

THE MEADOWLARK

The Official Newsletter of the
MIDDLETOWN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

May, 2010

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The official web site of the Middletown United Methodist Church:

www.middletownumcnj.org

Fall Worship

Praise Service	9:00am
Fellowship Time	10:00am
Traditional Service	10:30am
Fellowship, Discipleship & Ministry	10:00am
Adult & Youth Sunday School	9:30am



Middletown United Methodist Church
924 Middletown-Lincroft Road
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The Pastor's Message May, 2010

Dear Members and friends,

Some of the men have just come back to Middletown from our weekend away at the Keswick Retreat Center. We had a rewarding time of fellowship and fruitful discussions and devotions around the theme of "Connections." To give a framework for our time, we first watched the film "A River Runs Through It." The storyline suggested several sub-themes: Identifying ourselves with each other and God; forgiveness; and patience and waiting for God's timing. These were all tied to how we are connected to God and one another as people of faith in a nurturing community.

As I have been thinking about it since, I have turned back to a book titled "Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations," by Robert Schnase. In the book, the writer lists radical hospitality, passionate worship, intentional faith development, risk taking mission and service, and extravagant generosity as the hallmarks of healthy and dynamic congregations. In the section on Passionate Worship, Schnase writes: "Vibrant, fruitful, growing churches offer Passionate Worship that connects people to God and to one another. Lives shaped by God's Spirit become the nucleus for congregations with extraordinary warmth, graciousness, and belonging." I can't help but be reminded that worship, at its best, is relational; it connects us. I've long known that this is the case but it is good to have it reaffirmed now and again. (The picture at the right is a detail from Michelangelo's work on the Sistine Chapel's ceiling, depicting the touch of God with humanity, that most crucial connection.)



What do we do when we come together for worship? The Worship Team and the Praise Band work with me to try to create opportunities for this touch to take place in every service. What I'd like all of us to consider is how we participate in the worship as congregants. Each person has a part to play in the service. Do we come ready to worship? Are we focused on God, putting aside other concerns for the time being that we might open ourselves to the presence and work of the Spirit? If not, we'll have a less than rewarding experience. A vessel cannot be filled that is already full of something else and if we come with our own agendas to worship there will be no room in our hearts and minds for God. Do we pay attention to the promptings of the Spirit or are we more concerned with whether or not we like a

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Pastor's News & Church Reports...

The Pastor's Message

(←Continued from Page 2)

particular song or hymn, whether the service is going overtime, or whatever we might have planned for the afternoon?

If we are able to be present to God as God is present to us, we will have a rich worship experience that will strengthen our connection to God and to one another. A preaching professor once told me that every sermon is preached a multiplicity of times: once for every person in the sanctuary. It's a way of saying that we bring a variety of life-contexts to the hearing of God's Word, so each of us hears what God is trying to communicate differently. Nevertheless, we are drawn together like pieces in a jig-saw puzzle; each one unique, each one having a place and contributing to the completion of the whole. When we leave our time of worship, the ties that bind us should always be stronger and our sense of the abiding presence of God more profound.

*Grace and Peace,
Glenn Ferguson*

MORTGAGE ELIMINATION PLAN

April, 2010 Update

As of April 18, 2010, the total received toward the elimination of the mortgage was \$61,482. The April 24, 2010 mortgage statement balance was **\$168,776.61** including interest compared to **\$205,485.61** on March 24, 2010. The estimated May 24, 2010 statement balance is \$151,821.37. The current projected December 31, 2010 mortgage balance is **\$60,889.53** unless we receive further commitments from those who have not yet made them.

To completely eliminate the mortgage by the end of the year, which is our goal, we would need to receive an average of \$733 from these (83) families. Even if you are unable to commit \$733, whatever you add to this effort to release us from this debt would help.

We're eternally grateful to those who've made or paid commitments. As a reminder, we can free up \$32,000 per year in our budget for other ministries by eliminating the mortgage. Please prayerfully consider what you and your family can do. (Keep in mind that any commitments made to the MEP are *in addition* to your regular giving, not in place of it.)

Copies of the congregational letter that included a commitment form on the back are available in the narthex on the table just outside the Sanctuary door.

UMCOR HEALTH KITS

The Women's Fellowship decided that they will gather, prepare and mail the UMCOR Health Kits which are needed for relief in disasters such as the latest earthquake disaster in Haiti. While they are urgently needed when disaster strikes, we need to have them ready for when another such disaster should strike.

The Health kits provide basic necessities to people who have been forced to leave their homes because of human conflict or natural disaster. UMCOR is very specific in the items needed...nothing more or less. The items needed are 1 hand towel (15" x 25" up to 17" x 27". No kitchen towels), 1 washcloth, 1 comb (large, sturdy, not pocket size), 1 nail file or fingernail clippers (no emery boards or toenail clippers), 1 bath size bar of soap (3 oz and up), 1 toothbrush (single brushes only in original wrapper, no child size brushes), and 6 adhesive plastic stripe bandages.

The Women's Fellowship will prepare the bags and ship them when enough items have been gathered. A receptacle will be in the narthex so you may place your items as you get them. As stated, this will be an on-going mission project. Please feel free to bring items now and in the future. We thank you in advance for your help in this mission project.

MAY, 2010

SUNDAY							MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY	
JUNE, 2010							APRIL 26		27		28		29		30		1	
S	M	T	W	T	F	S											8:30 FP Marathon	
		1	2	3	4	5												
6	7	8	9	10	11	12												
13	14	15	16	17	18	19												
20	21	22	23	24	25	26												
27	28	29	30															
COMMUNION SUNDAY							3		4		5		6		7		8	
9:00: Praise Worship 9:15: Sunday School 10:00: Fellowship Time 10:30: Traditional Service 6:00: 6:30: 7:00:							9:30: MDO 6:00: 6:30: 7:00: Adult Bible Study 7:00: Finance Meets 8:00:		9:30: 6:00: 6:30: 7:00: SPRC Meeting 8:00:		9:30: MDO 5:30: Youth Bell Choir 5:45: Jr. UMYF 6:30: Sr. UMYF 6:30: Bells & Choir 7:30: 8:00:		9:30: Prayer Fellowship 6:00: 6:30: 7:00: 7:30: 8:00:		9:30: MDO 6:30: 7:00: 7:30: 8:00:		8:30: Men's Breakfast 1:00: Cline Court	
MOTHER'S DAY							10		11		12		13		14		15	
9:00: Praise Worship 9:15: Sunday School 10:00: Fellowship Time 10:30: Traditional Service 6:00: 6:30:							9:30: MDO 6:30: 7:00: Adult Bible Study 7:30: Admin Council		9:30: 6:00: 6:30: 7:00: 7:30: 8:00:		9:30: MDO 5:30: Youth Bell Choir 5:45: Jr. UMYF 6:30: Sr. UMYF 6:30: Bells & Choir 7:30:		9:30: Prayer Fellowship 6:00: 6:30: 7:00: 7:30: 8:00:		9:30: MDO 6:00: 6:30: 7:00: 7:30: 8:00:		<i>Meadowlark Due!</i> 8:30: District Meeting 8:30: W Fellowship 7:00: Coffee House	
16							17		18		19		20		21		22	
9:00: Praise Worship 9:15: Sunday School 10:00: Family Promise Bake Sale 10:30: Traditional Service 6:00: 6:30:							9:30: MDO 6:00: 6:30: 7:00: Adult Bible Study 7:30: Board of Trustees 8:00:		9:30: 6:00: 6:30: 7:00: 7:30: 8:00:		9:30: MDO 5:30: Youth Bell Choir 5:45: Jr. UMYF 6:30: Sr. UMYF 6:30: Bells & Choir 7:30:		9:30: Prayer Fellowship 6:00: 6:30: 7:00: 7:30: Men's Leader 8:00:		9:30: MDO 5:30: 6:00: Fellowship Night 6:30: 7:00: 8:00:			
23							24		25		26		27		28		29	
9:00: Praise Worship 9:15: Sunday School 10:00: Fellowship Time 10:30: Traditional Service 6:00: 6:30:							9:30: MDO 6:00: 6:30: 7:00: Adult Bible Study 7:00: Worship Tear 8:00:		9:30: 6:00: 6:30: 7:00: 7:30: 8:00:		9:30: MDO 5:30: Youth Bell Choir 5:45: Jr. UMYF (LAST) 6:30: Sr. UMYF 6:30: Bells & Choir 7:30:		9:30: Prayer Fellowship 6:00: 6:30: 7:00: 7:30: 8:00:		9:30: MDO 6:00: 6:30: 7:00: 7:30: 8:00:		June Meadowlark	
30							31		JUNE 1		2		3		4		5	
9:00: Praise Worship 9:15: Sunday School 10:00: Fellowship Time 10:30: Traditional Service 6:00: 6:30:							MEMORIAL DAY MDO Closed Church Office Closed 6:30: 7:00: Adult Bible Study 7:30:											

JUNE, 2010

SUNDAY							MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY			
JULY, 2010							MAY 31		JUNE 1		2		3		4		5			
S	M	T	W	T	F	S					9:30: MDO in session		ANNUAL CONFERENCE 9:30: Prayer Fellowship		ANNUAL CONFERENCE 9:30: MDO in session		ANNUAL CONFERENCE			
				1	2	3														
4	5	6	7	8	9	10			6:00:		6:00:		6:00:		6:00:					
11	12	13	14	15	16	17			6:30:		6:30: Sr. UMYF		6:30:		6:30:					
18	19	20	21	22	23	24			7:00:		6:30: Bells & Choir		7:00:		7:00:					
25	26	27	28	29	30	31			7:30:		7:30:		7:30:		7:30:					
									8:00:		8:00:		8:00:		8:00:					
COMMUNION SUNDAY																				
9:00: Praise Worship 9:15: Sunday School 10:00: Fellowship Time 10:30: Traditional Service							9:30: MDO (LAST)		9:30: MDO Teachers		9:30:		9:30:		9:30:		8:30: Men's Breakfast			
6:00: 6:30: 7:00:							6:00: 6:30: 7:00: 7:00: Finance Meets 8:00:		6:00: 6:30: 7:00: 7:30: 8:00:		6:00: 6:30: Sr. UMYF 6:30: Bells & Choir 7:30: 8:00:		6:00: 6:30: 7:00: 7:30: 8:00:		6:00: 6:30: 7:00: 7:30: 8:00:					
VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION									<i>Meadowlark Items Due!</i>											
9:00: Praise Worship 9:15: Sunday School 10:00: Fellowship Time 10:30: Traditional Service							9:30:		9:30:		9:30:		9:30:		9:30:		8:30: W. Fellowship			
6:00: 6:30: 7:00:							6:00: 6:30: 7:00: 7:30: Admin Council 8:00:		6:00: 6:30: 7:00: 7:30: 8:00:		6:00: 6:30: Sr. UMYF 6:30: Bells & Choir 7:30: 8:00:		6:00: 6:30: 7:00: 7:30: 8:00:		6:00: 6:30: 7:00: 7:30: 8:00:					
9:00: Praise Worship 9:15: Sunday School 10:00: Fellowship Time 10:30: Traditional Service							9:30:		9:30:		9:30:		9:30:		9:30:					
6:00: 6:30: 7:00:							6:30: 7:00: 7:30: Board of Trustees 8:00:		6:00: 6:30: 7:00: 7:30: 8:00:		6:00: 6:30: Sr. UMYF (LAST) 6:30: Bells & Choir 7:30: 8:00:		6:00: 6:30: 7:00: 7:30: 8:00:		6:00: 6:30: 7:00: 7:30: 8:00:					
SUMMER WORSHIP BEGINS													JULY 1							
10:00: Single Worship Service 10:00: Summer Sunday School							9:30:		9:30:		9:30:		9:30:		9:30:					
6:00: 6:30: 7:00:							6:00: 6:30: 7:00: 7:30: 8:00:		6:00: 6:30: 7:00: 7:30: 8:00:		6:00: 6:30: 6:30: Bells & Choir 7:30: 8:00:		6:00: 6:30: 7:00: 7:30: 8:00:		6:00: 6:30: 7:00: 7:30: 8:00:					

In Our Church Family...

CHURCH WIDE BARBECUE

May 21, 2010

On Friday, May 21, the Fellowship team will be holding a chicken BBQ for the entire church family. Corn on the cob will also be provided. We are asking the congregation to bring salads/side dishes if your last name begins with the letters A-M. If your name begins with N-Z, please bring a dessert. You will also want to bring lawn chairs or blankets with you. After dinner, we will gather around a fire pit for song singing and fellowship. Make sure you put it on your calendar. We will start to gather at 6:00 and begin dinner at approximately 6:30.



ones in hospitals, nursing homes, their homes or over the phone.

“But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he [Jesus] then said to the paralytic—“Stand up, take your bed and go to your home.’ And he stood up and went to his home. (Matthew 8:6-7)

FAMILY PROMISE BAKE SALE

Sunday, May 16, 2010

Come one, come all ... on Sunday, May 16, 2010 from 10:00am – 12:00pm with your baked goodies and/or your appetites (and wallets) for buying goodies.

All proceeds will benefit Family Promise of Monmouth County. The last time we did this in October 2008, we raised \$500.00 for Family Promise! I hope we can do this again. Please drop off your baked goods by 9:45 AM. Thank you.

For more details or information, or if you have any questions, please speak with Joyce Johnson.

HEALING MINISTRY

May, 2010

Healing ministers will be offering prayers with members at the altar rail or privately, during both services on Sunday, May 16th.

Our monthly meeting will also be on that Sunday (5/16), 6:30pm, in the church library. We will be discussing “Forgiveness and Confession” the sixth chapter in Charles Stanley’s book, The Gift of Forgiveness. In this chapter Stanley talks about:

- Why we should confess our sins, even if they’ve already been forgiven.
- The basis of continuing forgiveness.
- How we should treat a person who has wronged us and what happens if we refuse to forgive that person.
- Why confession is essential for believers.

We welcome anyone to join us in discussing these aspects of forgiveness. Members of the congregation may contact Pastor Glenn or Phil Welch, Jr., to arrange for the pastor and/or healing ministers to visit and pray with them and loved

(Continued in next column→)

VBS VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

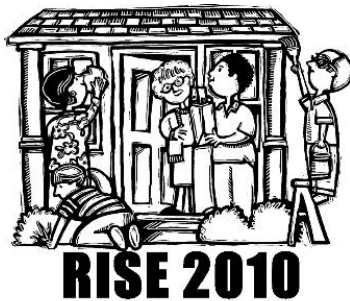
Summer is just around the corner and a mainstay of the summer schedule is Vacation Bible School. This year the dates are July 19-23. The mornings all filled with fun and learning for your children. Plan to have your family be a part of it. Put VBS on your calendar and if you can help with teaching, as an aide, with craft, games, or singing, let the pastor know.

In Our Church Community...

RISE COFFEE HOUSE

Saturday, May 15, 2010, 7-9pm

The Praise Team will again be providing music during a Coffee House to be held on **Saturday evening, May 15th from 7 - 9 pm**. This will be a time of Fellowship for the entire church to come together for a great evening with the praise, folk and pop music provided by the Praise Band. Coffee and other beverages will be provided so mark your calendar now and plan to come out for the RISE Coffee House on **Saturday evening May 15th**.



Donations will be accepted to help us build our RISE house. For 15 years, MUMC has been sending teams of youth and adults to build steps, wheel chair ramps, paint homes, put on new roofs and a lot of other surprising work for the people of Steuben County, New York. This is a great, but expensive mission. Each youth this year paid \$180 toward their meals for the week and some of the building materials but we will need almost \$3,000 additional to cover the full cost of the trip and building materials.

Middletown UMC will again be sending 3 teams to RISE during the summer of 2010. We are tentatively signed up for the week of July 11-17th. Registration forms will first be sent to those who attended last year then open to other Senior High involved in Sunday School or UMYF.

We thank you in advance for your generosity but we hope to see you at the Coffee House even more! For more information or any questions, please call Janet or Gerry Ferrara at (732) 706-0819.

Gerry Ferrara

JUNIOR YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

Our school year is winding down and so, sadly, are Wednesday night Junior Youth Group meetings. Our end of year picnic / BBQ will be on 5/19. 5/26 will be our last meeting. We will have pizza at the church before carpooling to Wesleyan Arms senior resident apartments in Red Bank (part of the UMhomes network) for our joint service project with the 4th & 5th grade Sunday School class. Parents, please make arrangements for your child's transportation with one of the adult leaders going. Permission slips will be e-mailed shortly.

Thank you to all for a wonderful year!

***Peace,
Joyce Johnson***



RUMMAGE SALE

As you all know the rummage sale was a huge success this year. Not only did we have a lot of good "stuff", we had a lot of people buying all that good



"stuff". As a result, we made over \$4,000.00! We want you all to know that we were able to send out checks to several organizations that we have supported in the past.

We sent to Ranch Hope, Hogar, Community Outreach Group, Keyport Food Pantry, Family promise, and Hope School in Israel. We thank all of you came out and helped either sorting or selling. It was a wonderful day and we look forward to repeating our success next year.

Church Announcements...

OUR DAILY PRAYER CONCERNS:

- * John Sarkissian, father of Jeff & Joanne Haffeman * Amy Davis * Clarice Fontaine * Patricia Vaspory *
- * Donna Waters-Fantasia and Family * Carolyn & Mel Hooper & Family *
- * Kevin, friend of Joyce Johnson * Audrey Lucassen and Family *
- * Irene Leonard * Beverly Wrede *
- * The Families of those serving in the Military * Our Brothers & Sisters serving in the Military *
- * The people of Haiti & Chile, Rescue Volunteers *

