



The Chimes

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Modesto Church of the Brethren

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Pastor: Andrew Sampson

Ministers: Every Member of the Congregation

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

On Wednesday, February 17, we will enter into the season of Lent. Neither Lent nor Ash Wednesday were familiar to me growing up in rural Ohio as there was not a lot of religious diversity and we did not hear much about other expressions of Christianity in our little church. We knew about some of them, as we had classmates who were Jehovah's Witnesses. They never came to our Christmas party at school, and fish sandwiches were served in the cafeteria on Friday, but I did not know why. I was naïve enough that when I encountered a dorm mate with "dust" on his forehead one afternoon, I jokingly asked if he had missed a spot in the shower. He replied that he had come back from Ash Wednesday service and even though I did not know what that was, I kept quiet, and then went to the computer lab to search the Internet for an answer. However, I still did not attend an Ash Wednesday service or observe Lent until many years later in seminary.



I have grown to appreciate the beauty and rhythm of Ash Wednesday and Lent as well as the liturgical (church) calendar from Advent to Christmas to Lent to Easter to Pentecost to Ordinary Time. How the tempo and activity build in Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany, then slow at Lent to allow the body, church and individuals to reflect, refresh, and prepare for the celebration of Easter and fulfilling Pentecost's calling. Lent is more than simply abstaining or giving up something or adding a new responsibility for 40 days. In many ways, Lent clashes with what the world values. Our world encourages us to speed up while Lent tells us to slow down. The world says to avoid introspection and Lent says that we should look within and evaluate what we find. The world says that our needs are priority while Lent says to consider the well-being of the community.

I would encourage you this Lent to use the time to refresh yourself emotionally and spiritually, be attentive to the needs around you, and listen to how God is speaking to you. Consider how we, the church, can foster changes within our neighborhood, community, and world that are desperately needed yet go unnoticed or are completely disregarded. How can we be catalysts for these changes to take place? Let us use Lent as a time to prayerfully consider what these changes may be. ~Pastor Andrew

Lent

"Bless This Mess"

Lent is a 6-week journey of transformation...and this process can be messy. **You will soon receive a Lenten packet in the mail to help you and your family to "bless this mess" along the ups and downs of these uncertain times.**

Inside you will find some illustrated cards with explanations for simple, engaging activities to use along the 40-day journey. From caring for God's creation to advocating for racial justice and equality, the Lenten calendar's themes and activities are both accessible and challenging. May these opportunities for reflection and concrete action be helpful as you anticipate the promise of renewal and new life that Easter brings. --The Worship & Spiritual Life Commission



Please join us for worship on the Modesto Church of the Brethren Facebook page at 11 AM each Sunday.



Rita M's. granddaughter and her husband, and 2 great grandsons are visiting for the weekend.

Monique S. asks us to please pray for her uncle who is back in the hospital with COVID and is not doing well. Monique also has a joy that Marquis was recognized at school for having a 3.50 grade point average during the first semester.

Sheri S. wishes Andrew a happy birthday this week.

Carole G. asks for prayers for her friend Mary, who lost her husband suddenly a few days ago.

Pat R. sends appreciation for cards, visits, food, errands run, emails, and many other expressions of support during this stay-at-home time. She sends her blessings to all of you.

Keep Ginny H. in your prayers as she recuperates at English Oaks. Cards and short calls are welcome.



February Birthdays

Gary Lawrence-7

Joshua Gilstrap-Katen-9

Zachary Roy-23

Linda Owen-27

(And Pastor Andrew, sometime this week!)



Peggy reports: "We served 40 meals of roasted chicken and red potatoes. Everything went very smoothly with limited waiting time in the pick-up line.

"Our next take-out dinner will be on St. Patrick's Day, Wednesday, March 17. More information will follow, but it will be run very similarly to the first event.

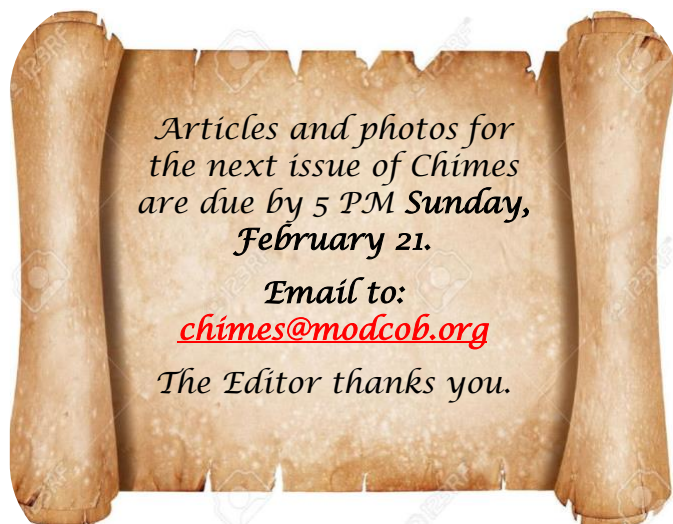
"It was great to see some of you last week. Hopefully we will be able to gather in person before too much longer."

Take care, Peggy for Fellowship and Recreation Commission.



Welcome Statement

Believing that God's unbounded love and grace, as taught by Jesus, are offered to all and meant to be shared and celebrated by all, we embrace persons of every age, race, sexual orientation, ethnic and religious background, physical and mental ability, and economic means as vital and integral members of God's family. As an Open and Affirming congregation we welcome everyone to participate in the life and worship of our church.



Articles and photos for the next issue of Chimes are due by 5 PM Sunday, February 21.

Email to:

chimes@modcob.org

The Editor thanks you.

Modesto Church of the Brethren

Board of Administration

Minutes

February 8, 2021

Present: Kim Boardman, Jim Boardman, Jim Martinez, Marye Martinez, Elaine Forcier, Felton Daniels, Karleen Daniels, Luella Cole, Edie Ransom, Andrew Sampson, Linda Hunter, Bill Johnson, Leslie Wilkinson

Absent: Peggy Hoover

1. Opening Devotions: Kim Boardman - Galen Guengerich article, "Really? Where There Is a Will, There Is a Way."
2. Approval of Agenda: M/S/P - Linda Hunter, Jim Boardman
3. Approval of January 16, 2021 minutes: - Jim Boardman wanted to add that the church's new livestream equipment will only improve the sound for those livestreaming from home, but it will not improve the sound in the sanctuary. Amended and approved. M/S/P - Karleen Daniels, Bill Johnson
4. Treasurer's Report for January, Edie Ransom:
Questions/Comments:
 - Building and Grounds have had to spend money for maintenance. Service and utilities have been the largest expenditures.
 - Income was down this month. Normally in February and March the income will be larger.
 - The rent is down because Family Promise has not used the church space because of COVID-19.
 - Accept and approve the report. M/S/P - Elaine Forcier, Linda Hunter
5. Report/Recommendation from "Back Property" committee: Felton Daniels and Jim Boardman - The committee met and thought they had a proposal to use Rooms 5 and 6 to house Family Promise families. Family Promise has concerns about security issues so are not ready to move forward with the proposal at the moment. Other concerns are about housing families for months at a time versus a week at a time. Family Promise is looking for housing to rent, outside Modesto, that is more affordable.
6. Update on Board Google email accounts, Andrew Sampson: Andrew sent Jill a check-list and Board members will be receiving an email saying we have been added to modcob.org. We will be able to share documents back and forth without using email, and will all be able to view a document, and make changes to the document, at the same time.
7. Website updates and discussion, Luella Cole: Since Erin left, Luella has been entering activities and *The Chimes* to the website. Luella recommends that Andrew and others update the website as it is out of date.
 - Andrew suggests streamlining the website to make it simpler. The website should include our welcome statement and church hours. Some pictures to be added may include the labyrinth and the church building. Andrew will meet with Luella and Jill regarding anything additional to add.
 - Kim has a suggestion for each commission chairperson. Check the church website, see what is there that pertains to your commission, and suggest updates if needed.
8. Commission Reports:
 - A. Fellowship and Recreation, Peggy Hoover: No report. Andrew said that there are 40 RSVPs for the February 10th dinner.
 - B. Member-at-Large, Felton Daniels: No report.
 - C. Christian Education, Karleen Daniels: Working on a fun event for February with the theme of "Celebrating Love and Diversity. The commission asked Ashley Ford, Kelsey Boardman, and Vincent Castaneda if they would be interested in planning events for children.
 - D. Moderator, Linda Hunter: No report.

- E. Buildings and Grounds, Jim Boardman: Bids for painting and carpeting the office area have been looked into. There is a bid for \$2,000 to paint the office area. The kitchen had a ceiling leak. Part of the ceiling had collapsed. Large parts of sheet rock were wet. Jim asked if anyone had a recommendation of someone who could make repairs. Jim cleaned up the insulation and other debris.
- F. Deacons, Marye Martinez: Wednesday is Ginny Hollis's birthday, and Marye requests that board members send Ginny birthday cards. Deacons are sending out valentine cards.
- G. Personnel, Bill Johnson: We will not meet until August or September. Peggy Hoover is no longer interested in being our interim choir director.
- H. Stewardship, Jim Martinez: No report.
- I. Pastor, Andrew Sampson:
 - Annual Conference will be completely virtual this year. There is a fee if people would like to attend the business meetings: \$100.00 per person. Worship services are free.
 - Love Feast will be April 1st. It will be a PSW District-wide love feast on Maundy Thursday. It will be on Zoom. There will be registrations. There will be conversations at virtual tables. People can watch the event on YouTube. Hopefully many churches will participate.
 - We may have vesper (sunset) services in the future.
 - March 14th will mark the one-year anniversary of our church starting virtual church services. We average over 300 people in attendance each week for our church services, including people from several states and countries. Seventy-five percent of the viewers are from Modesto. Andrew has sent an email to our church leaders, and members who are healthcare professionals, asking their thoughts about when we may return to church in person.

Questions/comments:

- Felton asks whether there's a way to ask those who are attending our services, but who are not regular members, to financially donate to our church.
 - Karleen asked if *The Chimes* can clarify whether the church is meeting virtually or in person.
- J. Witness, Luella Cole: Witness Commission will meet when Luella begins setting up Zoom meetings.
 - K. Worship and Spiritual Life, Elaine Forcier:
 - Worship and Spiritual Life does not see a need for a choir until the virus is under control. Peggy and three others are preparing to add handbells to our church service music.
 - PSW District has awarded our church a \$2,000 grant for the new livestreaming equipment. Installation has begun but is not finished. There are some young people who are interested in helping learn how to run the equipment. Elaine is hoping that by early March, there may be a training for those interested in doing this.
- 9. Other: Kim: Andrew Sampson, Bill Johnson, Jim Martinez, Jeff Glass, Elaine Forcier, Kim Boardman, Felton Daniels, Marye Martinez, Karleen Daniels, Ann Marie Washington, Jonathan Goodrich, and Linda Hunter will be attending The Future Church Summit. All but two months have been filled in on the devotions calendar for the Board Meetings. Luella will do the devotions next month.
 - 10. Next board meeting: Monday, March 8, 2021, at 6:30 pm by Zoom.
 - 11. Adjourn: 7:56 pm.

Notes respectfully submitted by Leslie Wilkinson