

Vision...

"Without a vision, the people will perish..."

Proverbs



Safford First United Methodist Church Newsletter ♦ November 2011

View from the pulpit...

Over the last couple of weeks, as I've been reading and studying, I stumbled onto an interesting article about, "How can United Methodists believe in hell?" Then I received a newsletter from a colleague that also was about hell. In his newsletter he shared the results of a recent survey from Biblegateway that was sent to nearly 3,000 people asking them "Which of these perspectives best describes your understanding of hell, as it's described in the Bible?"

Hell is a literal place of eternal suffering: 86%
Hell is a literal place, but isn't eternal: 5%
Hell is a metaphor: 3%
I'm not sure: 3%
Other: 3%

The vast majority of people still hold to the traditional view of hell as a place of everlasting punishment. This is a perspective that takes in a wide range of different ideas about the specific details of hell and has been the dominant belief in Christianity throughout the history of the church. Just in case you're interested in some of the Biblical rationale behind this or any of the other Christian perspectives on hell, I recommend the book ***Four Views on Hell***. It presents four different views from four different Christian Theologians about hell; the literal view, the metaphorical view, the Purgatorial view, and the Conditional view. Interesting reading so you can judge for yourself.

More recently however was Rob Bell's book ***Love Wins: A Book About Heaven, Hell and the Fate of Every Person Who Ever Lived***. In it, Bell says the belief in conscious, eternal torment is "misguided and toxic and ultimately subverts the

contagious spread of Jesus' message of love, peace, forgiveness and joy that our world desperately needs to hear." He has been criticized by some conservative fundamentalist scholars but there are some denominations that go even further and suggest if God is a God of love, and God has ultimate power, then everyone should be saved, because that's what God wants.

The problem with this universal salvation idea is that it's not consistent with scripture. It simply is not what the Bible says! Jesus talked about the judgment of God and the fate of the wicked all the time. John Wesley also had no problems talking about the horrors of eternal punishment with his followers back in the late 1700's. Our current Book of Discipline also affirms that as United Methodists "we believe in the resurrections of the dead; the righteous to life eternal and the wicked to endless condemnation."

One of the reasons I love our Methodist heritage and doctrine is because of our emphasis on free will in partnership with a loving, yet powerful God. Salvation is not totally God's choice or commandment; faith is a human response. Therefore salvation is not a divine decision

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but a relationship between God and us.

Salvation as a relationship allows human choice and also requires responsibility. God loves us first, but we have to choose to be in relationship with God. God's grace is primary, but we are justified by our faith. We are forgiven by God's mercy, but we are responsible for good works. The continuing relationship between God and a person is the process of sanctification, which is also our Methodist doctrine.

However, because God has given us free will, we can choose not to relate to God in the first place or even to stop relating to God for whatever reason. We can turn away and even fall out of our relationship with God. Ron Bell says "We're free to resist, reject, and even rebel against God's way for us. We can have all the hell we want."

If salvation is relational, there are basically two implications for us as Christians: (1) we're responsible for our relationship with God which is what we recently learned about in my series from Philippians. Prevenient grace ultimately should lead to holiness. (2) There should be urgency in our witness. It's critical that we share the good news of Jesus Christ, because those who do not turn to God can be lost from God forever.

Romans 6:23 says, "The wages of sin is death." That is the tragic possibility. But the rest of the verse is good news: "the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Eternal separation from God is possible, but by the grace of God and our responsible witness, nobody has to go there. Thanks be to God!!!

See ya in church !



.....NOTICE.....

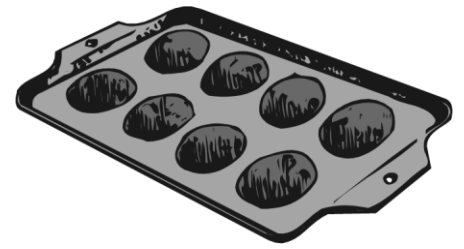
The Karios Prison Ministry Weekend scheduled for November 3 - 6 has been indefinitely postponed due to security concerns within the Red Rock Correctional Center. All of you planning to contribute cookies and other agape such as posters, letters and place mats should put your plans on hold

as well.

Continue to pray for this ministry.

Kairos means "God's Time" and sometimes

His time is not what we had hoped or had planned for. But he does have a plan!



Thank you and Praise God for your support of this ministry.

Dick Spining

Methodism 101

There is a link on the course introduction page to register for the upcoming class scheduled for December 7, 2011 through January 18, 2012. The link following this paragraph will take you to the page where the registration link is located.

http://www.umcom.org/site/c.mrLZJ9PFKmg/b.3563949/k.E4C8/Training_United_Methodism_101.htm

After entering the link above in your browser address bar, hit enter. When you get to that page, scroll down and watch for the dates of the course as described above. There is a sentence right under the dates that says, "Click here to register for this course." The word "here" in the sentence is a hyperlink that will take you to the next step in registering for the course.

The link above has been added to our website on the Links page so that we have access to it on a permanent basis. This course is repeated throughout the year. It starts again on alternating months and runs for 6 weeks.

Registration for the next course is available now.



New Member

Spotlight...

Dale Clark became a member of FUMC on August 28, 2011. He is a long-time resident of the Gila Valley, having moved here with his family when he was seven years old. His parents and one brother Chris are also residents, and his brother Gary lives in Coolidge.

After graduating from Safford High School, Dale attended Eastern Arizona College where he earned an Associate's Degree in Political Science. In addition, he is working toward a degree in Education, which he will receive in May 2012. His goal is to earn a Bachelor's Degree in the near future.

His full time employment is as a Computer Technician at Safford High School, where he works with another of our FUMC members Susan Lindsay. He says he enjoys being at the high school and also enjoys doing some contract work for Bonita School.

One of his special interests is the First United Methodist Boy Scouts, where he was a member some years ago. It was through the Methodist troop that he received his Eagle award, and now he shares his scouting skills by working with the present troop members. Dale is a Venture Troop Committee member and also a Master Mason with Free Masonry.

It is a pleasure to welcome Dale into our church family, and we look forward to future opportunities to get better acquainted.



DID YOU KNOW...

Our church is blessed to have five teams of people who reach out by visiting members who are homebound either temporarily or on a regular basis. This is so worthwhile and is an opportunity for all



of us to be the hands and ears of Jesus to others. If you are interested in this vital ministry, please contact Carrie Glaspie at 428-3706. No experience required.

Welcoming Ministry

If you haven't noticed, there are a lot of ongoing ministries in our church. God has been faithful to provide the ongoing support and people to continue these ministries, but are you aware that Welcoming is a part of who we are as Christians? It goes with us everywhere. Welcoming is the responsibility of all the members of a congregation who are in Christ. It shows others we are a caring congregation. It reflects Psalms 145:8 "The Lord is gracious and full of compassion."

You will soon have the opportunity to learn how we as Christians at First United Methodist Church can strengthen what Christ has already done. Everyone, young and old, can learn how to do this with God's guidance as we begin a new adventure of sharpening our spiritual awareness for the concerns of those who walk through our doors the first time for Worship. First time attendees (visitors/guests) don't necessarily come looking for a pastor, they come as they are, looking for those who are like them and can relate to them on a spiritual level and the first 7 minutes are the most important. Long before the pastor even begins to talk.

Christ explained our purpose in John 15. Every member of the church needs to be educated about the ministry of hospitality. We hope you will begin to prayerfully consider how you can attend and participate in the "Welcoming Ministry" training that will be offered in the near future? But remember, "Welcoming" is not an event. It is a lifestyle. Who knows? You might be the first glimpse of Christ someone else might see.

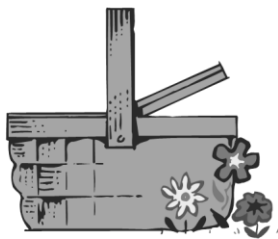
Yours in Christ,
The Welcoming Ministry Committee



November Youth Calendar

Nov. 6 – Picnic Lunch at
Roper 12:00 p.m.

Nov. 13 – Scavenger Hunt
1:00 p.m.



Nov. 20 - Church Thanksgiving Dinner 11:45 a.m.
(after church)

Nov. 21 – Seventh Day Slumber Concert
New Life City Church
Doors open at 6:00 p.m.

Nov. 27 – Pack'n'Sack Lunches for Homeless 1:00
p.m.

Thank You from the Food Bank

Our Neighbor's Pantry would like to take this opportunity to recognize the amazing job our congregation has done to help feed the hungry. Our Congregation collected over one hundred pounds of food and around 20 pounds of nonfood items. You are all awesome in the eyes of Christ and in the eyes of the hungry. Thanks again FUMC Congregation!

Don't forget to support your women's group or men's group in their efforts to donate to the food bank. Please let us know which group your food donation represents so we can credit them and thank them. The winner will be announced in church. GOOD LUCK MEN AND WOMEN!!!!

Gail Damron, Director Our Neighbor's Pantry



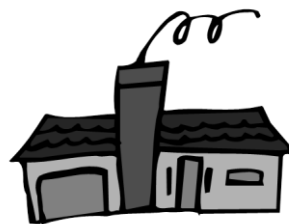
United Methodist Women's Meeting

Join us on Thursday, November 10 for a program focused on "Who Is My Neighbor?". The meeting will begin at 11 a.m. with lunch served at 12 noon. Please bring food items for our Thanksgiving food baskets and Our Neighbor's Pantry. The Methodist Women have been challenged to collect more food than the Methodist Men during the month of November. Look for collection boxes in the narthex of the sanctuary. Let's go ladies!



Just a quick note to let everyone know that we have arrived safely in Williston, North Dakota. We arrived to 90 degree weather! The U-Haul is unloaded and now Goldie is slowly trying to organize our house. Thanks to all who prayed and continue to pray for us!

Paul O'Dell





The Month in Scripture

Nov. 1: Revelation 7: 9-17
Psalm 34: 1-10, 22
1 John 3: 1-3
Matthew 5: 1-12

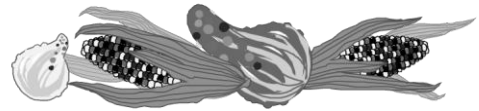
Nov. 6: Joshua 24: 1-3a, 14-25
Psalm 78: 1-7
1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18
Matthew 25: 1-13

Nov. 13: Judges 4: 1-7
Psalm 123
1 Thessalonians 5: 1-11
Matthew 25: 14-30

Nov. 20: Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24
Psalm 100
Ephesians 1: 15-23
Matthew 25: 31-46

Nov. 24 Thanksgiving Day
Deuteronomy 8: 7-18
Psalm 65
2 Corinthians 9: 6-15
Luke 17: 11-19

Nov. 27: Isaiah 64: 1-9
Psalm 80: 1-7, 17-19
1 Corinthians 1: 3-9
Mark 13: 24-37



First United Methodist Church's Annual

Thanksgiving Dinner will be
Sunday, November 20th at
12:00 p.m.

If your name is between
A-H you are asked to bring
a vegetable or a casserole.
Those who are between I-R
are asked to bring a salad
of any kind and those
between S-Z are asked to
bring a dessert. Turkey,
dressing, gravy, potatoes,
rolls and beverages will be
furnished. If you would be
interested in cooking one of
the turkeys please call the
church office. Everyone is
invited!

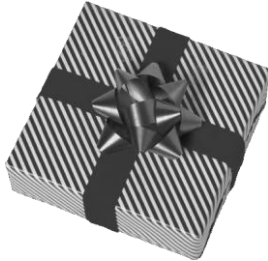


Shop 'n' Go Christmas Show

Saturday, November 12th

8 am – 2 pm

In the Fellowship Hall



Great time to do some Christmas shopping!

If you Make or Bake, there is still room for more vendors. Contact Trish Stone – 428-7068

Operation Christmas Child

It's time to grab a shoebox and fill it for OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD! Last year, worldwide, there were 8.1 million shoebox gifts delivered to children in 110 countries!!

Colorful green and red boxes are available in the sanctuary, but regular or plastic shoeboxes will work just fine. There is a brochure in each box that tells what to put in (and what NOT to). Brochures are also available in the Narthex. If at all possible, the shoebox should be accompanied by a \$7 check to offset shipping charges.

Boxes are due at the church between November 14th and November 20th. If you have any questions, please contact Cheryl Lawrence at 348-4668. Thank you so much for participating in this great project.



Hanging of the greens for Christmas will be Saturday November 26th at 9:00 a.m. in the sanctuary. Come and help us begin the Advent season together.



Be on the lookout for The Angel Tree Mission. Angel Tree is a program of Prison Fellowship which assists in providing Christmas gifts for inmates' children through the love of Christ and the generous members of our FUMC family. A small Angel Tree will be located in the Narthex during December. Hanging on the tree will be tags with the child's first name only, the gift request, size and color information, and the child's age and sex. FUMC family members adopt one or more gift requests. Gifts are purchased with a price range between \$15.00 and \$20.00 per gift. Unwrapped gifts are returned to the Church. More information and deadlines will follow in the December Vision.



November 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Noon – Youth Picnic Lunch at Roper	6:30 John 3:16 class 7 pm DayCare Board Meeting	5:30 pm Pastor’s Roundtable 6:15 pm Church Supper		11 am – UMW Business meeting Noon – UMW Luncheon and speaker		8 am – 2 pm: Shop n’ Go Christmas Show
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
1 pm – Youth Scavenger Hunt	6:30 John 3:16 class Shoe Boxes due this week.	7 pm Ad Council Shoe Boxes due this week.	Shoe Boxes due this week.	Shoe Boxes due this week.	Operation Christmas Child deadline Shoe Boxes due this week.	Shoe Boxes due this week.
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Noon – Church Thanksgiving Dinner Deadline for Shoe Boxes				Thanksgiving Day		
27	28	29	30			
1 pm – Pack n’ Sack Lunches for Homeless	6:30 John 3:16 class					

6 pm – CMA/NA (L)
7:30 pm – AA (L)

Thursday

5 pm – Brownies (FC)
6 pm – CMA (L)

Friday

6 pm – CMA (L)

Saturday

12 pm – CMA (L)

16 Peter Gentile
16 Clay Mitchell
17 Aleta Carpenter
17 Karen Caylor
20 Gretchen Brewer
20 Jan Lindsey
21 James Brady
22 April Thomas
23 Ryder Abeyta
23 Greg Lindsey
24 Andrea Stanley
26 Owen Jordahl
28 Judi Jeanpierre
28 Tricia Stone
30 Bruce Stanfield

Weekly Church Events

Sunday

8:15 am – Essentials Worship Service (S)
8:45 am – John’s Junior Ringers practice (FH)
9:15 am – Sunday School (Various)
10:30 am – Liturgical Worship Service (S)
6 pm – Youth Group (YR)
6 pm – Wesley Group (FH)

Wednesday

5 pm – Prayer Meeting (VR)
5 pm – John’s Joyful Ringers (S)
5:30 pm – Joyful Noise Singers (FH)
6:30 pm – Chancel Choir Rehearsal (S)

Thursday

9:15 am – Quilter’s Group (FH)

Weekly Community Events

Monday

6 pm – Cub Scouts/Webelos (FH)
6 pm – NA (L)
7 pm – Boy Scouts (FH)

Tuesday

6 pm – CMA/NA (L)

Wednesday

Property Location Key

(FC) Friendship Classroom, (FH) Fellowship Hall, (L) Library, (PG) Pecan Grove, (S) Sanctuary, (V) Vision Room, (W) Wesley Room

Birthdays

2 Justice Aguilar
2 Denise Rhodes
3 Priscilla Hinkins
3 Delphine Maxey
4 Dick Spining
5 Amber Thomas
7 Philip Jr. Capps
7 Ren Fite
7 Riley Fite
7 Lynne Reed
8 Mary Howell
8 Marcie Thomas
10 Trudy Anderson
10 Brenna Taylor
13 Doug Jones
13 Bella Mariani

Anniversaries

2 Walt & Sharon Friauf
8 Mike & Denise Rhodes
21 Ed & Peggy Hunter

We support the church through our:

PRAYERS: Activate the prayer chain by phoning Judy Fisher at 428-6485, or the church office at 428-4211. You can also write special prayer requests on cards in the pew racks, and turn them in Sunday during worship. We also invite you to take time each Wednesday to pray for the ministry of the First United Methodist Church.

ATTENDANCE:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
September 25	143
October 2	147
October 9	127
October 16	144
October 23	117

SERVICE: Thank you to the Acolytes: Sierra, Jesse & Alexis Stone, Victor & Valeria Moya, Josh Romero, Alex Etter & Camille Delgado.

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Let us give thanks
unto the Lord