



March 2003

The Beacon

Sunnyhills United Methodist Church
355 Dixon Road, Milpitas CA 95035
Pastor Shirley Macemon

Church Office

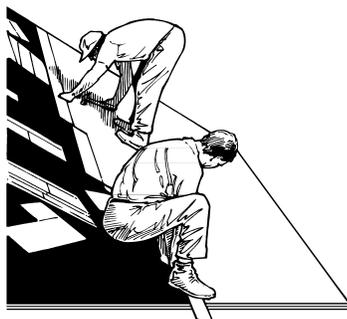
(408) 262-1486

Visit us on the Web!

www.gbgm-umc.org/sunnyhills

Mexico Home-Building Mission

by *Daislyn Pease*



Hi there! As many of you know, Shirley, Leah, and I will be making a trip to Tijuana just before Easter this year. We will be building a home along with about 100 other people from Los Altos UMC and other churches through Amor ministries (see below). We will build a two-room family home, 11' x 22', for a Mexican family that has managed to purchase the land. These are not the poverty-stricken squatters you may think of when you picture Tijuana, but they are hard-working people who need a helping hand so they can build a better life for their families. They've saved up some money

and most of them have jobs. They may help us build, learn from the experience, and build on additional rooms later on their own. Every year the children love to help build tar paper squares. We expect to come home again totally pooped and having discovered many muscles that had been long forgotten!

You too can join in on the fun by helping out. We can't take our families food—it's against the rules. However, they could use sheets, towels, buckets, mops, etc., for their new home. We'd like to put together a "Giving Tree" for our adoptive family in Tijuana. We won't know exactly how large the family is or what ages the children are until we get there, so we can't take specific presents. We can take general household items such as linens, towels, cleaning equipment, and other "house-warming" items. Please look for the Giving Tree in the back of the Sanctuary in March, or call the church office for more information.



Amor Ministries

Building Hope

www.amor.org

Amor Ministries was founded in 1980 to respond to spiritual and physical poverty in the world. The first work projects consisted of refurbishing orphanages in Tijuana. The first Amor home was built in 1985. 15,856

participants attended Amor mission trips in 2000 and 760 homes were built that year.

Amor Ministries doesn't want a group to just build a house in a developing nation.

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Pastor's Letter

I drove my daughter to the stables last week and realized the daffodils were in full bloom all along the stable's driveway in the Saratoga Hills. Yellow, pale cream with deep yellow throats, some almost orange, some only a whisper of color. No matter how bleak the news is, no matter how nervous we may feel, or how much unrest is in the air, creation keeps right on creating. I am not minimizing the world situation. But, I am thankful to those daffodils for reminding me that our lives go on, day after day. As we read Isaiah 40:28 in worship one Sunday in February: *The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.* God is the God of us all.



The liturgical season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on March 5th. Lent is a time of contemplation and preparation for the remembrance of the events of Holy Week and the joyous celebration of Easter. Over the history of the Church, only recently has our celebration of Christmas outshone our celebration of Easter. For many centuries the observance of Easter was the premier liturgy of the Christian churches.

During Advent, in preparation for Christmas, we prepare for God coming to earth: Emmanuel, God with us. During Lent, our focus shifts. Romans 8:38-39 says it best for me: *For I am convinced that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.* We worship the risen Lord. Death did not separate the disciples from Jesus' love, nor does it separate us from that same love. This is the path we tread as we move through Lent toward Easter.



I have a request to ask of each of you. Elsewhere in this *Beacon*, you will read Daislyn Pease's article on the Mexico mission. We don't leave for Mexico until April, but most of our preparation and planning happens this month. Sunnyhills UMC is sending Daislyn, my daughter Leah Marcus, and me. Please keep us and the whole team—almost 100 men, women and children from the Los Altos UMC, Alum Rock UMC, Sunnyhills UMC, and friends of these churches—in your prayers as we prepare for this mission. The trip is a joy, and it is very hard work. It is a challenge, and it is the best week of the year. We will be taking a special offering to support the trip later this month, but your prayers are just as important.

Grace and Peace,

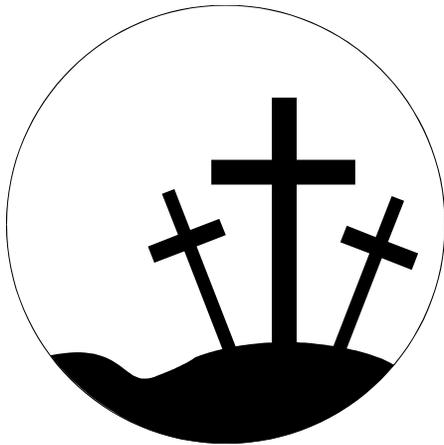
Shirley

Lenten Opportunities

Preparing for Easter

The church season of Lent is the 40 days before Easter, not including Sundays. In the early church, these 40 days were fast days, with only one meal eaten and no meat for the entire pre-Easter period. Focus instead was on prayer and meditation of what Christ had done for humanity in his death and resurrection. Sundays are excluded from the fast days because they are always celebrations of the resurrected Christ.

Fasts are less frequently associated with Lent today, though many of us still “give up something for Lent.” Often we sacrifice a favorite food or activity, using the time saved in prayer and meditation or the money saved for mission.



Sunnyhills UMC Lenten opportunities

Ash Wednesday service, March 5th, 7:30 p.m.

Lenten Study, Sunday mornings, March 9-April 6 (see below)

Maundy Thursday service, April 17, 7:30 p.m.

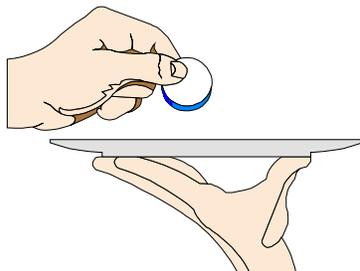
Easter Sunrise Service, April 20th, 6:30 a.m.

Easter Morning Worship Celebration, 9:30 a.m.

Lenten Study

March 9-April 6

Pastor Shirley will lead a five-week study using a sampling of devotional writings from some of the men and women who have shaped Christianity through the ages. The authors include C.S. Lewis, Henri Nouwen, Gregory of Nyssa, Catherine of Genoa, John Wesley, and Madame Guyon. These selections are taken from the book *Devotional Classics*, edited by Richard Foster and James Smith (Renovare Press, 1993). Pastor Shirley will purchase several copies of the book for the church library. If you would like to own your own copy of this book, tell Shirley and she will order you one. Indicate your interest in the study by filling out the form in the Sanctuary or calling the church office (408/262-1486).



Special Offering

Sunday, March 30th

We will take a special offering in worship to support the Home-Building Mission to Mexico.

Proposed Mission Statement

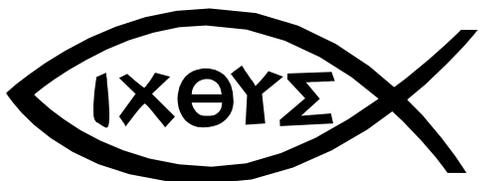
Who Are We? Whose Are We?

We, the Sunnyhills United Methodist Church, are an ethnically and theologically diverse, reconciling, and inclusive community.

We know God's goodness, live in God's love, and are called to be partners in God's creation.

In response, we seek to follow the examples, teachings and life of Jesus by striving to pattern our lives and our church to:

*Welcome all to God's table,
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*



Income and Expenses

January 2003

INCOME

Offerings	\$2,393
Building Use & Other	346
Special Giving	274
TOTAL	\$3,013

EXPENSES

Mission & Outreach	\$ 998
Operating Expenses	2,503
Pastor & Staff Support	3,890
TOTAL	\$7,391

Fund Balances

San Jose Family Shelter	\$ 85
'363' Fund	\$139
Cash on Hand	\$33,982

Free Leadership Training Gender Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

You are warmly encouraged to attend a free leadership training on Sexual Harassment and Gender Discrimination on International Women's Day, Saturday, March 8th, at Sunnyhills UMC.

This workshop is sponsored by the Bay Area Chapter of 9to5, National Association of Working Women, whose active members, we are proud to say, include several members of SUMC.

This important program will be held from 11:00 a.m. until 12:30 p.m., with a light lunch to follow provided by 9to5. Please don't miss this opportunity. All of us need to stay current on our rights in the workplace. We have a commitment to become informed advocates and to fight for stronger legal protections against discrimination. Our 9to5 slogan is: ***Change the Workplace—Change the World!***

Childcare will be provided. Please RSVP to 408/946-4834 (Cathy Deppe).



Amor Ministries

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The group begins to understand the conditions of poverty through immersion.

Families are selected to receive homes by a group of Mexican pastors who discern the need within their own communities. Any family is eligible; there is no requirement for church attendance or membership. However, the family must own their land.

In these communities, families purchase, on average, a 20' by 40' lot from the government to live on. The typical family home is one or two rooms made from used garage doors with a dirt floor. When it rains, the family ends up living in a house with a floor that turns to mud.

Amor Ministries typically builds an 11' by 22' two-room home with a slab floor, a stucco-finished exterior, two windows, and a door. An AMOR house is a simple design, built according to the standards of the community so that a group without skilled labor can complete the project. No power tools or generators are used. Volunteers working on the project have a chance to experience the culture, get to know the family they are building for, and play with the children.

*Hope is a concrete floor
Hope is four strong walls
Hope is a roof that doesn't leak
Hope is giving more than you can
Hope is getting more than you gave.*

Calendar Notes

Church Conference

Sunday, March 2nd

At this short meeting after worship, members will vote on the investment of monies with the Conference Claimants' Endowment Board. The funds come from the sale of our interests in the Kidango property. Also pastor's salary details.

Ash Wednesday Service

Wednesday, March 5th

This service marks the first day of Lent. Please join us at 7:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary.

Trustees Meeting

*Saturday, March 8th
3:00-5:00 p.m.*

Business relating to the property of the church, including prioritizing 2003 building maintenance and grounds upkeep.

WRAP

Saturday, March 8th

5:00 p.m. Potluck

6:00 p.m. Meeting

Everyone is welcome as we plan Sunnyhills UMC program and mission.

Children's Choir

Sunday, March 9th and 23rd

The Children's Choir will rehearse at 11:30 a.m. All youngsters are welcome!

Lunch Bunch

Sunday, March 16th

Yum! Everyone with a good appetite is invited to join our trip to the new Yan Can eatery at McCarthy Ranch. The food is delicious and reasonably priced. Martin Yan really CAN cook!