

March 2009

Special points of interest:

- **March 12-14**
Angel Food
Order Dates
- **March 22** **Prayer**
Shawl Ministry
- **March 28** **Angel**
Food
Distribution
- **March 29** **Fifth**
Sunday
Fellowship Meal

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Word of Grace

A Message to the People of The United Methodist Church

The global financial crisis is bringing hardship and suffering to people in every part of the world. For those in wealthy nations, it causes anxiety and uncertainty about declining pension accounts and the threat of lost jobs. Others are coping with unemployment and foreclosed mortgages. And for still others who live in places with scarce resources or exist in conditions of poverty, it means empty stomachs, lack of care for urgent health needs, and no prospects to earn a day's bread.

The International Labor Organization projects a loss of 50 million jobs globally by the end of 2009. The World Bank warns that an additional 53 million people will fall into poverty (living on less than \$2 per day) and that 200,000 to 400,000 more children will die by 2015 if the crisis persists.

Local congregations, annual conferences, and the general agencies likewise face economic constraints, requiring them to reassess how they carry out ministry and to seek greater effectiveness and economies while keeping focused on loving God and neighbor.

In addition, the crisis is generating increasing global unrest and violence, creating even more misery and an insecure world. It is a prophetic reminder that our destiny as a worldwide community and a global church is interwoven with complex bonds of prosperity, security, dignity, and justice. We are no more secure than the most vulnerable among us; no more prosperous than the poorest; and no more assured of justice and dignity than those who live in the shadows of power, void of fairness and equity. We reclaim anew Jesus' teaching, "as you [cared for] the least of these who are members of my family, you

did it to me" (Matt 25:40), as an urgent appeal for how we can live today.

At all times, but especially in fearful and dangerous days, we followers of Jesus are called to live in hope and in the assurance that God is present with us. Facing hard times, the Apostle Paul asked: "Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:35 and 37, 39).

To the Israelites, having lost everything and living in exile, God offered assurance: "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, I will help you" (Is. 41:10). The psalmists are similarly convinced: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear" (Ps. 46:1, 2).

With this firm assurance that the whole of creation lives within the embrace of a loving God, we are confident that the Four Areas of Focus for the mission and ministry of the people of The United Methodist Church affirmed by General Conference 2008 are among the most important ways we faithfully bear witness to the Gospel. We urgently need principled Christian leaders for the church and the world. People searching for meaning are seeking new places of welcome and hospitality for worship, prayer, and spiritual growth. It is abundantly evident that United Methodists must engage in ministry with the poor and tackle the diseases

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District Leadership Event

“Reaching Toward the Future” was the theme for the Flint Hills District Leadership Event held at Grace UMC on Saturday, February 7. One hundred forty clergy and lay members attended the all-day event.

The keynote address, “It’s Not the End of the Earth,” was delivered by Pastor Nanette Roberts, Senior Pastor at Olathe Grace UMC. Bishop Scott Jones led the concluding communion service. Workshops were conducted on stewardship, staff-parish relations, young adult ministry, disaster response, lay leadership, and practices of fruitful congregations.

United Methodist Women of Grace prepared the lasagna luncheon, and the Health and Wellness Ministry provided snacks throughout the day. The Membership Ministry and other volunteers served as greeters, assisted with registration, arranged classrooms, provided directions to events, assisted with the technology, provided music, assisted with the worship services, answered questions of guests, cleaned the church before the event, and prepared the church for the

Sunday service.

Attendees were very complementary of the hospitality provided by Grace members. Thanks to all who contributed to the success of this event!

Giving Thanks

Dear Emporia Grace UMC,
Thank you from the Flint Hills Leadership team for helping with our District Celebration. Your hospitality was outstanding and I heard the food was delicious. Sorry I had to miss the day.

Karen Smith



Dear Friends,
Thank you for your faithful stewardship to the ministries of the Kansas East Conference. With your apportionments you participate in Spofford’s ministry to young children ages 4-12 who have severe behavioral problems due to abuse, neglect or mental illness. Spofford offers vital services to children and families throughout Kansas and Missouri. We count on the financial support of the UMC to assist us in our ministry. Our 92 year history together is strong, grounded in faith and mission. The strength of our past will guide our future. Your apportionment gift helps change children’s lives and families hope. Just as the butterfly emerges from its cocoon to stretch its wings and fly, the children at Spofford also take flight with new skills, new behaviors, new hopes and new opportunities. Thank you for joining us in ministry to children and families.

Sincerely,

Kira Montuori

Director of Community Relations and Development

Word of Grace is a collaborative, monthly project of the Communications Ministry and the church office. **Due date is the 20th each month** in order to mail the newsletter by the 29th.

Articles may be submitted to the church office in person or by email at emporiagraceumc@sbcglobal.net

Please save documents in plain text and send graphics in separate files. We are using a variety of computer platforms and this helps ensure files can be opened regardless of the operating system in use.

While every effort is made to accommodate all submissions, priority is given to those that support the Grace UMC mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ.

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of poverty that rob people of the fullness of life, health, and wholeness.

As we enter into the season of Lent we are called to reflection, repentance, and sacrificial living. Lent is a time of preparation when we look beyond human frailty and the brokenness of the world to resurrection, hope, and new life. We are reminded that our faith does not rise and fall with the financial markets but resides in the enduring love of God who is present with us as we struggle and strive to love God and our neighbors. This Lent can be a time when we recommit to practice every day the Wesleyan values to do no harm, do good and stay in love with God.

A churchwide conversation is asking that we envision ways to reinvigorate our outreach to a hurting world and offer hospitality to those seeking deeper spiritual understanding. Local congregations are engaging in self-examination to “Rethink Church” and strengthen their outreach beyond the doors of the church buildings. Annual Conferences are working to ensure the human rights of the poor, to address the diseases of poverty, and to offer direct intervention to relieve human needs arising from poverty, including those of women and children in local communities and of persons who lack opportunity for artistic expression.

The general agencies of the church are finding ways together to achieve economies and assure greater effectiveness in support of annual conferences and local churches. Information on the Four Areas of Focus can be found by contacting the general agencies of the church directly and at www.umc.org/focusareas.

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Lev. 19:18) calls for individual and corporate responsibility. John Wesley wrote, “The gospel of Christ knows of no religion, but social. No holiness but social holiness. Faith working by love is the length and breadth and depth and height of Christian perfection” (Hymns and Sacred Poems, 1739, ¶ 5).

As we pray and reflect this Lenten season, may we embrace life with hope, expectancy, and the assurance that God through Christ Jesus is calling us to prepare our hearts, minds, and hands to work for the New Creation. And may we nurture and care for one another and for those to whom we are

inextricably connected by God’s grace around the world.

With expectancy and hope,

Bishop Gregory Palmer
President, Council of Bishops
Neil M. Alexander
Chair, The Table of General Secretaries
Bishop John Hopkins
Chair, The Connectional Table

Flint Hills District Prayer Calendar

We have an invitation from the Flint Hills District to join in on the “Flint Hills District Prayer Calendar.” Each month we will be in prayer for the Churches and Ministries and UMC Organizations listed, as well as the ministers and staff associated with them. Prayer requests are listed by each week:

March 1	Alta Vista: Simpson/ Emanuel
March 8	Emporia Grace
March 15	Retirees and Surviving Spouses
March 22	Cottonwood Falls/ Bazaar
March 29	Harveyville

Let us pray.

Heavenly and merciful Father, we lift up the Flint Hills District of the United Methodist Church. Always we seek your guidance as we strive to make disciples of Jesus Christ. We pray for the churches, ministries, and United Methodist organizations, that they will listen to your wishes for them so that their activities will be pleasing to you and help them to foster discipleship. We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

At Grace United Methodist Church we are **Christ-Centered and People-Oriented**

In all we do, we choose to follow the example of Christ, reaching out to all people with the love and grace of God through worship, Bible study, mission outreach, prayer, and fellowship—so that all nations may become disciples of Jesus Christ.

In the Word

March 1 Isaiah 44-50

March 8 Isaiah 51-57

March 15 Isaiah 58-64

March 22 Isaiah 65-66
Jeremiah 1-5

March 29 Jeremiah 6-12

March Events

Our regular weekly schedule:

Sun

9 am Music/Sunday School
9:15 am Sun School
10 am Worship Service
11:30 am Meals of Grace
6:30 pm Worship Service

Mon

6 pm Cub Scouts
7 pm Boy Scouts

Tues

9 am Bible Study
6:30 Bible Study
7 pm Men's Bible Study

Wed

5:30 pm Worship Planning
6 pm Family Night Meal
6:30 pm Worship
7-8 pm Faith Building Activities
7 pm Voices of Grace

Thurs

4:15 pm Sonshine Choir
5 pm Girlfriend Theology
7 pm Bible Study

Sat

9 am Dresses for Dorcas

Sunday March 1

12 pm Membership Ministry
12 pm Health & Wellness Ministry

Tuesday March 3

6:30 pm Bible Study

Sunday March 8

12 pm Missions Ministry
1 pm Worship Ministry

Tuesday March 10

7:30 pm Phebe Group

Wednesday March 11

2 pm Abigail & Joanna Groups
5 pm Abundant Harvest

Thursday March 12

10 am Angel Food orders
7 pm Finance Ministry

Friday March 13

2 pm Angel Food orders

Saturday March 14

10 am Angel Food orders
7:30 pm Cub Scouts

Sunday March 15

12 pm Church Council
1 pm Education Ministry

Saturday March 21

9-5 pm ESU Music Reunion

Sunday March 22

4 pm Prayer Shawl Ministry

Monday March 23

5 pm Abundant Harvest

Wednesday March 25

1:30 pm Create to Share

Thursday March 26

5:30 pm Parish Visitors
5:30 WOW Group

Saturday March 28

7:30 Angel Food Distribution

Sunday March 29

5th Sunday Potluck Dinner Celebration

Angel Food Ministries

March order dates:

Thursday Mar. 12, 10 am-2 pm

Friday Mar. 13, 2 pm-6 pm

Saturday Mar. 14, 10 am-2 pm

Delivery date is Sat., March 28, 8:30 am

The March menus may be picked up in the church office or you may go to emporiagrace.org and follow the link to angelfoodministries.com.

5th Sunday Celebration -

The Membership Ministry is holding a 5th Sunday Celebration on March 29 following the morning worship service, between 11:15 and 11:30. We are planning a potluck dinner and are asking the congregation to bring a favorite dish, whether it be a main dish, salad, vegetable or dessert. Please join us in fellowship.

Christian Education

Lenten Study Opportunities – A time for self-examination and self-reflection. Join us!

Sunday School Class for Adults
A variety of texts from the Bible will be presented and discussed, beginning with Mark 1: 1-16
March 1 – March 29
9:15 a.m.
Lighthouse Classroom

Tuesday Night Study
Living with the Mind of Christ by James A. Harnish
March 3 – March 31
6:30 – 8 pm
Parlor

Additional Christian Education opportunities:

Children and Youth classes/studies are available on Sunday morning at 9:15 a.m. and Wednesday evenings at 6 pm.

Senior Adult Sunday School Class
Every Sunday
9:15 a.m.
Room 302

Prayer Group
Every Sunday
9:15 a.m.
Basement Classroom

Tuesday Morning Bible Study
9 a.m.
Contact Church Office (342-2240) for location

Personal Pantry Shopping List

The UMW WOW Circle continues to need your help in collecting personal hygiene and personal household items for families in our community. As you bring food and clothing for our basket, we would also appreciate receiving the following items on this list:

- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Bar soap
- Toilet paper
- Dish soap
- Toothbrushes
- Toothpaste
- Paper towels
- Liquid laundry detergent
- Dishwashing soap
- Hand soap
- Deodorant
- Face and body lotion
- Sanitary napkins
- Tampons
- Diapers
- Baby lotion
- Baby powder
- Shaving cream
- Trash bags
- Sponges

On behalf of the families we have helped and those we've yet to meet, thank you!

Health & Wellness

Seven Habits for Healthy

Eating:

Habit #2 Focus on Fruits

Eat a variety of fruits every day. Fruits add vitamins, minerals and fiber to your meals and snacks. Each member of your family needs about 2 cups of fruits every day.

HINTS:

- Keep a bowl of fruits like apples, oranges and bananas on the kitchen counter for quick snacks.
- Use fruit for dessert instead of cakes or cookies.
- Include fresh, frozen, canned or dried fruit on your grocery list.
- Buy 100% fruit juice and not fruit drinks. Fruit drinks might not have fruit in them and are mostly sugar. Look at the food label.

FROZEN FRUIT CUPS

- 3 bananas
- 24 ounces fat-free strawberry yogurt
- 10 oz. frozen strawberries, thawed (with the juice)
- 8 oz. canned crushed pineapple with juice

Line 18 muffin tin cups with paper baking cups. Dice or mash bananas and place in large mixing bowl. Stir in remaining items. Spoon into muffin tin cups and freeze at least 3 hours or until firm. Remove frozen cups and store in large plastic bag in freezer. Before serving, remove paper cups and let stand 10 minutes.

From the *Healthy Food Guidebook*

Next month: Get Your Calcium-rich Foods

To learn more about food and nutrition, call Lyon County Extension Office at 620-341-3220.

DATE TO REMEMBER: May 16 is the Annual Health Fair at GUMC.

First Christian Church in Emporia is hosting Life Line Screenings on March 9, 2009. Four screenings will be offered: carotid artery screening, abdominal aortic aneurysm screening, atrial fibrillation, and ankle brachial index. Three finger stick blood tests that help identify risk factors for heart disease will also be offered. Osteoporosis screening is also available.

PRE-REGISTRATION is required.

For information or to make a registration, please call 1-800-324-1851. Fliers are also available in the church office and on the Health and Wellness bulletin board in Fellowship Hall.

Celebration La Esperanza UMC

Make plans to attend an evening of desserts, music and fun on April 25 to celebrate and support Mission La Esperanza. Grace United Methodist and First United Methodist have both supported mission work to the Hispanic community of Emporia and want to celebrate the past and support the future of this important ministry with this important event. The evening will be filled with music of Hector and Sherry Sanchez and others while guests dine on desserts. The event is sponsored by the Mission Outreach committees from each church and the Board of Directors of Mission La Esperanza and will be held at First UMC with a ticket price of only \$7.00 for the event. More information will follow shortly.