

TO THE POINT

www.fumcpalmetto.org

June 15, 2011

The Long Hello

by Esther Robinson

I am so glad to finally be here (almost). I have been on a long journey to get to this place. True, I only learned a short 2 months ago that Palmetto is where the journey would bring me, but this leg of the journey began about a year ago when the Sr. Pastor at Coronado Community UMC, Bob Brown, went on a 4 month Renewal leave and put me in charge; little did I know that would leave me itching for more! I had been at a place in my life and ministry that I thought would go on forever. After 8 years, it seemed like my journey in ministry would play out in New Smyrna Beach.

So how did I arrive at Palmetto?

My father is partially responsible. My father is a retired United Methodist Pastor so my family moved regularly when I was a child. Believe it or not, I used to love moving. Everything and everyone was new and full of possibility. No more 'same old, some old.' There was a new house and, since I was the only girl, a new bedroom all to myself. I remember being shocked to learn that my best friend in middle school was devastated when we moved. One night, I found her sobbing in the girl's bathroom after youth group. My perspective changed after that.

Something happened as I matured. 'Same old, same old' seemed good to me. I lost the thrill of the new car smell. 'Predictability' and 'safety' became positive values. Moving to New Smyrna from Miami was one of the hardest things I've ever done. Part of the difficulty for me then was certainly culture shock, but I have to admit that a lot of it was plain, old discomfort with change. I was homesick a lot in the beginning.

Change is like that. It is hard work. Not something to take lightly. At the New Start seminar that all moving pastors were required to attend this year, I learned the difference

between change and transition. Change is something that happens to you, it is external, like the new bedroom of my childhood. Change can happen abruptly as when you move: one day you live here and the next, you don't.

Transition, on the other hand, is an internal process and takes much longer. I liken it to transplanting a tree. For the first little while the tree is in shock and you have to pay it extra attention and water regularly until the roots get established. I want to acknowledge that as we get to know each other you will be going through a transition every bit as much as I will. You've barely gotten to know Stephen and now I come along. It would be presumptuous of me to come in here and tell you to do things differently. For now, my plan is to visit with you, worship with you and listen as carefully as possible.

I shared with Sue Revell that the United Methodist appointment process is a lot like an arranged marriage, a practice which is alive and well in many places in the world. As out-dated as that seems, it turns out that we are not necessarily better at picking our own mates! Arranged marriages have a similar success rate to marriages where the parties choose one another. (In an aside, I am amazed at what the Conference undertakes to do every year; acting as parents who must find a satisfactory match for their 700 sons and daughters.)

My appointment to Palmetto was 'arranged' on one level, but it was a relationship I sought and feel well prepared for. Whatever the circumstances, we all have choices. We can approach our 'marriage' as something forced upon us which would not bode well for a long and harmonious partnership. Or, we could keep an open mind, give each other the benefit of the doubt and see where it leads. In other words, an adventure!

I want you to know that for me, marriage is for life. By that I mean that I am committed to being your pastor through thick and thin, better or worse, in sickness and in health. Whatever our differences and challenges, I promise to approach them as if we are family – because we are! I look forward to getting to know you, learning about your passion for ministry and where you sense God leading First UMC Palmetto.

In eager anticipation,

Pastor Esther

What are YOU doing on the 4th of July? On Monday, July 4th, the City of Palmetto and the Palmetto CRA (Community Redevelopment Agency) will host a great concert with vendors and activities in Sutton Park beginning at 5 p.m. the fabulous fireworks display will begin along the riverfront at 9 p.m. We have been asked to provide parking in our church lots for the many visitors and vehicles that will be coming for the festivities and fireworks. . .but we need some help. Will you consider helping to park cars from 4-8 p.m., or for as long as you can stay that day? Yes, it *will* be hot, and you *will* get sweaty, but this is really a great chance for us to demonstrate our church and community spirit and the funds raised will support the various ministries of our church. If you can help, please let Sue Revell or David Brown know. God Bless the USA!

Servant Ministry Opportunities:

- ◆ During the summer months when many of our northern friends are away there is a need for volunteers to help at the Thrift Shop. Please contact Lyn Smith, 746-6932 if you would like to be part of this important ministry.
- ◆ Our food pantry is in need of peanut butter and jelly donations this month.

Did you know? The United Methodist Men will continue to meet each Thursday morning at 7:00 a.m. at Popi's on Highway 301 North in Ellenton through June, July and August. All men are welcome and encouraged to attend. The monthly pancake breakfasts will resume in October. Also, so far this year the UMM have contributed to the Russo Prison Ministry, Salvation Army, Our Daily Bread, Sheriff's Youth Ranch, Food Pantry, Glory Group for food baskets, and the General Commission on United Methodist Men on the Scouting Movement for a total of \$1000.

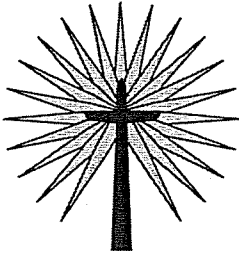


We wish a Happy Birthday in July to

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 7/1 - Roger Adams, Elvin Mahan | 7/17 - Virginia Smith |
| 7/3 - Doug Bloodworth | 7/19 - Ada Belle Flack |
| 7/4 - Joan Henbury, Jean Miller | 7/20 - Elwyn Adams |
| 7/6 - Donna Walwork | 7/21 - Marilynne Ramp |
| 7/10 - Lois Coy | 7/22 - Marge Stiving |
| 7/13 - Alice Reed | 7/30 - Catherine Adams, Bob Moulton |
| 7/14 - Lisa Clements | 7/31 - Jim Cordwell, Bill Cruise |
| 7/15 - Richard Pecht, Ed Throup | |

Celebrating Wedding Anniversaries in July

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|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 7/12 - M/M Tim Revell | 7/23 - M/M Dennis Bundy |
| 7/18 - M/M Richard Kroll | |



First United Methodist Church
PALMETTO
330 11th Avenue West
Palmetto, FL 34221

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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.

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

Senior Pastor
Rev. Stephen Hoffman
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.

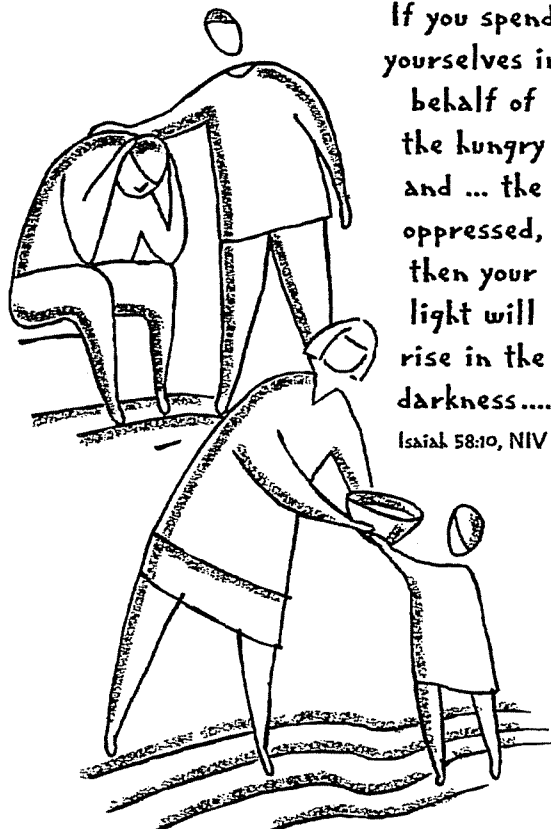
Monday - Thursday

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**If you spend
yourselves in
behalf of
the hungry
and ... the
oppressed,
then your
light will
rise in the
darkness....**

Isaiah 58:10, NIV