



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.gbmg-umc.org/sunnyhills

November 2005

Gathered in Christ's Name

SUMC Church Conference

Sunday—November 13th—After Worship

God's call for SUMC. Pastor's salary and benefits. Building upkeep and maintenance. Spiritual growth. Membership roster. Planning mission. Births and deaths. Children's Sunday school. Electing church officers. Helping our neighbors in Milpitas and around the world. Adult Bible study. 2006 congregational goals. San Jose District programs and concerns. Faith in action. Celebrating our past and planning our future.



Dr. Nymphas Edwards, San Jose District Superintendent, will join our worship and bring us the message on Sunday, November 13th. After worship we'll join together to enjoy a light luncheon and then proceed to our Church Conference, chaired as usual by the District Superintendent.



This important annual business meeting of the church will set the pastor's salary, elect church officers and committee members, review 2005 reports, and prepare for 2006 activities and mission.

Please plan to be with us in our Sunday celebration and as we complete the necessary business for the smooth running of our church and mission. Everyone is welcome and everyone has a voice. Childcare provided.

Thank You, Thank You, Thank You

To JAMES OGG who has helped immeasurably on so many projects!

Countless hours painting and preparing the parsonage for new tenants, circuit rider set up, etc., etc., etc. Be sure to thank James and our many stalwart volunteers for all their hard work on our summer projects. Sunnyhills UMC couldn't function without them!

Pastor's Letter

Dear Friends,

November finds us looking toward Thanksgiving, trying to figure out where the year has gone, Advent and Christmas rushing toward us. This year, we continue to be surrounded by stories of amazing human tragedy on an all-too-regular basis. Devastation of hurricanes, earthquake, and the ever-present violence of war in so many places across the globe is too much for any of us to really comprehend.



There are no easy answers for the lives that have been lost and families left homeless in the wake of these tragedies, or in the wake of the AIDS epidemic and drought in Africa, or frankly, hunger in our own American cities. Life lived in suffering is not, I believe, the will or plan of God. But, suffering is a fact for many, both in our community and around the world. One of the things that sets us apart as Christians—those who would live as Jesus teaches—is how we respond to (and with) those who suffer.

In this Beacon, you'll find out about our Youth-led mission project for Advent, and how we can make a difference in a few lives through our giving during the weeks before Christmas.

As a church community, we have responded to and will continue to respond to the hurricane victims, and other disaster victims around the world through the United Methodist Committee On Relief—UMCOR. One hundred percent of the money donated to UMCOR is used for disaster relief. So far this year, Sunnyhills UMC has donated more than \$2,000 to disaster relief through UMCOR: \$450 for Tsunami relief, \$1,612 in hurricane relief, and about \$125 at Annual Conference time through the flood bucket project.

Our annual conference and local churches are also organizing short-term Volunteer-in-Mission trips to the hurricane area. Los Altos UMC, with whom we have gone to Mexico in the spring, has changed their mission emphasis this year. Instead of a Mexico mission, the team will go to the Gulf Coast in 2006 and work on hurricane relief for this year. Although plans are not finalized, the most likely dates for the Los Altos-connection missions are February 18-25 and April 8-15.

UM Volunteer-in-Mission teams are being organized on a regular basis through other churches throughout the Conference and through the our California-Nevada Conference office. According to the Conference website, eight groups have already been sent from CalNevada since September, and five others are scheduled and on the website. For more information on these mission opportunities, check out <http://www.cnumcvim.org/>.

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NOVEMBER

Calendar Notes

Staff Parish Committee

*Saturday, November 5th
9:00 a.m.*

Committee members please meet in the Church Office.

WRAP (Administrative Council)

*Saturday, November 5th
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.

Living the Questions

Sunday evenings at 6:30 p.m.

Adult discussion and study group led by Pastor Shirley.

Board of Trustees

*Sunday, November 6th
11:30 a.m.*

Committee members please meet in the Church Office.

Annual Church Conference

Sunday November 13th after worship

Our District Superintendent will lead us in worship and then chair this important business meeting of the whole church. Please mark your calendars and plan to be part of our Sunday Celebration and of the decision-making process.



Mark Your Calendar!

**Salvation Army Bell Ringing
Saturday 12/10**

**Caroling Party
Saturday 12/17**

Manger Project—See Pages 6-7

**A Very
Happy Birthday!
To**

11/3 Ann Zeise
11/6 Rebecca Balarbar
11/6 Hien Phan
11/10 Jun Cruz
11/12 Rueben Marcos
Valderrama



**Best Wishes for
a Wonderful
Anniversary!**

11/16 Jennifer Touchton
& Eric Larsen
11/26 Sharon & Bob Fall

11/14 Margaret Scott
11/20 Kristel Tanciango

And Are We Yet Alive?

Our own Bishop Beverly J. Shamana writes:



Dear Friends in Christ,

Your generous benevolence and prayer is felt far and wide and our brothers and sisters in the Gulf region are grateful to you. I will continue to update you on conditions in the annual conferences as I learn about them through our Council of Bishops and other contacts. Bishop Hope Morgan Ward of the Mississippi Conference reports that 25 of their pastors are living in RVs because their parsonages are demolished or uninhabitable. In addition, 91 Elders are now without churches in the Louisiana Conference. Among the losses in the Mississippi Conference, the historic Gulfside Assembly in Waveland, which took the brunt of Katrina's hurricane winds. The historic halls where many African-Americans met since segregation times are now debris and rubble. A beautiful new building dedicated just weeks before Hurricane Katrina and named in honor of Bishop Alfred Norris is gone. We know teams will be needed for the next two quadrennia for the very long recovery just beginning. Even as our churches and communities face overwhelming odds, I've been told that they still sing with conviction the great hymn of our faith, *And Are We Yet Alive, To See Each Other's Face?* "Their voices may be a little weak, but they're still singing."

How You Can Help

Visit Hurricane Response page at www.cnumc.org for the latest on relief efforts. Cash gifts to Hurricanes 2005 Global will help those affected by Hurricane Katrina. Donors can give through SUMC or online at www.methodistrelief.org.

Proclaiming the **Whole** Gospel

*A Gathering for
Progressive
United Methodists*



January 13-14, 2006
Campbell United
Methodist Church

Presented by:

**The Calif.-Nev. Annual Conference Committee on Reconciliation
The Calif.-Nev. Annual Conference Board of Church and Society
The California-Nevada Methodist Federation for Social Action
The California-Nevada Reconciling Ministries Clergy**

Registration Fee \$35 (\$5 discount if postmarked by 11/30/05)
If you are unable to afford the \$35, enclose whatever you can pay. Optional
Friday dinner is \$12 per person additional. Send your registration to: John Davenport, Registrar, 1138 Meridian Circle, Santa Rosa, CA 95401

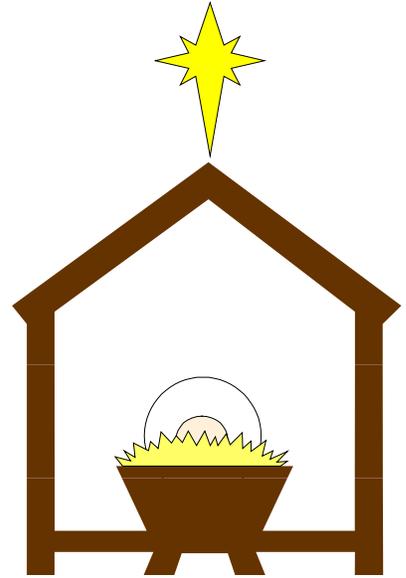
Save the date!!! Don't miss this rare opportunity to worship with, learn from, and interact with national leaders at a convocation right here in our own back yard. **Proclaiming the WHOLE Gospel** focuses on the Christian responsibility to consider all Christ's message, not just our favorite snippets. Speakers will move us, teach us, enlighten us, and help us link our faith to our lives in an all-too-damaged world.

The schedule includes dinner on Friday, January 13th, prepared by the Campbell church youth group to support Sierra Service Project and a Celebration of Reconciling Ministries with **Jim and Jean Strathdee** leading worship. Saturday, January 14th starts with a continental breakfast, followed by speakers, breakout groups over lunch talking with the speakers and others representing social justice issues, and adjournment in late afternoon.

Powerful speakers and leaders from across the U.S. include **Gilbert Caldwell**, a retired United Methodist Minister who participated in the Mississippi Freedom Summer of 1964, the Selma to Montgomery March in 1965, and the March on Washington. Rev. Caldwell is a founding member of Black Methodists for Church Renewal. Dr. **Janet Wolf**, Southeastern Jurisdictional coordinator for the United Methodist Reconciling Ministries Clergy, is one of America's most dynamic preachers. **Troy G. Plummer**, Executive Director of the Reconciling Ministries Network, has traveled coast to coast organizing and bringing an inclusive Gospel message for all God's children. **Jimmy Creech**, recently chaired Soulforce, Inc., an interreligious movement using the principles of nonviolent resistance taught and practiced by Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., to confront the spiritual violence perpetrated against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons by too many religious institutions. **Mike Farrel** of Hollywood, California, has been a long-time champion of human rights throughout the world, serving as Co-Chair of the Human Rights Watch in California. Dr. **Karen Oliveto** is an Associate Dean at Pacific School of Religion and has been prominent in the effort to open the doors of the United Methodist Church to all persons, including gays and lesbians and their families.

Children's Ministries Advent Manger Project

During Advent and Christmas, our children will be celebrating the greatest gift of all—the gift of God's child, Jesus. The Advent Manger Project is a planned part of that celebration to help them interact with the story of Jesus' birth and respond in faith. As children grow in faith, they can comprehend the meaning of mission as they show love, concern, and thoughtfulness for other persons. As they learn about children and families who live with real need each day and realize that their efforts will make a life-changing difference, the children will experience the joy of participating in God's work in the world.



Each week beginning with November 27th, the first Sunday in Advent, the Advent Manger Project invites Sunday School classes, parents, and the entire SUMC congregation to prepare for the birth of Jesus through crafts, prayer, and mission giving. Each week we will focus on a theme of preparation for the birth of Jesus: the manger, hay, blanket, and baby Jesus. Each theme is paired with an Advance Special administered by the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, and we will take a special offering for the focus mission each Sunday.

The Advance for Christ and His Church is an official United Methodist program for voluntary financial giving. Through the Advance, United Methodist individuals and groups support specific mission programs or personnel with their financial gifts. The Advance is called "second-mile giving" because, in the United Methodist Church, the "first mile" is the money local churches give to fulfill their World Service and other commitments.

Please see Page 7 for a description of the mission projects we will be learning about and supporting during Advent.

Pastor's Letter

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Other opportunities to help our neighbor exist right here in Milpitas and the Silicon Valley: the Milpitas Food Pantry and the San Jose Family Shelter, to name just two, need our support to continue their mission of feeding and housing those in need. Our special offering at the Christmas Eve service will be earmarked for local charities.

In so many ways we are called to feed the hungry, clothe the poor, visit the sick. Our responses make all the difference in the world.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Shirley

Income and Expenses

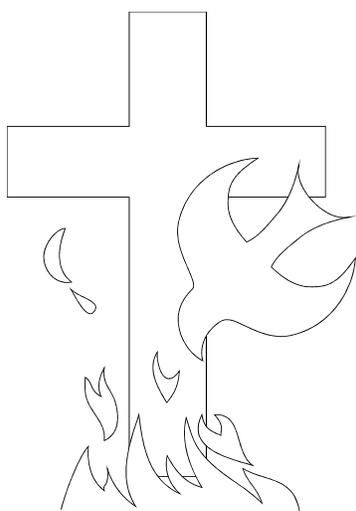
August-September 2005

| INCOME | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | AUG | SEPT | TOTAL |
| Offerings | \$4,489 | \$4,048 | \$8,537 |
| Bldg. Use, etc. | 2,414 | 9,153 | 11,567 |
| Special Giving | 50 | 1,511 | 1,561 |
| TOTAL | \$6,953 | \$14,712 | \$21,666 |

| EXPENSES | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| | AUG | SEPT | TOTAL |
| Mission&Outreach \$ | 749 | \$2,260 | \$3,010 |
| Operating Exp. | 3,377 | 2,966 | 6,344 |
| Pastor & Staff | 4,743 | 3,543 | 8,287 |
| TOTAL | \$8,870 | \$8,771 | \$17,642 |

Fund Balances

| | | |
|------------------|----------|----------|
| Cash on hand | \$41,244 | \$47,261 |
| Designated funds | \$37,926 | \$40,415 |
| Cash Available | \$ 3,318 | \$ 6,846 |



Rosemary Radford Ruether,
Professor Emerita at Pacific
School of Religion,
theologian, author, and
activist, is a leader in
feminism, ecological
awareness, liberation theology,
and current Christian
scholarship