



The Carillon

Get Ready for the Upcoming...

GARAGE SALE - August 22 and 23

Our August event to help *Stamp Out the Debt* will be held on Friday and Saturday, August 22 and 23. Start looking around in your garage, basement, attic, and closets and see what you have that you can donate. Bring your items to the church, Monday thru Thursday, August 18-21, 8 a.m.–8 p.m. only! **PLEASE DO NOT BRING ANYTHING PRIOR TO AUGUST 18...**we have no place to store donated items.

Items we want: collectibles, antiques, books, furniture, lamps, art work, barbecues in working condition, TVs not older than 5 years and in working condition, linens (with sizes marked with masking tape), shelves, tools, gardening tools, toys, kitchenware, house wares,

small appliances, patio furniture, bikes (not broken), tricycles, sporting goods.

Do NOT bring: clothes (children's clothes can be donated to our Kid's Closet), adult clothes, toilets, cell phones, faucets, junk, anything that is broken. If such things are brought you will be asked to take them home with you. If you are unsure about any item call the church to inquire.

If you wouldn't buy it...don't bring it!

We also need a lot of help sorting, pricing, and on the days of the sale many people will be needed for various jobs. Please sign up on the Sign Me Up green sheet or call the office to volunteer. Let's make this a great experience and help Stamp Out the Debt!

The Big Moo Canoe

Rob Bean

I have been so excited about the level of support we have received for this project to date. We have received so many emails, letters and calls with encouraging words and they served as a constant reminder to "keep moving forward" as the miles ground past on June 13. The Big Moo Canoe has been a truly amazing project to be a part of this year!

I finished the 250 miles in 32 hours and 55 minutes and pulled off the river at 7:49 pm on Sunday, June 15. I kept a 7.5 mph overall average and my moving average was 8.3 mph. Basically I made really good time even though the water level had dropped quite significantly from the flood of the previous week. I was very happy with the effort and for making it back in the boat on Saturday morning. Friday was demoralizing in every way and I was ready to pack it in

after the first day. I had hoped to cover 100 miles on Friday but the wind was blowing 35 mph steady (headwind and crosswind) and was gusting to 50 mph. At times I was doing my best just to stay on the canoe and covered only 85 miles that first day. It was rough on the brain to stay focused for 14 hours of windy paddling and shuttle transfers, but after 5 hours of sleep I felt ready to go again. Saturday and Sunday were much better with little to no wind and beautiful blue skies. I saw a ton of wildlife over the 250 miles and my team performed beautifully taking care of me throughout the effort.



The Prophet and the Patriot

By Charles Schuster

Fast approaching is a time in our year when we celebrate the birth of our nation with the usual firepower and fire works that light up the sky and lift up our voices in praise of our nation. The church has a special and important role to play when it comes to our conflicting allegiances as citizens of our nation and Christian believers in the crucified savior.

As I reflect upon other years and other places, I am reminded of some of the ways in which the fourth of July has been observed. Most memorable was the church I served in Thornton. The year was 1976 and it was the 200th anniversary of our nation's birth. The church had a steel structure on the outside of the building that housed a bell. The Trustees of the church had attached a rope to the bell in anticipation of being able to ring the bell at noon at the conclusion of our worship service on the Fourth and in celebration of the second century of our nation's declaration of independence. It was suggested that bells all over the nation be rung at 12 noon. The Trustees of the church had worked hard in preparation for the bell ringing. They had secured a tall ladder and one of the less timid church members climbed to the top of the ladder and painted the bell and the housing that supported it. For the first time in years the church had a bell they could ring. They thought they could ring it. It turned out the latex paint in combination with years of corrosion produced a seal on the bell such that the clapper could move but the resounding effect was more of a thud than a ring.

Worship that day was a little long. I had prepared a sermon that was extended in length and the choir insisted on singing several patriotic pieces and one of the church members lobbied to play "America the Beautiful" on his harmonica. The service ended exactly two minutes after 12 noon. There was a pause as the congregation leaned forward in anticipation of the bell ringing. There were shadowy figures running past the opaque windows, and there were faint words of exasperation being voiced and there was a muted and muffled sentence that included the breaking of one of the 10 Commandments. I thought I heard the "name of the Lord" being taken in vain. Finally, a ladder was produced and the same church member who had painted the bell climbed the ladder with a hammer in his hand and he pounded that bell until it pealed its ring all over the city. It was the loudest bell in Thornton.

At the end of the day as we were reflecting on the meaning of the event, it seemed that our bell and the way we made it ring was symptomatic of the merger of patriotism and prophecy. We demonstrated appropriate pride in our nation, but we were not excessively chauvinistic in our outburst. What makes our nation the best it can be and a country whose existence is worthy of celebration is not a superficial allegiance to its current policies nor a naïve and romanticized characterization of its history. What makes our nation worthy of celebration is the prophetic realization that is found in the declaration that formed us. "We the people in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, and ensure domestic tranquil-

ity". Our nation was formed as a safe place for people to come whose freedoms had been denied.

Our nation was born with an extreme confidence in the capacity of the human family to do great things. Our greatness as a nation, and the heritage the prophet and the patriot will join together in holding as a common value that what makes us what we are is not our exclusiveness but our inclusiveness. What holds our future is not the restrictive genius of the elite, but the encompassing brilliance which comes when the circle is expanding not constricting.

A prophet can be a patriot as long as the patriot knows how to praise the nation when its performing with values consistent to its founding, and is courageous in holding the nation and its leaders accountable when the policies run counter to those values.

We are all responsible as patriots (people who are proud of our nation) to be prophets (people who seek to listen to a higher voice).

This year, on the Fourth of July and in a time when our future will be determined by the result of an election in November, we will not be told for whom we should vote (that is a violation of the principle of the separation of church and state), but we can expect our church, the sermons from the pulpit, the discussions in the classes, to help us all remember the touch of the eternal that has defined us as a great nation in the past and that will call us to equal greatness in the years to come.



Membership Memos

New members:

Welcome to the **Price family**. George works for Swift & Co in Greeley. He and his wife Darlene enjoy golf and reading. They have two sons. Michael finished 7th grade and Alex finished 3rd grade.

Cynthia Khoo is a post doctoral fellow at CSU. She enjoys reading and hiking and is interested in local, mission trips. She moved from Lex-

ington, KY and is active in our Stephen Ministry program.

Ruth Van Voorhis moved to Loveland from Wyoming. She enjoys reading, knitting, camping, kayaking, travel and music.

Moved:

Pam and John Toliver: 1886 Queens Rd., Many, LA 71449

Joyce Tashiro:

Beatrice Marvel: 602 McKee Dr., Gallup, NM 87301

Frances Holmes: % Shirley Criss, 6969 W. Yale Ave. # 41, Denver, CO 80227

Deaths:

Evelyn Anderson

Billy Townsend

...and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

\$100 A Day for Expanding Our Ministries

June 9th — Given by **Donald & Marlene Kelly** in celebration of their 51st wedding anniversary.

June 18th — Given by **Elva Alden** in loving memory of Howard on what would have been our 50th wedding anniversary.

June 20th — Given by **Paul & Glenda Gill** in celebration of their 50th (Golden) wedding anniversary.

Great Challenge - Great Response - Great People

We have received so many very generous donations from church members and our whole team appreciates the level of involvement and support. We have become the top fundraising "Team Heifer" project ever. Raising \$7,300+ with more still coming in. THANK YOU! We received donations from over 100 individuals in 15 states and have had articles printed about our Heifer project 14 times in three

states.

You are invited to the celebration of the Big Moo Canoe success on Sunday, July 20th at 9:15 a.m. when Heifer will be at FUMC to present the Big Moo Canoe team with a plaque.

<http://www.moocanoe.com/event-overview.cfm>

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Learning for Life at FUMC...A Learning and Teaching Center

Summer Book and Movie Reviews

Here are more great opportunities to participate in FUMC's traditional summer book reviews and discussions. If you haven't yet attended one, you're missing out on a good time! Don't stay away because you haven't had a chance to read the book or see the movie – come and join in the discussion in the **Parlor from 7:00 – 8:00 pm**, preceded by a light meal at 6:00.

- On **Wednesday July 16**, Rev. Miller will lead a discussion on *No Future Without Forgiveness* by Desmond Tutu. This book chronicles Tutu's time as chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the remarkable attempt by South Africans to offer amnesty and forgiveness for human rights violations during the apartheid era.
- On **Wednesday July 23**, Rev. Kershaw will lead a discussion on the film *The Great Debaters*. Denzel Washington directs and stars in this uplifting drama based on a true story about a small East Texas all-black college in 1935 that rises to the top of the nation's debate teams in a duel against Harvard.
- On **Wednesday July 30**, Rev. Schuster's focus will be the book *God is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything* by Christopher Hitchens, a book that Publisher's Weekly says is "the best of the recent rash of atheist manifestos." This promises to be a lively discussion!

Living Fully – Dying Well

The 7-week study is designed to assist people of all ages to make careful, wise and prayerful preparation for meeting life's most important moments. Bishop Rueben Job, author of the study says, "Living fully is life's most rewarding gift. Young or old, rich or poor, at the peak of our powers or weakened by the limitations of age or disease, living fully is something that in our better moments we all desire and with God's help can all achieve. Just as we cannot live fully without serious consideration of life and its meaning, we cannot die well without consideration of death and its meaning for us all." Ray Miller and Martha Conant will lead this study on **Tuesdays from 6:00 – 7:00 pm starting August 12**. Register in Fellowship Hall or in the church office. Participant manuals are \$9.

DISCIPLE CLASS REGISTRATION FOR 2008-09

The following Disciple Bible Studies will be offered from August 2008–May 2009. Registration is starting now to enable adequate supplies to be obtained. Please check the course you are interested in and plan to join with others in this small group experience to grow in your relationship with Christ and with other believers.

_____ **Disciple 1** "Becoming Disciples Through Bible Study" A study of the entire Bible discerning the messages that are common from Genesis to Revelation. Ray Miller will lead this 34 week study starting Monday August 18, 11:00 am – 1:30 pm including lunch at 12 noon. Participant's Manual: \$33

_____ **Disciple 2** "Into the Word—Into the World" A deeper examination of the books of Genesis/Exodus and Luke/Acts emphasizing the rhythm of coming to God and going for God. Gary Conner will lead this 32 week study starting Thursday August 21, 2:00 –4:00 pm. Participant's Manual: \$33

_____ **Disciple 3** "Remember Who You Are" A closer study of the Old Testament Prophets and the Letters of Paul. Diane Smith will lead this 32 week study starting Thursday August 21, 8:00 – 10:00 am. Participant's Manual: \$33

_____ **Disciple 4** "Under the Tree of Life" Conveys the promise of finding shelter, security, and rest in God's love focused on the Old Testament Writings, the Gospel of John, the Letters of John, James, and Jude, and the Revelation of John. Karen Lowe will lead this 32 week study starting Monday August 18, 6:30 – 8:30 pm. Participant's Manual: \$33

Short-Term Disciple Class

_____ **"Invitation to Psalms"** explores the Bible's prayer book and their moving testimonies of grace, glory, sorrow, and beauty and how they can give expression to our own life experiences. Betsy Kellogg will lead this 10 week study starting Monday September 8, 6:30 – 8:30 pm. Participant's Manual: \$9

____ I want to participate in the Disciple Class(es) checked above.

____ I want more information about the following class(es). Circle class(es) 1, 2, 3, 4 or Short-Term _____

Name(s) _____ Phone _____ Email _____

Turn in at Church Office.

Christmas In July!

The sun may be shining and the thermometer creeping upward, but COSROW is already busy planning this year's Advent Guide. This year's guide promises to be something special, with devotional readings, music, crafts, games and



activities for all ages. Do you have a treasured recipe? A favorite family pastime? Know the best holiday program in town? Have a great idea for kids' holiday crafts? Do you know the perfect getaway for two, or for one? Share them

with your FUMC family! E-mail any and all of your holiday-related ideas, traditions, and Bible verses to Lisa Pere (LLPERE@comcast.net). Please let us know if we can use your name, or if we should credit someone with a recipe or passage.

Summer Sunday School ...is in full swing!



We are currently doing a Rotation Unit on *David, the Boy* through July 13 and then we will study *Forgiveness*. Attendance so far has been

great – I encourage you to bring your children whenever you are in town. We will meet every Sunday, including holidays.

Healing Service—July 8, 6 p.m. in the Chapel

On Tuesday, July 8, at 6 p.m. a Healing Service will be held in the Chapel, led by Martha Conant and Ray Miller. This is a follow-up to the Divine Healing class held this Spring. This service is designed for anyone who has experienced brokenness in

their lives through death, health issues, emotional distress, haunting memories, broken relationships, etc. We will operate out of the model suggested in James 5:13-16. It is the current plan to

hold a Healing Service on a once-a-month basis. Any questions, contact Martha Conant or Ray Miller.

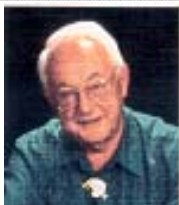
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—Quote Magazine*

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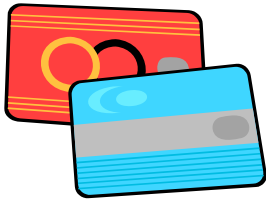
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Grocery Card Ministry



We have made a change in the way we order Grocery Cards. Currently, the cards can be ordered during the worship hour and picked up after the service. We have attempted to make the cards more available and easier to order. We won-

dered if it would make a difference. We have been doing this for one month and the result is we have more than doubled the sale of cards already. One third of the sales result support UMW projects and two thirds of the sales support the church budget and will help pay off the debt.

Thanks for your support.

Preserving Family Histories for Generations to Come

If you are like me you have thought more than once, "I should write down things I think my children/grandchildren/family would like to know about my life." It's amazing just how much even those closest to us do not know. Perhaps the way to actually do this is to get together with others who

have a similar interest and we can help each other accomplish this. If interested, please call Ray Miller, 215-3933 or come to the kick-off on Monday, July 7 at 1:00 p.m.

Tie-One-On To Help Stamp Out The Church Debt

That's right, in the heat of July the men and women of the First United Methodist Church of Fort Collins are going to rid themselves of those neckties they no longer wear.

For example, our retired executives, sales people, professors, etc. no longer use ties everyday. They have some real classics. They are invited to put them on the **BIG TIE TREE** in Fellowship Hall on July

20 prior to each service. We can all get one or several of those ties by making a contribution.

SOOOOooo...bring your ties, make an exchange or just take ties and put a contribution in the bucket. All contributions go to stamping out the debt. Quilters, you can get some really unique pieces for quilting.

Job Opportunity

The Mother's Day Out program is in need of teachers:

- Tuesdays and Thursdays
 - 8:45 a.m.—1:30 p.m.
 - September through May
 - \$9.00 an hour
 - Staff children attend free
 - Teaching degree is not required
- Call Gail Farnum, 223-3370, for more details.

We've Made a Dent

As of June 9th, we have had contributions amounting to \$28,627 through the special Stamp Out the Debt offering. That has reduced our indebtedness to approximately \$71,000.

Thanks to all who participated, and those who haven't had a chance to do so yet, it is not too late!



How Are We Doing?

Each Month we will give you a report on the financial situation of our congregation. Unlike many of our home situations, our income is not evenly spread out over the 12 months of the year. We have peak times when our receipts are high and down times when our income can be significantly lower. We are about to enter one of the times in the year when traditionally our income is less. So here is the report:

- Total income for January – May \$407,829
- Total Expenditures for January – May \$431,818

So you can see that we began June with a deficit of \$23,989 for the first 5 months of 2008. Why are our expenditures so far ahead of receipts? In part

*God is nearer to us than we are
to ourselves.*

because our utility bills are \$5,500 higher than last year. Also we have had major expenditures for new printing equipment in the office for machines that were totally worn out.

What can we do? It becomes imperative that each of us make every effort to keep our promised giving up-to-date if at all possible. And if it is possible, perhaps an extra gift to your church will help us to come to Fall without any greater deficit. God has led us into some wonderful years as a congregation with great hopefulness for our future. How great it is to be part of something so exciting.

Tales from the Kid's Closet

The Children and Family Council's Kids' Closet not only helps people, it helps the planet, as every kind of recycling does. One mom pointed out that people know, deep inside, how wrong it is to waste, and when things go to the landfill, it affects our psychological and spiritual health because we know that's not good stewardship of the earth.

As a member of the Sunshine Singers, Judy Lefler saw our Kids' Closet, and she and her husband were inspired to start a similar project at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, which last year won a community service award from Group Publishing.

New flyers went out to 52 service agencies and churches, and it's obvious from the sign-in sheet that clients see them. Joan Kraus of the Vineyard Resource Center sent suggestions on how to make the Spanish on the flyers more communicative. Thanks to Mrs. Josephson for



the child-size table and chairs, so kids can sit and color while their moms are looking at clothes.

One of the client's mom helped me by taking some bags of adult clothes to drop off at another church where adults are served. One mom who came in looking for clothes for her two kids brought several adorable little brand-new dresses, thanks to a two-year old who refuses to wear girly clothes sent by a grandma who keeps on sending girly clothes. She also brought some toys to keep in the room to amuse babies.

Backpacks are proving to be very popular. A couple weeks ago there were half a dozen in stock, and now there are none.

Kids' Closet is now open every Saturday from 9 am - 12 noon, and every Tuesday from 3 pm - 7 pm. Donations of clean, gently-used children's clothing and shoes can be left at the foot of the stairway by the choir room door.

United Methodist Women

Register now for *A Day Apart*

This year our annual Peaks & Plains District “A Day Apart” will be held at Rinn UMC in Frederick, CO, on Saturday, July 19 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The theme is “Share Glad Tidings.” Sandy Stewart, an ordained UMC clergywoman serving in extension ministry for people living in marginal or homeless situations, will be our speaker. Join other District women for a centering opportunity to reconnect with God and our sisters in Christ. Registration forms are available on the UMW bulletin board and must be submitted no later than July 12.

Circle Meetings

There are no regular circle meetings scheduled for July.

Executive Board.

The Executive Board will not meet in July. The next meeting will be Thursday, August 21 at 4:00 p.m. in the parlor. It will be an important planning meeting; on the agenda are the 2009 budget, 2009 programs, the kick off luncheon in September, and the Conference UMW Annual Meeting here in October. Bring a covered dish to share in a potluck dinner over business.

The important thing is not to think much but to love much.

—St. Teresa of Avila

“Living the Sacred”

**2008 RMC Church-wide School of Christian Mission, August 7-9, 2008
St. Andrew UMC, Highlands Ranch, CO**

As part of its mission outreach and to fulfill its charge to promote spiritual growth and mission education, the United Methodist Women co-sponsors a *church-wide* education program with the Rocky Mountain Conference and the United Methodist Church. The School of Christian Mission has been called the best lay education program in the world. It provides an unusual combination of classes, worship and fellowship to bring the study of the church’s global mission and the responsibility of Christians within the church to all levels of our church community. It provides information and training at the conference level for those who plan to teach the studies in their churches and spreads awareness of current topics and geographical regions needing our support through prayer, fundraising and volunteering.

Tools & Blankets — July 27, 2008

Tools and Blankets Sunday will be celebrated on July 27 when a special offering will be taken to assist victims of disasters and poverty. FUMC will join with some 8000 congregations and groups across the United States to support Church World Service’s efforts to provide approximately \$3.7 million in assistance to struggling families in some 80 nations. Church World Service has a reputation of being one of the first relief agencies to pro-

vide assistance where needed, recent examples being the cyclone refugees in Myanmar and the earth quake victims in China. These funds provide the right tool and/or a warm blanket that makes a real difference in the lives of children and families faced with an emergency or struggling to keep food on the table. This offering is one way that our congregation

can share its abundance with the less fortunate of the world.



Double Nickel Luncheon

We regret that illness prevented Andy Mair from attending the June 13th luncheon. We wish him a speedy recovery and look forward to having him as the

speaker at a future time.

Karen Atler from CSU ably stepped in and gave interesting comments about a study she is

conducting on “Does how you spend your time impact your health?” She will be interviewing members of FUMC as a part of the study.

Ride to Sunday Worship:

If you need a ride to Sunday worship, call Erma Clements, 221-0224 or Bill Eiman, 482-5402

Relaxed Seniors

Tired? Stressed? Need a relaxing hour? Thanks to Rev. David Dalke nine Seniors journeyed to the Boulder College of Massage Therapy and returned very relaxed. That is what a good mas-

sage will do for you. Each person had a full hour massage at no cost (even tips were refused).

Later lunch was enjoyed at the Café Blue (good food).

Bring Items for Our Troops

Remember our troops and their needs! The items that have been collected and shipped are greatly appreciated as evidenced by the Certificate of Appreciation that has been received. So far, six boxes have been sent!

The collection container is located in the church office.
Personal Items (travel size):

chap sticks, soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes with covers, sunscreen, nasal spray, shampoo, foot powder travel size, hand sanitizers, deodorant, wash clothes, and baby wipes.

Snacks:

M&M’s beef jerky, dried fruits, nuts/seeds, tea bags, crackers, snacks/granola bars, trail mix,

Vienna sausages, tuna snack kits, camping style foods, etc.

Fall Bus Trip



Mark your calendar for Thursday, September 25. That is the day that the Senior Council has tentatively set for the 2008 Fall Bus Trip. The site that is under consideration is the Wyoming Territorial Prison near Laramie, Wyoming. The cost will include transportation, gratuity to driver, admission and lunch. Tours are self guided using brochures furnished and the site is wheel chair accessible.

Care Closet

The closet has been so well received both by the donations of medical equipment and by use of the equipment that a larger closet is needed. If you or someone you know is in need of medical equipment the Care Closet may be the answer.

Open Doors Task Force Report to the Congregation

An Open Doors Task Force was created this year to develop a strategy for getting the word out to the Fort Collins area about who we are at First United Methodist Church. The first step that was recognized was the need to determine what the message should be. Below you will find the result of our deliberations. It is intended to provide 'talking points' for us individually and as we make plans for a more extensive outreach to the area. If you wish to respond to this, please do so to the Task Force chair, Stephen King at 970-266-1609 or stephen.king@aei.com.

Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.
“What’s Behind the Open Doors?”

We are a community of people with...

Open Hearts – Our hearts are open to the needs of others. Our goal is to make a difference in the world through love.

Open Minds – We come with our questions and viewpoints. Open dialog enlightens us.

Open Doors – Everyone is welcome. We do not judge, only encourage one another.

Open Hearts

We devote ourselves to a mission of intentionally showing God's love in our daily lives, supporting each other in becoming the best we can be, and actively working to make this world a better place for all. We embrace those who have been hurt in the name of Christianity. We know that

*The prayer that does not alter
circumstances can alter our
attitude toward circumstances.*

–E. Lee Phillips

the way we act toward others is the fullest expression of what we believe.

Open Minds

We value exploring and questioning. We pursue our search for meaning together. We gain wisdom from scripture, tradition, reason and experience. We know no one of us has all the truth, and each of us has some of it, so in community we learn from each other. And even if we do not always see eye to eye, we strive to ensure a safe and respectful environment that transcends differences.

Open Doors

Our doors are open to all people, believers and agnostics, traditional Christians and questioning skeptics, women and men, those of all ages, gender identities and sexual orientations, those of all races and cultures, and those of all classes and abilities. We are each at different places on a spiritual life journey that for us includes Jesus, but we also value the truth of other faiths.

We are United Methodists which means we do not define ourselves by a rigid set of beliefs. It all comes together at First United Methodist of Fort Collins. Here we gather to learn from each other. We have open hearts, open minds, and our doors are open to you.

*Task force members – Linda Ambrose,
Dean and Susan Block, Steve King,
Janet Krech, Ray Miller, and Julie
Shaffer.*

A Letter from Sean and Colleen

Hello Fort Collins FUMC! As Sean and I are coming up on one year since leaving Fort Collins, I thought it might be time for an update. We landed in Ames, IA on June 29 2007 and our first Sunday was July 1. The congregation is very warm and loving and have made us very welcome. When we first arrived at the parsonage, it was to a stocked

refrigerator and larder, so we did not even have to shop for groceries or cleaning supplies that first couple of weeks.

Ames is similar to Fort Collins, in that it is the location of a land grant agricultural school-Iowa State University. Interestingly, cows suspected of "mad cow" disease come here to be tested, though I am un-

sure whether testing occurs pre- or post-mortem. Iowa State is also a leading University in research into human/computer interaction and the production and environmental, ethical, and economic impacts of ethanol.

Ames is Iowa's largest small town with 500,00 residents. Perhaps one

continue on page 11

The History of Stephen Ministry at FUMC 1998-2003

by Norma B. Cowell

Stephen Ministry at FUMC was initiated in 1997 with a substantial gift from church members, Kay and Forrest Walters. In order to form a Stephen Ministry within a church, several people have to be sent to Leadership Training for one week. Three persons were sent for the training: Carol Fox, Robyn Franklin, and I. I knew that this was exactly what I wanted to be involved with at FUMC.

In April 1998, the three of us went to Seattle, Washington for the Leadership Training. We had eagerly read all of the literature about Stephen Ministry, but nothing had prepared us for the actual training. We were overwhelmed by the scope of the Ministry and all the material we had to "digest". However, we were more overwhelmed by the other people there. They were from many states plus Canada and from several denominations. We experienced their enthusiasm and their dedication. The majority of them were already Stephen Ministers in their churches but were training to become Leaders.

We began our first class for the 50 hours of Stephen Ministers Training (SMT) with eight people who were commissioned in the spring of 1999. We sent two more people for Leadership Training in 1999. Two of the Stephen Ministers from the first class, Jim Luallen and Lizbeth Denkers, returned with

new ideas and renewed enthusiasm. Our second SMT class began in the fall of 1999 in conjunction with the class at First Presbyterian.

In 2000, we had our first Director, Robyn Franklin. We had another training class in 2000. At the conclusion of their training, five new Stephen Ministers were commissioned in the spring of 2001. In June, 2001, Reverend Carol Fox left FUMC for a special appointment to the Isle of Man. By October, 2001, Reverend Joyce Curtis had joined the staff. She also participated in our new class of 2001. The fourth class consisted of nine people who were commissioned in 2002. Robyn Franklin left as the Director; another Leader Sam Mack became the Director.

In June 2003, my husband, Jim Cowell retired from FUMC and I left the ministry. During the years between 1998 and 2003, Stephen Ministry gained the confidence and the support of the FUMC staff and the congregation. Our group of ministers was a community of trust and caring for each other even as we cared for others. Now in 2008, 10 years later, it is an ongoing ministry, ever-evolving with new ideas, finding new ways to care with new Leaders, and a new Director, Bill Rice. The goal, however, remains the same. The Stephen Minister is a child of God who walks beside a hurting person.

A Letter from Sean & Colleen continues...

of the best indications that Iowa may be Heaven, is the fact that, even on the Interstate, people will wave you in if you use a blinker.

Sean is working in several areas of the church ministry. He is the primary contact for the youth, mission and outreach ministries. As Ames First is a "downtown" church, the building houses a food program, free medical clinic and provides help with gas costs for people trying to get by. Sean also preaches about twice a month for all 3 of the worship services. He is on at least

3 conference committees and is involved in two community-wide initiatives to improve the quality of life for all of Ames' citizens.

As to me, I am about as busy as ever. I was part of the Iowa Annual Conference Worship Committee this year. I also just got a job as organist at a UMC in a nearby town. I have been substitute teaching at the middle and high school level, and learning to garden in a land with rich soil and enough water. Who would have thought that would be hard? Highlights of the

year were a trip to "House on the Rock" in Wisconsin, a whirlwind train trip to Colorado in February, and attending General Conference where I saw Rev. Everhart, Rev. Schuster and the President of Liberia. I am still unclear as to which was the most exciting. :)

Sean is an excellent minister and I am successfully avoiding identification as "normal" as I pursue music and community opportunities in this beautiful place. Please feel free to email at colsunstrebo@yahoo.com.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

1005 Stover Street
Fort Collins, CO 80524-3849

Phone: 970-482-2436
Fax: 970-221-5833
E-mail: staff@fcfumc.net

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Vacation Bible School

(June 16-20,2008)



Vacation Bible School was a huge success again this year! We had over 125 children attend our Son World VBS. Special thanks are extended to our co-directors: Barb Grauberger, Allison Straubing, and Stephanie Tomasini -- it wouldn't have been possible without them. We had about 50 willing and smiling volunteers, including some great teen helpers, who made the week a huge success – THANK YOU!! Our theme words for the

week were: Believe, Act, Forgiveness, Obey, and Choose Jesus. Each of these key words was discussed in relation to various Bible stories and the children learned about some of God's important servants.

Our VBS mission project this year was the Harmony House, which is a family visitation center in Fort Collins where supervised visitations and exchanges can occur. Harmony House's

mission is to allow children to have visits or exchanges with their family in a safe, non-threatening, home-like setting under the supervision of a trained community volunteer. Our VBS children collected needed paper products for Harmony House, as well as cash donations. It was a great opportunity for them to share God's love with others in our community.