

**September 2005**

# **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](http://www.gb-gm-umc.org/sunnyhills)*



## **The Circuit Rider Is Coming to Sunnyhills!**

**Sunday—September 18th—9:30 a.m.**

*The big tent is going up and everyone is gathering from miles around. Pack your buggy, load up grandma and the kids, invite your neighbors, and come on down for an old-fashioned tent revival.*

**You will be renewed!**

Gather in the tent on the front lawn for worship as we share, sing, praise God, and revive our faith. Special music and plenty of good old-fashioned singing. Followed by pony rides for the kids and a BBQ ribs lunch. Everyone is welcome. Bring your neighbors and friends.

### **Who were the Circuit Riders?**

John Wesley organized the circuit riders, first in England and then in the American colonies. They were an important religious and moral force along the frontier and in

rural areas of the south, and they were largely responsible for the spread of Methodism throughout the United States.

Each circuit of congregations—sometimes as many as 25 or 30 meeting places—was under the supervision of a Methodist preacher who might have several lay assistants. Any young man who could preach and was willing to ride a horse for weeks over wild country might become an assistant and finally a circuit rider. The salary was \$64 a year until 1800, when it was raised to \$100, with the horse furnished.

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## ***Pastor's Letter***

Dear Friends,

My last two weeks were spent leading the San Jose District sponsored UM Volunteers in Mission trip to Jamaica. We were in Falmouth, on the north coast of Jamaica, involved in three project areas: to continue construction on the parsonage which suffered major damage during Hurricane Ivan last year, to paint the sanctuary of the Methodist church in Falmouth, and to run Vacation Bible Schools in the four churches on the Falmouth Circuit. Nineteen of us from eight churches here in the San Jose district, and two young men from Desire, in the Clarendon parish in Jamaica (where our SJ District team worked last summer) made up our work team.



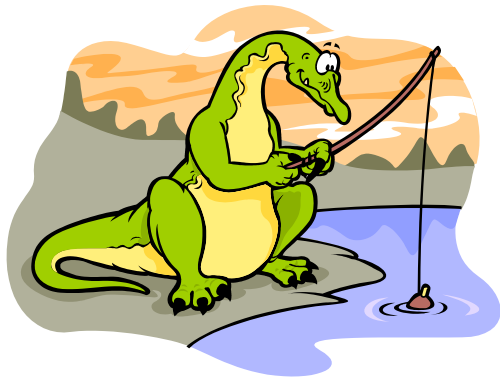
The work on the parsonage was particularly strenuous, involving placing cement blocks and pouring concrete to create the uppermost levels of several rooms on the back of the home in preparation for the roof. Our guys joined the contractor and his team on that part of the project. The sanctuary had new windows installed early in the summer, and the dedication of those windows had been postponed until the sanctuary could be painted. This large, airy room required extension ladders to reach the top of each wall. We patched and painted; the congregation was pleased with their "new" sanctuary.

Vacation Bible schools turned out to be quite a challenge—and quite typically Jamaican according to my experience last year. The VBS team was in two churches the first week, and the two remaining churches on the circuit the second week. Typically, the first day attendance was moderate. Of course, those children went home and invited their friends, who went home and invited their friends, who went home and invited their friends. In almost every case, the last-day attendance was 3 to 4 times that of the first day! In all, we served more than 300 children in the four locations!

Of course, working alongside the folks from the Falmouth circuit was a joy. Although the circuit pastor was on vacation most of the time, we were well cared for by the staff at the Methodist Center, where we ate and stayed, and by the church administrator and one of the stewards, who helped us negotiate our way around Falmouth and the circuit. For those days we took some time to play, our bus driver assured we knew the sites of the country side, the history of our destination, found us amazing eating locations, and was above and beyond the call of duty on several occasions.

One of my personal joys was being able to include Sheldon Buchanan and Royan Williams as part of our team. I worked with Sheldon and Royan last summer in Frankfield, their home church, and stayed in touch during the year. They joined us in Falmouth as full team members and were invaluable interpreters of Jamaican culture, as well as a joy to have around. Neither had been to several of the tourist

*(Continued on page 4)*



## Calendar Notes

# SEPTEMBER

### Join the Choir

*Thursday, September 8th  
7:00-9:00 p.m.*

Choir rehearsal begins again. Bring out your voice and help to praise God with the sound of music. Everyone is welcome—if you enjoy singing, you're the right one!

### WRAP

**(Administrative Council)**  
*Saturday, September 10th  
10:00 a.m.*

Come join us at our monthly Saturday morning WRAP meetings. We receive committee updates, review financial reports, participate in program planning, and schedule the calendar. You can suggest our next lunch bunch or volunteer in numerous ways. Join us in the planning of our church life. Held in Jones Hall. Coffee/tea/juice and light repast provided.

### Community Breakfast

*Sunday, September 11th  
7:00 a.m.*

The free breakfast begins at 7:00 a.m. and ends at 8:30 a.m. The fire department will make a home safety presentation. Join community leaders and concerned citizens in discussion.



### Sunday School Begins

*Sunday, September 11th  
10:15-11:15 a.m.*

Classes for pre-school through middle school. Fun and faith activities. See page 8.

### Coming Home to God The Circuit Rider Visits SUMC

*Sunday, September 18th  
9:30 a.m.*

Special worship service under the big tent, followed by a BBQ ribs lunch and pony rides for the kids. Yum! See page 1.

### Living the Question

*Begins Sunday, September 25th  
6:30 p.m.*

Adult discussion and study group led by Pastor Shirley. See page 5.

### Looking Ahead . . .

*Saturday, October 8th  
9:00 a.m.*

*Staff Parish meets  
in church office  
10:00 a.m.*

*WRAP meets in Jones Hall*

*Sunday, October 9th  
10:30 a.m.*

*Blessing of the Animals*

**A Very  
Happy Birthday!  
To**



**Best Wishes for a  
Wonderful  
Anniversary!**

9/ 5	Eric Cruz	9/21	Karen Schreifels	9/12	Thelma & Bob Wilber
9/15	Erin Cruz	9/22	Warren Scott	9/15	Ann & Fred Zeise
9/15	Rolf Haas	9/25	Isak Larsen	9/21	Aida & Jun Cruz
9/15	Ron Ray	9/26	Dee Bragg	9/23	Emil & Laine Sazon
9/16	Joe Martin	9/26	Irene Jefferson		
9/17	Anna Phan				

*Best wishes and hearty congratulations from all our church family!*

## **Pastor's Letter**

*(Continued from page 2)*

areas we visited, so we also had the privilege of showing them parts of their own country they had not yet seen.

Our scheduled departure, Saturday, August 27, was changed due to interruption in service in Miami, still mopping up from Hurricane Katrina. I moved our group to a hotel in Montego Bay, and we decompressed for a couple of days, waiting for the first flight we could book: Monday, August 29!

Obviously, the slight inconvenience we had due to Katrina doesn't begin to compare with the devastation that storm left along the Gulf Coast early this week. We mourn with those who have lost loved ones, and stand in prayer with those who won't know for some time if they return to homes or rubble. We will take Relief offerings for the next several weeks, to be sent through the United Methodist Committee on Relief. If you won't be in church and would like to contribute, you may send a contribution to the church office or contribute directly via the internet: [www.umcor.org](http://www.umcor.org). Like the Red Cross, the United Methodist Committee on Relief is one of the early responders on the scene of disasters. Please keep all those affected by Katrina, and those involved in relief work in your prayers.

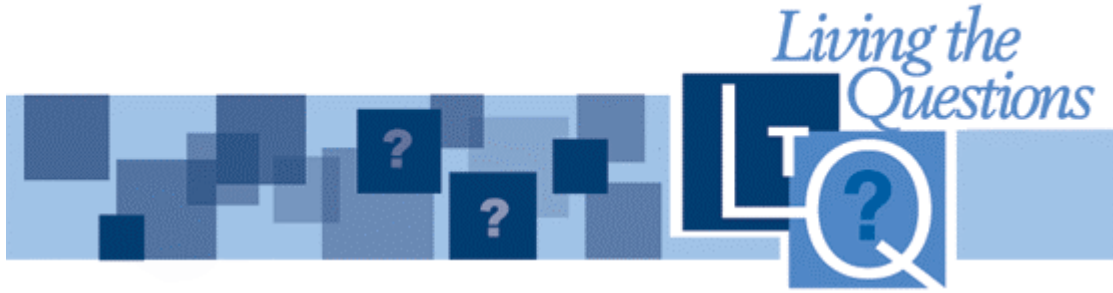
Grace and Peace,  
*Pastor Shirley*



*Opportunity may knock once, but temptation  
bangs on your front door forever.*

*Many folks want to serve God, but only as advisers.*

*It is easier to preach ten sermons than it is to live one.*



*“Wisdom is asking the questions for which there are no answers.”—Harrell Beck*

Living the Questions is a 12-week small group study exploring beyond the traditions and rote theologies in which so many people and local churches seem to be stuck. The thoughtful conversations, digital stories, and spiritual practices will help participants discover the relevance of Christianity in the 21st century and what a meaningful faith can look like in today’s world.

*“An attractive and thoughtful expression of the progressive approach to Christianity.”  
—James R. Adams*

Sunnyhills UMC will offer *Living the Questions* on Sunday evenings beginning Sunday, September 25th. Our potluck dinner will begin at 6:30 p.m., and our evening will conclude by 9:00 p.m. The format of each 2-1/2 hour weekly session includes a potluck meal, video, guided discussion, spiritual exercises, and Bible study. Child care will be provided if you indicate the need with your reservation.

Each week there is pre-session reading to be done. Internet resources are also available, although if you do not have internet access, do not let this keep you from joining the study. We welcome all to participate.

*“LtQ conveys the richness of the Christian tradition in the various personalities, stories and cultures presented. It also succeeds in lifting up the importance of social justice in Christian faith.”—The Christian Century*

Themes include thinking theologically, restoring relationships, evil and a God of Love, social justice and the prophets, biblical authority, compassion, the heart of Jesus’ Ministry, and many more. Please join us for this important and life-changing journey to deepen our faith.

**Please fill out and return to the church office by 9/18 so that we know how to prepare:**

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Church affiliation (or “none”) \_\_\_\_\_

I need child care for my children: Name(s) Age(s) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I understand there may be a fee to defray the cost of child care

Please come on the 25<sup>th</sup> with a potluck dish to share for dinner. Call the church office with questions (408-262-1486)

## Income and Expenses July 2005

### INCOME:

Offerings	\$3,812
Bldg. Use & Others	1,887
Special Giving	343
Total	\$6,042

### EXPENSES:

Mission & Outreach	\$ 999
Operating Expenses	3,823
Pastor & Staff Support	3,583
Total	\$8,405

Cash on hand	\$43,161
Designated funds	\$37,876
Cash available	\$ 5,285



## E-Mail News List

Anyone interested in receiving updates on Sunnyhills UMC activities by e-mail, please e-mail Gwen freeman at

gwenffreeman@yahoo.com

and she'll include on her new list.

### Thank you, thank you, THANK YOU!

to all those who contributed in many, many ways to the work at the parsonage. After a long, hot summer of painting, yard work, and general clean up, it is bright and fresh and ready for new tenants to move in. (If you know someone who's looking for a 3-bedroom house with a fenced yard in a good school district, it's available!)

Rolf Haas, team leader extraordinaire  
Jack & Gwen Freeman, kitchen & bath specialists

Bob Roll, good cheer and great painting  
Daislyn Pease, whatever was needed  
Ann Zeise, clean, cleaner, cleanest  
Anna, Huan, and Helen Phan, shelves and more!

Lynne Pope, vacuuming and scrubbing, day after day

Jun, Eric, and Erin Cruz, more cleaning  
Guy and Cliveden Haas, painting

Ralph Nicklaus, yard work, sprinklers, and under the house

James Ogg, painting, masking, and everything else

## New Music

Daislyn, Guy, and Gwen recently participated in a music publisher's reading (singing?) session in San Francisco and had a great time. It was very exciting singing with a large group in a spectacular setting. And, we ordered (and have received) some new music. If you have thought about joining the choir but were afraid because you didn't know the music, here is your chance because this music is new to all of us. 7:00-9:00 p.m. Thursday evenings.

## The Circuit Rider is Coming to Sunnyhills!

(Continued from page 1)

There were few actual meetinghouses; church services usually were held in cabins, in barrooms, or outdoors.

### What is a camp meeting?

Camp meetings, held by the Methodists and many other denominations, gathered together Christians of all denominations as well as unaffiliated “sight-seers” for several days of preaching, exhortations, prayer, bible study, and socializing that hopefully ended with converts and baptisms. Families came from miles around to camp in tents and wagons in a shady grove with a central area set aside for the meetings. As many as two dozen ministers and circuit-riding preachers, with the help of deacons and exhorters, would lead the event. A typical day began at 5:00 a.m. with the blowing of a trumpet signaling the time to rise and ended at 10:00 at night after a long day of prayer, preaching, hymn singing, testimonials, etc. This schedule was repeated for a period of four or five days. The meeting culminated with emotional preaching and baptisms.

### Where did they come from?

Both the white and black Methodist churches used circuit riders and camp meetings to reach out to Christians in far-flung frontier areas and knit together their many small house churches into a larger conference. Saddlebag preachers, as they were also called, traveled light, carrying their belongings and books in their saddlebags. Ranging far and wide through villages and wilderness, they preached daily or more often at any site available, log cabin, local court house, meeting house, or outdoor forest setting.

Francis Asbury (1745-1816), the founding bishop of American Methodism, set the pace. He traveled 270,000 miles and preached 16,000 sermons as he traveled the circuits.

Peter Cartwright (1785-1872) described the life of the circuit rider. He wrote in his *Autobiography*, “A Methodist preacher, when he felt that God had called him to preach, instead of hunting up a college or Biblical Institute, hunted up a hardy pony and some traveling apparatus and with his library always at hand, namely, a Bible, Hymn book, and Discipline, he started, and with a text that never wore out nor grew stale, he cried, ‘Behold, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.’ In this way he went through storms of wind, hail, snow, and rain; climbed hills and mountains, traversed valleys, plunged through swamps, swollen streams, lay out all night, wet, weary, and hungry, held his horse by the bridle all night, or tied him to a limb, slept with saddle blanket for a bed, his saddle-bags for a pillow. Often he slept in dirty cabins, ate roasting ears for bread, drank buttermilk for coffee; took deer or bear meat, or wild turkey, for breakfast, dinner, and supper. This was old-fashioned Methodist preacher fare and fortune.”



Sources:  
Encyclopedia  
Britannica,  
General  
Commission  
on Archives  
and History of  
the United  
Methodist  
Church,  
Conner Prairie  
Living History  
Museum,  
Kansas  
Heritage Group

Hey! Didja' hear the news??  
Sunday School starts again  
on September 11th!

SUMC and St. Joseph Episcopal  
are running a joint Sunday School  
again this year.

Come say hello to old friends  
and help new members feel welcome.

10:15-11:15 a.m. every Sunday morning (except holidays)  
Kids can leave church with their classes after the Children's Time  
or they are welcome to play in childcare until time for Sunday School.

See ya' on the 11th!

