

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.gbkm-umc.org/sunnyhills

October 2003

Blessing of the Animals

Bring Your Furry, Feathered, and Finny Friends
(Two-Legged Friends Welcome as Well!)

Sunday, October 5th, 11:00 a.m.

St. Francis of Assisi, whose feast day is October 4th, loved the larks flying about his hilltop town. Staying in a small hovel, he and the early brothers of his order allowed themselves to be displaced by a donkey. Francis expressed his awe of God's creation in his *Canticle of the Creatures*, an ode to all God's living creation. "All praise to you, Oh Lord, for all these brother and sister creatures."

In honor of St. Francis and in recognition of the place animals and pets play in our lives, Sunnyhills UMC and St. Joseph the Worker Episcopal congregations will hold a joint blessing of the animals on October 5th at 11:00 a.m. on the front lawn of SUMC. All animals (and friends) are welcome!



Prayers of St. Francis

Probably no one in history has set out as seriously as Francis did to imitate the life of Christ and to carry out Christ's work literally in Christ's own way. He was a spiritual seeker, a social worker, an itinerant preacher, the founder of a religious order, a celebrant of poverty, and, of course, a lover of nature. Many of his prayers and meditations are still used by seekers today:

St. Francis of Assisi's Vocation Prayer

Most High, Glorious God,
Enlighten the darkness of our minds.
Give us a right faith, a firm hope and a
perfect charity,
So that we may always and in all things
act according to Your Holy Will.

Two Greetings of St. Francis of Assisi

Good Morning, Good People!

Peace and all Good!

Blessing of St. Francis

The Lord bless you and keep you.
May He show His face to you and have
mercy.
May He turn His countenance to you and
give you peace.
The Lord bless you!

Meditation Prayer

My God and My All!

Pastor's Letter

Sunday, October 5th, Father David Pace of the St. Joseph the Worker Episcopal Church and I will join in leading the Blessing of the Animals service on the front lawn of our Church property.

This is becoming one of my favorite Sundays of the year for many reasons. Even though we jointly sponsor children's Sunday School with St. Joseph's, we meet side by side each week and rarely interact. We really don't know each other or, except for this service, join together in Christian community. This one Sunday morning, our animals bring us together.



The pets and the animals in our lives are a part of God's creation. The creation stories in Genesis remind us of the responsibilities given to humankind: stewardship responsibilities for the all earth. Blessing our pets and animals reminds us of that respect, of our duties toward those living beings we have chosen to care for, and of their importance in our lives.

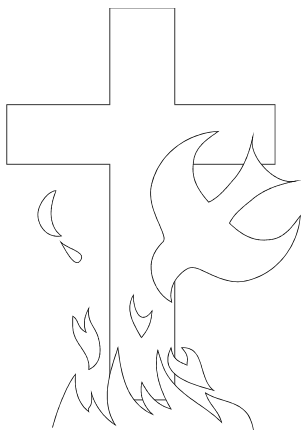
The animals themselves are a wonderful way to come into community. We get to know more about each other through our pets, and we're liable to reach out to folks we haven't talked to recently or whom we don't know very well.

We get to worship in God's great out-of-doors. Our front lawn is a little-used part of our church campus, but for this service, the community that drives by Sunnyhills knows that something is going on at the Methodist church—that we are yet alive! How often will passers-by see a collection of dogs, cats, fish, birds and, yes, horses, bringing their favorite people to church?

Eight hundred years ago, Francis of Assisi cherished the animals around him and set the stage for the blessing that we participate in on Sunday. I hope you will join us.

Grace and peace,

Shirley



Special Offering

World Communion Sunday—October 5th

On the first Sunday in October, Christian denominations around the world come together to celebrate our common call to ministry in Christ. Our mission offering will be given to the California-Nevada Conference where it will provide:

- ❖ Ethnic Scholarships for undergraduate students
- ❖ Crusade Scholarships for international and U.S. racial- and ethnic-minority graduate students
- ❖ Scholarships for racial- and ethnic-minority persons seeking second careers in church-related vocations.



Calendar Notes



WRAP (Administrative Council)

*Sunday, October 5th
12:00 noon*

Everyone is welcome as we plan for our present and our future! Help us craft the program and outreach best suited to SUMC. Grace the business meeting with your attendance and help our mission grow!

Lunch Bunch Mannyla Rose

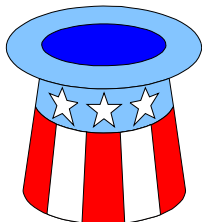
*Sunday, October 26th
12:00 noon*

Everyone is welcome at the Lunch Bunch! Enjoy the adult Bible study after worship and fellowship, and then join the group at a local restaurant for good food and good conversation. Our October destination is the Mannyla Rose, a fine Filipino eatery located on Dempsey near Park Victoria.

Community Breakfast

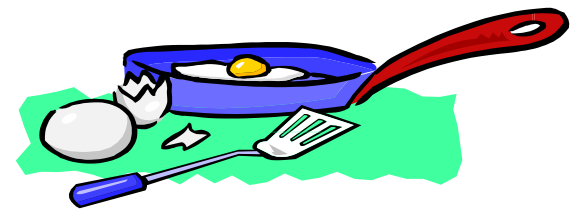
Sunday--Oct. 5th--7:00-8:30 a.m.

Milpitas Fire Department will host the Sunnyhills Neighborhood Community Breakfast in Jones Hall on the first Sunday in October. Milpitas Fire Chief Bill Weisgerber will be in charge of the free breakfast and intends to live up the Fire Department's reputation for eating well. Fire Department members will provide useful information on keeping home and family safe from the hazards of fire. The Community Breakfast is an excellent opportunity to meet movers and shakers in the Milpitas scene and discuss items of local interest with knowledgeable participants.



Democracy in Action

Remember to vote on October 7th!



Mexico Mission 2004

April 17-24, 2004



Spring seems like many months away, but it is already time to begin planning for the spring Mission trip to Mexico. Again this year, Pastor Shirley and participants from Sunnyhills will join mission members from the Los Altos UMC to build homes across the border in Tijuana, Mexico. We'll work harder than you may think you can . . . get dirtier than you think possible . . . have the opportunity to experience more joy than ever . . . and change lives in ways that can only be described as miraculous.

General information and pictures of previous missions can be found at:

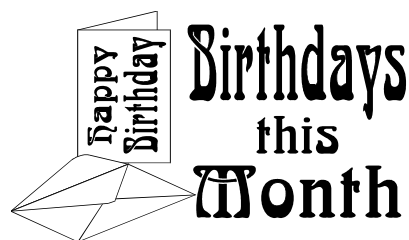
<http://www.laumc.org/ministries/outreach/mexico/index.html>

The trip this year is planned for April 17-24, 2004. Registration information and details will be available late in the year, but now is the time to consider how you can support this mission. Is this the year for you to be a building participant? Sunnyhills UMC will underwrite a portion of each participant's fees, so don't let the cost of the trip keep you from participating. If you feel called to this mission, talk to Pastor Shirley. Pray. Discuss this opportunity with your family. Join us. Your life will never be the same!

Working Together, Sharing God's Bounty

New Adult Study Begins October 12th

This nine-week study is based on the United Methodist Social Principles of Economic Community and the biblical principles of stewardship and economic justice. Participants will explore issues of how we as individuals, communities, and countries use and abuse resources and the effects of that use and abuse. Our print resources are a study book, *Working Together, Sharing God's Bounty* (\$10.00) and the Bible. The study will begin Sunday, October 12th at 11:00 a.m. (after fellowship time).



Be sure to wish our Birthday guys and gals Many Happy Returns!

10/7 Herbert Holloway

10/31 Aida Cruz

And don't forget our old friends who will enjoy a card:

10/16 Anita Valderrama

10/25 Bob Martin

10/25 Bob Fall

10/27 Tyler Griffin