



# The Chimes

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## 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.*

## Reflection

### Questions with No Wrong Answers: Preview of Wednesday's Conversation

On Wednesday evenings at 5:00 I will be hanging out in the church library for a time of conversation before Faith Bites. There will be a question for consideration to which there are no wrong answers and we'll see where the conversation takes us. The topics will be varied (the first few are listed elsewhere in this edition of the Chimes) ranging from entertainment to theology.

There are some questions I've been asking myself that may or may not end up as future topics. Let me share a few with you:

**1. Should I continue to be a football fan?** Following sports is the longest running passion of my life. While I enjoy following many sports, football has been the one I've been most passionate about. But as it becomes increasingly violent and more and more is revealed about the negative health issues many players are forced to deal with, I wonder if that passion is inconsistent with the values I profess as a Christian. There are other reasons that should concern football fans as well, but I must confess that for me personally if I do give up following football,

it's more likely to be because I don't like the emphasis on the passing game and offense than any ethical reasoning.

**2. Is the political divide in our country permanent or just a temporary condition?** Truthfully, I'm not sure this matters that much to me, but it does matter for the kind of country that my granddaughters will inherit. I worry that more and more our party affiliation determines where we stand on most issues and so we accept someone else's understanding of things, not even considering their motives, instead of forming our own opinions based on thoughtful consideration. The result is that battling things to the death is preferred over compromise and as political power shifts back and forth the constant undoing of what was done before prevents the country from moving forward and we lose our status as world leaders. I do believe we will eventually find ways to bridge the divide, but am gravely concerned about how much damage we do in the meantime.

**3. Can the Church of the Brethren survive if we don't start planting new churches?** This question has added meaning for me personally as I have a desire to be involved in church planting, especially in one near to my home in La Quinta, but don't feel called to be a church planter. The larger question though is an issue because we as a denomination are closing churches much faster than we're planting new ones.

One of things that I often have heard is that we should be helping our struggling churches instead of starting new ones. While I understand that kind of thinking, it ignores the fact that people who are not currently involved in a church are five times more likely to attend a new church than an existing one.

#### **4. Wendy's or Jack in the Box?**

Maybe the better question is why is it so hard for me to eat healthier. ~Pastor Michael



#### **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](mailto:mfletcher21625@aol.com) or by phone at 313-303-1227.

Sept. 25- Oct. 21- in Modesto  
Oct. 22 - 26 - Working from Southern Cal  
Oct. 27 - Nov. 6 - in Modesto  
Nov. 7-8 - Working from Southern Cal  
Nov. 9-11 - District Conference  
Nov. 12-15 - Working from Southern Cal  
Nov. 16-18 - 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, Sept 27 - 1:00 pm** - Michael's Pizza Bar, 500 N Carpenter Rd  
**Saturday, Sept 29 - 8:30 am** - My Garden Café, 3507 Tully Rd  
**Monday, October 1 - 1:00 pm** - Panera Bread, 3401 Dale Rd  
**Thursday, October 4 - 4:00 pm** - Starbucks, 1800 Oakdale Rd  
**Saturday, October 6 - 8:30 am** - Marie Callender's, 3500 Coffee Rd  
**Monday, October 8 - 1:00 pm** - Buckhorn BBQ, 3401 Dale Rd (in the Mall)



#### **Upcoming Sermon Topics**

##### **September 30 - Discipleship 101: The Inner Life - Mark 1:29-39**

Jesus demonstrated time and time again how important a life of devotion to prayer was. Prayer is only one of the ways in which we experience God's presence in our lives, worship, the study of scripture and meditation are a few others. But the most important thing in developing a strong and close relationship with God is being able to set aside time to develop these inner life practices.

**October 7 - Discipleship 101: The Outer Life: Romans 12:9-21** - One of the great mistakes of Christianity is to turn our faith into a set of rules that must be followed. Another mistake is to believe that faith grants us the freedom to do whatever. So, what's in between? Love!

And while neither rules nor freedom make us more loving, practicing compassion, mercy and grace can. In Romans 12, Paul lays out so practices that applied in our everyday lives will move us in the right direction.

### **Wednesday Evening Conversations: Questions with no Wrong Answers**



You are invited to share in conversation around important and/or interesting topics of the day involving, well just about anything and everything. We'll meet in the library at 5:00 and finish up in time for everyone to get in line for the meal at Faith Bites.

Upcoming topics will be:

Sept. 26 - Faith: What role does scripture play in our faith?

Oct. 3 - Entertainment: Is there a movie, television show or musical performance that inspires you?

Oct. 10 - Politics: What are the most important issues heading into the mid-term elections?

Oct. 17 - Church: What vision for the Church of the Brethren would inspire and propel us into the future. (Note: The Church of the Brethren has established as the primary objective for the 2019 Annual Conference the formation of a "compelling vision." An important part of this process will conversations held at District Conference.)



### **Young Adult Gathering**

All young adults of the congregation are invited to join our next Young Adult gathering, Friday evening October 12 from 5:30 to 7:30 at Michael's Pizza Bar, 500 Carpenter Rd.



### **University of La Verne Visit**

On Sunday October 14<sup>th</sup> representatives of the University of La Verne will be visiting and sharing with us about the new sacred space at the university. This presentation will take place in the sanctuary at 9:30.



Keep in your prayers David Strohm, at home after a fall.

Continue to keep Linda Bustle in your prayers as she faces chemotherapy in the near future.

Continue to pray for Gene Palsgrove, now recuperating from a fall at home.

Keep in your thoughts Sara Miller's co-worker, who has undergone 5 surgeries recently, and has no immediate family near.

Be with Jaimie Campbell, caring for her mother who has kidney disease.

Rejoice with Terhesa Gamboa, whose Woodland West event on September 22 brought 105 persons to Family Fun Day at Sharp Park.

Also give thanks with Terhesa that her friend Robert will leave jail and go directly to a rehab facility.

Continue to be mindful of those who are ill, in pain, lonely, or troubled too deeply for words.

## Deacons On Call

September: Jim Martínez

October: Linda Owen

## Greeters

September 30: Terhesa Gamboa  
& Eddie Hernandez

## THANKS FROM FELLOWSHIP & REC!

For all of you who came to our annual All Church Picnic/Ice Cream Social-Thanks SOOO much for making this a very successful event. Thanks for all those tasty salads and a special thanks to those that made ice cream. The bubble activity was loved by the children and many adults which proves you're never too old to play and act silly! Water balloons were very popular as well. Watch for our next activity, the Harvest Festival on Saturday October 27th at 5:30. Again thank you.  
Fellowship & Recreation

**REMINDER: THIS WEDNESDAY'S FAITH BITES IS A POTLUCK!**

**COMING SOON**



**This Friday, September 28, 6 PM!**

FUN=Family Unity Night  
Yummy Dinner plus games, crafts, music and learning!

As well as a Parent Support time!  
For families with children Kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

Please RSVP to Modesto Church of the Brethren 209-523-1438



Our next Family Promise Hosting Week is October 14-21. The sign-up board is in the narthex, and there are several volunteer opportunities available, especially for overnight hosts! Please sign up!





The next Senior Ministries trip on October 25 will include a tour of historic Knights Ferry, and a stop at the Oakdale Cheese Factory! More info next time!!



### **An Evening of Poetry...**

Barbara West, Ken Smeltzer's niece, will be in Modesto for a Poetry Reading series on Tuesday, October 9 at the Barkin' Dog Grill, 940 11th Street, Modesto, starting at 6:00pm. Hosted by The Modesto-Stanislaus Poetry Center. From Barbara's website: "Barbara West's unique performance style comes from her background in theater and rock n' roll; less like 'poetry reading' and more like a cross between stand-up comedy and 'stand-up meditation'....Barbara enjoys reciting from memory. This allows her to use her whole body to present a poem, usually without a mic, since her voice is plenty loud."

### **FROM THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:**

We are still looking for volunteers for office fill in when Jill is gone or ill. Volunteers that we have at present are: Stephen Reddy, Terhesa Gamboa, Linda Owens, Elaine Forcier, Karleen Daniels, Gayle Hernandez, Linda Sesser, Karen Cosner, and Bill Johnson. If you feel that you can spare 4 hours at a time filling in at the office please let Jill know by calling the office at 209 523-1438. Your time spent would be much appreciated.



### **A Gentle Reminder from Worship and Spiritual Life**

Remember, we're writing our own Advent Devotional booklet this year. Sign-ups begin Sunday, September 30. This is your chance to write, imagine, or create some thoughts and/or personal narrative around Advent or Christmas themes. More information to follow!

And...Our Advent book study of "The First Christmas: What the Gospels Really Teach About Jesus' Birth," by Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan. We will meet the four Thursdays of Advent: November 29, December 6, 13, and 20, 6:00-7:30. The book is available from Amazon or Barnes and Noble. A great time to share Christmas memories and look carefully into "the first Christmas."



## ALL CHURCH WORKDAY



Come join us on Saturday  
October 20th for our All  
Church Work Morning  
from 9 til noon for some  
fun, food and fellowship.  
Any questions please call  
Bill Johnson 209 522-

0746, cell 209 985-0908. The sign-up poster  
is in the narthex. The good jobs go quick!



**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 the  
church office at  
[office@modcob.org](mailto:office@modcob.org) by  
Wednesday evenings.  
Thank you!**

*Articles and photos for  
the next issue of Chimes  
are due by **Thursday,  
October 4.** Use article  
name in the subject line  
and email to:*

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

*The Editor thanks you.*

## *The Condensed Calendar*



Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

5 pm Evening Conversations: Questions with  
No Wrong Answers—Library  
6 pm Faith Bites **POTLUCK**  
**NO CHOIR PRACTICE!**

Thursday

October 4 Chimes Deadline

October 12 5:30 pm Pastor's Roaming Office  
Michaels Pizza

October 14 9:30 am University of Laverne  
representatives will be visiting

October 14<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> Family Promise Hosting

October 20 9 am All Church Work Day

October 25 8:30 am Sr. Ministry Event  
trip to Knight's Ferry  
and Oakdale Cheese Factory

October 26 6pm Family FUN Night

October 27 5 pm Harvest Festival



Friday

6 pm FUN Night

November 16 6pm Family FUN Night

November 22-23 Thanksgiving—Office closed

Saturday



Next Sunday--September 30<sup>th</sup>

9:30 am Sunday Morning Study

11 am Worship

2 pm Youth Meeting

December 16 12:30 pm Holiday Luncheon

December 14 6pm Family FUN Night

December 24-25 Christmas--Office closed