



# The Chimes

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## Modesto Church of the Brethren

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Ministers: Everyone in the Congregation

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

## Reflections

### Preaching in the Reformed Tradition from the perspective of Rev. Dennis Alger

In the early 1970s, an ex-Brethren Volunteer Service worker named Dennis Alger attended the MCoB. Dennis later became a minister and served various communities in Arizona, Oregon and Hawaii as pastor and hospital chaplain. He is retired now, but continues to be a pastor in Lahaina, Hawaii, as interim pastor for the Waiola United Church of Christ. He shared a reflection which ran in that congregation's newsletter. It seemed an appropriate addition to the explanations of why we do what we do regarding our worship services.

"In the Roman Catholic Mass, it is the Eucharist which is the focus of the service. For Protestants, the homily or sermon is considered the main point of the gathering. This is because the preacher expands upon the Scripture of the day; the sacrament(s), music and prayers lend authenticity to the endeavor.

It is the responsibility of the pastor to study the Scripture, consider the historic, cultural and religious context—an activity termed "exegesis." Theologian Karl Barth once noted that the preacher holds the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other; it is the situations of modern life which the eternal Word addresses. We recognize the Bible as, in my words, faith seeking understanding or the insights about the Realm of God gleaned over the centuries, inspired by the Spirit. So it is that, often, prior to reading the Scripture, the liturgist says, "Listen for what the Spirit is saying to the church," as we trust

the Spirit to open our minds to God's relentless engagement of us in our time and place. The preacher has a lot of room for exposition, or speaking a certain hermeneutic, that is, a point of view underlying the spoken word. Some of us use a lot of personal experience; others of us are cautious about making it about our own journey—although sometimes doing so helps congregations understand us. The period in which we went to seminary influences our degree of self-revelation; reflecting upon our own journey comes and goes. Yet the responsibility of proclaiming the gospel in the face of Powers of our time must be at the center. And this does not change during times of transition—such as right now. It matters to speak of God's presence and direction throughout unfamiliar journeys together."

## Invitations to Worship



June 11

Matthew 28:16-20!

"Not perfect, still called" is the theme concerning the disciples who had some doubts about the risen Christ, but stepped up to the plate, took their assignment, and ran with it! Also read Psalms 8 and Psalms 29...another good start! Our morning message will be brought by Reverend Stephen Reddy

June 18

**Exodus 19:2-8a and Romans 5:1-8**

The theme for worship is "Promises that God makes to us" and how that impacts the kinds of promises and commitments we are willing to make. The Exodus text mentions God bearing us up on eagles wings to protect us. The Romans text mentions the Spirit coming to us and filling our hearts. Reverend Jeanine Ewert will bring the message.



## Hold in The Light

**Words of encouragement from Psalms  
138:3 and 8**

'When I pray, you answer me and encourage me by giving me the strength I need...The Lord will work out his plans for my life—for your lovingkindness, Lord, continues forever.'

A Memorial service for **Phyllis Harvey** will be held on Thursday, June 8th at noon. The family invites you to attend a luncheon following to continue celebrating Phyllis' life. We continue holding the Harveys in our prayers.

We rejoice with **Larry Cole** at the birth of a new granddaughter.

Our prayers for strength and comfort as well as healing for **Diana Messamer** as she awaits diagnosis and plans for treatment of cancer.

Many folks are and will be traveling in the coming weeks and summer months. Several travelers are **Chuck Messamer and Mike McCourt** on their way to and through Alaska on motorcycles and **Justine Martinez** returning from England. For all travelers we pray for safety and timely arrivals.

**Karleen Daniels** sent this message: "I would like the church to know that I talked with **Kheth Khun's** sister today. She has not been able to talk with Kheth, but his lawyer called her after Kheth's parole hearing and let the family know that Kheth has been granted parole by the parole board. The next step will be to send the results of the hearing to the governor and he will either

agree with the board's decision or deny him parole. The governor's decision could take 5-6 months. The family wishes to very much thank the church for its support of Kheth throughout this 27 yr. ordeal and especially for the church's emotional support and individual congregants' financial help for this parole hearing." {(Members and friends of the congregation donated \$2,680 toward Kheth's legal expenses.) Let's continue to keep Kheth, his family and this matter in our prayers!

Let's remember our **sisters and brothers in the EYN** as they strive to remain faithful to Jesus' teachings amid persecution and famine. **N'guba Buba** is one of the Chibok Girls still unaccounted for after being abducted by Boko Haram over three years ago. Please pray for her return and for the assimilation of the returned girls.



**Deacon on Call for June:  
Eddie Hernandez**

## In the Days Ahead



**Summer Supper Potlucks**

During the months of June, July and August our Faith Bites cooks and helpers take a well earned rest from preparing dinners for us. Instead, we



prepare suppers for each other with each one bringing a dish of food to share with whoever shows up. On Wednesday, June 7th, we will have the added pleasure of meeting the new interim pastor, Mike Fletcher! So come along, bring your favorite Mexican dish to share and enjoy great food and fellowship at 6:00p in the Gathering Place!

Plan to help rearrange tables in the Gathering Place after the supper this Wednesday evening. There is a dinner following Phyllis Harvey's memorial so your help doing this set up task would be most appreciated.

## Movie Nights

Once a month following Summer Supper Potluck, there will be a movie shown in the sanctuary. The schedule is: June 21 "Hidden Figures," July 19 "Lion" and August 16 "Moonlight". Please consider adding the following dates and movie titles to your calendar now so you don't miss out!



## Peace Week Returns

After a one summer hiatus, Peace Week is back! Coming up quickly on June 19, it will run five mornings, 9a-12p, through the 23rd and culminate with a Family Unity Night and Peace Week program at 6:00p on Friday the

23rd when all are invited to get a

glimpse of how the children learned to be peacemakers. They'll show their creation of a giant, portable "peace mural" that can be displayed at fairs, schools, and on our own grounds, perhaps near the labyrinth! It is undoubtedly going to make a great reusable "Time for Peace Week" sign for the front of our church for many years to come.

We are linked in with On Earth Peace and their children's mural project, so what we create may even get some national attention!

The week promises to be even more meaningful and energy-filled than ever, with the incredible leadership team of Mary Pieczarka and Tera Thayer. Jolinda Reddy and Leslie Wilkinson will be filling the head teacher roles for 3-6th graders and K-2nd graders, respectively. Elaine Forcier and friends leading singing, plus lots of games and snacks and stories and art, will keep the children busy and entertained and learning new ways to be Peacemakers.

## You can help!

**Tell your friends**, neighbors and acquaintances (invite some kids)!

**Put up a poster** at your local hang-out (Tera has extras in the office)

**Lend** some pillows you don't mind kids sitting on

**Donate** any leftover house paint from that last project

Perhaps **join the crew** that will be on-site that week. To volunteer, call Bonnie Munson: 505-4355  
**Registration** closes June 15th.

## Senior Ministries Happenings

### Thailand

What vision does the word Thailand conjure up in your mind? For me, it's the lushness of vegetation, hot humid air redolent with fragrances of flowers and exotic foods, ornate gilt covered temples and generous people. Come hear of Pam Franklin's recent journey and see some of her photos of the Christmas season she and Indira Clark spent there. Lunch (\$7) at noon on July 6th with program following. Watch for more information on the announcement loop on Sundays.

### Musical Matinee, Anyone?

Join a trip to the foothills in August, sponsored by Senior Ministries, for a fun filled day away!

The Great American Trailer Park Musical is described as "a big-hearted new musical comedy with a cheeky script and infectious score," and a "wheel-spinning, mud-splattering good time; a show that is the theatrical equivalent of a bag of Doritos— you can't get enough. Show-stopping electricity to trump every musical."

Date: August 3, 2017—deadline sign up on July 6  
Gather at church at 10:15a, leaving by 10:30a.

Lunch at noon at Standard Pour  
Matinee at Sierra Repertory Theatre at 2p  
Return to Modesto, late afternoon

Cost: \$26 per matinee ticket. Lunch and ride share costs are extra.

Sign up by paying for your ticket by July 6.  
Checks should be made out to Modesto Church of the Brethren, designating "Senior Ministry Trip".  
Sign up with Margaret Johnson. (209-522-0746)



## Items to Note

### The Journey Continues...

Stan Dueck met with the congregation on Sunday, April 30th and reported on the results of our congregation's Vital Ministry Journey. Six areas have appeared as **top priorities**. They include:

1. **Oversee** the congregation to develop a plan for reconciliation between members or between members and paid staff, as such a plan does not exist.
2. **Renew** vitality through prayer ministry and seeing to it that as many people as possible are connected to small groups that can provide more support.
3. **Develop** a plan to reach out to the community, and in a related way, reach out to the unchurched in creative ways. We have already been involved in three important encounters with the community around us; the Community Forum, open house at the Mosque and Stanislaus County Interfaith Council's first Annual Prayer Dinner co-sponsored by our Witness Commission and held at our church.
4. **Enhance** our already active program for Seniors.
5. **Develop** an intergenerational and intercultural balance within the programs of the church. This would include programs for the under 40s, families with children, and be consciously open and affirming to individuals and groups in some additional ways, including political views, special needs, economic issues, and religious values as well as other issues that otherwise tend to divide people.
6. There was a call for what Stan called a more "Unified Service" to **include more artistic and musical components** to supplement those we now use, and to develop styles and various types of energy to meet more of a variety of congregant interests.

The Board and the VMJ Team have a meeting scheduled with Stan for July 8 to discuss how and by whom these six points will be integrated into our church. This is the beginning of the

"implementation" phase of the VMJ process. Stan will continue to work with church leadership during this phase. However, actual implementation depends more and more upon our decisions and must be done through our own efforts.—The VMJ Team

### Recognitions of Milestones

The church family is proud to recognize those who reach milestones in their lives and careers.



This year there were many graduates and two retirees. Congratulations to the following:

#### Graduating from 8th Grade

Fiona Messamer, Isabelle Messamer, Maddy Beth Harty, Raeann Davis, Jarin House

#### Graduating from High School

Katelyn Messamer

Graduating from College

Jaime Farrar, Kyle Boardman, Zack Roy, Hannah Matteson, Vic Jacobs, Pete Jacobs

#### Retiring

from nurse practitioner-Jim Costello;

from teaching-Mary Pieczarka

#### Family Promise

About fifteen years ago, Carla Messamer and I attended a meeting at Modesto Covenant Church to learn about a new program that would help homeless families. We brought the information back to our Board, and the decision was made to join Family Promise of Greater Modesto.

Not long after that, the Family Promise Board and our Board jointly decided that Modesto Church of the Brethren had the space and the facilities to become the Day Center for Family Promise.

Training meetings were held for the members of the congregation, and we started out in 2005 by hosting families five times a year.

The network of host churches has grown over the twelve years that Family Promise has been helping families, so our hosting weeks have decreased to four per year. Each hosting week requires many people to provide dinners, visit with the families, and stay overnight so that the families are not alone in a strange place. We have help from members of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, mainly to provide meals and act as evening hosts, but we rely on our congregation to volunteer for overnight hosting.

Therein lies a problem.

Lately, it has become harder to convince members of our congregation that staying overnight at the church is not an impossible task! During our most recent hosting week, our Family Promise congregational coordinators, Linda Williams and I were evening hosts two or three times during the week. Others have also stayed overnight multiple times in one week.

Linda and I need some feedback from members of the congregation about what we might be able to do to encourage more people to join in the hosting duties. Our next hosting week will be August 20-27. Please prayerfully consider what you can do to help.

"Be ready with a meal or a bed when it's needed. Why, some have extended hospitality to angels without ever knowing it!" Hebrews 13:2 (The Message)—Luella Cole for Family Promise



### Denominational Recognition

Thanks to Felton Daniels, the Chair of Vital Ministries Journey committee, for the informative article published in *Messenger*, our denominational magazine. The June issue highlighted churches across the US which are finding new ways of bringing hope and providing service in the communities surrounding them. The article is on page 3. The *Brethren Messenger* is also online at [www.brethren.org/messenger](http://www.brethren.org/messenger)

### Publicity Slides



Those wanting a slide made for the announcement loop information is due to NancyB, by the Wednesday before the you want the slide shown. Note SLIDE FOR LOOP in the subject line, then email to: [chimes@modcob.org](mailto:chimes@modcob.org)

### Chimes Deadline:

Articles and photos for the next issue of *Chimes* are due by Thursday, June 15, 2017.

Use article name in the subject line. Email to:

[chimes@modcob.org](mailto:chimes@modcob.org)

The Editor thanks you.



## The Condensed Calendar

### Wednesday-

8:30a-4p The Quiet Place open in Rm. 5

6p 1<sup>st</sup> Summer Supper Potluck—Mexican Night/ meet Pastor Mike Fletcher

### Thursday-

8:30a-4p The Quiet Place open in Rm. 5

12p Memorial Service for Phyllis Harvey with meal following  
5p Ladies Night Out – Pastas Pronto

### Friday-

Women's Retreat – through the 11<sup>th</sup>

8:30a-4p The Quiet Place open in Rm. 5

### Next Sunday – June 11<sup>th</sup>

9:30a Sunday School – Jr. High-adult

(5<sup>th</sup> grade and under welcome in the nursery with Shaun and Kelly!)

11a Worship

### IN THE NEAR FUTURE

June 16-18 Men's Retreat

June 19 6p Summer Supper Potluck

June 19-23 Peace Week

June 23 6p Family Enrichment Night

June 25 12:15p Prospector Potluck – Daniel's Home

June 28-July 2 Annual Conference

June 28-July 2 Discovery Camp

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

July 2 Discovery Camp

July 4 Office Closed

July 6 12p Sr. Ministries Event – Thailand

July 14 6p Family Enrichment

July 21-26 Family Camp

July 28-30 Gourmet Cooking Camp

August 3 10:15am Trip to Matinee at Sierra Rep