

September 2002

The Beacon

Sunnyhills United Methodist Church
355 Dixon Road, Milpitas CA 95035

Pastor Shirley Macemon

Church Office

(408) 262-1486

Visit us on the Web!

www.gb-gm-umc.org/sunnyhills

Sunday School Dedication

Kickoff Barbeque After Church

Sunday September 8th

Sunday School classes begin on September 8th. Once again, St. Joseph the Worker Episcopal Church and Sunnyhills UMC join forces in a combined Sunday School.

SUMC celebrates children and dedicates teachers and students during the worship on September 8th. After the service, we'll join together for our **Kickoff Barbeque**. Gwen Freeman (408/263-8942) is coordinating activities and welcomes donations of side dishes, chips, soda, etc.

Each Sunday, child care is provided in the Child Care Room (Upper Building) from 9:30 a.m. on. Older children usually attend the first part of the Sunday Celebration with their parents. Children leave with their teachers to begin Sunday School at the end of the Children's Time, about 10:15 a.m. Sunday School ends at 11:15 a.m.



Our Beginner Class (preschool, kindergarten, and first grade) will meet in the Art Room (upper building, behind the Child Care Room). St. Joseph will provide the teachers and materials for this class.

The Primary Class (second through sixth grades) meets in the small classroom in Jones Hall. SUMC provides the teachers and materials for this group. Cliveden Chew Haas and Cathy Deppe are our fearless leaders.

The Primary Class curriculum for 2002-03 is *Seasons of the Spirit*, an ecumenical resource which focuses on spiritual growth, exploring the Bible, and learning our faith traditions. Everyone enjoys the singing, arts and crafts, field trips, and other activities.

See y'all at the barbeque!

Pastor's Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Please drop by any time to chat.

If you have an emergency and need to talk to a pastor, call me on my cell phone: 408/505-6462.



From the Pastors Desk

School has started. Summer will soon officially draw to a close. Community and life rhythms have changed even if our own household doesn't have children. But we notice it with traffic patterns, shopping and even television schedules! Of course, our Church life changes with the seasons too.

We've spent the summer months reflecting on our core values: spiritual growth, diversity, community, respectfulness and personal growth—what they mean and what they mean to us, how they shape who we are and how we are shaped by them. This has been an invaluable process: grounding us in our faith tradition, steeping us with visions of *who* we are and *whose* we are. We have voiced our frustrations with the past and our hopes and visions for the future.

And it's time as they say, to return to our regularly scheduled programming. To return to a "church in life" from a "church fighting for its life". We're not putting our visioning task away—visioning is an ongoing task in all healthy churches. As one of the church planners I've worked with points out, "If you don't know where you're going, any road will get you there!" Our visioning tasks become a regular part of who we are, not special meetings held after worship.

So, you may ask, what is our "regularly scheduled programming?" I'm proposing: (Please see page 5 for full details.)

1. An elementary-age youth group, to meet monthly for fun, field trips, and learning.
2. First Sunday "sermon talk back" time, beginning October 6th.
3. Monthly Sunday Lunch Bunch. Go to a restaurant or park, have lunch together.
4. Spiritual Growth study group, using *Companions in Christ*, beginning late Sept.
5. Cultural Diversity study group, using Charles Foster's *Cultural Diversity*.
6. Prayer Fellowship continues to meet at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday mornings in the sanctuary. All are welcome.

Other events include an intergenerational home-building mission to Tijuana next April.

Of course, each of these activities and events needs participants and leaders. Planning and proposing is easy. Implementation takes the support of the congregation reaching out to do new things and stretching to make new things happen. Do you see something in this that speaks to you? We are rebuilding the Sunnyhills United Methodist Church to be the mission of Jesus Christ in Milpitas. Come and be a part of this exciting time in the *life* of the church.

Working for the Kingdom,

Shirley

September

Calendar Items

Milpitas Community Breakfast

Sunday—September 8th—7:00 a.m.

Jones Hall

Join civic and neighborhood leaders, enjoy a hearty and delicious breakfast, and discuss issues of concern in our area. The September guest host is the *Milpitas Post*, its editors and reporters. This is a great chance to ask why something does or doesn't get into the paper, learn more about editorial issues, suggest improvements, etc. Sponsored by the Sunnyhills Neighborhood Association. For more information, contact Neil MacKenzie at 408/946-5260 or sunnyhills@ix.netcom.com

Memorial Service

Wednesday—September 11th

In cooperation with the congregations of St. Joseph the Worker Episcopal Church, we will hold a Memorial Service on September 11th in our Sanctuary. A time of silent meditation and prayer begins at 6:00 p.m. The service will begin at 7:00 p.m. Child care will be provided. Everyone is welcome. Please let people in the community know about this opportunity to remember those involved in the tragic events of last year. Call Pastor Shirley for more information.



Choir Rehearsals Begin

Thursday—September 12th

Open your heart and sing out in joy! The SUMC Choir welcomes new members and old to rehearsals every Thursday, 7:00-9:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. Call Gwen Freeman (408/263-8942) with questions, or just show up for rehearsals.

SUMC WRAP

(Administrative Council)

Saturday—September 14th

Potluck at 5:00 p.m.

Business Mtg. at 6:00 p.m.

Everyone in the church community is welcome. Your comments, your ideas, your presence, and your energy will help craft the program and mission best suited to SUMC.

Come and Meet

Nymphas Edwards, D.S.

Monday—September 23rd

7:00-8:30 p.m.

Nymphas Edwards, our new San Jose District Superintendent, is coming to meet the Sunnyhills UMC congregation on Monday evening, September 23rd, at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Make every effort to come out to greet Nymphas in a social setting (and enjoy some scrumptious desserts!) as he becomes better acquainted with our congregation and we with him. Nymphas has some great stories to share, and he looks forward to learning more about SUMC, its members, and activities. Cathy Deppe will lead the children's program.

Looking Ahead

Save these Dates!



April 12-19, 2003, in coordination with the Los Altos UMC, Pastor Shirley will lead an intergenerational home-building mission to Tijuana. Builders of all ages and skill levels are welcome. Participants will van-pool to Tijuana, camp in a rock quarry, build an 11'x22' home (with no power tools) in 4 days and then come home. This mission changes lives—the lives of the families we build for, and the lives of the builders themselves. Ask Shirley about her experiences on other trips. Get ready to reshape your life. You'll hear lots more about this amazing opportunity!

The Primary Sunday School Class will visit Heifer Project International on **Sunday, October 13th**. Students will tour the Ceres Learning Center, meet some of the HPI animals, and learn more about Heifer's mission and the needs of those whom the organization serves. HPI helps families improve their lives around the world, from the Caribbean to Uganda, from the U.S. to North Korea, from Peru to Poland. We'll explore the causes of hunger and poverty in our world today and the way animals—and people—can make a difference.



Our Annual Church Conference will be held **Sunday, October 20th** at 11:30 a.m. District Superintendent Nymphas Edwards will join us as we celebrate the ministry of our church, look back at the accomplishments of the past year, and approve plans for next year. Mark your calendars for this important annual event in the life of our church.

Administrative Council News

It's the start of a new school year and renewed life in our congregation. Let's make the most of it. Enjoy our time together in worship and activities. Our annual "kickoff" is September 8th. We will have a barbeque and potluck after church. As always, we need volunteers—an expert barbeque person. If you are looking for ideas, a sign-up will be passed around at church.

Saturday, September 14th is our monthly potluck (we do enjoy eating!) and WRAP. We are looking forward to an exciting time of planning activities for the fall. How about a hymnfest? Do you have any activity you would like to suggest?

Monday, Sept. 23rd at 7:00 p.m. is a get-acquainted with our new District Superintendent.

Jennifer Lanham is now playing for a Sunday morning worship service at the senior residential center in Milpitas. We will miss her enthusiasm and love of music. Citi Pascual is sharing her talents with us. Make sure to stop by the piano and say hello.

Blessings,
Gwen Freeman

Where Do We Go From Here?

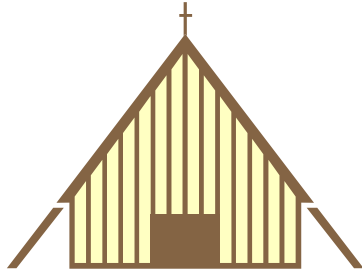
Pastor Shirley Macemon

August 25, 2002

Core Values

Spiritual Growth Diversity Communications Respectfulness Personal Growth

1. Return to a “Church in Life” instead of a “Church under Siege” by resuming activities that nurture, such as:
 - ⇒ Youth/Children’s group—monthly—to have fun, take field trips and programs, learn more about acolyting and worship assisting, do crafts, play games.
 - ⇒ First Sunday "Sermon talk back" time—an informal time after fellowship to discuss any of the previous month’s messages—or other topics that may have become pertinent. First meeting: October 6th.
 - ⇒ Monthly Sunday Lunch Bunch. Go to a restaurant or park, have lunch together.
 - ⇒ Regular hands-on mission emphasis.
In April, Pastor Shirley will lead an intergenerational home-building mission to Tijuana in coordination with the Los Altos UMC.
Other hands-on mission projects to be explored.
2. As members and constituents committed to the continuance and growth of the Sunnyhills UMC, we will specifically invite our friends and neighbors to come to church.
3. Specific Study Groups that address our Core Values:
 - ⇒ Spiritual Growth group, using Upper Room materials *Companions in Christ*. I’ll lead this 25-week study, beginning late September. More details to follow.
 - ⇒ Cultural Diversity study: Start in September, to study Charles Foster’s *Cultural Diversity*
4. Media and communications issues:
 - ⇒ Add SUMC worship and Sunday school times to signs at Dixon Road
 - ⇒ Add UM Igniting slogan “Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors” to sign at Dixon
 - ⇒ Create attractive signs to direct visitors from both parking lots to the SUMC sanctuary and nursery
 - ⇒ Place press releases with *Milpitas Post* as appropriate for activities and events
5. Grant Writers: Monies are available from several UM organizations for development of ethnic ministries, young adult ministries, etc. A team will review available grants, determine which grants match our core values and strengths, and apply for funds.
6. Formalize a “mission statement” for Sunnyhills United Methodist Church such as:
The Sunnyhills United Methodist Church, an ethnically and theologically diverse, reconciling, and inclusive community, seeks to follow the example of Jesus Christ by welcoming all to walk with Christ, striving to nurture each other in Christian love, equip people with a faith that supports life in the world, and serve God in the church, the community, and the world. (Reworded from p. 35, Crack Your Congregation’s Code)
7. Review all above notions and plans quarterly at WRAP. Ask questions:
 - ⇒ Is our congregation’s diversity well represented in our activities. If not, why?
 - ⇒ Have we invited friends and neighbors to come to church? Have they come? Why or why not?
 - ⇒ What’s next?



Why Church Membership?

The United Methodist Church, with Open Hearts, Open Minds and Open Doors, welcomes any and all who come through those doors. So you may ask, what is the deal about membership? I've wondered that myself, especially as we approach our annual Church Conference, a time when we traditionally take a look at the membership rolls with an eye toward whom have we lost track of and who might have found a church home elsewhere.

When I was 13, I was confirmed in membership at the First Methodist Church in Hendersonville, North Carolina. I'm sure we learned about John Wesley, the Anglican priest who is our founder of the Methodist church. I'm sure we discussed the connectional structure of the church, and learned something of what baptism meant. But the thing that stood out in my mind then and now is a promise I made when I accepted church membership. After all the God-talk about renouncing sin, and trusting Jesus, the promise I made was to support my local church with my prayers, my presence, my gifts and my service. Over the years, when my life has been rocky, that membership vow has often kept me grounded in a faith community where I've received much more than I've been able to express.

I invite you to reflect on your membership. If you are a member of the Sunnyhills United Methodist Church, rejoice in that decision whenever it was made. If you have not made a membership decision, pray about whether you are being called to membership. We're here for you, whatever that decision is.

We'll be receiving new members by baptism, profession of faith, and transfer from United Methodist and other denominations on October 6, 2002. If you would like to talk more about membership, call me, Pastor Shirley Macemon, 408-262-1486.

✂ "Welcome the Stranger" reprinted from *The Interpreter* begins on page 7. ✂

For Sale

1994 COLEMAN SEQUOIA ELECTRIC POP-UP TENT TRAILER



Sleeps 6 with Kitchen Galley. MANY EXTRAS starting with Large Air Conditioning Unit, Inside and Outside Propane Gas Stoves, Hot Water Heater with access inside and outside, Water Storage tank, Outside Shower, Awning with screen Room, Electric Brakes, Upgraded Propane tank, oversize steel-belted radials for a smoother ride. EXCELLENT CONDITION. We had it Totally Serviced in July 2002 by Coleman Shop Alpine Recreation, Morgan Hill. Shop Upgraded total trailer to 2002 standards at our request, including new propane tank. Call Don or Eugenia Egbert at 408/263-1881 to see or ask questions or both.

Welcome the Stranger

"I was a stranger and you welcomed me" (Matthew 25:35)

The invitations have been sent. You've invited your guests to dinner. You've prepared your best gourmet meal and set the table with your finest linens and flatware. You anxiously expect company to soon arrive.

But what if that was all you did? What if you made all the preparations for your guests and then let them ring the doorbell until they finally went away? Or you invited them in and then ignored them, or sat down to dinner with them and never included

them in your conversation? Few of us would be so thoughtless or rude. Unfortunately, we seem to do it in our churches with some regularity.

October 20 is the second Laity Sunday of the 2001-2004 quadrennium. This year's theme is "Partners in Ministry—All God's People Welcoming the Stranger."

By now, we've had Igniting Ministry, www.ignitingministry.org, around for a while, and our United Methodist Church has used television, newspaper and billboard ads to invite people into our churches.

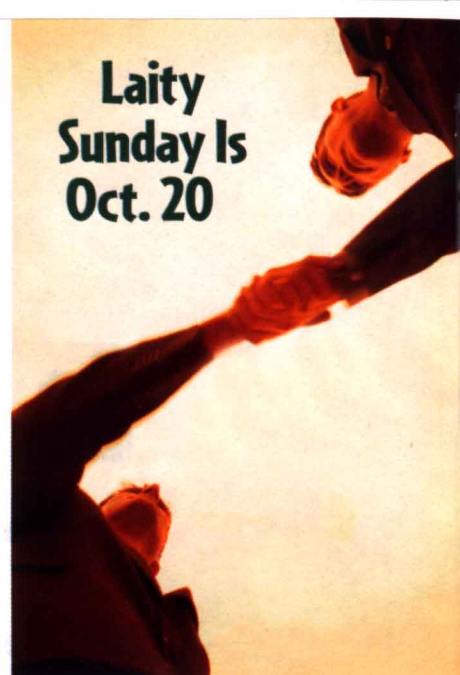
The people we're trying to reach with this advertising are strangers. We have extended the invitation, they see something that appeals to them, and so they come into our churches seeking something. They come wondering, "Will this church be the warm, spirit-feeding place the ads promised?"

Too often, it's not. Remember, the strangers you invite to your church are probably not United Methodists. While some will have had some church experience, others will have never stepped inside a church. If they don't find at least some of what they're looking for in their first visit, they will leave and may never come back to yours or any other church.

I have visited many churches in the United States. Some have been warm and welcoming, some have been cold and unwelcoming; but most fall somewhere in between.

Where does your church fall? If you ask people in all these churches what their church is like, most of them will tell you that theirs is a "friendly church." But that's not enough.

Your church must be actively,



**Laity
Sunday Is
Oct. 20**

intentionally and preparedly warm and welcoming. Does your church have:

- **Trained greeters** who know how to spot strangers and what to do when they encounter a stranger? Are there greeters in the parking lot?
- **A cadre of trained ushers** and a **system** that ensures there will be enough of them for every worship service? Do they simply pass out bulletins, or do they actually engage people? Are they also trained to spot strangers and what to do when they meet a stranger?
- **Laypersons who make follow-up** contact with first-time visitors?
- **A system to connect people** to small groups in your church? Are you adding small-group experiences in your church? Are you prepared for the stranger who has no church experience?

It is important to do a good job of welcoming strangers and connecting them somewhere in the congregation. It doesn't just happen. It takes hard work, training and the involvement of all members.

—**Timothy E. Moss** is retired from the General Board of Discipleship.

Worship Suggestions

Scripture Lessons

Old Testament: Genesis 18:1-8

New Testament: Matthew 25:34-40

Epistle: 1 Peter 4:8-10

Psalm 19 (No. 750, *United Methodist Hymnal*)

Litany

Book of Worship No. 432 or selection from *The Book of Discipline*, Pars. 125-128

Suggested Hymns

No. 568 "Christ for the World We Sing"

No. 569 "We've a Story to Tell to the Nations"

No. 571 "Go, Make of All Disciples"

No. 577 "God of Grace and God of Glory"

No. 578 "God of Love and God of Power"

No. 593 "Here I Am, Lord"