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▪ AG UM CC Chronicle

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The First United Methodist Church of Arroyo Grande Cast~A~Net February 2011

"The kingdom of God is like a net that was cast into the sea" ~ Matthew 13:47
 Phone: 805-481-2692 Website: WorshipWeekly.com Email: FUMCAG@sbcglobal.net



Judy and her little
 girl Phoebe

UMW Guest February 2011

I was born and raised in California, graduating from high school in Trona, California. During those years I was active in church, school and scouting activities.

Undergraduate studies were completed at Scarritt College in Nashville, Tennessee, (now Scarritt Bennett Center) where I earned my Bachelor's degree. I earned a Masters of Religious Education degree from St. Paul School of Theology, in Kansas City, Missouri.

I began working with the General Board of Global Ministries in 1964. At that time we were called Rural Workers. As is true to the nature of the UMC, names changed to Town and Country Workers and now we are called Church and Community Workers. My service appointments have been in Polk County, Arkansas, Little Rock Conference (now Arkansas Conference), at the Lake of the Ozarks Parish, and Northeast Church and Community Ministry in Springfield, Missouri, Missouri West Conference (now Missouri Conference), and in Twin Valley Parish, Cross-Lines Cooperative Council, and Ogden Friendship House, in the Kansas East Conference. I now am concluding my service as So. Central Jurisdiction Mission Interpreter in Residence.

I was commissioned a Deaconess in the UMC in 1967 while in Arkansas, and consecrated a Diaconal Minister in 1977

while in Missouri. Through this relationship I have participated in three International Federation of Diakonia meetings. It has been my privilege to serve as part of the General Conference Delegation in 2000, '04, and '08 as well as part of the Jurisdiction Conference in 1992, 1996 with others from the Kansas East Conference.

I have served on a variety of committees in the conference and currently complete a time as Conference Secretary of Global Ministries, District Committee on Ministry, and Board of Managers for the School of Christian Mission. I have also taught in the conference school.

I enjoy travel and as a result of these various opportunities, have been fortunate enough to minister in places around the world, as well as in our own country.

I plan to return to my California roots and live on the Central Coast. This way I will be close to my 90 year old father and closer to my sister as well. So I will enjoy walking the beach, reading, and designing my own schedule. I will miss all those who have been friends and colleagues here in the Midwest and invite you to visit should you be in that area. (Or you could plan to be in the area.)

What would please me most is to learn that many more of our congregations reached out in mission and ministry and developed a Covenant Relationship with a United Methodist Missionary.



Pastor David Burgess



Dear Church Family,;

In my notes this month I want to think about "What matters to a first time guest at our church". Each guest who steps onto our property on Sunday

morning for worship comes with expectations, and first impressions matter a lot! In fact guests are making decisions if they will return right when they step out of their vehicle. Whether they will come back depends on their total experience with our church community. It's like this: Putting on their consumer hats, they ask the same questions about the new places you and I visit during the week. Questions such as: Was this worth my time? Do these people care about me? Am I valued here?

In Matthew 25:35 and 40, Jesus said, "I was a stranger and you welcomed me...Just as you did it to the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." I'm sure you have heard the expression, "You only have one chance to make a first impression," and that is certainly accurate. It's not only the greeters or ushers. It's every single one of us who should have this as our number one goal: to make a good and lasting impression on visiting guests.

When you and I make a good first impression, there is a high probability that a guest will say that being with us at church was worth his or her time, The guest will say, "I'm coming back, People really took the time to talk with me. I was valued not judged, and they really cared, by introducing me to others in the church community."

Let's Together Make A Good First Impression!



In ministry together.

David

Happy Valentine's Day

United Methodist Men
Annual Sweetheart Breakfast

12 FEBRUARY, 2011 8:30 AM
THE MISSION INN ~ PISMO BEACH

ADMIT ONE

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF ARROYO GRANDE



Devin Paredes	2/2
Barbara Reineke	2/4
Ian Spalding	2/4
Betty Ashton	2/5
Betty Johnson	2/7
Wayne Huggins	2/8
Victoria Gandy	2/9
Guy Oates	2/10
Bennie Duffin	2/11
MaryBeth Lorenzen	2/14
Charles Perriguet	2/15
Ryan Roemer	2/19
Irene Kliesch	2/20
Michelle Paredes	2/25
Matthew Jones	2/28
Bob Davis	2/28
Sean Treat	2/29



Did we miss your birthday? Would you like to have you or a family member recognized?

God has poured out his love into our hearts....
Romans 5:5

THE IMPOSSIBLE TRUE STORY

FREE Movie Night
February 5th—6 PM

Disney
SECRETARIAT

UMC OF AG—SANCTUARY



Camp Arroyo Grande Has A New Cabin Dedication—November 14th

Close to 100 people attended the gala BBQ for the cabin dedication on November 14th at Camp AG. Camp managers, Steve and Debbie Tallant, hosted the event with special guest, Paul Cogger (Director of Camping for the Methodist Conference), Rev. Bob Underwood led the dedication ceremonies which were held under a canvas pop-up tent, just south of the newly finished cabin.



“You are sitting over the site of the next cabin,” said Steve Tallant in his opening remarks. Tallant noted that about \$25,000 had been spent in leveling out the cabin sites, bringing in a large drain system and all of the electrical and plumbing. That is all in now for development of cabin number 2 which is hoped to be in place by summer of 2011. The two cabins are part of a six cabin complex. The plan calls for replacing the six older cabins that were brought in from an army base over 30 years ago. The entire camp is planned to be refurbished over the next 15-20 years. The new cabin totaled close to \$70,000 including the site improvements. With funds in short supply, the camp is gladly accepting donations.



Those in attendance were impressed with the new unit. It sleeps 14 in a fully carpeted room and has two tiled showers with full bathroom facilities. The soft tan walls trimmed in white enhance the beauty of the building that will house families and campers for years to come. Ceremonies were concluded with cake and refreshments.

submitted by Val McClure, *Camp Liaison*



Bible Quiz

First Corinthians 13 is a popular Scripture reading at wedding ceremonies. The so-called “love chapter” provides an extended definition of what Paul calls “the greatest” gift (verse 13).

Which of the following characteristics of love isn’t found in I Corinthians 13?

- A. Love is patient.
- B. Love rejoices in the truth.
- C. Love believes all things.
- D. Love is childlike.

Answer: D



Women are the Fastest Growing Segment of Substance Abusers In the United States!

Alcohol and drug addiction are chronic, debilitating diseases, and recovery is not finite in itself. It requires management over the course of a person’s lifetime. For women, especially chronic abusers, recovery can be an uphill battle. Women are the fastest growing segment of drug abusers in the U.S. and make up a fourth of all abusers, according to the U.S. Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.

Clinicians and program administrators are increasingly aware of the important differences between men and women with regard to the physical effects of substance use and the specific issues related to substance use disorders. They are also recognizing that these differences have an impact on treatment—that gender does make a difference. When women’s specific needs are addressed from the outset, improved treatment engagement, retention, and outcomes are the result.

Recovery programs are now increasingly taking women’s unique needs into consideration and developing gender-specific recovery support services specifically designed for addicted women and their families. Strengthening family systems is critical to a woman’s long-term recovery. Addiction is a family disease, passed from generation to generation and nearly two-thirds of Americans have friends or family members who have struggled with addiction. “Everybody suffers from this disease and everybody needs healing” said Sis Wenger,

president and chief officer of National Association for Children of Alcoholics.

Speaking up about addiction and recovery can be a powerful way to break the silence of family alcoholism and other drug addictions and motivate individuals struggling with substance abuse to seek treatment. Ms. Wegner says that families dealing with addictions need to hear messages of hope and possibility of recover for their whole family. They also need help finding recovery resources.

Meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous, Al-Anon and Alateen meet at our church on a regular basis. Contact our church office to learn about specific meeting times. The United Methodist Special Program on Substance Abuse and Related Violence (SPSARV) coordinates our denomination’s global response to alcohol, chemical use and dependency and related violence, and is administered by the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church.

I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick. Ezekiel 34: 16

(Condensed from an article in the January, 2011 issue of **Response** magazine (the publication of United Methodist Women)

by Patti Melsheimer

UNITED METHODIST **★ EXTRA! EXTRA! ★**
MEN Men's News

**Helping men to grow in Christ,
 so others can know Christ.**

Submitted by Bill Weitkamp

**UMM Learn About
 Walk to Emmaus &
 Tend To Business**



Men's Walk - February 24-27
Women's Walk - March 3-6

At the December 11 UMM meeting, Pastor David explained the Walk to Emmaus week-end for men to be held February 24-27 in Ventura. A business meeting followed that included the donation of \$200 to the church benevolence fund and a procedure for selecting the UMM Man of the Year Award. Monthly Saturday morning programs were also discussed. Mark your 2011 calendar for these Saturdays of February 12, March 19, April 30 and June 11. The Carl Kliesch Memorial Golf Tournament will also be held on a Saturday this spring. Watch this column and the church bulletin for details.



Sweetheart
BREAKFAST

**February 12 at Mission
 Inn of Pismo Beach**

The annual Sweetheart Breakfast will be held on Saturday, February 12 at the Mission Inn of Pismo Beach located at 601 James Way in Pismo Beach. A buffet breakfast will be served at 8:30 AM and musical entertainment will be provided. Be certain to arrange now for this important date, so to speak.

See Wayne Huggins for your tickets in Criswell Hall between and after church service.



**Attention to all
 Beverly Lewis
 Fans!!**

We now have her *The Courtship of Nellie Fisher* series, consisting of three books in our library. Our thanks to Fern Farmer for donating them.

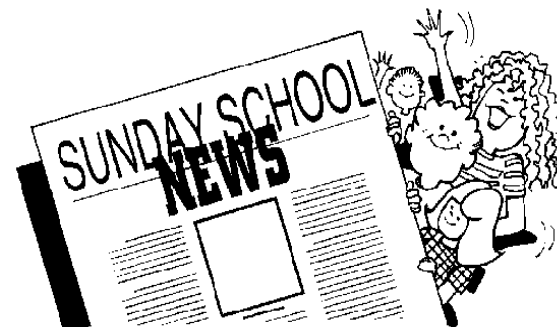
Come check out all of our great books and interesting videos. We are open every Sunday to all of our church family.



Our church has offered **Senior Exercise Classes** for many years as part of our community outreach. In fact, most of the participants are not members of our church but typically attend other churches. For 2010, free-will donations by participants in the classes were about \$1736.

These classes are open to everyone on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 8:30 AM until 9:30 AM in our Criswell Hall.

"Just trying to keep on moving" ~ Wayne



Our Family Christmas Eve Pageant on Christmas Eve was a very special blessing to all who attended. We had angels flying everywhere, shepherds looking for their flocks and even a few little cows, a donkey and a pig. The story of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem, and our Savior's birth in a lowly stable was beautifully portrayed, and as you can see by the happy faces above, our children had a wonderful time preparing and presenting this glorious program. A special thank you to all who helped make this past Christmas Eve Family service memorable in every way.

As we begin the new year we are continuing with our weekly Kids Night Out on Wednesday evenings to coincide with our Pastor's Bible Study. Dinner is served at 5:15 pm (there is no charge for the meal, but donations are gratefully received), followed by a time centered around the bible, with lots of fun, games, songs and crafts beginning at 5:45 pm. We are also practicing more songs to bring to the congregation during the Children's Moment in the 10:30 am Worship Service.

The children are enjoying this special break during the week when they can get together and enjoy fellowship with one another. All of our children are invited and encouraged to bring a friend. We hope to see you there!



UM YOUTH NEWS



Kudos to Jordan Henderson, Jen Trecartin, and David Anderson, three of our youth who are all on the Arroyo Grande High School Robotics team. Robotics you say (so do I) but I am sure that if you find one of these youth in church they would love to tell you all about it. Mike has had the opportunity to be a mentor for the team, helping with the welding aspects of the robot. Good luck to the whole team and more to come on how they do in the competition.



Mark your calendars for March 13! The annual Spudtacular will be immediately following the second service. As always, the potatoes will be huge and the toppings will be abundant. Look for tickets to go on sale at the end of February.

We continue to meet on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings. We hope to see all youth, 6–12 grades, (especially all the youth girls) plus remember to ask a friend.

In Christ's Service, Mike and Lou

PARENTING WITH LOVE AND LOGIC

Early Childhood Parenting Made Fun!

Would you like to feel **more confident** as a parent?
 Would you like to have **more fun** parenting?
 Would you like to feel **more relaxed** at the end of the day?

If so, this parenting program is designed just for YOU!

Led by Matthew and Tracy Regusci, the seminar will meet for 5 consecutive Tuesdays beginning March 1st and continuing through March 29th, 2011, at the First United Methodist Church of Arroyo Grande. Dinner is served at 6:00 P.M., and class time follows from 6:30-8:00 P.M.

The cost is \$50.00 per person or \$95.00 a couple, which includes dinner and a workbook. Child care is available at a cost of \$5.00 per child/per session, and must be paid in advance. You can register in advance on Friday, February 25, 2011, or pay at the door at \$10.00 per person/per session.

If you have any questions, you may contact Maddy Quaglino, director of the Arroyo Grande United Methodist Children's Center, at 481-2223, or visit our website at www.loveandlogic.com and www.worshipweekly.com for more information.



United Methodist Women Faith, Hope and Love In Action

Ann Williamson, UMW Publicity



The organized unit of United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom

as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

Well...it's February—The month of love. Not just love of a special sweetheart, but the love of family and friends also. Take some time to remember that all love is a reflection of the love that God has for each and every one of us.

This month we are going to spotlight the ladies of the Esther Circle. They were all so welcoming to me and I felt right at home with them in doing this article. These friendly and cheerful Methodist women have been meeting for many, many years in our McMillen Room. Before that they met at the old church in the Arroyo Grande Village. They have a long history of special Christian camaraderie in our church. They may have been around a long time but they are certainly an active and vibrant bunch.

While I was with them, I counted 25 members. They start their meetings each month with a sack lunch and a shared dessert. This is part of their fellowship. After lunch they get down to business with their lesson which is most often something chosen from the various recommended studies suggested by the UMW.

Today, was a special day of discussion and giving pledges for the yearly pledge drive. These monies will help with mission work done both locally and far and wide.

One of the special highlights that this circle is especially proud of is the implementing of Pauline Castillo's idea to help out the children of Grover Beach Elementary School. 70% of these students are living below the poverty level. For three years now our UMW ladies have donated \$1000 and hand delivered it to the principal of this school, Mr. Juan Olivarría. The money is carefully given out in the form of vouchers by Mr. O (as the students call him) to students in need of clothing and special scholarships.

Thank you, Pauline and Esther Circle, for pointing out this need right here in our own back yard.

All in all, it was a great experience to get together with the ladies of Esther Circle. If you are looking for a special group to belong to at our church, I am certain the Esther Circle will welcome you with open arms.



Esther Circle
2/10/11
Mary Martha
2/16/11
JOY Circle
2/15/11

Esther Circle meets the **second Thursday** of each month at **noon** in the **McMillen Room**. They have begun their new study on the book Joy to The World—Mission in the age of Global Christianity.

Mary-Martha Circle meets on the **third Wednesday** of each month at **9:30 AM** in the **McMillen Room** of our church. They will start the book The Beauty and Courage of Sudan: Why A Dream of Peace Is Possible.

JOY Circle meets on the **third Tuesday** of each month at **7 PM** at a member's home. Contact the church office for February's location. They have completed their serious and thought provoking study on the Sudan.



The students pictured above are members of the school's Student Council. They are: Veronica Smith, President; Mathew Salazar, Vice-President, and Arte Hernandez, Student Representative.



"Why We Worry" - part one

compiled by Jerry Smith

If you've ever thought of yourself as a worrywart, then you're no stranger to worry. And if you consider yourself a worrier, you're also no stranger to the phrase "what if". "What if I need a root canal?" or "What if she asks where I've been?" and "What if I get caught?" maybe it's, "What if I don't do well?"

The question of "what if" is a worry wart first line of defense against things going awry. The fears of a worrier are often getting sick, making a mistake, messing up, being caught off guard, and feeling humiliated or embarrassed to name a few.

What's Wrong With Worrying?

What's wrong with a little 'innocent' worry once in awhile? For most people, nothing. But, for a worrywart, worry is anything but innocent...or occasional. Worry, especially chronic worry, exacts a psychological price that is often exorbitant. Physically, our body may translate the stress and tension of worrying into headaches, stomach distress, hives, insomnia, lower immune system response, or even heart attacks--in some cases, in extreme cases anxiety and depression. Whether it's warding off a common cold or being susceptible to cancer, there's no doubt our bodies abhor worry.

What Does the Bible Say About Worry?

The Bible clearly teaches Christians not to worry. Philipians 4:6 says, "Do not be anxious [do not worry] about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." In this verse we are not just told or asked nicely, but commanded, NOT to worry. This Scripture teaches us to bring all of our needs and concerns to God in prayer rather than worry about them. Worry wastes our time and also takes our focus off of trusting God. **Worry replaced by prayer equals TRUST.**

Jesus encourages us constantly in the Word to avoid worrying about our physical needs like clothing and food. He assures us that our heavenly Father will take care of all our needs in Matthew 6:25-34. So then, if we are directly commanded and lovingly encouraged not to worry, then why do we continue the damaging behavior?

Since worrying should not be a part of a believer's life, how does one overcome worry? The Bible tells in

Emotionally, worrying is no bargain either. It leaves us feeling off balance, insecure, and often quite frantic. We become glass-half-empty pessimists, wringing our hands as we try to anticipate what might go wrong and how we're going to handle it. Worrywarts worry because their world has become riddled with doubt and distrust. If you can't believe in life, you're doomed to fear it. If nothing else, worry gives you a sense that at least you're doing something to brace against life's curve balls. Guess you could say spitting in the wind is doing something.

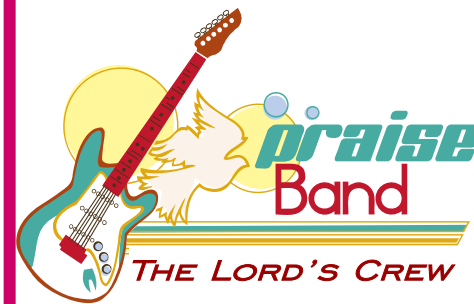
Why We Worry

Unfortunately, worry-warts feel there's little or no choice. Worry for them is the only way to survive things going wrong. Heaven help them if they get a bit complacent, lazy, or too relaxed--WHAM! Life will deliver them a blow from which they might not recover. If you're a worrier, you're probably convinced that if you worry enough, you might be able to figure out (control) all those what-ifs and then stop worrying. In a sense, you worry so you won't have to keep worrying. (continued in Part 2 next month)

SOURCE: <http://www.healthylivingnyc.com/article/5>

1 Peter 5:7, that we are instructed to "cast all your anxiety on him because He cares for you." God does not want us to carry around the weight that worrying about our problems brings. In this verse, God is telling us to give Him all of our worries and concerns. Why does God want to take on our problems, you may ask? *The answer here is simple--because He cares for us.* God is concerned about everything that happens to us--large or small--God wants to give it His FULL attention. When we give God our problems, He promises to give us the peace which is beyond all understanding (Philippians 4:7). Try it...what do you have to lose. Of course, for those who do not know the Savior, worry and anxiety will be part of life. But to those who have given their lives to Him, Jesus promised, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden light" (Matthew 11:28-30).

Source: www.gotquestions.org/Bible-worry.htm



The praise band is a team of worship leaders we call **The Lord's Crew**. This Group leads our Contemporary Worship every Sunday during the 8:30 AM service and is under the direction of Susan Coho. The team meets for practice every other Saturday of each month, unless otherwise stated.

February's rehearsals are scheduled for **12th & 26th at 6:30 PM**. If you are unable to attend please contact director. Thank you!



The 10th of each month



We are so pleased to have a new member join the choir for this 2011 season: Eric Westfall. New to the church and already getting involved. Way to go, Eric! He is a wonderful addition to our tenor section.

As I am writing this, I am packing for my trip to Cal Baptist University for "Music Quest 2011." It's a great way to get inspired and rededicated spiritually through music, also a superb place to order music. Some of the choir's favorite anthems have come from this resource.

If you love God, and love to sing praises to him, come join us. We meet Wednesday evenings in the sanctuary at 7:00 p.m.

Perhaps you have a hidden talent that we don't know about. Do you play an instrument? I often need musicians to play different parts: trumpet, cello, violin....how about percussion? Give me a ring.

In Christ, *Julie*

The Cochran Report Community Service At Work

I am happy to give you the following breakdown of our Community Service Collection Drive for 2010.

- LABELS FOR EDUCATION: 611. Total since beginning of Apr. 1993 - 42,358.
- WHOLE CARDS: 15#. Started this year.
- CARD FRONTS: 42.7#. Total since start in Mar. 2003, 725.8#
- BOX TOPS FOR EDUCATION: 991. Total since start in Apr. 2001, 3,247

Earlier this year I informed you of

a new Community Service. It entails buttons the size of nickels to quarters that are used for challenged people of all ages. They make items that help their hand dexterity. As yet I've not received any but please give if you can.

Please keep up your good work. I truly enjoy this service that I can provide for our church. I haven't been as active as I would like to be but Mama takes the number one spot. Thank you ALL for your contributions that help so many people. Safety and good will in 2011!

Thanks,
C.J. Cochran



**Need Prayer?
Got Praise?**

Bring it to our Prayer Chain.

Contact **Pauline Castillo** and she will set the chain in motion.

REQUESTS CAN REMAIN ANONYMOUS
Every **Thursday at 10AM**, a dedicated group of prayer warriors, we call our **Intercessory Prayer Group**, meet in the Library to pray for members of our church family and the community as they lift up requests given to our prayer chain, those mentioned in worship, or on request cards.



Start your day off **RIGHT** and get to know your church family in this small group setting.

Fridays at 8:30 AM in the church Library. No time like the present to get involved. Our current study book is titled, **Be Alive: A Study of John's Gospel Chapters 1-10**. See you there!



This non-denominational women's group meets on **Mondays at 7 PM** in the UMC of AG Sanctuary to pray for this church and others in the community; asking God to pour out His Spirit of redemption, deliverance, healing and salvation. Contact *Susan Coho* through the church office if you have any questions.



Contemporary Worship Service at 8:30 AM communion is observed each Sunday as part of regular worship.

Traditional Worship Service at 10:30 AM observes this Sacrament on the first Sunday of each month.

This do in remembrance of Me.



HERE'S WHAT'S UP ON WEDNESDAYS?

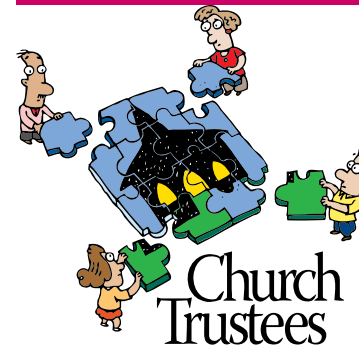
- 8:30 am Senior Exercise Group**
- 9:00 AM The 'Walking For Health Group'**
- 2:00 PM Pastor's Study**
- 5:15 PM Church Family Supper**
- 6:00 PM Kids Night Out Pastor's Study**
- 7:00 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal The UM Youth**



Pastor's Wednesday Study "Deepening Your Spiritual Effectiveness"

Wednesdays at 2 PM or 6 PM in the McMillen Room.

Dinner is served at 5:15 PM before the 6 PM study. Donations are appreciated!



Tom Egan, Chair

- The front window of the bus has been sealed to keep out the rain. It has current registration and new tags.
- The upper roof above the Sanctuary needs to be replaced- possibly in either May or June. The cost is approximately \$6,700
- The two sewer sump pumps have been checked and are both good, The sump pump to drain the water in the parking lot has been replaced.
- The situation with our vacant lot has been discussed, and more time is needed to come to a decision.
- New handicapped parking signs are in place. Now we need two more parking spaces to be converted to handicapped only.
- The Preschool's facility use rental fee has increased to \$500 a month. I asked if the additional \$200 goes to Trustees and was told no. Maddy has asked if the door inside the nursery could be removed and a wall installed. This will be done.
- It is clean-up time, and we have lots to do. We have a fish tank approximately 3 feet long, and, if you would like to have it, please let us know. A storage space upstairs above the kitchen is about to be cleaned out. If you have something up there, see Linda Herber. We have moved some things outside Sean's old office, and it will soon be headed for the dumpster. If you have anything stored there, please act quickly and have it removed.
- It has been asked that a light be placed at the bottom of the beautiful stained glass window behind the choir. We will look into it and see if it can be done.



SPRING CLEANING IS IN THE AIR



The church is in need of some spring cleaning of its attic space and closets. A group of dedicated church members are willing to do the cleaning but are also asking for the help of the church (in knowing what to keep or not to keep). The attic and closets have become a "storage area" for a great number of items, many of which are not being used and could either be discarded or donated. Many items are stored in different areas which makes it difficult to know what we have. The cleaning crew is asking that any members who have any items stored that are still wanted to please either make arrangements to store or discard the items properly. It is not the intention for anything to be discarded that is not intended to be. We will hopefully be able to consolidate and put like items together. A master list will be made listing where the items are, to make it easy to locate what is needed. We want to start cleaning by 02/19/11. Any items left after this date will be assumed to be not wanted. Please contact the church office if you have any questions.

Thanks for you help, *The Cleaning Crew*

Bill & Gladys Paulsen—Two Strong Pillars In Our Church

by David Beaman

On a recent and very damp afternoon, I visited the Bell Street home of Bill and Gladys Paulsen. It was raining so hard I got wet even though it was only a few steps from car to porch. I have known my hosts a long time, so we got right to work discussing their life stories.



Bill and Gladys were high school sweethearts from Gibsonburg and Helena, Ohio during the early years of WW II. Upon graduation, Bill responded to the patriotic call to enlist in the U.S. Navy and served as an onboard gun crew member assigned to protect the merchant ships as they carried supplies to the active war areas in Europe. It was a dangerous assignment, especially because the convoys of merchant ships crossing the Atlantic Ocean were prime targets for German submarine torpedoes. The convoys suffered enormous losses of human life and cargo. During his European duty, his ship sailed the Suez Canal, Mediterranean Sea, Indian Ocean. Bill spent one Christmas in Calcutta, India. In the last years of the conflict, when the war efforts expanded, his ship was assigned to carry cargo to the South Pacific. While his ship was transporting bombs and ammunition to Okinawa, the convoy was attacked by Japanese fighter planes and a ship positioned very near his was totally destroyed while his was spared. He also witnessed a *Kamikaze* attack that sank an American Destroyer. Thankfully, Bill remained unharmed during his wartime service and returned to civilian life in 1946.

Bill came home to Ohio and he and Gladys married in 1947. Bill came from a family of brick and stone masons and took up the trade to support his growing family by building homes as the nation mobilized to fill employment needs for the former soldiers and sailors who had served to win the war. The family had grown to include six daughters. In 1958 they moved to Tucson, Arizona then later to

Phoenix. In 1965 Bill accepted an offer that brought the family to Arroyo Grande, where he was hired to be the Methodist Camp Manager for an original term of 3 months, which, because of his valuable skills, turned out to be a much longer term of 9 years. While Manager, he also built the Manager's House at the camp and was hired as a major builder on our current church Sanctuary that was finished in 1968. If you look around you will also see his work at the old barbecue pit, the planter beds and the outdoor atriums visible through the windows from inside the sanctuary.

Gladys, and their daughters, were very active in the camp operations when family campers came for visits and fellowship. They handled all the details of feeding the visitors. Gladys planned and cooked all the meals. The daughters were also much involved with camp programs that kept the visitors entertained and occupied with the mission of camp experience. The involvement and devotion of the whole Paulsen family helped make the Arroyo Grande United Methodist Camp a memorable experience for countless visitors from churches in California, Arizona, Nevada and Hawaii.

Our congregation has always recognized Bill and Gladys as the "go to" type of members who step up and help make things happen. They have served on the Board of Trustees, as Financial Secretary, organized barbecues, folded bulletins, served on the Staff-Parish Relations Committee, Esther Circle, Chancel Choir, Yellow Umbrella, Memorials and what ever service that needs to be done. They can always be found faithfully attending, and actively participating, in the regular business and planning meetings where members of the congregation work to sustain the operations and mission of our church.

Imagine...

You are in your car driving home and your thoughts wander to your "To Do" list and you begin to hum the tune on the radio. Suddenly a sound unlike any you've ever heard fills the air! You question it and realize the sound is high above you! A trumpet... a choir... a choir of trumpets?

You don't know — but you **want** to know.

So you pull over, get out, and look up. As you do, you see you aren't the only one curious. The roadside has become a parking lot — car doors are open and people are staring at the sky.

Shoppers are racing out of the grocery store. The Little League baseball game across the street has come to a halt. Players and parents are searching the clouds and what they see... what you now see, has never been seen before—speculated about, but not seen.

As if the sky were a curtain, the drapes of the atmosphere part. A brilliant light spills onto the earth. There are no shadows. None.

From every hue of color, with millions more never seen. Riding on the flow is an endless fleet of what you finally realize are angels. They pass through the curtains one myriad at a time, until they occupy every square inch of the sky. North South East West!

Thousands of silvery wings rise and fall in unison, and over the sound of the trumpets you can hear the chanting... "Holy, holy, holy." The final flank of angels is followed by twenty-four silver-bearded elders and a multitude of souls who join the angels in worship.

Suddenly, the heavens are quiet. All is quiet. The angels turn.... you turn... the entire world turns.... and **there He is! Jesus!**

Through waves of light you see the silhouetted figure of **Christ the King.** He is atop a great stallion, and the stallion is atop a billowing cloud. He opens his mouth, and you are surrounded by his declaration: **"I am the Alpha and the Omega."**

The angels bow their heads. The elders remove their crowns. And before you is a Figure so consuming that you know. Instantly you know:

Nothing else matters... forget stock markets and school reports, sales meetings and football games, the e-mails and 'To Do' Lists—

Nothing is newsworthy. *All that mattered, matters no more....*

For Christ has come!