

January 2010

Glimpses of Faith Newsletter

Faith UCC  
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New Braunfels, TX 78130

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Is it just me or is anybody else out there thinking that the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century can't be over already! Where did it go? Wasn't it just last year the world was anxious about W2K?



The old soap opera had it right, "like sands through an hourglass so are the days of our lives." This is not a modern notion. Human beings are the only living

beings on this planet that are conscious of the fact that we will die one day. With that sense comes knowledge of the passage of time. The ancient psalmist offered the following advice, "**So teach us to number our days that we may gain a wise heart.**" Psalm 90:12 NRSV

The awareness that each moment of life is precious and fleeting will hopefully not instill in us a sense of constant angst. That is not what the psalmist is calling for. I believe what he is calling for is an awareness of living in the "Now." This can bring about a feeling of "awe" and "wonder" in the midst of doing the simplest things.

To give my students in the comparative religion some insight into this I use to assign this extra credit project. Try it yourself as a New Year's exercise. Find a quiet place where you won't be interrupted and the phone won't ring, where the TV and the radio are not playing. Take an orange with you and a pencil and a piece of paper. Start off by writing down everything you can think of about your previous experiences of eating an orange. When you are done set the paper and pencil aside. Take the orange and carefully peel and eat it by hand. Pay attention to every detail. What do you see? What do you feel? What do you smell? Enjoy the orange in ALL its "orangeness."

When you are done take some quiet time to reflect on the experience. What did you learn? Any surprises? What would happen if we tried to live in the now more often? How would this affect our relationships? Our work lives? Our leisure times? Our worship? Our \_\_\_\_\_? You fill in the blank.

We are about to begin the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. May we follow the psalmist's advice, "**Lord, teach us to number our days.**" Amen.

**Have a blessed New Year and 2010!**



... Thank you for making theological education a vital ministry of your congregation. ... Each seminary strengthens the life of the church by enlivening critical reflection on faith, and supporting bold Christian discipleship. Each school is a vibrant, caring, and challenging place in which to pursue theological education. ... The seminaries bring greater vitality to our churches – in worship, in Christian education for all ages, and in providing meaningful justice and outreach ministries.

With Gratitude, Kiely Todd Roska  
CUE Seminaries

**Dear Faith UCC,**

We extend a very special thank you for your recent contribution of \$50 that we received on November 21, 2009. We are certainly blessed by friends like you who keep us in mind. ....

Together with God's grace and your willing partnership, we will continue the ministry of Slumber Falls Camp.

Sincerely, Rev. Charles Stark

**Dear Friends,**

On behalf of the Eden residents, staff, Board of Directors and Executive Directory, Laurence Dahl, we wish to thank you for your gift.

This contribution helps assure the continuation of our ministry as we have been "*Touching the hearts and souls of Seniors since 1910.*" Eden Home is providing care and services to our seniors through housing, nursing care, assisted

living, rehabilitation, spiritual nurturing and our supportive services. ...

Sincerely, Betty Doeppenschmidt

**Aloha Scott,**

Thank you so much for facilitating a wonderful weekend with your church. I enjoyed the service award banquet, giving the message at worship, the lunch out and the CROP Walk. .... Wishing you and the church a blessed Christmas and a healthy year ahead.

Grace and Peace, Rev. Fe Ayap

**Dear Friends,**

... As always, there is a flutter of activity here at the Mission. In a matter of two days, over 150 families recently registered to receive holiday food baskets from us at Christmas. Demand for emergency assistance services remains extremely high, evidenced by the crush of people who visit us every day. Volunteer work groups continue their amazing service with us, hammering and building and painting countless homes as neighborhood recovery continues. We've broken ground on our first affordable housing development, Bethel Estates, where 32 homes will eventually be built. And we continue to raise our unique voice to affect policy related to affordable housing and other issues, committed to substantive change with long-term impacts.

We remain a dynamic, relevant ministry in the midst of tremendous change and challenge. With your help we do make a difference. Thousands of people will have experienced that difference this year. On their behalf, and ours, thank you...for all the ways in which your gifts empower our ministry.

May the peace and joy of Christmas be yours, Rev. Shari Prestemon

## Don's Corner

**“A wise man's heart guides his mouth.”**  
Proverbs 16:23 (NIV)

When my wife, Ruth, entered a nursing home, I was left alone in our apartment talking to myself. Trouble is I'm sometimes not very good company. For one thing, I tend to be hard on me.

“Watch what you're doin', stupid,” I'd tell myself. And “stupid” would be mild. But the worst habit I soon developed came out of left field. In over a half century of marriage I might have cursed once or twice in our home. Now I would let out a zinger on 'most any occasion, and it didn't matter much what class of profanity it was.

Oh, I know God is always listening, but I'm not talking to Him, I rationalized, so it doesn't matter.

“What you need is a dog,” a friend opined. “you can talk to them all day, and they don't argue. They're non-judgmental and you can blame 'em for anything that goes wrong.”

He had a point, but owning a dog wasn't practical in the apartment. Then one day I remembered a one-liner that solved my problem.

“Hear about the dyslexic atheist?” the jokester asks. “He doesn't believe in Dog.”

“That's it!” I exclaimed. “Dog spelt backward is God.”

Y'know, ever since I let God back into that apartment, the air has cleared considerably. Oh, my loner language isn't perfect by any means. But I'll keep workin' on it.

**Prayer: Father, let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight. Amen .**

**Faith UCC will  
hold its Annual  
Meeting on Sunday  
January 24<sup>th</sup>.**



### **Bible Study for Discerning Adults With Peter Olsen**

“The Troublesome Teaching of Jesus” is a three week session exploring the mandates of Jesus that we often find hard to follow. There will be time for information, discussion, questions and conversations. The class will meet January 10, 17, and 24<sup>th</sup> at 9:15 a.m. (sharp) Please register in advance in the church office. Supplies and student books need to be printed. The class is limited to 10 people in the group. A minimum of 7 is required for the class to go. Rev. Peter Olsen will lead the class.

### **An Old English Greeting**

**God bless thy year!  
Thy coming in,  
Thy going out.  
Thy rest, thy  
Traveling about.  
The rough, the smooth,  
The bright, the dear  
God bless thy year.**

## January Worship Assistant Schedule

### January 3

Liturgist: Sheila Angerer  
Acolyte: Quinn Perry  
Council Rep: Nicolle Clark  
Greeter: Evelyn Krueger  
Hospitality: Mikki Ward  
Communion: Mikki Ward  
Ushers: Joe & Mikki Ward; Nicolle Clark;  
Robert Deninno

### January 10

Liturgist: Jennifer Marlow  
Acolyte: Larissa Hunley  
Council Rep: Jan Hunley  
Greeter: Lucile Marberger  
Hospitality: Julia Allison  
Ushers: Jan Hunley; Tim Marlow;  
Jim Gossett;

### January 17

Liturgist: Kathy Leber  
Acolyte: Emma Storms  
Council Rep: Don Green  
Greeter: Judy Anderson  
Ushers: Don Green; Judy Anderson;  
Cody Allen

### January 24

Liturgist: Steve Foster  
Acolyte: Will Gossett  
Council Rep: Joe Ward  
Greeter: Nancy Foster  
Hospitality: Kathy Leber  
Ushers: Joe & Mikki Ward; Steve Foster

Notice: If you cannot serve on the designated date/dates shown, please try to find a substitute. If that is not possible, please call Joseph Ward (830-305-0214) or leave a message at the church office (830-625-6761) as soon as possible.

If you would like to be added or removed from all or part of the Worship Assistants List, please contact Joseph Ward at 830-305-0214.



January 16	Bill Brown
January 19	Julia Allison
January 19	Lois Swander
January 21	Bruce Ridgley
January 21	Sharon Zillmann
January 21	David Pena
January 22	Bonnie Stark
January 25	Emma Storms
January 26	Annie May Pape
January 26	Darlene Stephens
January 26	Arlon Meckel
January 29	Kelcey Kramm



## Christmas Greetings

Dear Faith Church Members, Merry Christmas and Best Wishes for every Happiness throughout the New Year.

Love from, Harriet Jahnce and Ken

Blessed Christmas Greetings,

I pray that the Spirit of God will bless each of you for a great Christmas and year 2010.

Prayerfully  
Harold Boettcher

(a letter from Harold is on the kiosk)



### **Things You Can Learn From a Dog**

- Never pass up the opportunity to go for a joyride.
- Allow the experience of fresh air and the wind in your face to be pure ecstasy.
- When loved ones come home, always run to greet them.
- When it's in your best interest, practice obedience.
- Let others know when they've invaded your territory.
- Take naps and stretch before rising.
- Run, romp and play daily.
- Eat with gusto and enthusiasm.
- Be loyal.
- Never pretend to be something you're not.
- If what you want lies buried, dig until you find it.
- When someone is having a bad day, be silent, sit close by and nuzzle them gently.
- Thrive on attention and let people touch you.
- Avoid biting when a simple growl will do.
- On hot days, drink lots of water and lay under a shady tree.
- When you're happy, dance around and wag your entire body.

- No matter how often you're scolded, don't buy into the guilt thing and pout...run right back and make friends.
- Delight in the simple joy of a long walk.

This came from the *Salem Outlook*, a newsletter from Salem UCC in Rochester, NY.

### **“Worship the Lord....” New Seven Week Sermon Series**

As you know, we have been looking at our worship service at Faith UCC for some time now and are planning on adding a contemporary service some time in the New Year, 2010. We have also made changes in our main service. This seems like a very good time to explore “What is Worship?”

- January 3 “Why Worship?”
- January 10 “Sing to the Lord!”
- January 17 “Wherever 2 or 3...”
- January 24 “Old, Old Story”
- January 31 “Worship Is Work”
- February 7 “Let Us Pray”
- February 14 “After Worship...”

“O give thanks to the Lord, call on [God's] name, make known [God's] deeds among the peoples. Sing to [God], sing praises to [God]; tell of all [God's] wonderful works. Glory in [God's] holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice. Seek the Lord and [God's] strength; seek [God's] [presence continually].  
Psalm 105:1-4

## November Financial Report



<b>General Fund</b> 10/31	\$2,258.46
Income & Deposits	9,045.06
Disbursements	6,043.74
Balance as of 11/30	\$5,259.78
<b>Building Fund</b> 10/31	\$1,089.88
Income	759.00
Disbursements	1,000.09
Balance as of 11/30	848.79
<b>Memorial Fund</b> 10/31	\$3,299.00
Income	0.00
Disbursements	634.76
Balance as of 11;30	\$2,664.24
<b>Savings Account</b> 10/31	\$2,693.12
Deposits	0.00
Interest	9.68
Balance as of 11/30	\$2,702.80
<b>Church Mortgage</b> 11/30	\$24,424.97

Respectfully submitted:  
Terri Armstrong  
Financial Secretary

**Note: If you read the above you will notice that our Building Fund has fallen below our monthly mortgage payment. We need extra income in this category. This money does not come out of our yearly budget.**

**ONA Retreat  
Slumber Falls**

## Saturday January 23<sup>rd</sup>

The theme of this year's annual ONA Retreat is **"Bridging the Gap: Sacred Conversations with Those Who Believe Differently."**

Please join us for a day of learning how to speak with those who may not be ONA, or who may interpret scripture differently from us. From both sides, such a conversation can overflow with emotion and quickly turn negative. Can we be open and affirming of those with whom we disagree? Is there room in the UCC for Christians who hold different views? The 2010 ONA Workshop will look at two movements that are trying to bridge the gap of disagreement by reaching out in Christian Fellowship to open a sacred conversation. Our special guests include Sung Won Park, director of the Religious Voices Project, and Rev. Robert Thompson of the Faithful and Welcoming Churches movement in the UCC. **The workshop's purpose is not to change anyone's view, but to hear what each other has to say and discover what we have in common.**

The cost is \$25 if paid before January 1 and \$35 after January 1<sup>st</sup>.  
Questions? Contact Rev. Rita Wilbur at 210-403-9084  
sopucc@sbcglobal.net

**Thought for the day: Don't let your worries get the best of you; remember, Moses started out as a basket case!**

## Faith Kiva Program Makes Two Loans in Puerto Rico

The first loan was made to the Uloa Group 1 & 2. We loaned \$100 toward the groups \$4,000 loan, which will be paid back over 8 months. Carlos and the other borrowers in the group live north of San Pedro in Batey Ulloa. Bateyes are poor rural communities constructed by sugar companies for their field workers. They have little electricity, no potable running water, and limited access to medical facilities.

Despite these difficulties, Carlos has had great success expanding his business through loans. He is a seasoned veteran with Esperanza International: he is now taking out his ninth loan. He uses the extra cash flow to make cheese and produce milk to sell at his family's 'colmado' in town. Carlos also travels to nearby Quisqueya, a larger town where he can sell more milk and cheese.



Carlos is a very amiable person who loves playing the guitar. He tries to bring his guitar to every meeting to lead the group in a song or two before they start. With the increases in profits due to loans, he has now been able to install a new cement floor in his home. With your support, Carlos can continue looking ahead to the future as his business continues to expand. Thank you for lending to Carlos and the Ulloa group!

## Our Whole Lives Comprehensive Sexuality Education

**Parents:** What value do you place on your child's ability to develop healthy relationships?

**Teens:** Would you like to learn to clearly set boundaries for YOURSELF?

### Join us for an informational/Planning Meeting at Faith UCC

Wednesday January 13<sup>th</sup>, 6 p.m  
Moderated by Nicolle Clark

#### Benefits for Parents:

- Opens dialog with your child about sexuality
- Helps teens to avoid peer pressure
- Gives your child accurate information
- OWL is rational and not fear based
- OWL is holistic and abstinence-plus based
- Educates about sexual abuse, exploitation, and harassment

#### Benefits for Teens:

- Determine the kind of relationship YOU want
- Learn to set your OWN boundaries and values
- Practice problem-solving and decision making skills
- Get honest answers to your questions
- Develop a healthy body image
- Develop a healthy sexual identity

This program is critical to guide your teen through one of the most significant developmental processes he/she will face.

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**January Dates to Remember**

1/3 Communion Sunday  
Annual Reports Due

1/6 Church Council meeting 6:30 p.m.

1/7 Worship Task Force Meeting  
6:30 p.m.

1/9 Men's Breakfast 8 a.m.

1/10 Bible Study 9:15 a.m.  
Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.

1/13 OWL Info Meeting 6 p.m.

1/15 SOS Food Bank 1-4 p.m.

1/17 Bible Study 9:15 a.m.  
Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.

1/23 ONA Retreat Slumber Falls

**1/24** Bible Study 9:15 a.m.  
Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.  
Deadline for February Newsletter  
**Church Annual Meeting after  
Church**

*Annual  
Meeting*