

First United Methodist Church  
PALMETTO

# THE FLAME

SEPTEMBER, 2011

FROM  
THE  
PASTOR



Last month I helped a friend of mine with her congregation's annual planning retreat up in New Port Richey. The goal for the day was to adopt a new church "theme" for the

upcoming year. The theme they picked last year was "Increasing Christ in Your Life". All ministries and programs were aimed at fulfilling that theme. For them, "Increasing Christ in Your Life" meant deepening their walk with Christ through worship, study, and action. At the retreat, they evaluated how well they had fulfilled their theme last year and came up with a new one.

Several ideas were suggested during small group brainstorming, but the new one they selected was "Increasing Christ in Our Neighborhood." One small group facetiously suggested the theme "The Church Has Left the Building"; a humorous take-off on the expression "Elvis has left the building!" Besides having a very narrow cultural reference which few would understand - Elvis? Who is Elvis? - they felt it communicated they were literally abandoning the space. It did, however, approach what they wanted to communicate: they are an older congregation located in a depressed area of downtown and they want to minister in their surroundings. Sounds like another church I know.

Privately, I liked it *because* of the tongue-in-cheek quality. . . It says church folk can laugh at ourselves. Our message is serious and we do serious work but we who convey it are all "cracked vessels" no pun intended! Another motto which they rejected was "Change without Compromise" for sounding too negative and inflexible. "Increasing Christ in Our Neighborhood" ex-

pressed what they wished to convey succinctly and effectively. No motto does it all, but it was felt that their members would know what this meant and embrace it.

A few years ago there was a Saturday Night Live television skit based on a character called "the Church Lady" which made light-hearted fun of a certain type of church-goer. I rarely stayed up that late on a Saturday night, but I saw a few of those skits. The character was funny; the skits could be a little off the wall. Usually, I laughed along with the audience but once in a while I had the uncomfortable feeling that we in the church were being laughed at.

One thing I am committed to as a Pastor is for First United Methodist Church to take charge of our message to the world and our surrounding community. I would rather we poke a little fun at ourselves than to be laughed at. I would rather be open about our character flaws than to discover that others have written us off. I would rather put a message out there that we want heard than to have people make erroneous assumptions or, worse, no assumptions about our church life.

Most of all, I want to let those folks know how much we have to offer; they just don't know it yet! If they come inside our doors, I don't think it would take them long to see God's love in Christ at work in this congregation. I can see that just in the short while that I have been here. Soon, others too will know just how much they are missing not being here!

I'm proud to be your Pastor.

Peace and prayers,

*Pastor Esther*

## Intentional Hospitality

With great anticipation and wearing name-tags, you have welcomed Rev. Robinson to Palmetto. Perhaps you saw the articles in our local papers that noted her arrival here. I read recently that pastoring is 1/3 preaching (study, prep, reading), 1/3 administration (meetings, e-mail, phone calls, mail, chaos), and 1/3 pastoral care (meeting with people). As Pastor Esther continues to adapt to us and to a new community, there is little doubt that she might disagree with those percentages right now. . . even in the slow season of summer, it probably seems more like 2/3, 2/3 and 2/3. I hope you will join me in encouraging her in this new chapter in the life of our church and to help her find balance with her "To Do" list. Here are a few things we can all do to welcome and support our new Pastor:

1. Until Pastor Esther can call you by name, remind her by saying, "Hi, my name is....". She's learning each of our names and faces. We only need to learn one. When you see her in the store or out and about, introduce yourself again.
2. Help her meet new people, make new friends and contacts in the community. Help her get to know you too. Give her a call (cell phone is best: 386-314-6072). Include her in lunch plans after services, or invite her to your home for dinner. How about to a ball game, a local festival or for a boat ride?

She is new to Palmetto and you can show her new places & interesting things. Remember that you, too were new once.

3. Pray for Esther often and for her work as she leads our congregation. Show her every act of kindness you can, for she has been sent to work with a great group of God's people (us). Look for the positives and make her feel appreciated, loved and supported as she leads us in worship and helps us to lead our lives in Christ.

*Jesus said:  
"I was a stranger  
and you  
welcomed me...  
and as you  
welcomed a  
stranger so you  
welcomed me."*

Pastor Esther's enthusiasm and intentions for growing our congregation and collaborating with others in mission and service are exciting, but it is not her mission alone. The greatest act of intentional hospitality each of us can offer will be to step up and ask, "How can I serve?"

An installation service for Rev. Robinson will be held during both worship services on Sunday, October 16, followed by our annual Church Charge Conference at 4:00 p.m. that same day, which will be followed by a congregational dinner. I hope that many will plan to attend to formally welcome our new Pastor and to share in fellowship with one another.

In worship and service with you,  
Sue Revell, Chair  
Staff Parish Relations Committee



Sunday, October 2, 2011

Worship Services at 8:30 & 10:45 AM

Sunday School for All Ages at 9:30 AM

Nursery Care Available

## From the Trustees

The Trustees have been very busy over the last few months. There are, of course, the usual day to day maintenance and repair issues around the church. However, the major effort over the past few months has been in two areas:

- ➔ Preparation of the parsonage for the new Pastor.
- ➔ Preparation of the Fellowship Hall for repainting.

The parsonage work is now complete, and the Fellowship Hall will be painted by the end of September. In addition, the hallway between the sanctuary and the Fellowship Hall will be painted over the next month or so.

New initiatives will be started in the next months to address (among other things ) update emergency plans for the church and personal property inventories.

## From the Finance Committee

The Finance Committee wants to extend its thanks to all members for their faithful giving over the last year. While the recession has passed, we know that many of our members are on fixed incomes and that others continue to struggle with a challenging economy.

The past few months have been typically challenging for the Finance Committee, with total expenses exceeding income so far this year. I should emphasize our gratitude to the Board and volunteers at the Thrift Shop for their very generous contributions to assist the General

Fund through this summer season.

To help things along, we encourage all of our members to consider providing additional support over the next few months. This additional support might be in the form of additional giving each Sunday or simply accelerating some of your giving to the next few months instead of the end of the year (when we have more members back from their Northern homes). Thank you for your consideration!

Richard Barber, Chair

## From the Thrift Shop

Since the first of this year we have purchased music for the choir, given \$2,000 to Habitat for Humanity, paid the repair bill for maintenance of the hand bells. Then we purchased a refrigerator for the church kitchen. After that we paid for tree removal. And, last but not least, we have given \$13,400 to go into the General Fund for operating expenses. Thanks to all the faithful volunteers that have made this possible. If you are able to help us out please call Lyn Smith.

## Pancake Breakfasts



United Methodist Men resume their monthly pancake breakfasts on Saturday, October 22, 8:00-11:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. Invite your friends and neighbors to join you for delicious pancakes, sausage, eggs and great fellowship!

## SPOTLIGHT ON: FOOD PANTRY MINISTRY

August is a busy time for the Food Pantry, summers usually see an increase in numbers and this year was no exception. During this month we gave 150 bags of food to those knocking on our door. We also track the number of "new" or first timers who come each month and in August we had 40 new people. We have spent \$912 buying grocery items and received generous donations from Ellenton, Palmetto Drive-In, and Terra Ceia United Methodist Churches.

The food pantry is open every Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9:30-11:30 a.m. and is manned by Barbara & Jim Cordwell, Jim Price, a volunteer from Drive-In Methodist, Terry Strawn, Jean Hensley, and myself, Cindy Minick. JoAnne Campbell and Yvonne Shaw make up the grocery bags each week while Jean and I do the grocery shopping. Noni Hammerstrand and Betty Sharp complete the team with their behind-the-scenes coordination of receiving food from our sister churches and always lending a hand when we are overwhelmed in the office.

Each grocery bag is made up of a box of cereal, a package of dry milk, lunch items such as peanut butter and jelly or soup and a can of

tuna. A main meal includes beef stew, or spaghetti and meat sauce, or tuna helper along with a can of fruit and vegetables. We also try to include a bag of rice and beans. Along with the food items, we add an Upper Room devotional book when they are available. While anyone over the age of 18 is welcome to receive a food bag, they must have a photo ID and are able to receive food once every 30 days.



Occasionally, we have donations outside of the normal food items such as paper goods from the Palmetto Women's Club and hamburger buns from Square One Restaurant. These are always a big hit and are warmly received, they are given out freely and not included in the bags.

The Food Pantry is a wonderful way to serve our community and I feel truly blessed to be a part of it. I have received lots of encouragement from fellow shoppers and cashiers when they see us with the great quantities of food and we tell of our Food Pantry here at Palmetto UMC. Anyone wanting to participate can call Cindy Minick at 580-6233 or the church office.

**The Worship Committee** met with Pastor Esther on August 5 to regroup and establish some guidelines for our purpose at FUMC...we discussed the issue of whether to continue with one worship service on Sundays or to revert back to two, thus the survey sheet that was in the bulletin. We will extend the one service through September of this year at least. Further input and opinions are still welcome!

We are planning a special service in regard

to the 10th Anniversary of 9/11 with further details to come. Our member Wendy Marble stated she was going to Lake Junaluska to obtain some more ideas for the upcoming season as we always enjoy her well thought out input!

Looking forward to the return of the "snow birds" and a reception luncheon for Pastor Esther Robinson sometime in October.

Gail Moulton, Chair



## It's time to *sing* Let the praises *ring!*

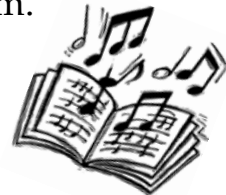
Worship music opportunities begin this fall.  
Come and join us!

### Chancel Choir

Weekly Rehearsal: Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.  
Starting on September 7.

Thank you for a wonderful summer of  
sharing God's message in song!

It's always an exciting time to start a new season.  
Serving Him with you. Mary Shields



### Wesleyan Handbells

Ready, Set, Ring!

Handbell Rehearsal: Tuesdays at 2:30 p.m.  
Starting on September 13

We hope you have all had a great summer  
and are ready to come back and ring.

People interested in ringing or learning how to ring  
contact Carolyn Brown through the church office.

Handbell members will attend a Fall Workshop  
in September with other handbell choirs.

We will ring some new music as well as getting  
to know other ringers in this area.

Great fun! Great music!

You are invited to join our choir in celebrating  
the love of Christ through music.

Carolyn & David Brown.





## United Methodist Men

The UMM meet for weekly Fellowship Breakfasts on Thursday mornings at 7:00 a.m., at Popi's IV on Hwy. 301 N. in Ellenton. All men are welcome...young, old and all in between!

The annual Men's Spiritual Retreat is scheduled for October 7-9, 2011 at the Life Enrichment Center in Leesburg, Florida. This year's Spiritual Focus is *As for Me and My House, We Will Serve the Lord*, from Joshua 24:15. This retreat is designed to renew and equip men for ministry and service. The weekend will include a variety of

enrichment discussion groups, free time options of sports activities, horseshoes and canoeing. Football fans will enjoy watching college football on the 7 foot big screen in the Gold Room during Saturday afternoon free time. Registration begins at 3:00 p.m. on Friday evening and ends on Sunday morning following breakfast and worship.

For more information see George Strawn or contact the church office.



## GLORY GROUP WELCOMES YOU!

I am looking forward to our First Glory Group meeting of the fall on September 26 at 6:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. This meeting will be pot luck, so please bring a dish to pass. Husbands are invited to attend as well!

For those of you who have not been to a Glory Group meeting, let me tell you a little about us. The Glory Group was founded over 50 years ago. This is a women's group. Our focus is to care for God's children in their time of need. We do this by delivering food for families at Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Spring Break. We also adopt families from Palmetto Elementary at Christmas,

providing them with gift of toys and clothing.

At our meetings we have a time of fellowship and devotion. We have programs led by our members. My favorite times with the group are when we are working together packing food bags or shopping for children. These times are when relationships are made with the other women. We are the hands and feet of Christ in our community.

Please join us at our first meeting. We would love to have you!

Sincerely,

Bethany Foil

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions: [darrinfoil@yahoo.com](mailto:darrinfoil@yahoo.com) or 941-730-7160.



Interested in ushering/greeting?

Contact:

Bob Marble - 722-1064

Kathy Johnson - 722-8415 (10:45 service)

Ken Maynard - 723-2516 (8:30 service)

## A New Shipment of Wesley Bears Has Arrived

These bears will sit in our Sanctuary to hear the beautiful music from our choir and special piano solos. They will be very attentive during Rev. Robinson's sermons. They may even get voluntary hugs from our members. Take one of these special bears home with you for just \$10! Place your



donation in a pew envelope and mark it "Bears". Then pass these little furry blessings on to someone who is shut-in, ill, or even celebrating a special day. We have gotten great compliments from many who have received their bear brothers. For more information call Sheron Bundy at 941-723-7854.

## ***We wish a Happy Birthday in September to . . .***

9/4 - Ella Crossman, Dickey Stuckert  
 9/5 - Jeannette Rinehart, Betty Smith  
 9/8 - Dianna Ward  
 9/9 - Connie Houser  
 9/12 - Sharon Grobaker  
 9/13 - Kristyn Moore, Jerry Quesenberry  
 9/15 - Linda Gibel, LeeAnn Russo  
 9/17 - Bethany Foil  
 9/18 - Kirk Atkins

9/19 - Ann Thomas  
 9/20 - Ted Minick, Marge Trees  
 9/21 - Virginia Reed  
 9/23 - Laura Troxell  
 9/24 - Irene King  
 9/25 - Ed Gibel, Rev. Esther Robinson,  
 Zach Perrin  
 9/27 - Erling Wittrock  
 9/29 - Bettie Wadsworth

## ***Celebrating Wedding Anniversaries in September . . . .***

9/8 - M/M Rick Thomas  
 9/18 - M/M Neil Van Der Jagt  
 9/21 - M/M Clem Stiving

9/24 - M/M Tom Lacher  
 9/25 - M/M Jerry Quesenberry  
 9/29 - M/M Sidney Thomas



*Many thanks to Sue Revell and all of her 4th of July volunteers for spending a warm afternoon in the church parking lot. Once again, FUMC-Palmetto offered parking to members of the community who came to watch the annual fireworks display. Some of the volunteers, pictured with Sue Revell (standing), are Doug Shaw, Jeannette Quesenberry, Hazel Ford, Carolyn Brown, and Jim Conklin (seated). Proceeds went to support the ministries of the church.*



First United Methodist Church  
**PALMETTO**

330 11th Avenue West  
Palmetto, FL 34221

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U.S. Postage  
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*Return Service Requested*

*We are instruments of God called to be neighbors in this community and world through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ based on quality worship, spiritual growth, and effective service.*

*Sunday Morning Unity Worship: 9:30 a.m. ~ Sunday School at 10:45 a.m. ~ Nursery Care Available*

Senior Pastor  
Rev. Esther L. Robinson  
Music Director/Organist  
Mary Shields  
Pianist  
Michele Jurgensen  
Administrative Assistant  
Noni Hammerstrand  
Receptionist  
Betty Sharp  
Custodian  
Lyn Smith  
Nursery Care  
Rebecca Staples

Church Office Hours:  
8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
12:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Monday - Thursday  
Phone: (941) 722-1812

Email:  
fumcpalmetto@yahoo.com

website:  
www.fumcpalmetto.org

In Remembrance of  
**Sept.**



Mark Your October Calendar:

Church Conference

Sunday, October 16, 4:00 p.m.

All members welcome!