



FIRST

VISIONS

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*"Happy Trails, to you...  
Until we meet again...!"*



Roy Rogers was my first hero... and in a way first heroes are always the best. Of course, I knew I was "spoized" to have Jesus for a hero, but he was, you know, God and everything. We could NEVER be like God... but maybe, with God's help, we could be a little bit like Roy.

And so, good people of FUMC, I have tried to be a little bit like Roy Rogers among you for these past two and a half years. I've sung my songs and told my stories, and tended your young'uns, and et some brownies, and had some good laughs, and sat on the porch whittlin' with the other ol' geezers, like me. I even got to drive "Nellie Belle" one time...!

(Translation, for those city slickers who don't talk Cowboy: Thanks, people of God in this place, for letting me proclaim the Gospel in your midst... for letting me open the doors of my heart to you, that the Word that Lives in Us All might soar back and forth between us and lift us all up... for entrusting me with the care of the youth group people and the little children, and the adults who are working in earnest to create and enliven their lives... for the Resurrection Class and the Cross-cultural Ministry Class and the other things you let me do.... Thanks for reaffirming in me God's word that I am able to serve in the Coming of the Kingdom. Thanks for doing your part in helping me to stand up straight again. Thanks for honoring me with your attention and your reflections, your strong word for the soul.)

The time has come now for me to wave and ride off into the sunset, to whatever adventures and perils and narrow

escapes and redemptions that God has in mind for me, next time around. My last day here will be October 30th.

May God grant that good memories of me remain with you, and that my many mistakes and defects may fade away from your minds like evening clouds.

May God grant you to know that you all go with me, in my heart, and that you may hear in the Still Place Within you that God is well-pleased with each of you all for your contributions to my re-entry into the formal "Family of God." And if it comes to pass that you regret anything, remember these two things: first, that it is in our weaknesses that God's strength is please to become real... and second, that in the Bible it always says, "and it came to pass..." and never once says, "And it came to stay."

So, may your joys and fondness dwell, and let all else slip away. May you trust now and always that God is doing for you and for us all that which we cannot do for ourselves. "This is the truth."

"Grace and grins, no matter what...!"

*Michael*

MYF--  
Halloween & Beyond

by Rachel Ortiz

MYF has been busy the last few weeks diligently planning the Halloween Carnival. The MYF Halloween Carnival will be Sunday October 30, 2005 from 5:30-7:00 in the Fellowship Hall. There will be games, prizes, food, and a lot of fun, hope to see all of you there. We do still need a few volunteers, both youth and adult. If you would like to volunteer for any aspect of the carnival please contact a MYF Youth Sponsor. We are also needing candy donations and baked goods for our Cake Walk. There is a box in the entry way for collecting candy and all baked goods will be accepted anytime on Sunday October 30. Thank you all ahead of time for all your support.

As many of you all know MYF is in the beginning of the planning stages to repaint the Sr. High Room. We held a vote on Sunday, October 9 and the vote was to NOT paint over the "Fish Mural". Any new MYF members wishing to add a new sea creature are strongly encouraged to and you will need to contact Jana Beery for more information on adding to the wall. Discussion, planning,

and painting plans will begin in November.

MYF is taking a short mission trip to Albuquerque. We will be traveling to the Albuquerque Rescue Mission on Saturday, November 19. We will be helping the Mission sort through the over abundance of canned goods they will begin receiving and then we will help serve dinner to those less fortunate. If we have a significant number of youth who would like to stay over night in Albuquerque and attend service at God's Way Community Church, we will make arrangements for rooms and such. If you are interested in attending this mission trip please contact a MYF Youth Sponsor. Plans are currently under way for a week long Summer Mission Trip to Loveland, CO in either June or July. Please watch for more info.

MYF sponsors are currently trying to create a MYF database so that we can keep all MYF aged youth caught up with what is going on. If you are not currently receiving the weekly updates for MYF and would like to please send on email to Rachel Ortiz at rachel\_ortiz@earthlink.net requesting to be added to our current list.



Irene Bubernak was presented the UMW Special Mission Recognition pin by Mada Jones during church on October 2. This pin is given to a person who has given special services to our church. Irene has served as an outstanding Sunday School teacher, as teacher in the extended sessions for children, and has beautified our gardens for years. She is indeed a very special person.

## Minutes of the LAFUMC Council Working Meeting

Sunday, October 9, 2005

The meeting was held at Don Casperson's home and refreshments were provided. Louise Mendius chaired the working meeting.

Susan Nava opened the meeting with prayer. No attendance was taken at the meeting; however, a quorum was present with 18 members present.

### Children's Sunday School

The Children's Sunday School was discussed. The problems associated with Children's Sunday School include the fact that very few children attend and parental support is lacking. This past Sunday, the 5th/6th grade class had only three children present. Approximately 12-15 children total attend Sunday School at the present time.

A Rotational Model was put forth as a possible solution at the Council meeting in September. Alice Carter explained the model to members that had not been able to attend the September meeting. She stated that the subcommittee could not attend the Bethlehem Lutheran Church to observe the Rotational Model in action because the attendance at Sunday School was too low. The group will try again this next Sunday. There is also a woman in Illinois who would facilitate a workshop for the church at any time. A question was raised as to whether the 8 AM time for the Praise and Worship service should be changed. It was mentioned that families with small children find it difficult to be ready by 8 AM. Further discussion ensued and the following action items will be taken:

Action Item 1: Parents with elementary school age children will be contacted to ascertain why there is lack of interest in Sunday School.

Action Item 2: An informational video on the Sunday School Rotational Model will be obtained for review by the Council, the Sunday School Superintendent, and all other interested parties. A date will be chosen and all church members will be invited to view the video.

Action Item 3: The Rotational Model trainer will be contacted and asked to do a Rotational Model workshop at the Church. All Church members will be invited.

Action Item 4: Council members will begin sharing the

"Rotational Model" vision with congregation with the goal of encouraging people to become teachers.

Action Item 5: Council members, along with the Youth Group Sponsors, will involve the parents of youth group in the Sunday School Planning process.

Action Item 6: A group including the Chair of Christian Growth, the Sunday School Superintendent, and the Program Director will begin formulating a relevant Sunday School program for parents of young children in our Church to go along with the Rotational Model.

Action Item 7: The interactions between the physical classroom needs of the Rotational Model and the needs of the ARK must be carefully studied. All relevant parties will be included in the planning process for use of the rooms.

### Youth Group Program Status

Youth Sponsor, Rachel Ortiz discussed the status of the youth group programs and mentioned that she is encouraged that the turnout is greater than last year. The clique problem seems to be mostly solved. There are youth from the Valley attending and participating in the program. The Wednesday night program, while eliminating some youth, seems to make it possible for others to attend. The Council is ready to support whatever the MYF group needs.

### IMPACT Program

Pastor Barry Dickens and Mission Co-Chair Susan Nava presented the "Impact for Girls" program. There are 16 High School age girls already enrolled in the 18 possible slots for the new session. This program teaches young women how to avoid possible situations from which physical attacks and rape might result. Barry mentioned that it took an end run around the High School administration to make this happen.

Action Item 1: Barry, Susan, Louise, and Communications Chair Jim Little will write a story for the Los Alamos Monitor about this program.

### Finance Campaign

Finance Chair David Janecky reviewed the financial situation of the Church, stating that we are approximately \$45K behind the budget projections for this time of the year. He and Alice Carter (Stewardship Committee Chair) stated that

plans are under way for the finance campaign. The Council Chair encouraged all committee chairs to attend the Stewardship Committee meetings. She stated that it is necessary for the leadership of the church to take the lead in stewardship and all committees are affected.

### Evangelism

One member mentioned that recently a family who had been visiting the Church decided to join another local church congregation. When asked, the family stated that they had requested a call several times and no one called. Barry will address this issue and all other visitation issues. He will get with the Evangelism Committee to see what can be done to make sure that this kind of thing does not happen again.

### Connected-In-Christ

A special working meeting of the Council on October 23rd to review progress and complete another workshop. The CIC planning will eventually lead to a vision and road map for the future of our church.

### Sexual Abuse Policy

ARK Director Carol Meade reported that the ARK staff is reviewing and developing procedures for background checks for all new hires, especially with regard to sexual and physical abuse issues. She stated that these procedures will be available to the Council when we start discussing the procedures and policies for background checks for all people involved with the children of the Church. The Council Chair reminded the Council that these procedures and policies will be discussed at the next Council meeting.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, the meeting was adjourned. The next business meeting of the Council will be November 6 at 6 p.m. in the Friendship Center.

Respectfully submitted by  
Jim Little and Louise Mendius

## Ark Activities

Making health kits for hurricane victims



Learning about fire-fighting and fire prevention

## October 2, 2005 A Busy Day



World Communion Sunday was observed during church as members shared parts of the service in other languages.



UMW provided a great dinner after church and before the work of our charge conference began.



Reverend Jim Hawk, our new district superintendent, and his wife, Jean, joined us for dinner to reminisce with us.

# We Witness

## Our Church Vows

We will be loyal to the United Methodist Church and uphold it with our prayers, presence, gifts and service.

## Our Prayers

There are many, many prayer needs in our church family and community. The caring board by the church office is filled to overflowing, and there are too many prayer needs to put in this space

without leaving out some other equally important needs. Having the complete prayer list is as simple as sending your email address to the church office and asking to be placed on the email list for prayer needs.

## Our Presence

An account of October attendance will follow in November 4th's edition of *First Visions*.

# Special October Days



## Birthdays:

Mader, Emma Jean 10/01  
Sollid, Jon 10/01  
Hundley, Michael 10/02  
Jackson, Doris 10/02  
Ricketts, Matthew 10/02  
Hoffman, Nels 10/04  
Carter, Alice 10/05  
Courtright, Geniece 10/08  
Balog, George 10/12  
Rousculp, Susannah 10/12  
Goldman, Peggy 10/13  
Hoffman, Sarab 10/14  
Zickert, Don 10/14  
Barefield, James 10/15  
Collom, Gerald 10/18  
Lloyd, Jane 10/18

Hodgson, Susan 10/20  
Trimmer, Ray 10/20  
Leschnitzer, Ella 10/22  
Trimmer, David 10/25  
Blackadar, John 10/26  
Sheppard, Daniel 10/26  
Sheppard, Diana 10/26  
Potter, Edith 10/27  
Ramsey, Herman 10/28  
Scudder, Dave 10/29  
Wooten, John 10/29  
Knapp, Charles 10/30

## Anniversaries:

October 8  
Fred & Hazel DeVries,  
October 10  
Lee & Jan Weinland

The next edition of *First Visions* will be dated  
November 4.

The deadline for articles is Wednesday, October 26.

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Youth and Education ~ Michael Ross  
Choir Director ~ Sarah Kelly  
First Visions Editor ~ Jan Stong

**Ark Child Development Center**  
Carol Mead, Director  
(505) 662-4822

**Sunday Services & Activities**  
8:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship  
9:15 a.m. Sunday School  
10:30 a.m. Traditional Worship

**Wednesday Activities**  
Chancel Choir 7 p.m.

**United Skates, Friday evenings**  
First Session 5:00-6:45 p.m. for children third grade and younger, \$2.00 includes skate rental  
Second Session for third grade and up, \$2.50 includes skate rental



# Our Applause

Thank you, Don Siebe, Louise Mendius, and Mark Hodgson for placement/direction for the new spotlights.

Dr. Kongolo was hosted in Los Alamos by Cathy and Tito Hinojosa. We give many thanks to them, to Terry Anderson, who coordinated Dr. Kongolo's

visit, and to Michael Ross, who translated for him.

Our other missionary, Kathy Burton Lewis, missionary from Japan, was hosted by Opal Lee and Dennis Gill. Thank you for all your work.

We offer thanks to the UMW, who provided an enchi-

lada dinner for Jim & Jean Hawk and everyone at the Charge Conference.

Kudos to Cathy Hinojosa, who was substitute secretary and Charge Conference booklet compiler, and to Cydne Urbina, who compiled two weeks of bulletins.

# What You Do Tells Everyone Who You Are

by Michael Ross

"You... who are you?" Dr. Kongolo asked us, October 2nd, in our sanctuary.

With his pure and energetic heart, he answered his own question by affirming us so profoundly, so graciously, telling us again and again that we are Children of God who, along with many others, have been fulfilling the Great Mission that Jesus has given us, to "go into ALL nations, and make disciples." He told us that by putting our seemingly small amounts into the plate, decade in and decade out, we have borne much "fruits of Mission" in Katanga Province of the Congo, changing the lives of so many people.

And so, in that same context—that of seeing ourselves as chosen by God for a specific mission, and then equipped and sent out on that mission—here is a little "Kongolo-like" tale: In 1962, the unrecognized Word of the Lord came to a six-year-old boy living near Mulungwishi, Katanga, saying: "You, go to school now. Learn French. I have an important job for you, forty-three years from now. You will return My thanks to some Methodists living on the other side of the world, called New Mexico." And in the same year, the same Word of God came to another boy, aged 16, living in Hobbs, New Mexico, saying, "You, enough with the learning Spanish already! Switch to French. I have an important job for you to do, forty-three years from now."

And so it was that, since age 16, I have been able to speak French well, and never until recently had any idea what that gift was "for." But this "gift of tongues" enabled me to be the person who met Dr. Kongolo, the messenger of the Lord from Katanga, at 5 different Methodist churches. And so I heard him say not only the word of "thanks" but also bit by

bit began to see the broader picture of the situation in the United Methodist Church of Katanga, Congo.

It is a beautiful, dancing, joyous image of the powerful moving work of the Holy Spirit lifting people up. Converts to Christianity (in the Methodist tradition) have gone from 20,000 in 1960 to 450,000 today. There is amazing dedication: pastors serve in "out-back" conditions for salaries of \$10 per month... applications by students for positions at the seminary number 400 for only 8 or 10 vacancies each year... doctor's level university-trained seminary professors, who are much in demand in the "First



World" and could be making a comfortable living elsewhere, instead return to Mulungwishi and make not much more than the local pastors do. It is a joyful dance of the Spirit that has only just begun. Already, "it is enough," and the people are complete. And yet, there is much more that can be done. Do we "hear" this calling?

In answer to a question at Harwood UMC, Kongolo said he and his family eat meat—by which he means poultry that they themselves raise in a little pen at his parsonage—once or twice a month. At St. Paul's UMC, he carefully put 15 or so pieces of "corn candy"—his first time ever to taste them—into a

paper napkin, to take home to his children (10,000 miles and 3 weeks' work away).

At our very last time together—and again, he did not volunteer the information, because he never wants to appear to be asking for anything more than what is offered—yet when he was being questioned over lunch, this is what he talked about, quietly. One of his daughters has been trying to enroll at Perkins, but the right kinds of scholarships seem not to be available. She has this deep longing to study Christian Education, and take that ministry back to the joyous and brand-new church—the Body of Christ in Katanga. The Sunday School programs are so rustic, and yet there is such a thirst among the women and children for the Waters of Life from Jesus....

Each time he introduced Dr. Katanga, Former DS Terry Anderson thanked FUMC and Barry in particular for "lending" me to this project, and asked me to carry that "thanks" back to you all. So, indeed, "Thank you, FUMC and Barry," for allowing me to serve the UMC as part of the Body of Christ in this place. But in truth it is I who thank you, and God, for allowing me to be so close, so many times, to the inspiration and the joy that Kongolo brings from his church to ours.

"A saint," said a little boy in Sunday School class one time, is "someone the Light shines through." He was referring to the stained glass windows... and to people like yourselves, O Saints of First United Methodist Church... and to people like Dr. Kongolo of the UMC of Katanga, Congo.

"You... who are you?" The Children of God.