



TO THE POINT

*A letter from Rev. Stephen Hoffman,
Pastor of First United Methodist Church
of Palmetto*

www.fumcpalmetto.org

October, 2009

Dear Friends,

First of all, apologies for the tardiness of this letter. I am the culpable one here. It does seem that there is a lot going on - some scheduled, some not, some exciting and delightful, others not what we had hoped for, but, nothing that can separate us from the love of God. God *is* good, all the time!

Unity Sunday is 25 October

Our Church Conference will be Sunday, 25 October at noon in the Fellowship Hall. That Sunday we will have one worship service at 10:45 a.m. The 8:30 a.m. service will not be held that week.

This year our District Superintendent Rev. John Powers will be here to preside. The various committees of the church are diligently preparing their reports. It will not be a long meeting but these will be the highlights:

1. I am asked to report on “Where I see God at work in and through our church — our challenges and opportunities.
2. Membership statistics will be shared including average worship attendance. This year a very thorough audit of membership is being done. It is also a concern that the number of people in worship has decreased during the year.
3. The Chair of our Church Council, Mr. Tim Mercurio will report on “How our church is living one of the 5 practices of the Methodist Way.” Tim has a servant heart, and we are blessed with his leadership. He will report on “Salty Service” which is a strength of our church.
4. Several financial matters of the church are presented at Church Conference.
 - a. Clergy Compensation for 2010 is voted on. This is presented by Mrs. Sue Revell who serves as Chair of our Staff Parish Relations Committee. The SPRC has responsibility for all staff-related issues. The recommendation this year is that this portion of the church budget remain the same next year as it was this year. We are grateful for Sue’s commitment to serving in this capacity.
 - b. Connectional Giving will be reported by Mr. Rick Barber, our Finance Chair. Apportionments or Connectional Giving is the way every local United Methodist Church supports the mission of our global church. It is the same proportion for every local church based on how much is spent at the local church. Thus it is truly a “fair share.”

For a number of years this church has not paid all its apportionments. Rick Barber serves very effectively keeping us on even keel. We can all be grateful for his leadership. We also anticipate that the full budget for 2010 will be presented.

5. Ministers of the Church. The Lay Leadership Committee is working on identifying people to serve on various committees in the church. The work of these administrative committees is vital for the stability of our church. Some of the work may appear routine and at times difficult issues need to be engaged so I understand why some may prefer to decline to serve, but our church will be vital in ministry in direct proportion to our faithfulness in these areas. These leaders will be elected.

We are blessed with a dedicated corps of liturgists and lay speakers in our church. Each of them is accountable to our Church Conference so each year they request that their certification be continued. This will be presented for approval as well.

Each of these items are important so I hope you will show your support for the leadership of our congregation's ministry by your presence on 25 October.

I am especially grateful for those who regularly attend 8:30 a.m. service making the effort to be present at 10:45 a.m.

United Methodist Men

The United Methodist Men are preparing to attend the Men's Retreat at the Life Enrichment Center in Leesburg. We have six men attending. Also, Bob Marble has let us know that he is distributing the devotional books we sent to Baghdad. Every Thursday morning Bob has a breakfast of oatmeal in solidarity with us gathering at Popi's IV. We will be glad when he returns home.



NOOMA Group Meets Sunday at 6:00 p.m.

We have a good group meeting to grow our faith on Sunday evenings for NOOMA. We will not meet on 18 October but will meet on 25 October. The theme for the 25th will be *KICKBALL— We think that we know what it is that will make us really happy. We use “if only” thinking. If only I had that car; if only I had that job; if only I could lose 15 pounds; then I could be happy. Really? Do we really trust God? Do we trust that God is good and sees a bigger picture*

than we ever could? It is easy to want what is right in front of us, but perhaps God has a wider perspective that we just can't see.

Mission Teams Lead Worship

On 27 September Dickey Stuckert, Sandy Davis, Lisa Edington and Daniel Soules led a spirit-filled worship service. On Monday evening they gave an expanded program for the Glory Group. An important development is that our Church Council has agreed to sponsor a Mission Team in 2010. The dates will be July 12-19. Please pray about joining this team. We are inviting others from our community to join us.

The “**Christianity and the Environment**” study has met for four sessions. We feel as if we have just scratched the surface of this vital dimension of our lives so we will continue to meet beginning Wednesday 14 October. This group is working on a Creation Care Covenant to be adopted by our Church Council.

It's a joy to serve Christ with you!

Grace and peace,

Stephen

From the Worship Committee: Over the summer we commissioned David Cohen of Forms in Sculpture of Sarasota to refinish all of the brass altar ware throughout the church as it was all in failing condition. He has done a marvelous job with that project! Also, there were remaining funds in the paraments account and that prompted the ordering of pastoral stoles to match the new cloths for the Sanctuary. It is very pleasing to have that project go so well! Thank you to all involved! Blessings to all, Gail Moulton, Chair.



Glory Group Cookbooks: *Did you know?* The Glory Group conceived, gathered material and had printed the Church Cookbook as a **historical document** celebrating the **125th Anniversary of the First united Methodist Church of Palmetto**. It has a dated history of the church, Thrift Shop, and the Glory Group. The book is titled “Glorious Delights” and contains favored recipes submitted by over 100 persons from the church community. the proceeds from the sale of this book will be used by the Glory Group for relief of families in the Palmetto area. Copies are available after the Sunday services and through the church office. The price is \$20 each.



A message from your Staff Parish Relations Committee: Did you know that October is *Clergy Appreciation Month*? While this is appropriate to observe every month of the year, we invite each of you to join us in expressing appreciation and celebrating the work of our Pastor Stephen and Christine in your own personal way. A simple card, an invitation to lunch, a promise of continued prayers and encouragement are just a few suggestions, however each individual gift of your kindness, expression of love or service, no matter how large or small is appropriate.

Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing. But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labor among you, and have charge of you I the Lord and admonish you; esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. 1 Thessalonians 5:11-13.



New Member Sunday: We will receive new members on October 18. You are warmly invited to become part of our church family. There are several ways to join: Profession of Faith, transfer of membership, or by shared member where you may also retain membership in another congregation as well. Please contact Rev. Hoffman if you are interested.



The Glory Group would like to thank everyone who supported their Penny Walk this summer. They raised \$440.67 and walked a half mile. Now they're getting ready for their Trash & Treasure Sale. Clean out your closets and bring your items to them. You may put them in the Fellowship Hall against the wall. If you would like to have your donations picked up please call the church office and someone will come to get it. The sale will be November 14, the same day as the United Methodist Men's Pancake Breakfast. The group will make peanuts on November 7, at 9:30 a.m. in the church kitchen. They can use all your help. Come and join them.



United Methodist Men: Fall is here and the United Methodist Men are ready to serve you and our neighbors the best breakfast in town! This year we will be serving on the 4th Saturday of the month instead of the 3rd — except for November. On November 14 we will serve our breakfast in conjunction with the Glory Group's Trash & Treasure Sale. Serving times are 8:00-11:00 a.m. Any questions, please call Harry Doyle, 729-7105.

Food Pantry Ministry: Many thanks to everyone, including Terra Ceia UMC, Drive-In UMC and Ellenton UMC, for donating peanut butter and jelly for our altar on World Communion Sunday. Special mention goes to Ellenton UMC for giving 90 jars of peanut butter and 70 jars of jelly! In September we distributed 134 bags as the demand continues to increase. Please keep this ministry in your prayers.

We want to take this opportunity to recognize Donna Walwork for her service to our Food Pantry. This ministry continues because of her dedication and inspiration. For many years she did all the shopping and prepared all the bags. Thanks to her thriftiness by saving coupons and bargain shopping she was always able to make the most of our resources while providing healthy meals for those in need. Thank you and God bless you Donna for your service!

Currently we are pleased to have Jodi Adams, Jean Hensley, Cindy Minick, Betty Sharp and Terri Strawn volunteering their time. And...there's always room for more. If anyone is interested in joining this ministry please call the church office. Don't have time to volunteer? You can still help. When you buy groceries at Publix or SweetBay and see a "buy one, get one free" sale on non-perishable food items, pick one up for yourself and bring the second one to the church. We also need your financial support to keep the pantry stocked. Thank you!



We wish a Happy Birthday in October to

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| 10/2 - Lindsey Gordon | 10/15 - Martin Lawson |
| 10/5 - Frank Wolfe, Jr. | 10/19 - Ruth Leonard |
| 10/8 - Jacob Elston, Linda Kubecka, Mickey
Sepa | 10/20 - Coby Gaulien |
| 10/9 - Ted McClary | 10/21 - Penny Roberts |
| 10/10 - Jacob Courtney | 10/23 - Roberta Greiner, Annabel Russo |
| 10/12 - Jane Touchton | 10/24 - Jean Swihart |
| 10/13 - Marie Shelley, Bill Thomas | 10/27 - Mick McCormack, Bob Thompson |
| 10/14 - Ralph Jones, Kurt Thoreson | 10/28 - Newt Greiner |
| | 10/29 - David Marble, Ken Maynard |

We wish a Happy Anniversary in October to

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 10/12 - M/M Clay Thomas | 10/20 - M/M Lee Bandeen |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|



First United Methodist Church
PALMETTO

330 11th Avenue West
Palmetto, FL 34221

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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 Worship: 8:30 & 10:45 a.m. ~ Sunday School at 9:30 a.m.

TOMORROW

Do not look forward to what might happen tomorrow.
The same God who cares for you today
Will take care of you and yours tomorrow and every day.
Either God will shield you from suffering
Or God will give you unfailing strength to bear it.
Be at peace then and put aside
All anxious thoughts and imaginations.
— *St. Francis de Sales*



Senior Pastor
Rev. Stephen Hoffman
Music Director/Organist
Mary Shields
Pianist
Michele Jurgensen
Administrative Assistant
Noni Hammerstrand
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