

January 2011

Glimpses of Faith Newsletter

Faith UCC
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A brand New Year has arrived with all the hope and possibilities that comes with it. It is a chance to begin anew, to leave behind the dross of the past and seek God's help in refining the gold of the present. One cannot help but be struck by Jesus' approach to time. Often times we are creatures of habit. We cannot break away from the sins and shortcomings of the past. We often cannot imagine any other way of living. It is certainly true that we can not go back in time and change what we have done in the past or what has been done to us, but this does not mean that new possibilities and new ways of living cannot be entered into in the present.

Jesus went about healing people who were experiencing ill health, both physical and mental. Jesus healed the blind, the lame, the deaf, the possessed, etc. Healing is possible even when everything in the past indicates it is not. Even when healing does not come, we can, by the grace of God, come to see our brokenness in a new light. The Apostle Paul prayed that the "thorn in his flesh be taken away" but as far as we know this thorn remained to the day he died. Yet, Paul learned to live with this thorn and to "rejoice in the Lord always." The grace of God comes in many ways.

People around us often don't help us to live into new possibilities. They remind us and often continue to seek to punish us for our sins and shortcomings. Some even delight in this because it helps them ignore the "logs in their own eyes." Jesus came upon an angry mob that was about to stone a woman who had committed adultery. Jesus defuses the situation by saying that the person without sin could cast the first stone. The crowd was honest enough to recognize that no one could throw the first stone, let alone the second or third. Then to the woman he simply says, "See, no one condemns you, neither do I. Go your way and sin no more." Jesus tells the woman to leave behind the sins of the past and move forward into the future free of past baggage.

Jesus pursuit of the kingdom of God eventually leads him to a cruel death on the cross. Throughout his life he sought and found God's loving presence. I don't believe that Jesus knew what would happen after he died, at least not fully. If he did why did he pray in the Garden of Gethsemane that the "cup would be taken away" and he would not have to go through his coming trial and death? What does Jesus do in this moment? He takes care of his earthly obligations, entrusting his mother into the care of one of his followers. He trusts in his past experience of God's presence and power in his life. He entrusts his future into God's hands. "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit."

As we enter into this New Year we can do little better than pray the prayer Reinhold Niebuhr prayed, that we know as the serenity prayer, **"God grant me the serenity to accept the things I**

cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference.”

January Birthdays

1-16 Bill Brown	1-22 Bonnie Stark
1-19 Julia Allison	1-25 Emma Storms
1-19 Lois Swander Stephens	1-26 Darlene
1-21...Bruce Ridgley	1-26 Bennie Harst
1-21...Sharon Zillmann	1-26 Annie Mae Pape
1-21...David Pena	1-29 Kelcey Kramm
1-21...David Meyer	



Congratulations to Eric & Abigail Capestany on Their Wedding!

It is with pleasure that Steve and Nancy Foster announce the marriage of their daughter, Abigail, to Eric Capestany. The wedding took place on Saturday, December 18th on the beach at Coconut Bay on the island of St. Lucia in the West Indies. Eric and Abigail Capestany will be residing at 727 Buren Road, Ketchikan, Alaska, 99901. Both Eric and Abigail are currently serving in the United States Coast Guard.

Faith UCC Annual Meeting January 30th

Faith UCC will hold its annual meeting following the church service on Sunday, January 30th. At this time we will vote on the 2011 budget, elect church officers, review what was accomplished in 2010 and look forward to 2011.

Those who have annual reports to make, please turn them in post haste! We would like to try and get them out two weeks before the annual meeting, so people can look them over ahead of time.

Please plan on attending. Your presence and input is important!

Faith UCC to Host Annual South Central Conference ONA Retreat: God's Extravagant Welcome!

The retreat will be held on Saturday **January 22**, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Faith UCC. The cost is \$25. Our resource persons, Jane Marie Grovijahn and Cynthia L. Medina, both teach at Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio.

Please mail registration with a check to Spirit of Peace UCC P.O. Box 700656 San Antonio, TX 78270. If you have any questions contact Rev. Rita Wilbur at 210-403-9084 or email at sopucc@sbcglobal.net

Open and Affirming (ONA)



United Church of Christ

Faith UCC will be providing the morning refreshments and lunch. There will be a sign up sheet on the kiosk. We are looking for financial contributions towards the main course and volunteers to bring, salads, deserts, vegetables, etc. If you can help with this please sign up to bring something. For more info contact the pastor or Jan Hunley.

Second Sunday Potluck January 9th

Bring a dish to share to our Second Sunday Potluck on January 9th, following the worship service.

After lunch Pastor Scott will present a power point slide program on his 2010 trip to Israel.

THANK YOU 

THANKS! You are So Thoughtful!

Thanks So Much! thanks

You Are Sweet Thank You

with loving thoughts You Are So Kind

THANKS THANKS

THANK YOU! *thank you*

Thanks a Bunch! 

Thank You from Pastor Scott

I would like to thank everyone for their cards, goodies, gifts and good wishes during the Christmas season. I would also like to thank the church for the gift card to Amazon. It will come in very handy. There are always new books I want to read! Wishing your all a very happy and blessed New Year in 2011!

January 2011 Worship Assistant Schedule

January 2

LITURGIST: Jim Gossett ACOLYTE: Larissa Hunley COUNCIL
REPRESENTATIVE: Jan Hunley GREETER: Dorthy Rest HOSPITALITY:
Sheila Angerer COMMUNION ASSISTANTS: Jennifer Marlow USHERS:
Jan Hunley Sheila Angerer Tim Marlow Robert Deninno
AUDIO VISUAL OPERATOR: Charles Stark

January 9

LITURGIST: Nancy Foster ACOLYTE: Don Green COUNCIL
REPRESENTATIVE: Don Green GREETER: Steve Foster HOSPITALITY:
Julia Allison USHERS: Don Green, Steve Foster, Richard Leber AUDIO
VISUAL OPERATOR: Mikki Ward

January 16

LITURGIST: Wendy Reinke ACOLYTE: Emma Storms COUNCIL
REPRESENTATIVE: Sheila Angerer GREETER: Judy Anderson
HOSPITALITY: Tracey Ferich USHERS: Sheila Angerer, Richard Leber, Judy
Anderson AUDIO VISUAL OPERATOR: Tim Marlow

January 23

LITURGIST: Mikki Ward ACOLYTE: Kai Perry COUNCIL
REPRESENTATIVE: Joe Ward GREETER: Lucile Marburger
HOSPITALITY: Chrissy Gossett USHERS: Joe Ward, David Pena, Quinn
Perry AUDIO VISUAL OPERATOR: New Person

January 30

LITURGIST: Curt Leonhardt ACOLYTE: Devyn Perry COUNCIL
REPRESENTATIVE: Karen Kramm GREETER: Evelyn Krueger
HOSPITALITY: Mikki Ward USHERS: Karen Kramm, Evelyn Krueger, Mikki
Ward AUDIO VISUAL OPERATOR: Nicolle Clark

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 removed from all or part of the Worship Assistant List, please contact Joseph Ward at 830-305-0214.

PFLAG Seguin

A year ago, people from Seguin and parts of Guadalupe County started a chapter of "Parents, Families, Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG)". I am part of that group, and we had no idea what would happen, but we knew if our families, our friends, and ourselves have struggles then others do too. We want to reach those people.

We have a retired Methodist minister, Kathy Edwards, spearheading our organization and because of her leadership, PFLAG Seguin is growing. Other members are leaders in their own different ways throughout the community. One thing for sure, we are committed to helping the disenfranchised in the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community.

We meet on the third Thursday of the month at 7 PM. Our meeting place is the best place in the world, but we keep the location close to us, because of people like the Baptist minister, who pickets GIs' funerals, with his obscene, hateful remarks. We do not want that ilk.

Do you want to know where we meet? Do you want to help? Do you want help? Are you the family member, the friend of the LGBT person? Are you an LGBT person in Seguin or nearby looking for allies and friends? Then ask Pastor Scott or me for the location. (As an added hook, we have coffee, tea, water and something to munch on too)!

We are so excited that we are charging into our second year with hope.

Respectfully,

Carol Gates

We Need YOUR Input For Our 2011 Lenten Devotional Booklet!

Sheila Angerer, who did a wonderful job editing our Christmas Advent Devotional, is going to be putting together a Lenten Devotional. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 9th. This year we would like to hear from church members. Simply turn in a brief thought, reflection, prayer, poem, scripture, etc. If you are using something someone else has written you might share why it is meaningful to you. It can be funny, serious, or simply a good story you want to share. Be creative! Written copies can be turned into the church office or you can email them to Sheila at geminibo2@yahoo.com. You can also call Sheila at 352-6555 for further information. There are forty days in Lent so we need as many people as possible to participate. You can turn in more than one!

Please Pray for Sudan – Referendum Prayer Requests:

On January 9th – if all goes to plan – Sudan will hold a referendum vote to decide its future. The referendum is an essential part of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), signed 6 years ago, which ended 20 years of civil war in which over 2 million died. The people of Southern Sudan will decide whether to remain in a united Sudan or establish their own nation.

This is no small matter - there are huge implications whatever the outcome for everyone living in Sudan. People who have been displaced from home by the war are giving up jobs and returning ahead of the referendum to be with friends and family.

If Sudan splits, a new country will be generated that will need much outside aid, lots of development and our support in prayer. If Sudan remains as one it will face major challenges in uniting the north and south under new federal government, and in helping the South of the country to bring fair government and development in rural areas.



The church has agreed to remain as one church. It will need to support those churches in the north, who will be in an Islamic state, should Sudan decide to split. The resources required to maintain a functioning and growing church in Sudan will not diminish whatever happens at the referendum.

There are huge tensions and expectations on all sides about a likely outcome for Sudan and much political wrangling over power and wealth distribution. There is also much argument over the actual border line between North and South, particularly as much of this runs through rich oil fields. This is could easily become a source of conflict.

Whatever happens, in a country more used to fighting than talking and with so much at stake for all involved there is a huge potential for violence and bloodshed at this time.

Everyone is asking for prayer as the referendum approaches and we need to remain in fellowship with the local churches throughout Sudan and we should look to respond in prayer. Please ask your priests and church intercessors to remember Sudan and the referendum in their public prayers, praying especially for a peaceful outcome. Please remember this event and pray for it yourselves at home, at work, in church and please encourage others to do the same.

Prayer for Sudan at this time of change is very important. Join with us and prayer partners around the globe in supporting our brothers and sisters in Sudan through this time. January 9th has been requested as a day of prayer in Churches across the country, please try to keep that day so that we can pray together.

December Financial Report

General Fund	Balance 11/30	\$9,820.83
Income & deposits		\$10,909.37
Disbursements		\$13,482.36
	Balance 12/31/10	\$7,247.84
Building Fund	Balance 11/30	\$10,355.97
Income		50.00
Disbursements		00.00
	Balance 12/31/10	\$10,405.97
Memorial Fund	Balance 11/30	\$3,419.24
No deposits or disbursements		
	Balance 12/31/10	\$3,405.24
Savings Account	Balance 11/30	\$2,716.08
No deposits or disbursements		
	Balance 12/31/10	\$2,716.08



**Marie Rose Remmel
Trust Bond Fund of
America**
 Value ad of 10/30
 \$13,123.69
 Change in value
 (168.08)
 Current Value
 \$12,996.96

Gilbert Trust MMA		
Value as of 6:26:10		\$12,345.08
Interest		.13
Balance as of 9/24		\$12,345.21

Submitted by Terri Armstrong
 Financial Secretary **Our thanks to everyone for making this a good financial year!**

Public Meeting on Comal County Transportation Alternatives

The League of Women Voters is holding a public meeting at Faith UCC on Thursday, January 13th from 7 to 8:30 p.m. to explore transportation alternatives. Speakers from the Alamo Regional Transit and the Lone Star Rail District will provide information about new bus routes and the proposed rail line between San Antonio and Austin.

New Kiva Loans

We currently have \$1,430.80 out in loans! We have to date made 64 loans. We have made three new loans at \$75 each to the following people and groups through the Kiva Micro-lending Program:

The group is called “Risueñas de Atenco” (Cheerful people from Atenco). It is comprised of 12 members. Maria de los Remedios is one of the members. She is 30 years old, and she has a middle school education.

She is a merchant, and she makes shoe boxes. She has two children. She tells us that she started her business in a very small place measuring 1 x 1.5 meters. They did everything by hand. They made between 150 and 200 boxes a week. Two years ago they were sold some apparatus to facilitate the process of making the box. Now they make between 1,000 and 1,300 boxes a week. This income gives them a living, and they are able to give their children what they need in order to become professionals in the future.

María Sonia Bonifacio de Moreno is 34 years old and lives in Mejicanos, in the San Salvador department of El Salvador. She lives with her husband, three young children, sister, and two nephews. María is a very hardworking person who owns her own sewing shop. She also repairs and sells sewing machines with her husband who sells them in downtown San Salvador. Additionally, María makes children's clothing and bedding. She sells these items on the streets in downtown San Salvador. María is requesting a loan with the enormous wish of obtaining more materials to make garments with and to buy more sewing machines and some spare parts. In this way, María and her husband hope to improve their business which is the only source of income they have.



This group is called Mariposas de Endare because they liked the name. It's located in the Santa María Endare neighborhood in the state of México. The group has 10 members.

Mrs. Felipa Manuela Torres is a group member. She is 52 years old and sells stationery supplies and animal feed. She has a total of 10 children, 7 girls and 3 boys. Currently, five still depend on her, two are in high school, one is studying toward a Bachelor's in the Atlacomulco Normal School, one is in middle school and one is in elementary school.

She is asking for the loan to buy feed because during the school vacation periods the stationery shop's sales drop.

At the moment of asking for the loan Felipa Manuela feels very enthusiastic because she'll be able to invest in her business. She is a very hard working person because together with her husband she's managed to raise her children and provide them with the opportunity to go to school. She intends to use the opportunity this loan gives her to continue to support her daughters so that they will finish their schooling and not be dependent on anyone since that will allow them to find a job and not have to go through what she herself has.