



September 2015

The Beacon

Sunnyhills United Methodist Church
355 Dixon Road, Milpitas CA 95035

Pastor Shirley Macemon

Church Office
Visit us on the Web!

(408) 262-1486
sunnyhillsumc.org



There's never a teardrop
that God doesn't see.
He knows when a sparrow
falls from a tree.
There's never a moment
when God doesn't care,
Never a time
when he won't hear our prayer.

Note from the editor:

- **Ad Council** will meet again, **Wednesday, September 2 and 16, 2015 p.m. at 7:00 p.m.** in **Jones Hall**.
- **Trustees** will **meet** on **Wednesday, September 9, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.** at **Karen's**
- The next **Community Breakfast** will be **Saturday, September 12, 2015 at 8:00 a.m.**
- **BEACON DEADLINE:** For the **October** issue – **Thursday afternoon, September 24, 2015.**

(See Page 3 for further calendar details)

Dear Friends,

Summer is over and things are in the works at Sunnyhills!

First, a change in the way we mail the Beacon.

Enclosed in this edition of The Beacon is a postcard. Please fill it out and indicate your preference. Would you like to continue getting a paper copy via US Mail, switch to getting a PDF file via email, or would you like both?

Please send your preferences via postcard, or drop Scott an email (with the subject BEACON) at SunnyhillsUMC@gmail.com and save a stamp. We will begin the new distribution methods with the October Beacon.

Next, I want to remind you of October 4, 2015: Miracle Sunday. We will hold worship at 10:00am that morning, followed by a potluck luncheon. All the congregations and community organizations that meet at Sunnyhills have been invited. The purpose of the Sunday is three-fold:

- Getting together with a big group is just plain fun: lots of positive energy!
- Our new District Superintendent, Staci Current will preach that morning, so we have a chance to get to know her.
- We will collect a special offering that morning to replace the roof on Jones Hall. We need about \$30,000 more than we have to make this critical project a reality, so we're asking for a one-time gift or a six-month pledge from every family that uses the facility. No gift is too small (or too large!)

September's worship theme is "My God is a Rock". During the month we'll be using Psalms as a basis for better realizing God's steadfast presence and love. Expect new music, some congregation-participation drama, and inspiring worship. On September 13 we will also begin a study: Embracing an Alternative Orthodoxy. We'll meet every other week for 5 sessions. Not much reading, but a workbook is suggested, so I'll purchase some of those to get us started.

The end of summer is one of those times it is a good idea to check our personal giving over the summer, and catch up with our own expectations. If you need an up-to-date copy of your vision statement, email or call the church office (sunnyhillsUMC@gmail.com 406-262-1486) and Scott will pass the message along to get that out to you.

Blessings,

Pastor Shirley



The Sunnyhills United Methodist Church
Choir

Rehearsals to resume, Thursdays, starting October 1, 2015

Ad Council

The **Administrative Council** will meet at **7:00PM** on **Wednesday, September 2 and 16, 2015** in Jones Hall. Please contact Bob Roll for additional information.



Change-Over Sunday

We're finally starting to cool off for the Fall..

But the demand for help from the Milpitas Food Pantry is still there!

The next **Change-Over Sunday** is **September 27**.

Your continuous support is very greatly appreciated.

The Trustees

The Trustees will meet again, **Wednesday, September 9, 2015** at **7:00PM**, at **Karen Schreifels'**.



Happy Birthday Wishes to:

- 9/5 Eric Cruz
- 9/14 Ria Feldman
- 9/15 Erin Cruz
- 9/15 Rolf Haas
- 9/17 Anna Phan
- 9/21 Karen Schreifels
- 9/22 Warren Scott
- 9/25 Isak Larsen



Happy Anniversary!!

- 09/15 Ann and Fred Zeise
- 09/21 Aida and Pablo Cruz
- 09/23 Emil and Laine Sazon

Income and Expenses
July 2015

INCOME	<i>July</i>
Offerings	\$ 2,599.00
Bldg. Use, etc.	\$ 5,589.75
Special Giving	\$ 2,494.86
TOTAL	\$ 10,683.61

EXPENSES	<i>July</i>
Ministry & Outreach	\$ 1,192.62
Operating Expense	\$ 2,443.96
Pastor and Staff	\$ 7,101.90
TOTAL	\$10,738.48

FUND BALANCE

Cash on hand	\$24,839.69
Designated funds	\$10,632.14



Friends:

I found this article on a UMC-related website. It has some great thought-provoking questions for us. We may or may not agree with the author, but his points and concerns are valid for us as well.

Pastor Shirley



WHEN YOUR CHURCH NO LONGER REFLECTS THE COMMUNITY

By Ron Edmondson

August 25th, 2015

I was coaching a group of pastors recently and was asked a question I've encountered but never really answered. It's a question which seems to come up frequently these days. It's actually a great and relevant question for our times. In fact, I think it's one many churches need to consider. It's a common dilemma churches face today.

In church revitalization, I often encourage churches to consider whether the church can be revived. Frankly some churches cannot. Some churches have a culture which works against them. The energy, in my opinion, would be better spent elsewhere.

Some churches have had their community leave them. The community has changed and they no longer look like their community demographically.

Now, to avoid confusion, I'm not talking spiritually. The church never reflects the community there. The church usually is countercultural in terms of how we reflect God's standards in our communities. I'm strictly talking demographically.

That's the one scenario which triggered this question.

Background: This church had for years been overwhelmingly a white, middle-class church. The community is presently less than 20 percent white. The dominant demographic is Hispanic.

The question was: How can we grow now that we don't represent the demographics of our community?

Great question. I'm not sure my answer was what he expected, but I think it's a good answer. (If I can be bold and say that.) Before I share my answer you need to know I'm a realistic, bluntly honest person. Plus, I don't think I can tell him or the church what to do. I can only help them consider the options.

I think he's asking the wrong question — at least the wrong initial question.

The question a church in this situation has to ask is **what** they are going to do — not **how** they are going to do whatever they do. More importantly, the **why** behind what you do will ultimately fuel the church to achieve it.

Furthermore, I went on to advise him that I believe the church needs to answer this question collectively, or at least more lay leadership needs to be involved in the answer. Whatever the church decides to do will determine the future of the church. Pastors may come and go, but those in the church will likely have to live with the answer for the remaining life of the church.

In my opinion — and its only an opinion — there are really only three options.

1. Become like the community: You can strive to represent your community again. This may require staffing and programming changes. You'll have to ask a lot more questions such as what the community needs and how best to address them. You'll need to engage current community leaders — and this is not just elected leaders but community activists and people who know the community. It won't be easy and it will challenge your people, but it's a noble goal. It's likely the community needs more churches that do reflect the community. But, getting there won't be easy.

2. Leave the community: You can relocate. You can relocate to a demographic that better represents who the church is now. Some will disagree, but I don't believe this decision would mean you don't care for the community which is here now. The church is just different. You should know this can be an expensive option, because you likely will not be able to sell your current facilities for what it will take to relocate. Possibly you can. Or you could be very kingdom-minded and help a church who does represent the community establish in your existing facility by gifting it to them or significantly discounting the price for them.

3. Slowly die in the community: This is an option. It wouldn't be my favorite, but it is an option. It could actually be a viable option if at the end of your time you realize your building is going to be better used by a church that does represent the community. You could begin to share your facility with a church like that now and coexist for the foreseeable future, then when your church officially closes its doors the new church inherits the building.

I realize there are strong opinions with each one of these answers. And none of the answers come easy. Frankly, to me it doesn't matter as much which you choose — as much as it does that you do. We need churches of all kinds in all kinds of communities. I firmly believe, however, that answering the question of which choice you are committed to make will ultimately determine what you do next.

As an organizational guy, I can tell you that trying to address the how before you determine the what and why is almost always wasted energy. With so much kingdom-building needed, who has time for that?

Ron Edmondson blogs at RonEdmondson.com.

<http://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/6279/when-your-church-no-longer-reflects-the-community>

Be Here for Miracle Sunday! 10:00 am Sunday October 4, 2015

We've invited all the congregations and community service groups that call Sunnyhills home to join us for remarkable and inspiring worship that morning. The Rev. Staci Current will preach - and that alone is a reason for being with us. She is our new District Superintendent, and an amazing preacher to boot! You'll have a chance to get to know many of the folks that also find our campus a big part of their lives: St Joseph and Holy Child Episcopal Churches, Santa Maria Old Catholic, St. Mary's Independent Philippine, Success Learning Center, Milpitas Parents Preschool, the Family Resource Center, and our 12-step groups and community committees. And, a potluck luncheon: think about the wide range of food that will be brought! Finally, we will take up a collection - a one time gift or short term pledge so that we may begin work replacing the Jones Hall roof. We need about 30,000\$ to begin this project. The first 10% of that offering will go to the Milpitas Food Pantry - so our generosity not only keeps the rain out, but works in the community as well.

Note the change in time for this worship service

Contact Pastor Shirley at the office (408-262-1486) or via email (smacemon@gmail.com) if you have questions or would like to help plan and organize.

Milpitas Community Breakfast

Saturday, Sept. 12, 2015, 8:00am in Jones Hall

County Supervisor Dave Cortese will share highlights of the County's efforts to reduce homelessness, keep people healthy, and what to watch for over the next year. Come share with him your concerns and ideas.

Bobby Jo Valentine in Concert

Bobby Jo Valentine is an award winning songwriter who sings and plays acoustic guitar.

He will be holding a concert on:

Thursday, Sept. 10, at 7pm.

at St. Paul's UMC, 405 S. 10th Street, San Jose.

This concert is open to all with a suggested \$15 donation at the door, but students are free with an ID.

For more information, contact the Rev. Jennifer Goto, (408) 655-6380

Or email jennifergoto@att.net.

The Beacon

Sunnyhills United Methodist Church
355 Dixon Road
Milpitas, CA 95035



FIRST CLASS MAIL

Calendar

Every Monday @ 11:00AM, Centering Prayer
Every Sunday @ 9:30AM, U.M. Worship

September

Wednesday, September 2

7:00pm

Ad Council

Wednesday, September 9

7:00pm

Trustees @ Karen's

Saturday, September 12

8:00am

Community Breakfast
Cortese

Wednesday, September 16

7:00pm

Ad Council

October

Wednesday, October 14

7:00pm

Trustees @ Karen's

Wednesday, October 21

7:00pm

Ad Council

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Coming:

Sunday, October 4 10:00am

Miracle Sunday

Join all the Sunnyhills-based congregations for an amazing celebration of our ministries, preaching by our new district Superintendent, pot luck luncheon, and the Miracle offering that will pay for our new Jones Hall roof and help support the Milpitas Food Bank.