



FIRST VISIONS

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THE PASTOR PONDERERS



"SOME (POSSIBLY) SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS"

Many of you are aware that I'm a former engineer, electrical to be specific ("EE" for short). And most engineers are unapologetically fascinated with "numbers." I've been a pastor long enough to realize that not everyone shares this fascination, but sometimes numbers are highly significant in the Church of Jesus Christ. As 2010 begins for us at Los Alamos First United Methodist Church, I share with you what I consider to be four significant numbers.

The first number is 101%. Yes, 101%. That's the percentage of our local church's "shared ministry goals" met and paid to the larger United Methodist Church in the just-completed year 2009. As most of you well-know, shared ministries are, for United Methodists, a primary way of funding "missions." And missions mean hurting people helped, lost people saved, hungry people fed -- all in the name and to the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. For decades now you have annually distinguished yourselves at Los Alamos First United Methodist Church by going beyond 100% of what is asked of you. And in 2009, despite economic upheaval in our world, you did not falter. Well done, good and faithful servants!

The second number is 13. That's the number of new full members who were added to our church's roll during 2009. Thirteen's not a huge number, no. But it's an improvement over both the number of new members received in 2008, which was just seven, and the number received in 2007, which was eleven. Of the thirteen received in 2009, five joined by public profession of faith in Jesus Christ. In old-fashioned, but very meaningful, evangelical terms, that's five precious souls added to the Lamb's Book of Life. New members, new converts, new believers, new disciples of Christ is what the Church which bears His name is ultimately all about.

The third number is -6. That's the figure by which our average

combined Sunday morning worship attendance declined at Los Alamos First United Methodist Church during 2009. Why highlight a negative number? For me it's the first real decline in worship attendance since I became your pastor. As I consider this number, I rationalize that the lion's share of the decline was suffered during the grim first half of 2009, with attendance "bouncing back" reasonably well during more recent months. But I know of few if any pastors who are ever pleased to log negative numbers in their personal pastoral records. Actually being present in the house of God, among His faithful people, is an important growth factor for each and every person who would claim to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. Let's get back on track, people of God, by coming to church more regularly!

The fourth and most significant number of all is 1. That number one is you. Each of you is the indispensable one, in God's sight, for whom Jesus Christ died. Each of you is the one to whom our Lord offers life, abundant now and eternal in the Kingdom to come. And each of you is the one who can make Los Alamos First United Methodist a better Church for Jesus Christ in 2010.

Ever and always, praise the Lord!

Dave Ring



Crop Walk 2009



AN EXCITING NEW OPPORTUNITY TO STUDY GOD'S WORD

In a Different Way! Beginning Wednesday, January 20, 2010 We offer a new "devotional" Bible Study for adults. It will meet at 6:00 pm in the Friendship Center. Initial topics, focusing upon one per week, will include prayer, forgiveness, time, faith, and change. If you'd like to discuss participation with Rob Kelsey, he can be contacted via rkelsey@usa.net.

If you would like to take part in this new Bible Study, please fill out and return the slip below:

Name(s) _____
Contact via _____ telephone _____
_____ e-mail _____

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*Christmas
Cantata*



**A R K S U N D A Y
J A N U A R Y 2 4 T H**

**COME AND SEE MORE OF WHAT WE
DID IN 2009
AT BOTH CHURCH SERVICES!!!**

SPECIAL JANUARY DAYS

Birthdays:

| | | | |
|-------------------|-------|-----------------------|-------|
| Betty Terrell | 01/01 | Jensina Sheppard | 01/19 |
| Jason Grider | 01/05 | Virginia Lee Sowder | 01/23 |
| Dennis Gill | 01/05 | Al Blackstock | 01/25 |
| Robyn Collom | 01/06 | Jim Little | 01/27 |
| Caroline Rousculp | 01/08 | Carolyn Pearson | 01/27 |
| Craig Siebe | 01/08 | Eileen Douglass | 01/28 |
| Martha Zumbro | 01/08 | | |
| Lianna Dare | 01/12 | Anniversaries: | |
| Clayton Pearson | 01/16 | January 12 | |
| Kyle Cash | 01/17 | Kemp & Nancee Beebe | |
| Clara Leschnitzer | 01/17 | | |
| Carrie Shuman | 01/17 | | |

MITTEN TREE



THANK YOU TO ALL WHO CONTRIBUTED!

First United Methodist Church called to:

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

The next edition of Visions will be dated January 22.
The deadline for articles is Wednesday, January 13.

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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.

THE DARE FAMILY JOINS LAFUMC

--December 27, 2009

Jeffrey Hunter Dare - by transfer from the Los Alamos United Church
Julie Shafer Dare - by transfer from Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Los Alamos
Small Children: Logan and Lianna have both been previously baptized
Hunter James Dare - baptized December 27, 2009



UPCOMING EVENTS Highlights

Sermon Titles

Sunday, January 10, 2010 - First Sunday after Epiphany,
Pastor Ring's Sermon: "I John 1"
Sunday, January 17, 2010 - Human Relations Day,
Pastor Ring's Sermon: "I John 2"
Sunday, January 24, 2010 - ARK Sunday,
Pastor Ring's Sermon: "I John 3"

Book Club

Friday, January 8, 9 am in the Library

Roller Skating

Friday, January 8, 5:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall

LAF Crafts

Sunday, January 10, 4 pm in the Friendship Center

Church Council

Sunday, January 10, 7 pm in the Friendship Center

Outreach/Missions

Monday, January 11, 6 pm in the Library

Disciple III

Monday, January 11, 6:45 pm in the Library

Staff

Tuesday, January 12, 10 am in the Library

Christian Education

Tuesday, January 12, 6 pm, in the Friendship Center

SPRC

Tuesday, January 12, 6:45 pm, in the Asbury Room

Finance

Tuesday, January 12, 7:30 pm, in the Library

Newspaper Articles Due

Wednesday, January 13

Disciple III

Wednesday, January 13, 3 pm in the Library

Choir

Wednesday, January 13, 7 pm in the Sanctuary

City-Wide Worship & Prayer

Thursday, January 14, 11:30 am in the Sanctuary

Boy Scouts

Thursday, January 14, 7 pm in the Fellowship Hall

1st Light

Thursday, January 14, 7 pm in the Sanctuary

Roller Skating

Friday, January 15, 5:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall

NO MS

Sunday, January 17

Martin Luther King Day

Offices Closed

Disciple III

Monday, January 18, 6:45 pm in the Library

Staff

Tuesday, January 19, 10 am in the Library

UMW Mission Study

Tuesday, January 19, 11 am, in the Friendship Center

Ark Board

Tuesday, January 19, 6 pm, in the Mid-High Room

Disciple III

Wednesday, January 20, 3 pm in the Friendship Center

Adult Bible Class

Wednesday, January 20, 6 pm, in the Friendship Center

Choir

Wednesday, January 20, 7 pm in the Sanctuary

City-Wide Worship & Prayer

Thursday, January 21, 11:30 am in the Sanctuary

Boy Scouts

Thursday, January 21, 7 pm in the Fellowship Hall

1st Light

Thursday, January 21, 7 pm in the Sanctuary