



The Chimes

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Modesto Church of the Brethren

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Interim Pastor: Michael Fletcher Ministers: Every Person in the Congregation

Continuing the work of Jesus. Peacefully. Simply. Together.

From the Board Chair

The list of Vital Ministry Goals that came out of the Vital Ministry Journey that the congregation completed last year were again distributed to the Board members at our June meeting. Members were asked to use these goals when planning their activities. While giving their report, each person was asked to refer to any of the goals that may have been included in the activities that they reported on. In some of the discussions that the Search Team has had with Pastoral applicants, several have indicated that they were impressed with our goals. We want to make sure that we are keeping them in focus.

Pastor Michael has been leading the Board in a book study, "To Alter Your World" by Michael Frost/Christiana Rice, for 15 minutes at the beginning of each meeting. We were asked to consider the changes that have taken place in the community, the world and our congregation. Who is our neighbor, what is going on in the church neighborhood, what do our neighbors need? To find those things out we need to get to know our neighbors. As we discussed the book, Luella shared that she went to Martone Elementary School to talk to the principal about how the church could help the school, what their needs were.

The principal was in a meeting, and a new principal will arrive at Martone on July 1, but Luella had a good chat with two

secretaries and will go back to meet the new principal after school starts again. Karleen shared that she took flyers for Peace Week to the local park and talked to parents and others about Peace Week and our church and encouraged them to check us out. One family came to the first day of Peace Week, continued to attend the rest of the week, and the whole family attended the F.U.N. night closing of Peace Week. This was very difficult for these two to go outside of their comfort zone, but they did it and we applaud them and know that there will continue to be opportunities for us to learn more about our neighbors and their needs.

I know many are concerned about the length of time it is taking to find a new pastor. I want to assure the congregation that the Search Team is continuing to interview, but that there are many more churches needing pastors than there are pastors needing churches. We have had 7 apply which is good considering the discrepancy in numbers available. We want to make sure that we get the right fit. No one wants to go through this again in a year or two. So please be patient. When the Team feels that we have the candidate with the right qualities, we will bring that person/s to Modesto to interview with the Team face to face. The candidate will preach a sermon and have opportunity to meet the congregation, and then the congregation will vote whether to accept the candidate as our pastor.

We are working on getting someone from within the congregation to plan the choir directing, piano playing, song leading, etc. for the congregation until a pastor is hired, then we will begin the Choir Director search along with the new Pastor. We have many talented people in our congregation and I know we can get this covered.

The congregation has gone through a lot of change over the last few years, but we are still strong, we are still together and we will get through this peacefully, simply and together. If you have any questions or concerns please call a Board member, a Search Team member, or me.

Blessings,
Karen Cosner



Vital Ministry Journey Goals

These are the goals the congregation developed through the VMJ process and that the commissions are focusing on in their work.

- ✚ **Provide Opportunities for Spiritual Growth** This should include, but not be limited to, a variety of types of Bible study, developing a prayer ministry, book studies and exploring spiritual disciplines.
- ✚ **Develop a Ministry of Reconciliation** - Provide tools for individuals and groups to work through differences.
- ✚ **Create Stronger Connections to Community** - Continue and strengthen existing relationships while exploring new ways to connect with and serve the greater Modesto community.

- ✚ **Enhance and Expand Small Group Ministry** - Develop a program to resource existing small groups and starting a variety of new small groups.
- ✚ **Enrich the Worship Experience** - Seek ways to add new and meaningful elements of worship and improve existing elements in order to inject energy into the worship service.
- ✚ **Enhance Ministries for All Age Groups** - Strive to make certain that we are aware of the varying needs of the different age groups that make up the congregation and create opportunities for every group.
- ✚ **Be an Open and Affirming Congregation that Promotes All Forms of Diversity** - Continue to promote our openness to the LGBTQ community using our designation as an Open and Affirming Congregation while seeking ways to also promote other types of diversity such as, but not limited to: racial, ethnic, economic and social diversity.
- ✚ **Improve Communications from Leadership to Congregation** - Seek ways to improve existing forms and add new methods of communicating what leadership is doing. Also seek to encourage the congregation to engage those forms.

Search Process Insights

For those of you who are wondering why our search for a pastor takes so long, I have just the article for you!! An excerpt from an excellent article in the June 2018 Messenger by Dana Cassell sheds light on the



issue: "Everyone knows that it's getting harder to call a pastor these days. If your congregation has been through a search process recently, you know how complicated it can be - how much time and energy it takes to create a profile, discern your congregations' needs, find the right candidates, interview them, pray for discernment, and call new pastoral leadership. This spring, denominational statistics confirmed the complication: 78 congregations had what we call "profiles" in our placement system, meaning that they were actively searching for a new pastor. Only 26 pastors had profiles, meaning that they were actively searching for a congregation that would call them into a pastoral position. **Seventy-eight openings for 26 candidates!** Pastoral placement isn't as simple as supply and demand: it is a delicate, prayerful process that takes into account relationships, geography, theology, and 'fit'. It's a complicated process." Continuing in my own words, our congregation is very fortunate to have had a good number of pastoral candidates who are specifically interested in our congregation submit their profiles. We are continuing to interview these candidates and will notify the congregation when we find the 'best fit' for us. Yes, the pace is slow and often frustrating but it's important to follow this methodical process. We are fortunate to have David Shetler advising and companioning the Search Committee along every step of the process. We are also blessed to have Pastor Michael doing an excellent job filling in as our interim pastor. We ask for your prayers and patience along our prayerful process of discernment. - Search Committee: Elaine Forcier, chair; members: Karen Cosner, Board Chair; Evan Campbell; Felton Daniels; Rachel Gilstrap-Katen; Matt Hazen; David F. Messamer



Living the Questions

How should we understand the creation stories in *Genesis* in light of science? What about the miracles that Jesus performed - were they real? For that matter, does God suspend the rules of nature today to allow miraculous events?

Why do bad things happen to good people? Why do good things happen to evil people? Is God powerless to stop evil or does God simply apply his power on some arbitrary basis? Is Satan real?

How should a disciple of Jesus involve herself in the political process? Does our faith influence our politics or is it the other way around?

How should the Bible be understood? Is it still relevant? If so, how much so?

What questions concerning faith and life do you have? My hope for the second half of summer this year is to consider the questions that present the greatest challenges for us during our Sunday morning worship time. I do not propose that I have the answers to these questions because I do not and since I am not running for political office, I can acknowledge that fact. But maybe in coming together, considering scripture and our shared experience we might be able to discern a way to live with our questions.

If you have a question you find challenging, please let me know and we can discuss making it into the focus of a Sunday morning message.

Pastor's Schedule

(When in Modesto) Monday & Wednesday through Friday - In office 8:30 to 11:30

Tuesday - Pastor's Sabbath. Other times by appointment, contact me by email at mfletcher21625@aol.com or by phone at 313-303-1227.

June 1 - July 1- in Modesto

July 1-8 - Annual Conference - Cincinnati OH

July 9-16 - Vacation

July 17-18 - Working from So Cal

July 19-Aug. 20 - in Modesto

Pastor's Roaming Office (Check church's Facebook page for updates)

Pastor's Roaming Office is an opportunity for anyone to chat in an informal manner about what is happening at the Modesto COB. For serious concerns setting an appointment would probably be better.

Thursday, June 21, 8:30 am - (Joining the Seniors Group for Breakfast) Huckleberry's 2213 Yosemite

Saturday, June 23, 8:30 am - Panera Bread, 2103 McHenry

Monday, June 25, 5:30 pm - Mimi's Café, 3401 Dale Rd

Friday, June 28, 12:30 pm - Commonwealth, 1022 11th St

Saturday, June 30, 8:30 am - Panera Bread - 3401 Dale Rd.

Sunday Morning Study

Please join us on Sunday Mornings at 9:30 in the church library for a time of thought-provoking conversation based a 10-12 minute video that takes a look at a spiritual issue from what is often a very unique perspective.

Sermon Snippets -

The Greatest Prayer Series



June 24 - Forgive our Debts as We Forgive - Matthew 6:14-15 - In first grade we recited the Lord's Prayer each morning, there we asked that our trespasses be forgiven, but when we said the same prayer in the Church of the Brethren we asked for our debts to be forgiven. Is there a difference? And if so, is it important or just interesting?

July 1 - Lead us not into a Time of Trial - Mark 4:1-9 (& v17) - We live out most days free of serious tests to our faith, but then a tragedy strikes and our faith is challenged, will it strengthen us for the fight or will we fall away? The last line of the prayer that Jesus taught his followers is a difficult one, but surely Jesus intends for an important lesson to be found in it.



Keep the Roy family in your prayers as Louise is in Intensive Care at Stanford receiving care for a stroke and cancer.

Rejoice with Diana Messamer that her tests were clear, and keep Chuck Messamer in your prayers as he undergoes knee replacement.

Keep Maryco Graff in your prayers as she is losing her hearing and will learn to sign.

Rejoice that Larry Cole felt well enough to come to church.

Keep Jim Boardman's brothers-in-law in your prayers as they deal with medical issues.

Continue to keep the VerHulst and Garrison families in your thoughts following the passing of their loved ones.

Keep in your prayers all those who grieve, all who are ill, in pain or troubled. May they find peace.

In the Days Ahead

Ladies Night Lunch Out!

The Prospector Ladies and friends are meeting for lunch this month instead of dinner! Meet at Monsoon Restaurant, a new Indian restaurant, at 950 10th Street, at 1 pm Wednesday, June 20.

Senior Ministries Tour of Modesto Airport

If you signed up by June 13, don't forget! Breakfast, 8:30 AM at Huckleberry's on Yosemite Ave., then the tour of the Sky Trek hangar and the airport tower at 10 AM.



Everyone Brings Something to the Table.

Our summer potlucks are the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of June, July and August.

June 27th will be potluck as usual (no food theme) No Movie this month!

July 11th Christmas in July
Prepare all your holiday food and bring to share.

July 25th (No food theme) Movie Night "I Can Only Imagine"

We are planning something special for our August 8th potluck. More information to follow.

August 22 (no food theme) Movie: "The Way"

The Fellowship and Recreation Commission is talking about Faith Bites in the fall. We need to hear from you and know if this is something you want to be continued.



Family Promise hosting begins June 24! Thanks to all who have signed up to help host. We still have opportunities for overnight hosts on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday of that week. Please consider helping to host in that way. ~Linda and Luella



Woodland West Community Neighborhood will be hosting a Modesto Police Department presentation on fraud and identity theft protection, Monday, June 25, at 6 PM in the Modesto Church of the Brethren sanctuary.



And with that, Peace Week 2018 is over!!!!
There were so many amazing memories that we made with the 17 kids who showed up throughout the week. Between learning about peace through peacebuilders like Wangarii Maathai, Thich Nhat Hanh, and Mahatma Gandhi; making peace poles; having the kids bring in toys and clothes for donations to Inter-Faith Ministries; making Gandhi Glasses; practicing mindfulness; singing; making friends; connecting; laughing; learning; and most importantly building peace, we really learned a lot about ourselves and others around us. ~Kelly and Shaun Gepley

Editor's Note:

In the version that was emailed to members, this page was filled with pictures. Unfortunately, the website will accept only media that is less than 2 mb, and keeping the pictures resulted in a document of 5 mb. Check the Facebook page for pictures!

The Condensed Calendar



Monday

12 pm Pastor's Roaming Office
Michael's Pizza-Carpenter Road
6:30 pm Immigration Discussion
Gathering Place

Tuesday

Wednesday

1 pm Ladies Lunch Out Monsoon Restaurant
950 10th St. (10th & J, next to Subway)

Thursday

8:30 am Sr. Ministries Event
Huckleberry's 8:30 am
Modesto Airport 10 am

Friday

6 pm Young Adult Gathering
Gathering Place

Saturday

Next Sunday-June 24th

Family Promise Hosting Week
9:30 am Sunday Morning Study
11 am Worship

June

June 24-July 1 Hosting Family Promise
June 25 6pm Woodland West ID Theft and
Fraud Prevention Program-Sanctuary
June 27 6pm Summer Supper Potluck
June 28-July 3 Discovery Camp CPP

JULY

July 3-8 Annual Conference - Cincinnati, OH
July 4 Holiday - Office Closed
July 11 6pm Summer Supper Potluck
July 15-20 Jr. High/Youth Camp CPP
July 20 6 pm FUN Night
July 20-25 Family Camp CPP
July 25 6pm Summer Supper Potluck/Movie

AUGUST

August 8 6pm Summer Supper Potluck
August 17 6pm FUN Night
August 19-26 Family Promise Hosting Week
August 22 6pm Summer Supper Potluck

September

September 3 - Labor Day - Office Closed
September 28 6pm FUN Night

**Do you have an announcement you would like the congregation to see on the big screen, before Sunday worship begins? Please send any announcements to Anita Pedersen-Pennock at pedersea@gmail.com by Wednesday evenings.
Thank you!**

(Although we have no projector now, we will have one soon. Stay tuned!)