



FIRST

VISIONS

an edition of the United Methodist Reporter

Two Sections, Section A | 070665 | Vol. 156 | No. 26 | November 13, 2009

INSIDE  
FIRST VISIONS

THE PASTOR  
PONDERS

RADICAL HOSPITALITY  
WORKSHOP

PRAY FOR OUR  
CHURCH

1<sup>A</sup>

LAITY  
SUNDAY/CHILDREN'S  
SABBATH PHOTOS

OPEN HOUSE

4<sup>A</sup>

SPECIAL NOVEMBER  
DAYS

PINE CONE RISTRAS

UPCOMING EVENTS

5<sup>A</sup>

## THE PASTOR PONDERS



### "THE STATE OF OUR CHURCH"

*Each year I present a report to our annual Charge Conference that I call, "The State of Our Church." The following is what I'll be sharing with those present for that special event at mid-day on Sunday, Nov. 15th:*

Three and a half years have elapsed since Fran and I began the adventure of sharing Christian ministry with and among the people of Los Alamos First United Methodist Church. In some ways it seems as though we've just barely arrived here; from another perspective we've travelled a significant distance together thus far.

2009 is/was the year that reality rose up and slapped this church in the face. For the past several prior years, despite a declining county population and decreased financial circumstances for the lifeblood employer of this community (the "Lab"), our congregation had successfully bucked exterior circumstances to show growth in both numbers and dollars. But the "great recession" hit us hard during the initial months of this year. Financial support faltered, attendance diminished. Consternation and complaint replaced excitement and affirmation.

When summer arrived it brought with it the usual Vacation Bible School. But this year's VBS was not at all usual. Rather, it was - surprisingly - outstanding. The number of children reached - over 100 - and the number of volunteers serving - over 50 - were both modern-day records for an LA-FUMC VBS. And that unexpected blessing tore away the pall of darkness

which had constrained this church's work for Christ. Since that momentous event of summer, we have been enjoying a marvelous recovery phase.

As I write this narrative not all is "sweetness and light." While we're steadily making up ground lost financially, we've not yet completely dug out of the pit created. Most likely we will not be able to celebrate the "surpluses" that were enjoyed at year's end in 2006, 2007, and 2008 when this year draws to a close. Attendance at both worship and Sunday School is rising (106 in Sunday School on 10/25, the best yet all year) but we are unlikely to show "net gains" by this year's end. The "good news" is that the nadir is well-past. We look ahead to a better 2010.

I believe that there is a lesson for both Los Alamos First United Methodist Church and its pastor in what we've experienced, both the "down" and the subsequent "up," during 2009. In recent past years we've been worldly-wise and perhaps even a tad prideful in our own capabilities. We thus allowed the world, at least partially, to set our agenda. But despite our foolishness God broke through to us - in the guise of children. Lest this happen again, we need to ever maintain a tight focus upon Jesus Christ and His resources, His Kingdom. To Him, and Him alone, be the glory!

*Dore Ring*

Mark Your Calendars:

Special "Start of  
Advent" Worship -  
Sunday, Nov. 29th,  
5 PM



## PRAY FOR OUR CHURCH

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Jesus, in John 15 verse 9 tells His Disciples (that includes us) that He has loved us even as the Father has loved Him. He then tells us to remain in His Love. In verse 10, He says that when we obey Him we remain in His Love. In verse 12, Jesus tells us how we can obey Him, when He commands us to love each other (fellow Christians) as He has loved us. In verse 17 He again commands us to love each other. One of the ways we can love each other is to pray for each other.

The Apostle Paul, in his letters to the early Churches, tells them that he thanks God for them and prays for them in very specific ways, especially for their spiritual growth. He also requests their prayers for him and his assigned ministry.

When we join any United Methodist Church, we promise to support our Church with our prayers. That is part of our stewardship pledge. But how much thought and effort do we really put into this promise? We do have some great prayer warriors and we publish prayer lists many of us faithfully pray for those with special prayer needs. Is that enough?

Let us ask our selves the following questions:

- \*Am I humble enough to ask my church family to pray for me?
- \*What is my attitude about my church? Do I have an attitude of gratitude or do I dwell on our churches defects? Do I thank God for our church, for our pastor, for our Sunday school classes and teachers and other church leaders? Do I express my gratitude to them?
- \*Do I pray for them and for the Holy Spirit's inspiration and guidance for them? Do I pray that God will help me be a

good listener and applicer of His messages through our pastor and other teachers? Do I ask God to show me how he wants me to participate in the life of our church family? Do I thank God for the awesome privilege of serving our Almighty God in our church family?

\*Do I pray that God will help us (including me) to love and accept every one in our church family as Jesus loves and accepts us and to help us to support, encourage, forgive each other, and accept each others forgiveness? Do I ask God to forgive me and heal me of any critical

spirit I may have when I disagree with decisions made by our church leaders?

\*Do I pray for the classes, meetings, other activities, and those participating in

them before and/or while they are occurring in our church or am I too busy watching TV to do so?

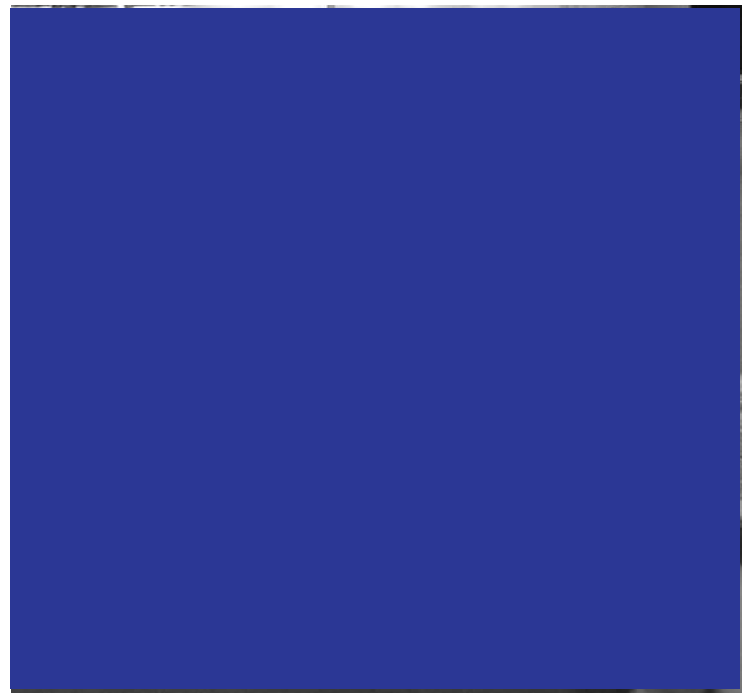
Let's keep our church bulletins and/or newspapers handy so we will be constantly aware of what is happening in our church so we can remember to pray for all the studies, meetings, and activities that are planned.

Lord Jesus help us all to love, support, forgive, appreciate, and encourage each other and help us to be grateful for and pray for each other. And Lord help us to remember that we all (each one of us) are Your church and that all of us are important parts of Your church!

God Bless you all.

Love,  
Hazel & Fred De Vries





Everyone at the Ark enjoys  
Halloween!



Our Newest Member  
John Scott  
Welcome!



MF on a Hike



## SPECIAL NOVEMBER DAYS

### Birthdays:

Louise Mendius 11/04  
 Jeanie Standley 11/11  
 Miriam Balog 11/12  
 Val Hundley 11/12  
 Armond Standley 11/12  
 Irene Bubernak 11/14  
 Harriet Zickert 11/17  
 Margaret Gibson 11/22  
 Mada Jones 11/25

### Anniversaries:

November 4  
 Walt & Martha Lou Ellis  
 November 23  
 Ron & Mada Jones  
 November 24  
 Stanley & Roberta Yasuda  
 November 25  
 Court & Mary Courtright  
 November 26  
 Dick & Judy Opsahl  
 Ray & Debbie Trimmer  
 November 27  
 Larry & Bobi Bryant



Join Us  
 Sunday

November 22

2 pm

The annual Los Alamos CROP Walk is upcoming on Sunday afternoon, Nov. 22nd, beginning at 2:00 PM. This is an ecumenical effort to fight hunger both globally and locally. (Yes, there really are hungry people in Los Alamos.) Los Alamos First United Methodist Church's own Aaron Goldman is one of the principal organizers of the Los Alamos CROP Walk. There are two

ways you can become involved: Either sign up to be a CROP Walker yourself or pledge to support someone else who will be walking. (I'm one such; there are a number of others in our congregation.)

Contact me (dzt33@yahoo.com) or Aaron (apgoldman@swcp.com) directly to sign up and for more information. I don't personally get involved in

every charitable cause in our church and community, but this is one I strongly support and urge you to do the same. God's blessings to you all! -- Dave Ring, Pastor

Join Us  
 November 19, 2009,  
 5:30 p.m.

WE WILL MAKE  
 PINE CONE RISTRAS  
 UNDER THE DIRECTION OF  
 DORIS JACKSON  
 MAKE YOUR RESERVATION NOW!  
 LIMITED SPACE AVAILABLE

Call Doris at:  
 662-7563, or  
 doriscjackson@earthlink.net  
 \$5.00 materials fee

## UPCOMING EVENTS Highlights

### Sermon Titles

Sunday, November 15,  
 Consecration Sunday:  
 Message from Dr. Tom Nagle:  
 "Nine Or One?" Gospel  
 Scripture: Luke 17: 11-19

Sunday, November 22,  
 Thanksgiving Sunday/Bible  
 Sunday, Message from Pastor  
 Dave Ring: "Giving Thanks for  
 God's Word" Old Testament  
 Scripture Text: Psalm 111:89-  
 105

Sunday, November 29, 1st  
 Sunday in Advent/United  
 Methodist Student Day,  
 Message for Pastor Dave Ring:  
 TBA

### Roller Skating

Friday, November 13, 5:30 pm  
 in the Fellowship Hall

### Lora Bell Cole Memorial

Saturday, November 14, 2 pm  
 in the Sanctuary

### \*\*\*Charge Conference\*\*\*

Sunday, November 15, 12:15  
 pm in the Fellowship Hall,  
 light lunch provided

### MF

Sunday, November 15, 4 pm in  
 the Senior High Room

### Disciple III

Monday, November 16,

6:45 pm in the Library

### Staff

Tuesday, November 17, 10 am  
 in the Library

### Ark Open House

Tuesday, November 17, 5 pm

### Ark Board

Tuesday, November 17, 6 pm  
 in the Mid-High Room

### Newspaper Articles Due

Wednesday, November 18

### Disciple III

Wednesday, November 18, 3  
 pm in the Library

### Choir

Wednesday, November 18, 7  
 pm in the Sanctuary

### City-Wide Worship & Prayer

Thursday, November 19, 11:30  
 am in the Sanctuary

### Dining Out

Thursday, November 19, 6 pm  
 at the Hill Diner

### Boy Scouts

Thursday, November 19, 7 pm  
 in the Fellowship Hall

### 1st Light

Thursday, November 19, 7 pm  
 in the Sanctuary

### Roller Skating

Friday, November 20, 5:30 pm  
 in the Fellowship Hall

### Crop Walk

Sunday, November 22, 2 pm

### MF

Sunday, November 22, 4 pm in  
 the Senior High Room

### Disciple III

Monday, November 23,  
 6:45 pm in the Library

### Staff

Tuesday, November 24, 10 am  
 in the Library

### Ark Staff

Tuesday, November, 5:30 pm in  
 the Mid-High Room

### Disciple III

Wednesday, November 25, 3  
 pm in the Friendship Center

### Choir

Wednesday, November 25, 8  
 pm in the Sanctuary

### Thanksgiving --

#### Offices Closed

Thursday, November 26

#### Offices Closed

Friday, November 27, 7 pm in  
 the Library

First United Methodist Church  
 called to:

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

The next edition of Visions will be dated November 27.  
 The deadline for articles is Wednesday, November 18.

715 Diamond Drive  
 Los Alamos, NM 87544  
 Phone: 505-662-6277  
 Fax: 505-663-0089

E-mail: [lafumc@lafumc.org](mailto:lafumc@lafumc.org)  
 Website: [www.lafumc.org](http://www.lafumc.org)  
 Pastor ~ Dr. Dave Ring  
 Discipleship Coordinator ~  
 Ann LePage

Choir Director ~ Jim Beinke  
 First Visions Editor ~ Jan Stong

Ark Child Development Center  
 Lorri White, Director  
 (505) 662-4822

### United Skates

First Session:  
 3rd graders & younger  
 5:30 pm - 6:45 pm  
 Admission \$2:00  
 Second Session  
 4th graders & older  
 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm  
 Admission \$2:50

### Sunday Services & Activities

8:30 a.m. Contemporary Worship  
 9:45 a.m. Sunday School  
 11 a.m. Traditional Worship

Wednesday Activities  
 Chancel Choir 7 p.m.