



FIRST

VISIONS

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## The Pastor Ponders



### "THE IMPORTANCE OF PASTORAL MINISTRY"

The following is an article I wrote some years ago. I deliberately bring it out now because it's appropriate that I share it with the people of LA-FUMC:

"Lucille was a reader. She was a retired schoolteacher, and she loved to read -- especially popular Christian literature, both fiction and non-fiction. Lucille also wanted her pastor to read what she read. Every week, sometimes twice weekly, she'd bring a book to me, always with a glowing report.

"Pastor, I just read this -- and you simply have to read it. It'll change your life."

The problem was, not that I didn't want to read, but I simply didn't have the time available to read -- certainly not at the rate Lucille read. She had little else to do but read; I didn't have that luxury. So the books she brought began stacking up on my desk. And Lucille grew increasingly frustrated with me. I repeatedly tried to explain to her that I didn't have the kind of time available for reading that she had, but she took my excuses as cover-up for lack of interest. After a year or so, she disgustingly stopped bringing me books altogether -- and became a largely inactive member of that church.

In every church I've served, there are ample numbers of folks who are passionate about something that, for them, is singularly important. And some of those same folks insist that their pastor become similarly enthralled with their particular fascination. Golfers want the

pastor to play golf with them -- three times or more weekly. Political activists want the preacher to get deeply involved in politics. Runners want the pastor to get up and run with them -- every morning at 6 AM.

Those who are involved in Christian parachurch ministries are often the worst of the lot in this regard. If they are dedicated to a cause, their preacher simply must join them. If they visit prisons, the pastor has to visit prisons, too. If they raise money for world hunger, the pastor better take a significant role there. If they volunteer at the YMCA, the preacher should be highly visible there as well.

In Romans 12, the apostle Paul reminds us that we each have differing gifts from God. And we therefore have differing interests -- and differing roles to play, both in the world and for the church. No one can, nor should, be expected to do it all.

If you're one of those passionate church members who insists that your pastor join you in your interests and pursuits, consider letting him off the hook. Maybe God has something else important for him to do -- like shepherding the flock."

*Dave Ring*

## Church Picnic

Many years we have celebrated the arrival of the school year and the approaching of fall with a picnic in the mountains. We decided to once again take the opportunity to get out in the beautiful mountain scenery of Camp May. What a wonderful excuse this is to talk with friends and hike in the surrounding area.

Please remember that there are no facilities at Camp May,

so make that one extra stop before you leave the church. Then, as you leave the church parking lot, you will turn right onto Diamond Drive. Continue over the bridge and turn right onto Highway 501 (W. Jemez). A reasonably short distance down W. Jemez, you will see a sign for the Pajarito Ski Area. Turn right onto this road and follow it past the ski area buildings. Camp May picnic area will be on the left hand side of the road. Look for the covered picnic area just past the ski hill parking lot.

Please join us on **August 27th** after second service for a picnic at Camp May for good fellowship and good food. Bring sandwiches for yourselves and a salad or dessert to share.



Egyptian Mummies  BlockBuilding  
See P. 5 for another



# Confirmation



## CLASSES

### TO BE OFFERED STARTING SEPT. 10TH

Pastor Ring is prepared to offer four sessions of Confirmation Classes for youth in grades six through nine. These will be offered on Sunday mornings during the Sunday School hour beginning on Sunday, Sept. 10th.

If you are a youth in that age range who has not yet been confirmed as a member of

Christ's Church, or if you are the parent of a youth who fits that profile, please contact Pastor Ring at the church office.

Older youth and/or adults who would like to receive confirmation training can be accommodated on an individualized basis. Call the church office, 662-6277, and talk to Pastor Ring.



## Flooding in Alamogordo

The following inspiring words were received from Rev. Steve Trout, regarding flooding which ravaged the Alamogordo area:

On June 22 massive flood waters tore through the southeastern part to Alamogordo severely damaging over 40 homes, several businesses and roads, inundating the cemetery and parks on that side of town. Several of Grace UMC's members were effected by the flood waters and the mud and debris. It was a wonder to behold the Church in action because of this disaster!

Many people rushed to the area, not to gawk, but to lend a hand where needed. At one parishioner's house over 30 people showed up to shovel 6-18" of mud from the house. The helpers ranged in age from 8-82. The house was emptied of ruined furniture, appliances, carpets, clothing, and etc., and then washed down to begin stripping the walls of ruined sheet rock. This task took one day! When this was winding down, many started looking for others who needed help. Several of Grace's members are contractors, and they started bringing in heavy equipment, trucks and small "bob cats" to carry away mud and debris from the flooded area.

Immediately the Church began raising money to help those who needed shelter, food, and clothing. Grace raised over \$14,000 in the first week after the flood and set up a distribution process with a volunteer, Shirley Foster, to coordinate the relief funds. We designated some of the homes as Volunteers in Mission projects for our teams. Because the Red Cross and Salvation Army have funds for immediate needs after disasters and were on sight soon after the flood, our funds are helping victims with construction grants to jump start rebuilding efforts.

The Conference Junior High Camp even got into the act and on Wednesday of that camp about 125 youth spread out over the devastated area to help clean up. They sent most of the youth to the cemetery. some went to individual homes. Another youth group from Lovington 1st UMC came and spent a week in cleanup duties. Grace feed the Jr Hi Camp and housed the group from Lovington.

To this day the Church is still distributing funds and lending a helping hand to those caught in the flood. I hope all the Churches in flood areas are able to do similar work in the name and power of Christ.

## Philip Yancey, Author

Our congregation has been invited to a series of talks by the noted author Philip Yancey. There will be a lecture on Friday evening, February 23rd, and a workshop/seminar on Saturday, February 24th at the United Church. It is truly a privilege and great opportunity to have Philip Yancey. He accepts few speaking engagements, concentrating primarily on his freelance writing on topics of faith and Biblical understanding.

In Philip Yancey's own words, "My books are a process of exploration and investigation. So I tend to tackle different problems related to faith, things of concern to me, things I wonder about and worry about." Yancey writes with a journalist's eye for detail, irony, and honest skepticism. He is well known for his books, including *The Jesus I Never Knew*, *What's So Amazing about Grace?*, *Where is God When It Hurts?*, (with Dr. Paul Brand) *Fearfully and Wonderfully Made*, and *In His Image*.

The cost of the Saturday seminars will be \$35.00 per person, which includes lunch and refreshments. The Friday

evening session will be without charge. More information and arrangements will be forthcoming. Registration forms will be made available in December and the United Church asks that responses be made as soon as possible. Please Note February 23rd and 24th, 2007 on your calendar

### Biographical Information

Philip Yancey earned graduate degrees in Communications and English from Wheaton College Graduate School and the University of Chicago. He joined the staff of *Campus Life Magazine* in 1971, and worked there as Editor for eight years.

Since 1978 Philip Yancey has primarily concentrated on freelance writing. More than 600 of his articles have appeared in 80 different publications, including *Reader's Digest*, *Publisher's Weekly*, *National Wildlife*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *Christian Century*, and *The Reformed Journal*. He writes articles and a monthly column for *Christianity Today* magazine, which he serves as Editor

at Large. Also, he serves as Co-Chair of the Editorial Board for *Books and Culture*, a recent publication of *Christianity Today*.

His sixteen books include *Where Is God When It Hurts?*, *The Student Bible* and *Disappointment with God*. These books have won eleven God Medallion Awards from the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association and have sold more than five million copies. (*Fearfully and Wonderfully Made*, *In His Image*, and *The Gift of Pain* were co-authored with Dr. Paul Brand.) Christian bookstore managers selected *The Jesus I Never Knew* as the 1996 Book of the Year, and *What's So Amazing about Grace?* won the same award in 1998. His most recent books are *The Bible Jesus Read*, *Reaching for the Invisible God*, *Soul Survivor*, and *Rumors of Another World*.

The Yanceys lived in downtown Chicago for many years before moving to a very different environment in Colorado. They enjoy hiking, wildlife, and all the other delights of the Rocky Mountains.

## Adults Only at Sacramento

Jim Hengstenberg, Director of Sacramento Camp, sends the following program info: (1-800-667-3414)

Fall Programs for "Adults Only" at Sacramento Methodist Assembly

These special adult retreats are hosted by our conference and retreat center 7,500 feet high in the Sacramento mountains twenty-five miles southeast of Cloudcroft. Fees are all-inclusive, except as noted. Registrations must be made no later than ten days prior to the workshop by calling 1-800-667-3414 or sma@pvt.net. Visit our website at [www.sacramentoassembly.org](http://www.sacramentoassembly.org).

• **The Unity of Body and Soul in Personal Spiritual Growth**--August 28-September 1 (Monday dinner through Friday breakfast). Pastor in Residence Rev. Bruce Abbott uses Bible study and physical activities such as bicycling and hiking to bring to new awareness this central belief of the Christian Faith. Fee: \$250 per person, double occupancy in Forrest Lodge.

• **Finding and Developing Your Personal Spiritual "Style"**--September 5-9 (Tuesday dinner through Saturday breakfast). Pastor in Residence Rev. Joan Roberts

will use creative and insightful presentations and discussion to facilitate participants' reflection on their spiritual pilgrimage to discover new strengths in their personal faith and practice. Fee: \$225 per person, double occupancy in Aspen Lodge.

• **Thin Air Golf Camp**--September 10-15 (Sunday dinner through Friday breakfast). Pure fun. Participants will play four different mountain or high desert golf courses like the 9,000' Lodge course in Cloudcroft, the Inn of the Mountain Gods or the Links in Ruidoso, or the University Course in Las Cruces, wherever course conditions are best! Green fees are included in camp fees of \$620 double or \$745 private occupancy in the comfortable Forrest Lodge.

• **"How to Communicate You Care if You Do!"**--September 15-17 (7:00 p.m. Friday through Sunday lunch) Psychologist Dr. Ray Goin leads this workshop for individuals wanting to improve their skills as parent, spouse, and friend by increasing personal awareness and power in communicating authentically. Fee in Forrest Lodge is \$188 shared, \$230 private.

• **Grown-ups Camp**--September 17-22 (Sunday din-

ner through Friday breakfast). Rev. Cheri Lyon leads this adult-paced week of relaxation, spiritual growth, and interesting activities that include free lectures on mountain birds, astronomy, and ayurvedic cooking, plus optional field trips to the National Solar Observatory, White Sands National Monument, or Carlsbad Caverns. Golf outings and lessons can be arranged. Fees for meals and lodging in Forrest Lodge are \$320 double occupancy or \$445 single occupancy. Off-site tours are an additional \$10-\$25 each.

• **Christianity and Islam: What's Behind the New Culture War?**--October 23-26 (Monday dinner through Thursday breakfast). Retired United Methodist pastor Rev. Leonard Gillingham provides reading materials and shares his experience and research on this sensitive social, political, and religious issue of our time. This will be a seminar seeking greater understanding of the strengths and risks of this critical interfaith dialogue. Fee: \$200 per person double occupancy.

CONTACT SACRAMENTO CAMP OR CONTACTS NOTED ABOVE FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND REGISTRATIONS!

## 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 for July 30th, Hymn Sing Sunday was 160.

### Our Giving

Figures through August 6th-- Ministry budget for 2006	\$475,000
Ministry gifts needed each week	9,134
Ministry gifts needed to date	292,288
Ministry gifts received to date	288,939
Shortage	3,349
Special gifts received to date for ministries outside our budget	12,234

## Special August Days

### Birthdays:

Jan Stong	08/06
Charles Mader	08/08
Tiffany Rockage	08/08
Sue Wooten	08/10
Lynne Cash	08/13
Jim Terrell	08/15
Don Enemark	08/16
Alex Lloyd	08/18
Dean Taylor	08/18
Tressa McDaniel	08/20
Mark Anthony Ortiz	08/21
Riley Courtright	08/23
Walt Ellis	08/25
Carla Shuman	08/27
Peggy Kruse	08/28
Jeff Lloyd	08/28
Grant Janecky	08/31

### Anniversaries:

August 6	John & June Pirtle
August 12	Jeff & Jane Lloyd
August 15	John & Anja Blackadar
August 17	Mark & Susan Hodgson
August 23	Don & Sheila Enemark
August 28	Joe & Irene Bubernak
August 30	Wesley & Delores Burk

### Hospital visits, flowers, cards, and prayers.

For all of the above, I'd like to say, "Thank you," to FUMC, for showing your love and concern for me while I was in the hospital recently. But, most of all, thank you for your prayers,

Gene Diedrich

First United Methodist Church  
called to:

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

The next edition of Visions will be dated August 25.  
The deadline for articles is Friday, August 18.

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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.



## Our Applause

Thank you to Missions/Outreach for the presentation of "The End of the Spear" which they made possible. The movie was great. Good choice!

Kudos to all the people who helped make this year's Vacation Bible School a success: Valerie Collom, director; Linda Leschnitzer, planning and food; Valerie Collins and Amethyst

Collins, music; Mada Jones and Irene Bubernak, crafts; Jan Stong, drama, along with the teen cast: Bob Collum, Clara Leschnitzer, and Tyrone Clemons; Fran Ring and Brent Collom, Bible Story leaders; Geniece Courtright, helper; Alice Carter, food; Lucy Malone and Emily Collom, group leaders; Sarah Kelly, accompanist; Bob Collom,

Gerald Collom, Clara Leschnitzer, and Ella Leschnitzer, decorations. Thanks go to anyone else I may have missed because of the Monday night newspaper deadline.

## Upcoming Events Highlights

### Sermon Titles

August 13: "More than Fire Insurance", Eph. 2:8-10 and James 2:14-17

August 20: "Forward--to the Bible", Psalm 119:105

August 27: "Is This Any Way to Run a Business?", Matt. 20:1-16

The sermons will be presented by Dr. Dave Ring, pastor at LAFUMC.



### Brodnax Shower

August 12, 1 pm in the Friendship Center

### LAF Crafts

August 13, 4 pm in the Friendship Center

### Da Vinci Code

The last meeting of this class will be on August 14, at 7 pm in the Mid-High Room. Everyone whether you have attended or not is invited to join for one last look at *The DaVinci Code*.

### Outreach

August 14, 6:30 pm, Friendship Center

### Finance

August 15 at 6:30 pm in the Library

### Youth Event

August 19-20, in Alamogordo--see pamphlets in the kiosk

### ARK Board

August 22, 5:45 pm in the Mid-High Room

### Church Picnic

August 27, after second service at Camp May.

### The Way

September 2, 7 am in the Friendship Center for breakfast, 7:45--go out in service to the community

Important note to all stewardship work area members and any other interested church leaders. All-day stewardship workshop will be held at St. John's UMC, Albuquerque, Thursday, September 28th. Please mark your calendars; further details to come.

## Trustees' Offer

A 1990 Mazda (blue) was recently donated to our church by a LANL staff member moving to another position. Dave Ring has test driven it for the past two weeks. It appears to be reliable transportation, possibly ideal for a student. The book value is \$1600. We are offering it for sale at \$1200. Contact Dave Ring at 662-6277 if you are interested.



Sprinkler Party

Ark