every member of the church is invited and encouraged to attend to find out more about the workings of our church.

Mystery Dinner Theatre – October 20th and 21st

There will be a Mystery Dinner Theatre on Saturday, October 20th and Sunday, October 21st in the fellowship hall of our church. The dinner and show for both nights begins at 6:30 p.m. Pat and Wendy Simmons are once again preparing the script, which will no doubt be very entertaining and amusing. Gilberto's Mexican Restaurant will be catering beef and chicken fajitas for the meal. Tickets are \$25 per person. All proceeds go directly toward the missions and outreach ministries of FUMC Mexia.

Ringers, Unite!

Our beautiful 3-octave set of handbells is back home now, after being sent to the shop for some major refurbishing, and they are ready for some glorious ringing—they're ready to make a joyful noise!

Many and special thanks to James and Dawn McKeand for their generous gift that enabled us to ship the bells to South Carolina. They are only one example of how people in this congregation step up when they see a need.

Chancel Ringers, the experienced adult handbell group, will resume rehearsals on Monday, September 10, at 6:00 pm. A couple of adults have expressed an interest in learning to play, and if there is enough interest, we will begin a second group, to be called **Genesis Ringers**. See Richard if you are interested. You may talk to him at any time, but especially during the Ministry Fair on September 9, after church.

Peacekeepers Ringers will begin a new year with some new members. Rehearsals will be 5:00-5:30 pm on Wednesdays, with time to eat supper before the new worship service begins at 6:00. For this time, we need adult volunteers to assist Richard. Each youth group that meets at the church needs to have two adults in attendance, and Richard (usually) counts as one. Don't worry, you won't be given any music responsibilities, unless you want them!

Youth Handbells. Some of last year's Peacekeepers class have graduated from the **Ringers**, and would like to continue ringing. Some older youth have also expressed an interest. We need a minimum of five players, but eight would be ideal (ten would be ok, too!). There will be a signup sheet available at the Music Ministry table at the Ministry Fair on September 9.

September Birthdays

3rd—Larry Sewell, 9th—Kenneth Christian, 10th—Ina Beth Forrest, 13th—Kelly O’Hare, 14th—Mary Marcotte, Mike Bolton, 16th—Mica Candy, 17th—Emily Lewis, Bug Paschal, 18th—Frances Williams, 19th—Sandy Imes, Elizabeth Withrow, 23rd—Delma Park, 24th—Lady Carter-Fain, Danette Day, 26th—Brandi Ellis, 28th—Doug Allen, 29th—Kathy Paschal

September Anniversaries

2nd—Bob & Patsy Henry, 3rd—James & Carol Ann Dawley, J.R. & Kathleen Flowers, 5th—James & Merl Shivers, Roger & Michelda Brown, Tad & Ima Burroughs, 7th—Bill & Cathy Ward, 13th—Jim & Leslie Clements, 19th—Bob & Peggy Wright, 29th—Bobby & Roy Baccus, 30th—Walt & Gael McKeever

United Methodist Women Tea & Book Review

The United Methodist Women had their annual Tea on Sunday August 5th. Kathy Morgan gave a *humorous* review of the book, “Being Dead is No Excuse (The Official Southern Ladies’ Guide to Hosting the Perfect Funeral)” by Gayden Metcalf & Charlotte Hays. The ladies in attendance found out what essential ingredients to have ready at all times in their pantry. Thank you, Kathy for doing a wonderful job of entertaining us. Following the review, tea was served to approximately 40 women in attendance.

Personal Thank You

Thank you, to the FUMC Church Family for the support I received at the time of my brother’s death. I also would like to thank FUMC for helping my daughter, Paige, attend Glen Rose summer camp. She had a great time and made many new friends.
Kelly and Paige O’Hare.

Scholarship Thanks You’s

Dear Church Family,
Thank you for the scholarship money for this school year. I really appreciate the assistance from the church.
Thanks & GIG’EM. —Scott Bolton

FUMC,
Thank you so much for the scholarship money. I appreciate the help & support from the church.
Thanks.—Shelby Bolton

Dear First United Methodist Church,
Thank you so much for the scholarship to help me continue my education. I really appreciate the prayers & support of my church family. I know my first year of college was successful due to your encouragement. My prayers are with FUMC as you continue to spread God’s love in the community.
God Bless. —Brook Simmons

Spirit and Arts

Concert Series at First United Methodist Church–Mexia, Texas

The Music Ministry at FUMC is excited to announce the new *Spirit and Arts* Concert Series. With a presentation to be offered nearly every month, on a Sunday evening at 6:00 pm, we hope to present a variety of performances, in a variety of styles, and perhaps not always musical. Each concert or performance will reinforce the idea that the Holy Spirit uses artistic expressions to touch lives.

The first performance will be on Sunday, September 23, and will feature Christian country singer/songwriter, Candice Myers. Nominated three times for the Christian Country Music Association's Female Vocalist of the Year, Candice's three albums have had several top 10 singles on the Christian Country charts.

Mark your calendars now. Admission is free, but tickets must be reserved in advance. A love offering will be taken to support her appearance. Tickets will be available at the FUMC office.

For more information on Candice Myers, check out her website: candicemyers.com.

Upcoming Emmaus Walks

Ladies Emmaus walk, September 6-9. Workers are Kathy Nutt, Valerie Bolton, Charlotte Posey, Ann Neil, Carol Ann Dawley, Starlene Yelverton and Jan Miller.

Men's Emmaus walk, September 20-23. Workers are Jerry Hathaway, Kent Kendall, Walt Harrison and Bob Henry

If anyone would like to go on a walk or more information call Walt Harrison at 254-315-254-7817, Kent Kendall at 254-562-3070 or Valerie Bolton at 562-7668

Hymnal Survey

We received notice this week of a unique opportunity to give the denomination feedback on the collection of hymns in our two books. If you ever wanted to express an opinion about the content of our hymnals, here's your chance! We strongly encourage you to take this online survey.

The General Board of Discipleship (GBOD) of the United Methodist Church invites every United Methodist to participate in a survey of favorite and least favorite hymns. This survey allows you to click on up to ten of your favorites and ten of your least favorite hymns and songs from *The United Methodist Hymnal* and *The Faith We Sing*. There are also five demographic questions to help GBOD analyze the results. All responses are anonymous and confidential. This information will help GBOD in planning future resources in congregational singing. You may find it helpful to compose a list of your selections prior to completing the survey. To take the survey, go to www.gbod.org/favoritehymns.html

<u>Attendance for August</u>		
	<u>SS</u>	<u>Worship</u>
8/5	71	153
8/12	56	137
8/19	48	138
8/26	58	140

<u>Welcome Our Newest Members</u>
Angela Treat, Chris, Angie, Chandler & Reid Rogers

<u>Bobbie Pendleton Memorials</u>
Sonia Kendall Lois Willett Lola Focke Alleen Womack

Deadline for submitting an article for the October Connections is September 25th
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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
Lowell Posey, Building Maintenance

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