

NEWSLETTER
for the
MANCOS UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH

Issued Quarterly

January-February-March Issue

Missive from Pastor Craig:

68 Club Up and Going

After getting snowed out on December 7, the 68 Club had their inaugural meeting on Monday, December 14. In case you were wondering, the club isn't for people who are 68 years old but it's for kids who are in the 6th, 7th, or 8th grade. (Get it? 6-8 club...) We had 6 youth show up including 3 young female teenagers, so OUR BOYS didn't quite know what to think. We had a spaghetti dinner, a few stories and laughs, and then we went through a discernment process reflecting on what we are grateful for and what we are not. We also had a wonderful discussion on the nature of God and God's presence in our lives.

We're going sledding or ice skating next week. We'll need the Holy Spirit to be with us for sure! Dan and Doreen Jones are helping Craig and Jennifer out with this special group of kids. Please pray for the youth and the adult sponsors who will be working with them.

Wow!

After much discussion, thought, and prayer, our church has taken a gracious "leap of faith" as one member aptly said. By a unanimous vote, we are going to create and start a second worship service, which will be contemporary in nature.

Yes, there is some anxiety; there should be! But...I have also felt a tremendous amount of energy and excitement around the church. I'd call it the Holy Spirit moving. Folks are coming up to me with thoughts and ideas and they are excited about inviting a new group of brothers and sisters to this service. It'll be the same Gospel message presented a different way to reach out to a new group of people.

In Matthew 28, Jesus said, "Go therefore and make disciples." The Great Commission calls us to share the Good News of God's grace, love, forgiveness, and compassion with all people. By the Grace of God, we hope to continue to reach people through our existing service and reach even more people through a second contemporary service. It is a leap of faith but all things are possible through God who gives us strength.

Please pray for this service, our music leaders, and our children's ministry director. Also, make a list of people who you would like to invite to either service. Pray over this list and trust God. Amen

Letter from the District Superintendent:

Dear friends,

A little boy and girl were singing their favorite carol in church the Sunday before Christmas. The boy concluded "Silent Night" with the words, "Sleep in heavenly beans."

"No," his sister corrected, "not beans. Peas."

The story reminds me of all of the wonderful activities of Advent and Christmas in most of our churches: singing carols, lighting an Advent wreath, Christmas sermons, possibly a children's program and Christmas Eve candle lighting services. I hope you find it a festive and inspirational time of year.

Dave Garroway was, for many years, the host of the TODAY show on NBC. Someone once asked him about his understanding of Christmas. He replied: "I've noticed that when people are asked what they want for Christmas, nine times out of ten, they answer with something material. That used to be amusing to me, but it's not amusing to me any longer. I happen to be one of those people who can afford anything he wants, but I find what I really want, I can't buy at all. I want peace of mind, peace of soul; the kind of peace you have when you don't really want anything."

What do YOU want for Christmas? For me, what I want cannot be bought or gift wrapped. What I want most can best be summed up in words like "faith," "hope" and "love."

For myself, I want faith. Faith enough to see God's hand working in even the bleakest of situations. Faith enough to believe that the goodness of God will prevail in the end. Faith enough to trust without reservation.

For my church I want hope. Abundant hope. Hope in tomorrow. A hope that believes that better times lay ahead and a hope that empowers us to step out with God.

For my world I want love. And I believe that the solutions to most of our biggest problems will only be found when we decide that we are indeed one family. The problems of war, health insurance, crime in American streets and illegal immigration take on a different hue when I am talking about my brothers and sisters whom I love dearly.

Do you also want things for Christmas you can't buy? I pray that we will all find those things this year that truly matter.

By the way, Beth Richardson's new book, *The Uncluttered Heart: Making Room for God During Advent and Christmas*, has been recommended as a worthwhile one to read this Advent season. *The Uncluttered Heart* offers four weeks of guided reflection through the weeks of Advent on through Epiphany. You can get the book at your favorite store or pick it up here: <http://tinyurl.com/yzoff3x>. To take the uncluttered season a digital step further, go to

www.unclutteredheart.org and sign up for free inspirational Advent telephone text messages or emails from the author.

May God be with you all this holiday season.

Steve Goodier

Letter from the Bishop:

Beloved in Christ,

As you receive this, I will be traveling in Jordan, Israel and Palestine, representing the Council of Bishops of the United Methodist Church. My introduction to the Middle East will be in a group representing all three religious traditions that consider this land Holy. We will observe Friday prayers in a mosque, Shabbat services in a synagogue on Saturday and worship in a Christian church on Sunday. People from three religious traditions, all promising peace, searching for God's paths that make for peace.

I am convinced that our scriptures paint beautiful pictures of God's kingdom so that we will know the signs to watch for. Signs that mark the way of promise. Last Sunday's text from the Hebrew scriptures offers this picture –

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,

the desert shall rejoice and blossom...

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,

and the ears of the deaf unstopped;

Then the lame shall leap like a deer,

and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,

and streams in the desert;

The burning sand shall become a pool,

and the thirsty ground springs of water. . . .

A highway shall be there,

and it shall be called the Holy Way.

(from Isaiah 35)

With histories of Holocaust and occupation, of suicide bombers and missile attacks, we will have to be very wise and a little crazy as we search for signs of a peaceable kingdom. But that's what faithful people do, isn't it? Peer into utter darkness to glimpse a star that marks God's presence in the world.

I place my hope in Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. But I know that Jesus reached across every human division to build relationships that brought healing and new community.

Please pray with me that we will recognize the Holy Way that leads to peace in our hearts, our homes, and the homelands of all God's beloved children.

Glory to God and on earth peace,

Bishop Elaine J.W. Stanovsky

Denver Area

United Methodist Church

Information from Connie Goodell, Lay Leader:

Parish Thanksgiving Service

The annual Parish Thanksgiving Service was held on the Sunday before Thanksgiving at the Mancos Church. All of the ministers of the parish took part in the service with Sharon Strauss, pastor at Dove Creek, delivering the message. The service was followed by a soup and bread dinner. The soups were provided by our church members and the bread was from members of the other churches. The service was well attended and we had to add two tables in the nursery to accommodate everyone for dinner.

This service and dinner provides an opportunity to meet new people and to renew old friendships in the parish. We are thankful to be a part of this loving parish.

New Tee Shirts for Heavenly Fitness

Heavenly Fitness has its new tee shirts, designed by Mary Kay Lance, who attends the class with her husband Ron. We will be demonstrating a small part of our program at the Charge Conference, January 10th, and we may be on the program for the Christian Women's Club in Cortez. We now have an average of 12 to 15 attending class, including three men. Heavenly

Fitness is low impact aerobics, set to upbeat Christian music and is geared to all levels of fitness.

For more information, contact Connie at 533-7398.

Church Christmas Dinner a Hugh Success

The Church Christmas Dinner was held on December 16th at the Mancos Community Center. There were around 120 persons in attendance, including numerous young families with small children. It was a great night for all of us to gather for our annual celebration and to enjoy the company of friends and new acquaintances with the holiday spirit. The dinner was the traditional Christmas dinner with turkey and all the trimmings and we would like to thank all the cooks that provided the delicious food. Thank you also to the many people who came early to help set up the hall and those who helped clean up afterwards. The success of an event this large would not have been possible with out all your help and we thank all of you very much.

Report from Mary Ann Ott:

PPR Report

The Pastor Parish Committee has been very busy in October and November. This is the time of year when we let the Conference know whether or not we want our pastor to return. Everyone agrees that we want Craig and Jen to return, especially now to carry through his vision of a second service. We feel blessed to have Craig and doubly blessed to have his talented wife, Jen. They give freely of their time and talents to the church and community.

Our committee has the task of preparing a profile of the church and community. It is an interesting challenge to look at the community analytically: What are the businesses; where do the residents earn a living; what services are available; is the population growing or declining; does the membership of the church reflect that of the community in age, income, ethnicity? These are but a few of the questions that had to be addressed. An interesting fact is that Mancos has grown 13% since the 2000 census, whereas Cortez has grown only 6%. Bayfield, on the other hand, has grown over 60%.

The third task of the Pastor Parish Committee is the annual parsonage "walk through." The main purpose of this evaluation is to determine if any repairs need to be made to the building and that everything is in operating order. We did repair some minor plumbing problems. The main item that needs attention is the back porch roof which is sagging from the weight of the snow. We trust that the Trustees will repair this as soon as possible.

Our parsonage is a charming craftsman-style home, built in the late 20's, and willed to the church by G.I. Perkins. It has four bedrooms and two

bathrooms. Not many parishioners visit the parsonage, especially the upstairs. The two upstairs bedrooms are painted a sunny yellow with a full bath in between, painted blue. Andi and Ro have made the rooms their own with their sports memorabilia and artwork. We should plan to remodel the kitchen and replace the cabinets in the future. At present, however, everything is in working order and Craig and Jen seem content to make it their home.

Wedding Anniversaries

Jack and I will be celebrating our Golden Anniversary Christmas Eve. It's a special time for us, yet I realize that everyone has his unique love story. When I look around our church, I'm impressed by the many couples who have passed that 50-year mark: Just this past year the Cooks, Goodells, and Starlipers celebrated their 50th anniversary, and the Baders, Alexanders, Edwards and Johnsons have surpassed that half-century mark by many years. It reinforces that old saying that the "family that worships together stays together."

A Thank-you from Jen Paschal:

On December 9th the Mancos United Methodist Church provided yet another blessing for many families in our community through the Food Distribution Program. This program is funded through our offerings and donations. So, many thanks to the generous donors and volunteers who help make this outreach possible.

I want to thank our church family for the many delicious meals that you all provided for our family while I was under the weather this fall. We are so blessed by all of you.

The Paschal family

Thanks from Barb Cover and Committee:

CHRISTMAS PIE SALE

A loving thank-you to the many women who baked pies and worked at our pie booth on December 12th.

There were many happy children who enjoyed buying gifts from the Christmas box. Thanks to those who brought gifts for them. It's always fun for kids and parents alike. A special thank you to Matt Lauer, owner of Fahrenheit Coffee Roasters, who once again furnished his great coffee. Although there was a poor turn out because of snow and icy roads, we made \$300.00, toward filling some of the 20 food baskets we give away to those in need during the holiday season. Thank you again for everyone's help at this busy time.

Merry Christmas to you all.

Love, Barb Cover, Sue Ryter, and Emily Easton

Sue Ryter Announces Craft Classes:

Linda Walters has been holding a craft class every Wednesday where she has been teaching mosaics to a group of enthusiastic ladies. Linda has provided all the materials and excellent instruction.

Sue Ryter has also been teaching silk scarf painting. The scarves are decorative and fun to make. We hope to have a weekly craft class through the spring.

Update from Macurdas:

Do hope all is well with everyone, as we brave the weather changes in our areas. As you probably have heard, even Texas had snow, and we may even have cold or freezing weather on Christmas this year. Driving from Mancos to Spring TX, at the end of September, we were able to enjoy the beauty of fall with many colored leaves rippling in the wind. It certainly was a sight to behold. Upon arrival in TX, we engaged in many activities with our church and friends. Our adult choir, children's choir, bell choir and an orchestra from surrounding high schools, participated in a beautiful musical concert on Dec 6. Various musical selections of Hallelujahs were done, including Beethoven's arrangement. The music was difficult, but we learned it and performed well. This was a challenging and rewarding accomplishment led by our new music director who is very devoted to music and relaying the words expressively. We feel so very blessed to be able to participate in the music programs both in Colorado and Texas and for the wonderful friendships in both areas. We thank God for each and every one of you. Wishing you and family a very joyous and Merry Christmas, and peace and good health in the New Year. Sending Christmas hugs to all.
Noma and Brad

Birthdays and Anniversaries:

January

1 – Zane Goodell
3 – Jake Driver
3 – Sue Ryter
3 – Bill Johnson
4 – Gloria Thomas
6 – Dick Edwards
8 – Michelle Black
13 -- Jeff Booton
21 – Marjorie & Keith Nelson (anniv)
25 – Zach Brown
31 – Joy Grant
31 – Katherine Stevick

February

4 – Steve Hawkins
8 – Dale Wright
8 -- Madeleine Guillette
11 – Dean Wolcott
14 -- Margie & Larry Russell (anniv)
15 – Erica Russell
17 – Pete Cruiser
22 -- Steve Budd-Jack

March

6 – Dave & Beth Stevick
13 -- Wyatt Richard

