



The Chimes

Date: March 13, 2018
Volume 18 Number 6

Modesto Church of the Brethren

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Interim Pastor: Michael Fletcher Ministers: Every Member of the Congregation

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



What is Our Mission?

The following comes from a book I am presently reading entitled, *To Alter your World: Partnering with God to Rebirth our Communities* written by Michael Frost and Christina Rice:

"The redemptive plan of God cannot be divorced from the fruitfulness of the church. As the world is redeemed, the church flourishes; and as the church flourishes, the world is redeemed. So, the church is both commissioned and equipped to repair the fabric of society, and to serve as envoys of love, dignity, commitment, communion and grace."

So, what's stopping us?

That's a very complex question and to give anything less than an equally complex answer would be unfair to the church and the community and to respond with an equally complex answer would require to many pages, but I would like to offer up two things for us to consider:

1. We need to constantly be asking ourselves this question: What is our mission? One of the best ways to answer that question is to consider

two other questions; what are the strengths and gifts that this church has to offer? And what are the needs of the community around us? We will find our mission at the intersection of those two things.

The reason we need to constantly be asking the question is that both our strengths and the needs are in constant flux and need to be evaluated and reevaluated.

2. I believe that one of the hardest hurdles for churches to clear is the need to let go of the past.

Traditions, practices and programs that served the church well in the past may no longer provide benefit the church. Yet the prevailing attitude too often seems to be an attempt to recapture the past by maintaining rather than creating a new future. We need to consider the words of the book of Revelation where God says, "Behold I make all things new," and discern what new thing God is calling us to join in on.

During my time at Modesto we have had some excellent conversations on these topics and I hope that we can continue those conversations as long as I am here and even more so that some of those conversations will lead to a new and exciting future. ~Pastor Michael

Pastor's Schedule

Tuesday - Pastor's Sabbath

Please feel free to schedule other appointments by contacting me by email at mfletcher21625@aol.com or by phone at 313-303-1227. Texting is ok, but please identify yourself when you do text.

Upcoming Study and Fellowship Opportunities



Wednesdays - 5:00 in Library - A Walk
Through the New Testament

March 14 - Philippians & The disputed letters

March 21 - No Study

Our next Coffee and Conversation will be Saturday, April 14, 9:30 in the Gathering Place; the topic is to be



Pastor's Roaming Office

(Check church's Facebook page for updates)

Tuesday, March 13,
9:30 am - Mr. T's, Tully &
Standiford

Thursday, March 15, 1:30 pm -
Starbucks, Oakdale & Merle

Saturday, March 17, 11:00 am - Panera
Bread, 2103 McHenry

Monday, March 26, 6:00 pm - Buffalo
Wild Wings, Vintage Faire Mall

Tuesday, March 27, 11:00 am - Panera
Bread, 2103 McHenry



Lenten Brown Bag Luncheons

Our final Lenten Brown Bag Lunch will be this Sunday, March 18, please consider bringing a brown bag lunch to enjoy in the Gathering Place following worship, even if you haven't attended any of the prior gatherings. In addition to a time of fellowship we'll have a chance to discuss and reflect on the morning's message as well as look at the scripture and topic for the following week.

In addition, I'd welcome suggestions for other gatherings of this type.





Our Lenten Journey Continues:
Exploring Jesus' Ministry to Help Us Find Our Own

March 18 - The Way Up is Down - John 12:20-26 - Most times the ways of ministry lead us in a very different direction from the ways of the world. As we consider what our ministry is to look like, let us be aware of how radical this calling is, and answer the question, "Is it worth it?"

March 25, Palm Sunday - The Line of No Return - Mark 11:1-11 - In the Lectionary, this Sunday is listed as Palm Sunday or Passion Sunday. We usually celebrate the Palms and Jesus "triumphant" entry into Jerusalem. But, there was another aspect to Jesus' entry, it was in a very real sense a point of no return, Jesus fate was sealed on this day, the cross awaited.

April 1, Easter Sunday - Terror and Amazement - Mark 16:1-8 - Almost all scholars agree that Mark was the first of the four Gospels to have been written and that the evidence is very strong that the original manuscript ended at verse 8. This means that Mark's Gospel includes no post resurrection appearances by Jesus. How would the story be different if Mark was the only Gospel we had? And more importantly how would that impact our faith?



Maundy Thursday-
Love Feast
March 29th @ 6:30

Humble Yourself in His Love

As we approach Easter Celebration we need to remember and prepare for our Brethren Love Feast. For those of you raised Brethren or have been a member of our church you are aware of the importance of the Love Feast. Love Feast is celebrated on Maundy (Holy) Thursday, the evening before Good Friday, leading up to Easter.

Our Love Feast will begin in the sanctuary with a brief introduction to center those in attendance as to the purpose of the evening. There is usually a general description of what will occur: Meditation, explanation of foot and hand washing, hymns to be sung followed by the actual washing (your feet or hands will be washed by a fellow member followed by you doing the same). This washing follows Jesus' example of humbling himself in service to his disciples. It is also a time for us to be mindful that we cleanse ourselves of sin through this ceremony, as we did at baptism, when we humble ourselves to this act and its meaning. Following the washing we will go to the Gathering Place for a simple meal of meat and broth and culminate the meal by serving one another communion. The Deacons will facilitate the evening,

We encourage all to attend and to join in all or any aspect of Love Feast that is comfortable for you or you may just watch in a prayerful manner. Those who have attended found the evening to be quite impactful in their religious and spiritual journeys.



Hold in prayer Wendy Warner and the Warner family in the sudden death of Rev. David Warner. His memorial service will be held at 10 AM Sunday, April 8, at the First Presbyterian Church, 2619 N. Berkeley Ave. Turlock, CA

Keep in your thoughts Doris Heisel at Garden City Healthcare Center after a stay in the hospital, hoping to be able to return to Walnut Grove Assisted Living soon.

Keep in your prayers Les Roy's friend in Hospice House.

Pray for all who are ill, all who are in pain, and all who are living with grief or worry.



Deacon on Call for March: Marye Martinez



Dan Galt's SCIC Ministry

As presented during MCOB worship Feb. 18, 2018

I was raised in the 1950's in a Baptist Church, like several others in this congregation. An unintended side effect of my childhood was religious inflexibility; in other words, religious intolerance.

This intolerance was brought home to me when the sermon our pastor gave in the early

fall of 1960, as Richard Nixon and John Kennedy were battling it out to be the next elected president, when he announced, "While I can't tell you how to vote, it would be a crime against Christianity if America elected a Catholic president."

It wasn't until later that I saw this for intolerance. At the time, my 13-year old mind probably responded, "right on," as my mother and all her relatives were staunch supports of "Tricky Dick" Nixon. Where, oh, where, was the Constitutional division between Church and State back then? But this sermon did set my young mind to wondering: if Catholics weren't a part of Christianity, what were they a part of?

Fast forward a couple of decades. My curiosity for the fate of the human soul led me to major in international agricultural development, then to spend two Peace Corps years in the Catholic country of Brazil, then to dedicate two decades of my work life overseas. Such work assignments included the Catholic countries of Honduras, Ecuador, Colombia, and Bolivia, the Muslim countries of Senegal, Pakistan, Indonesia, Jordan and Turkey, the Buddhist country of Thailand and the Hindu country of Nepal.

In 1992, Sabri Er, my designated language translator for the preparation of training materials in Turkey, and I sat together on a public bus discussing religion as we traveled East to Cappadocia. He enlightened me to the peacefulness of his interpretation of the Koran; he was blown away to learn a bit about the Church of the Brethren and Protestantism, neither of which he'd ever heard of before that day.

My reasons for continuing international agriculture work evolved, moving away from the concept that I functioned as a "minor missionary," working to help provide more food for the rural masses, giving them better

diets and more "leisure time" in which to accept Christianity as preached by local "major missionaries" to convert all heathens to Christianity. My own particular Christianity had evolved into one of seeing Heaven as a wide-open, flower-filled field, full of not just Christians from any one of the truly "enlightened denominations," to a heaven filled with all types of Christians, Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus and other good peoples of various faith groups.

In the fall of 2014, Pastor Russ would soon be leaving MCOB to become the Regional COB rep, and Pastor Erin would be shedding some of their joint ministerial duties. One obvious choice was for her to give up her seat on the Stanislaus County Interfaith Council, or SCIC. I leapt at the chance to be her replacement, and the rest is history.

As Trish and I prepare to leave Modesto, two groups are the most difficult to leave behind. The first is this congregation, filled with such wonderful people. A close second is the SCIC, a group I've come to love for their expansive hearts, acceptance of all other religious faith groups, and constant work to spread the message of religious tolerance to all of Stanislaus County. In the past two years, the SCIC has added an annual prayer supper to the traditional Thanksgiving Celebration, and we held a major in-service training on the inappropriateness of religious bullying in Modesto City Schools. Fortunately, Luella Cole, another person who fully supports religious tolerance, has made a commitment to continue the important place of this church on the SCIC by replacing me as our monthly representative to that council.



In the Days Ahead

New Sunday School Class! THE BRETHREN EXPERIENCE

All interested persons Junior High age and above are invited to a 4-week class on the BRETHREN EXPERIENCE.

This history class will be held during the Sunday school hour, **9:30 AM to 10:30 AM in Room 1 Sundays, March 18 and 25 and April 8 and 15.**

The class will include time for discussion and comments, a bit of drama, some old fashioned visuals, lectures and hopefully a little fun. If you are not well informed about the BRETHREN EXPERIENCE this 4-hour class on the 300+ years of the Brethren movement should enlighten you greatly. Come and plan to be enlightened. ~Felton Daniels



Please Note the Following Changes!

The Progressive Dinner scheduled for March 17 has been postponed to a date yet to be determined.

The annual CROP Walk has been postponed due to the death of David Warner, who was its Modesto chairperson. It will be rescheduled in the fall.

The Bike and Build Tour participants will **not** be traveling through Modesto this year .

Senior Ministries

REMINDER: Senior Ministries luncheon
Thursday, March 15, 12 Noon. Judy Kindle of
Sierra Vista Child and Family Services will
bring the program.

San Luis Reservoir- Romero Visitor Center

April 19, 2018- Getting Started

- Plan to be at the church by 8:45 so we
can depart by 9.

- We will be traveling by car and
appreciate drivers willing to take those who
need a ride. The drive takes a little over an
hour.

- If you do not plan to leave from the
church, please let Margaret Johnson know so
the group will not wait for you.

Romero Visitor Center 10:15-noon

After arriving, we will meet at about
10:30 for a talk, by guide Caitlin Boyer,
followed by two short films. One gives the
historical background of the dam and water
system. The other features an aerial view of
the water system put to music. The
remainder of the visit will allow time for
checking out the exhibits and tremendous
views. This facility is accessible. It is all on
one level, no stairs.

12:30- Lunch at Pea Soup Andersen's in Santa Nella

- The menu can be viewed at their website.
- We will be eating in the dining room.

Costs:

- Lunch at the restaurant
- If you are a passenger, \$5 contribution to
your driver for gas.

*Be sure to **sign up** for this event **by April 15** on our Senior Ministry bulletin board in the Narthex.

Questions: Margaret Johnson (209)522-0746 or (209)404-4287



Youth Meeting

Sunday March 18th from 12:30 to 2:30 the
youth will be getting together to plan an
upcoming worship service for Youth Sunday on
April 22.

Family Wildflower Hike - April 7th

Celebrate spring outside! Saturday April 7th
bring your family along on a walk in the Red
Hills east of Modesto, led by Anna Hazen
(she's hoping Sylvan Bupp will come along,
with all his knowledge of the flowers and
plants). We will walk along a dirt road that can
be a bit rocky, but has little elevation change.
The pace will be leisurely - no one gets left
behind, even the three year old covered in
mud. Meet at 10am at the Red Hills ACEC
parking lot on Red Hills Road. Coming from
Modesto, take Hwy120/108 through Oakdale,

turn right on La Grange Road, and then left onto Red Hills Road. The main parking area where we will meet has a large sign, a bathroom, picnic tables, and usually a lot of horse trailers; it's easy to spot. When everyone is there, we'll drive a little further on to the trail. Bring water, a hat, and lunch for a picnic afterward! Call or text Anna (916) 690-6642 with questions and to let her know you're coming. Rain will reschedule.



Love Modesto

On April 21st the youth and their parents will attend the Love Modesto rally, 8:00 AM in the morning, in front of the Gallo Center downtown, and then help with the all church work day at the church.



All Church Workday-April 21 8 AM
Check out the signup board in the narthex and choose your task!

Love Modesto

April 21

If the all church workday tasks are not your cup of tea, Love Modesto has many projects that require less physical labor! Check out the website: lovemodesto.com and choose a more sedate task to provide service to the community!



Our hosting week begins THIS SUNDAY! We still have a few hosting tasks that need volunteers: 2 Sunday overnight hosts are needed; as well as one overnight host for Tuesday night and 2 Thursday overnight hosts. We also need 2 evening hosts for Wednesday night after Faith Bites. Please consider helping out our Family Promise families!

**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
Pennock at
pedersea@gmail.com by
Wednesday evenings. Thank
you!**

The Condensed Calendar

Monday

6:30pm Board Meeting

Tuesday

Pastor's Sabbath

9:30am Pastor's Roaming Office - Mr. T's
Tully & Standiford

Wednesday

5pm Bible Study-Library

6pm Faith Bites

6:45pm Talk Around the table

7pm Choir

Thursday

12noon Sr. Ministries Luncheon
Sierra Vista program

Friday-

Saturday-~~Progressive Dinner~~ **POSTPONED**

Sunday-March 18

9:30am Brethren History Class-Room 1-
Jr.High-Adult(Infant to 5 years welcome in
the nursery with Shaun and Kelly

11am-Worship

12noon-Brown Bag Lunch-Gathering Place

5pm-Family Promise Hosting Begins

Mark Your Calendars

March

18-March 24-Family Promise

March 22 5pm Ladies Night Out-Beijing
Restaurant, McHenry & Coralwood

March 25 9:30am Brethren History Class
Room 1

March 29 6:30pm Maundy Thursday-Love
Feast/Feetwashing & Communion

April 1 9am Easter Breakfast/Egg Hunt
11amWorship

April 8 9:30am Brethren History Class
Room 1

April 15 9:30am Brethren History Class
Room 1

April 15 12:30pm Prospector Potluck
Forcier's

April 21 8am All Church Workday

April 21 8am Love Modesto

April 27-29 Church Retreat

