



FIRST

VISIONS

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Barry's Corner

Pastor's
Report



"The Rule of Hospitality"

This coming Sunday will be our monthly celebration of the Lord's Supper. Our sharing together at the Lord's Table is familiar to most of us, but an article I read this week by Jeff Smith gave me a new insight which you might appreciate.

Long ago when the Israelites were wandering nomads, there arose in the desert the "Rule of Hospitality." While it's not defined clearly in Scripture, it is referred to many times and in many ways. When the two angelic visitors wandered into Abraham's camp, for example, Abraham immediately invited them to sit at his table and eat. Abraham wasn't just being polite, he was following the Code of the desert.

This Code of the desert was simple. If a stranger wandered into your desert camp, you were obligated to feed him at your table no matter how little food you had - even if the stranger turned out to be your enemy!

The people of the Bible had a clear concept of the table. This code meant that whenever you were at the supper table there could be no enemies present. Not one. Eventually being at table with another person meant that you were saying to that person that you could not and would not ever see him or her as an enemy. As a result, the table became a place for the celebration of all pacts, promises, and genuine intimacy. To be at table with someone in Biblical times was to be socially intimate and was the fullest and most important symbol of close personal sharing.

Today it is much the same. You and I are the lost strangers

wandering in the desert. But when we stumble into God's camp He welcomes us. He provides rest from our weariness, shade from the burning heat, a cool and refreshing drink of living water, and an honored place at His Table where no one is ever an enemy.

We might ask ourselves, "Does He not know who I am? How can God do this when I have openly disobeyed Him? At times blatantly worked against Him? Behaved at times as His enemy? Doesn't He know how I have wronged Him?"

Yes, God knows all these things. But God lives by the Code of the desert, a code we today call "Grace." This is what the Lord's Table is all about. It's a place of acceptance, of forgiveness, of genuine intimacy, of close personal sharing, of celebration and renewal.

The "Rule of Hospitality" is still being practiced today. I hope you'll wander in this Sunday and experience it for yourself.

Your servant,

Barry

Summer Camps News

Sacramento Methodist Assembly Newsletter

NEW At SMA This Summer

CLIMBING TOWER...
OUTDOOR BASKETBALL
COURT...

INDOOR VOLLEYBALL AND
BASKETBALL COURT...
NEW FLOOR IN CHAPEL!!

These are new facility improvements our youth and families will find at Sacramento Methodist Assembly this summer. The floor of Skipper's Hall has been retiled, as has the floor of Bishop's Chapel. The outside basketball court by the amphitheater has been resurfaced, and in May the SMA staff will construct a 42 foot high climbing tower to be ready for our summer camps! The tower construction will be supervised by Jody Holland, brother of Rev. Wesley Holland of Ft. Sumner.

This is a summer your youth will not want to miss, so get them signed up now for our camps: Senior highs come June 12-16, mid-highs June 26-30, 2nd-4th graders June 9-11, and 4th-6th graders July 10-14.

NEW SPECIAL CAMPS: Plan now for "GRAND CAMP," a new camp for grandparents and their grandchildren (age 10-17). Grand Camp will be held June 19-22 and will give grandparents free time as well as structured activities to share with their grandchildren without interference of TV or video games.

Also, a special "GROWN-UPS CAMP" is scheduled for

two different times this summer and fall: August 14-17 or September 18-21. "Grown-ups Camp" will give adult campers the opportunity to play golf, go sightseeing, take art or golf classes, take yoga, get massages, learn bird watching or astronomy, and just relax in the beautiful scenery of the Sacramento Mountains. Food will be great, and lodging in the new Forrest Lodge will be on a first-registered basis.

Also keep alert for other new specialty camps SMA staff are preparing: girls volleyball camp, girls basketball camp, girls fitness camp, boys fitness camp, and two "Thin Air Golf Camps." GOLF CAMPS will be the weeks of May 22-25 and September 11-14. Golfers will play four different mountain and high-desert courses in surrounding cities from Las Cruces to Ruidoso, to Roswell, to Cloudcroft.

Also available this summer is a PROJECT WORLDVIEW WORKSHOP the week of July 24-27. Project Worldview is a half-week educational event to help participants understand and refine their own values and beliefs about the world, and to relate them to the worldviews of family, friends, and others they associate with. Participants will use "The Worldview Kit" prepared by facilitators Stephen P. Cook and Janet M. Cliff.

For rates, registration, or more information about any of these camps, contact SMA at 1-800-667-3414.





Easter Preparation



*Followed by
Easter Egg Hunt*



Journey to True Financial Freedom Seminar

WHATEVER YOUR INCOME THIS SEMINAR WILL HELP YOU . . .

What You Can Expect

- Professional seminar led by a trained seminar instructor from Crown Financial Ministries
- You'll receive a seminar syllabus which contains forms which can help you formulate a budget
- 6-7 hour seminar, 8 sessions, 2-3 breaks, and lunch
- You'll learn biblical principles of money management and tips for practical application

Who should attend?

Adults and teens who are interested in learning what the Bible says about managing your money and those who want instruction on developing and living by a budget.

At the Seminar, You Can Learn How to

- Make financial decisions according to God's principles
- Detect the hazards that lead to financial problems
- Discern wrong attitudes that may be a hindrance to your spiritual life
- Be encouraged as you learn how others have applied the principles

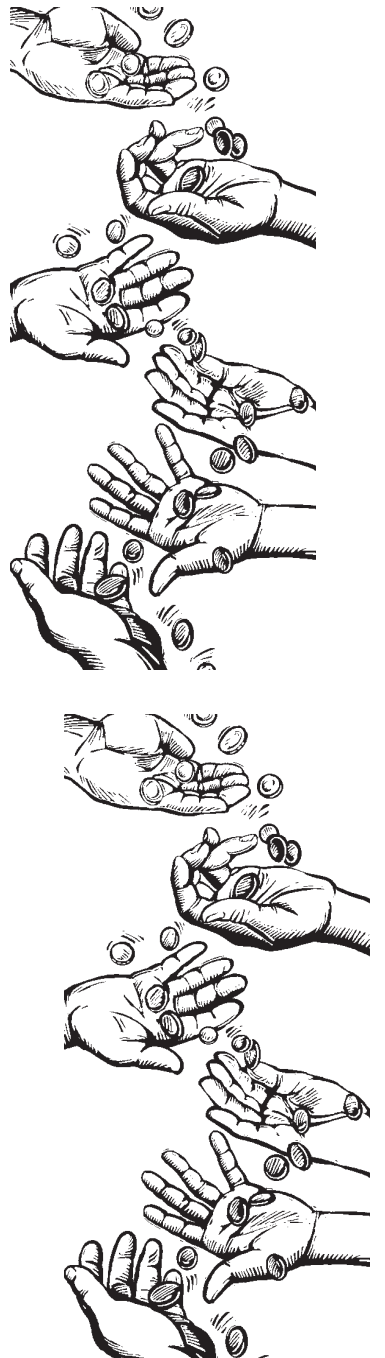
Whatever Your Age or Income, This Seminar Will Help You to

- Start on the road to financial freedom
- Establish a workable, personal financial plan
- Live a debt-free life
- Improve communications with your spouse
- Become "free to serve" as God directs

Seminar Topics

- What the Bible says about money
- The reality and Impact of debt on our society
- How God uses money in our lives
- The vision of financial freedom
- Developing the financial plan and avoiding the problem areas
- Practical steps to avoid or get out of debt
- Principles of giving

The Journey to Financial Freedom Seminar will be held here on May 20, 2006. It is an 8 hour Christian based seminar which will focus on helping participants to free themselves from the burden of debt and to be good stewards. The cost of the seminar is \$20.00 which includes material (scholarship money is available). Lunch will be provided at an additional charge. It is also our intent to provide child care for all attendees. Please pick up a brochure from the Kiosk and register early.



Graduating Seniors Brunch

We will honor our graduating seniors on May 14 with a brunch at 9:15 am in the Fellowship Center. Please call Jan at 662-6277 with names of seniors or to make reservations for your senior and your family!

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

Attendance at church on April 30th was 186.

Our Giving

Figures through April 30-- Ministry budget for 2006	\$475,000
Ministry gifts needed each week	9,134
Ministry gifts needed to date	164,402
Ministry gifts received to date	152,752

Special gifts received
to date for ministries
outside our budget 7,955

Trustees' Report

The Trustees are thankful for the generosity of the FUMC members in supporting the bond sale that benefitted the church. In addition they acknowledge the special gift that paid for the sanctuary lights.

However, the Trustees appeal to the members to support the church with their weekly giving in order that projects yet to be funded (parsonage renovation, Fellowship Hall roofing, heating improvements, etc.) can move forward. Moreover, we appeal to FUMC members to contribute their time and talents to the preparation of the parsonage for the new minister and his wife. Work days will be announced. We will need your help.

Ben Gibson,
President

Special May Days

Birthdays:

<i>Jana Beery</i>	05/02
<i>Fred DeVries</i>	05/03
<i>Hunter Eaton</i>	05/03
<i>Jason Trimmer</i>	05/04
<i>Tom Ricketts</i>	05/06
<i>Bob Malone</i>	05/09
<i>Rachel Taylor</i>	05/11
<i>Deborah Trimmer</i>	05/11
<i>Brent Collom</i>	05/12
<i>Ron Jones</i>	05/13
<i>Anna Parks</i>	05/19
<i>Susan Dickens</i>	05/24

<i>Sarah Ricketts</i>	05/26
<i>Kyle Beery</i>	05/27
<i>Walker Eaton</i>	05/29
<i>Angela Hodgson</i>	05/30

Anniversaries:

<i>May 21</i>
<i>Tom & Vicki Ricketts</i>
<i>May 23</i>
<i>Dale & Linda Leschnitzer</i>
<i>May 24</i>
<i>William & Carol Mead</i>

First United Methodist Church
called to:

Seek God,
Share Christ's Word,
Serve His World

The next edition of Visions will be dated May 19.
The deadline for articles is Friday, May 12.

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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
MYF Youth 6 pm
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

We would like to specially thank all those who stepped out of the house on Saturday morning and came by the church to help with our All-Church Workday. There was cleaning in every area of the church from the entryway all the way to the kitchen. The

sanctuary and Fellowship Hall received scrubbing as did the Friendship Center and the Library.

Thank you Louise Mendius, Terri Armstrong, Rod Douglass, Nels Hoffman, Mike Hundley, Pam Hundley, Francis Hundley, Val Hundley, Sarah Kelly, Bob

Malone, Lucy Malone, Mary Keller, Don Casperson, Gene Diedrich, Larry Rybarcyk, Sue Kinkead, Mike Pope, Kim Granzow, Carol Mead, Barry Dickens, and Susan Dickens.
Job Well Done!

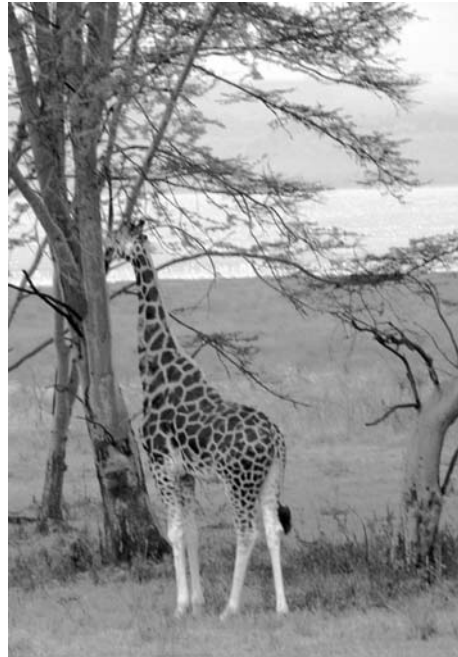
Journey to Africa (con't.)

by Aaron Goldman

CWS (Church World Service) has contributed heifers (pregnant cows) to farmers and helped in the construction of hay balers that are crude but effective. The balers consist of a wooden box about two feet longer than a standard bale set in a wooden tray. The box has a movable board in the back and two elongated poles attached in the rear, one horizontal and the other set in a 45 degree angle. Hay is dumped loosely in the box; then a person stands on the horizontal pole and pulls down on the other, squeezing the hay into a compact bale. Ropes that had been stretched out on the bottom are tied together completing a process that takes seven minutes. Waste of hay is minimized in these non-electric, no wash, hand-powered instruments that were invented by necessity to store food for the cow and calf that provide milk.

The brown fields that surround the farms would give despair to most people but Kenyans are an optimistic lot who keep a neat sense of humor and seem more concerned than worried. I commented that in Kenya just when you think things couldn't get any worse, they do. The laughter in response illustrates their sense of humor.

We left Kajaido early in the afternoon so that we could attend a Maasai Mart in Nairobi. This turned out to be an unforgettable experience that I would like to forget. The Maasai are Kenyans that live off the land and raise money from a type of flea market tightly congested on a Nairobi hillside. A narrow trail winds its way through tightly compacted Maasai selling their merchandise to people jammed so



close that visitors were either stepping on toes or on heels. Some overly friendly non-Maasai made themselves available to lead us through the mass of humanity and merchandise with the purpose of picking up goods that we would like to buy. When we finally got through the complex, our guide totaled up his suggested prices (much too high), and the bar-



gaining began. I wound up paying the equivalent of \$100 for a hand-crafted necklace, wooden tongs, and a painted cloth worth maybe \$20. We rationalized that we were helping the YMCA (their verbal beneficiary, subject to doubt) but the worst was yet to come. On the way back to the vans, agents hounded us with their clients' crafts. They pounded on the windows until our driver felt it safe to make a getaway.

After sweltering on a hot, dusty day over bumpy dirt and asphalt roads, I fought to stay awake while CWS managers who work in Kenya told of how CWS is trying to support water projects.

"I'm no longer the same
I'm no longer the same
You gave me a new life
Now I have a new life
And I'm no longer the same."

This song was presented by a Wanga Pilot School Choir. We visited the elementary school with an enrollment of 1,800 students that is wedged between a one acre garbage dump and Slum City. The Wanga Pilot Public School built in 1989 is partially funded by CWS and covers 10 acres. A six foot high wire fence that separates the dump from the school keeps the wild pigs and most of the vagrants who scrounge for food off the schoolyard and a security guard stationed at the entrance during daylight

hours keeps a semblance of protection for the youngsters. The ever present marabou storks, scavenger birds, patrolled the dump in great number. They have a wing span of nearly four feet and heads that look like Turkey Vultures with legs like storks.

Look for more of Aaron's report
in the next edition, May 19!