



First United Methodist
Church-Odessa
415 N. Lee
Odessa, TX 79761

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www.fumcodessa.org

Enjoy The Cultivator On-line



Join Us This Sunday

- 8:00 AM Early Bible Class
- 9:00 AM Traditional Worship
—Sanctuary
- 10:00 AM Sunday School, all ages
- 11:00 AM Contemporary Worship
—Fellowship Hall

First United Methodist Church, Odessa, Texas, founded in 1890, is a community of Christians who have pledged to support this church with their presence, their service, their gifts and their prayers. We dedicate ourselves to spreading God's Word throughout our community and to providing meaningful worship experiences, fellowship, and opportunities to fulfill the teachings of Jesus Christ through a variety of ministries. As United Methodists, "our doors, our hearts and our minds are open to all those who seek God's Grace."
The *CULTIVATOR* is a bi-monthly publication whose exclusive purpose is to help FUMC-Odessa accomplish its Mission by communicating and "cultivating" the presence of Christ in the lives of this congregation.

Welcome New Members



Toby and Becky Latham became members on Sunday, February 1. Toby works in the credit department at Western National Bank, and Becky is the Director of Development for the Permian Basin Rehabilitation Center. They are expecting a baby later this month. One reason they joined First UMC was because they loved the family first atmosphere and the welcoming members.



Vicky and Rich Tessaro became members on Sunday, February 1. Rich is an Assistant Warden at the Community Education Centers. Vicky works for the City of Odessa in the Public Safety Communications 911 Center. They were invited to our church by Vicky's brother, Charlie Strackbein, and attend the 9:00 worship service.



First United Methodist-Odessa

Our vision is to be a community that welcomes all people into life-changing relationships with God and others.

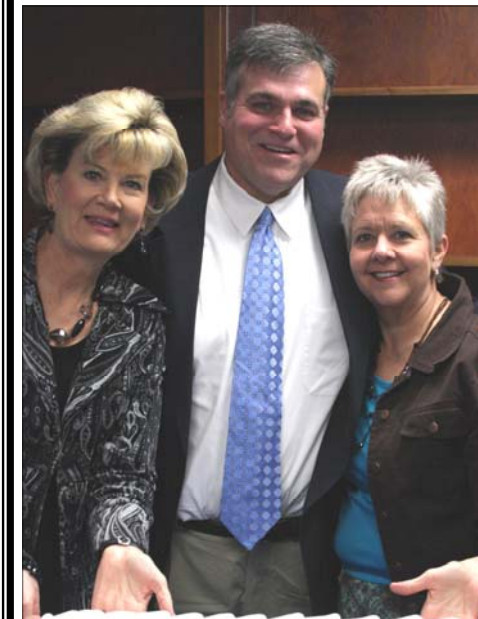
CULTIVATOR

Cultivating Christ's Presence in Our Congregation

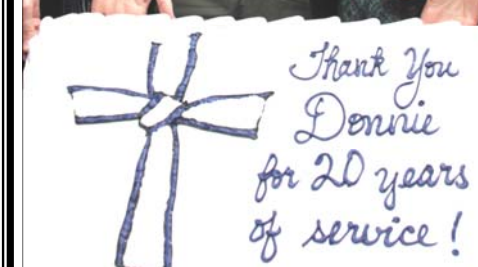
Volume 7, Issue 3

February 6, 2009

Celebrating 20 Years Of History



Joni Vincent and Sarah Mazur show Rev. Donnie Williams the cake celebrating his 20 years in youth ministry. Please turn to page 4 for more pictures of the surprise celebration on January 25.



Creating Church History



Off to a good beginning! Members of the newest Sunday School class pause before getting down to business on Sunday, Feb. 1. The as-yet un-named class joins our other eleven adult classes. Our longest-active classes, The Fidelis and Couples classes have met since the 1930s. Please turn to page 3 for details about this new venture. Pictured above are (seated) Cheyenne, Scott Hamilton and Joe Hansen; (standing) Brandy Blumberg, Michelle and Jeff Rea, Julie and Chris Garrett.



February 8 - High Definition Relationships

"Two people can accomplish more than twice as much as one; they get a better return for their labor. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But people who are alone when they fall are in real trouble." – Ecc. 4:9-10

February 15 - High Definition Dreams

"God, by His mighty power at work within us, is able to do far more than we would ever dare to ask or even dream of—infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, or hopes." – Eph. 3:20

Invite your neighbor to the 9:00 traditional service or the 11:00 contemporary service.



The Conference Thanks Our Church For Our Commitment

First UMC, Odessa
415 N Lee
Odessa, TX 79761

Dear Brothers & Sisters:

The national economic slowdown affected the finances of the New Mexico Conference. Ministries are cutting back and belt tightening to discover approaches to carry out their task with fewer financial resources. We continue to search for ways to fulfill the mission entrusted to us with fewer financial resources.

I rejoice and give thanks for your contributions to your Shared Ministry allocations. You contributed more than 100%. You enabled the proclamation of the Gospel and the transformation of lives. Students received scholarships, missionaries marched into service around the world, and youth experienced transformation at conference retreat and camping events. I cannot even begin to note the difference your gifts have made in the lives of people and congregations of this Annual Conference.

I personally thank you for what you have done for the financial health of this Annual Conference. Financial resources are essential in carrying out ministry, however, the most important issue remains in how effectively each congregation enables persons to encounter Jesus Christ, grow toward perfection in love, and reach a new generation for Christ. I rejoice in your keeping his mission front and center in all that you do.

Please pray for each of the congregations, each pastor, and a special prayer for me as I lead in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.



Bishop Whitfield

Grace & Peace,

D. Max Whitfield

The Blessing Of Beckoning

**Bishop Max Whitfield and Bishop Dan Solomon Invite You To
St. Mark's United Methodist Church in El Paso, TX**

Saturday, February 21, 2009 1:00 - 4:00 pm

Youth and young adults are invited, as the focus will be on calling and vocation as it relates especially to them.

Did you know...

...February is Black History month? The youth from **Mackey Chapel UMC** will help us experience Black History through music and movement during our worship services on Sunday, Feb. 15.

...the **Carlson Small Group** delivered snacks to the OC Baseball Team on Feb. 1? The college students were extremely appreciative of this act of servant evangelism.

With Sympathy to...

...**Traci Gregston, Raleigh and Bella** for the loss of Traci's mother, Barbara Roberson.



February Birthdays

<u>February 1</u> Vera Baza Robert Flaherty Kristy Stephens	<u>February 11</u> Mildred Bridwell	<u>February 20</u> Caroline Howard
<u>February 2</u> Mariel McLemore Howard Millsap Tom Rodman Jeanie Williams	<u>February 12</u> Kendra Martinez Wilma Tune	<u>February 22</u> Gary Leathers Bob Miller
<u>February 4</u> Brock Bizzell Ashlee Thompson	<u>February 13</u> Sherry Buck Janet Cabra Alice Learned Greg Terrell	<u>February 23</u> Anne Acreman Lauren Browning Kari Halldorson Ali Morgan Meg Morgan Tess Williams
<u>February 5</u> Steve Storm	<u>February 14</u> Lucilee Edgar	<u>February 24</u> Barbara Graff
<u>February 6</u> Jake Frost	<u>February 15</u> Steve Borchert Jaden Chavez	<u>February 25</u> Alexis Galaviz Beau Wright
<u>February 7</u> Letha Allen Bob Girard Grant Lehr Emily Osborn	<u>February 16</u> Charles Coffin	<u>February 26</u> Leslie King Ruth Ann McQuitty
<u>February 8</u> Mary Sue Carey	<u>February 17</u> Karen Burroughs Hank Jones	<u>February 27</u> H.C. Banfill Lucile Bellican
<u>February 9</u> Jack Lambert	<u>February 18</u> Wesley Coursey Ross Doran Mason Vincent	<u>February 28</u> Logan Cox Valerie Minyen
<u>February 10</u> Matt Furst	<u>February 19</u> Jean Jones Dee Melton	

100 Years Young

Tricia Elrod smiles as she stands behind her grandfather, Dick Whittenburg. Tricia organized the family celebration for Dick's 100th birthday on January 26. Also pictured are Dick's nephews Buzz Hurt and Sam Whittenburg. Dick and his late wife, Addie Mae, were longtime members. Other family members helping to celebrate were Tom Elrod, Tommy & Paula Elrod, and their daughters Madison and Lauren.



To the Memorial Fund
In memory of:
Aubrey Barlow
Ora Ruth Withrow
Given by
Katheryn & Sam Howell

In memory of
Aubrey Barlow
Given by
Grace and Janis Miller

In memory of
Carrie Cooper
Given by:
Jane Moore Bynum
Sharon & Bill Fowler
Vivian & Frank Fowler
Mr. & Mrs. Clay Wood

In memory of:
Dorothy Babb
Aubrey Barlow
Mary Jo Bostick
Given by
Gloria & LaDoyce Lambert

In memory of
Aubrey Barlow
Mary Jo Bostick
Given by
Pat & Glen Larum

To the Children's Clothes Closet

In memory of
Dixie Burroughs
Given by
Robbie & Dan Brazelton

In memory of
Carrie Cooper
Given by
Evelyn Bauman

To the Food Pantry
In memory of
Virginia Beene
Given by
Evelyn Bauman

In memory of
Robbie Nelle Hamilton
Given by
Mr. & Mrs. W. A. Bowhay

To the Choir Fund
In memory of
Carrie Cooper
Given by:
Sue Rylee
Sara Hignight

To the Youth Fund
In memory of
Aubrey Barlow
Given by
Edwin Guilbeau

In memory of
Dixie Burroughs
Given by
Challengers SS Class

February Focuses On Fellowship, Money And Marriage

Youth Super Bowl Party



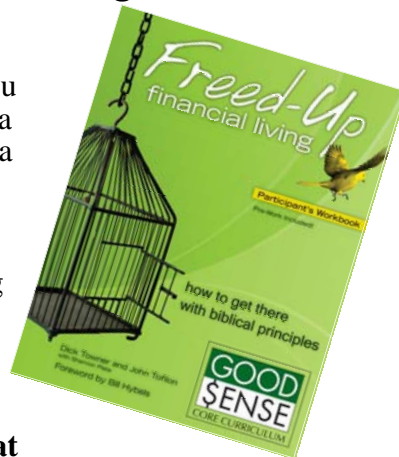
Youth members (top l-r) Tess Williams, Emily Osborn, Ali Morgan, Amanda Stallcup, Meg Morgan and (bottom l-r) Kaitlyn Riley, Erin Scharlach and Bryant Coppedge enjoy some Super Bowl Fun on Sunday, Feb. 1.

Good \$ense Bible Study: Freed Up Financial Living

During the course of this 6-week study you will become grounded in a biblical understanding of a proper relationship to money and possessions and begin developing a biblically-based Spending Plan.

We are offering two one-hour classes:
-Sunday evenings beginning February 15 at 6:00 pm.
-Wednesday evenings beginning February 18 at 7:00 pm.

Workbooks will be available Sunday morning, February 8, at the Welcome Centers before and after both worship



services or in the church office during the week for \$10.00 each.

Please try to purchase your workbooks before the classes start so you can complete the pre-work section before the first class.

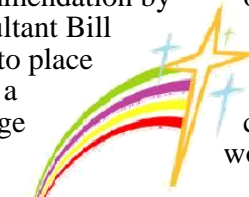
New Sunday School Class

Another recommendation by church consultant Bill Easum was put into place last Sunday when a "30-something" age group Sunday School class began meeting.

Chris Garrett, who teaches the class, said that during Easum's audit of First United Methodist's programs and activities last year, he found that while the church's Sunday School attendance was generally strong, there was a gap in class offerings for those in the 30 to early 40 age range.

Garrett and his wife Julie had been members of the Seekers Class, where Chris had been teaching, when he was approached by Senior Pastor Terry Tamplen to organize the new class which Easum recommended. "I was honored to be asked," Chris said.

Some members of Seekers will follow Chris and Julie as "seed" for the new class, but Chris will be actively looking for new members in the age group, both from inside the church and



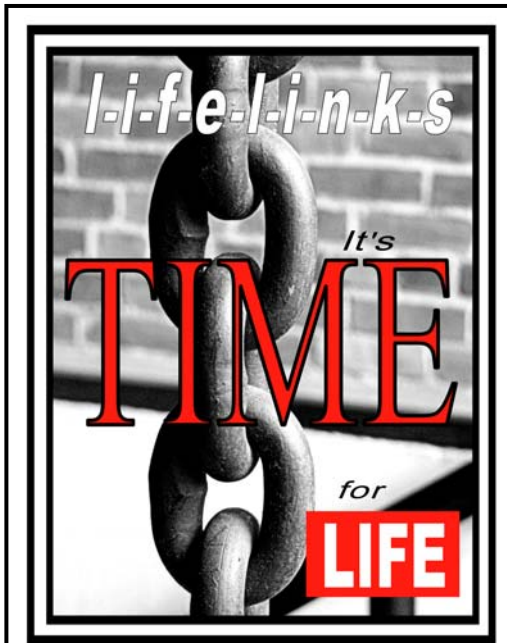
New Sunday School for 30-yr olds

outside in the community. He noted that he expected to find young men and women who might not have attended church regularly, but who would be interested in a Sunday School class of their peers that was engaged in a spirited Bible study.

When the class first met last Sunday, Chris began using Max Lucado's book entitled "Cast of Characters," which he said was a series of character studies on some of the Bible's most interesting lives, such as Joseph and the Samaritan woman. He said each chapter includes related biblical text and discussion questions for group study.

Chris invited all interested persons in their 30's or early 40's to visit the class which meets on the second floor of the education wing, and which has yet to be named. Chris said he wanted to wait until the class is more established so that the members might have a voice in what to name the class.

—LaDoyce Lambert



l-i-f-e-l-i-n-k-s

If you are interested in growing closer to God and learning more about our church and what it means to be a follower of Jesus, then this experience is for you!

February 22, 2009

3-6 p.m. ~ Dinner included

Sign-up Sundays at the Welcome Center or call the church office @ 337-1527.

Prefer to receive the Cultivator by email?

Sign up online at www.fumcodessa.org

FOCUS ON THE FAMILY® ANNOUNCES A LANDMARK SIMULCAST EVENT:

FOCUS ON MARRIAGE™

Seeing your marriage through the eyes of God



Beth Moore



Dr. Gary Smalley



Dr. John Trent



Gary Thomas



Dr. Del Tackett

LIVE VIA SATELLITE FEB. 28, 2009

Presented by: FOCUS ON THE FAMILY Powered by: CEN

8:30—3:30 in Fellowship Hall

Register online at www.fumcodessa.org or call 337-1527

\$15 per person or \$25 per couple includes lunch

Childcare available by reservation

What is Confirmation?

Confirmation is an important part of the spiritual formation of our students. We will be studying about the different areas of our faith and beliefs. If you know of a student in the 6th-8th grade who has not gone through confirmation and would like to do so, please contact the church office at 337-1527.

Confirmation 2009

Begins February 10
5-7 p.m.
In the youth building

How Can The Church Help? Prayer Partners Are Needed!

If you would like to serve as a prayer partner for one of our confirmation students, please contact Donnie Williams. It involves meeting the student at the beginning of confirmation, praying for them daily, encouraging them, and being with them on Confirmation Sunday. You will not be required to attend the weekly meetings.

God's Children Thank A Man Of God



Current and former youth members hold cards that read, "20 Years and Donnie's Still AWESOME!"

Donnie was blessed in the service with a special slideshow that captured just a few of the faces and places where he has shared the love of Jesus. Included was a video message from Brandon Hembree who is currently a missionary with his wife Christine and baby in Shanghai, China. The celebration was past due to thank Donnie for the many sacrifices that he makes in order to set such a great example for all of us. **Thanks Donnie!!!**

It is truly incredible to think of all of the lives you have not only inspired, but *changed*, by your works through the Spirit.



Christy Lewis begins the surprise celebration by thanking Donnie for his years of unselfish ministry to the youth of our church. Amanda Malone Overby thanks Donnie for being a positive role model for her when she was a high school student, and Natalie Hurt Watzl expresses her gratitude to Donnie for guiding her life-long walk with God that began as a member of his youth group. Steve Bender tells how Donnie still influences his life's work—years after graduating and leaving Odessa.

It was January 1, 1989 when Donnie Williams began his journey here as the Youth Pastor. We gathered on Sunday January 25, 2009 to celebrate the work that God has done through Donnie. Youth and parents past and present gathered in the balcony to thank Donnie for his friendship and servant's heart, and mostly to thank him for teaching us what it looks like to truly follow Jesus. Let us now take some time to ask the question: **What has Donnie been up to for the last 20 years?** Leading high school, jr. high and college students on **46 mission trips** all over Texas to Gonzales, Presidio, San Antonio, Marfa, Alpine, Amarillo, Ft. Davis, Sweetwater, Graham, San Marcos, and Dallas, and outside Texas to Denver, Window Rock, Arizona, New Orleans, Baldwin, Louisiana, St. Louis, and Anniston, Alabama. Attending **50 high school graduations**. Planning and keeping secret **9 Mystery Trips**, starting in 1992 with Planes, Trains & Automobiles—to L.A., California, Orlando, Chicago, New York City, San Francisco, Cincinnati, Washington, D.C., and Philadelphia. Donnie has led **12 Confirmation Classes and retreats**. He has also been blessed to be a part of **14 Chrystalis weekends**. And many of us can't forget the **many, many ski trips and weekly lunch bunch**. Donnie said that throughout the years all of the success that he has had has not been because of him, but because of God and because the church body has made Youth Ministry a priority. It could not be done without the support of the church body and help from sponsors and volunteers. He said that he has been around and been able to see a lot of other churches, and that there is not a better church than First United Methodist Church, Odessa.



True to his calling, an emotional Donnie Williams gives all the praise and glory to God for the years that he has served as a youth minister. In his remarks after a slideshow with pictures of hundreds of students involved in mission trips, mystery trips and ski trips, Donnie said that he still has the first worship bulletin in which he is listed as a staff member, January 1, 1989. Donnie pointed to the cross behind him to remind everyone that God is the focus for his life.



Sharing their love for Donnie, clockwise from top left: Haley Jordan and Shelby Schlueter; Senior Jaci Brooks and former student Lance Brooks; Chrystal Fouche; and Robert Mann and current student Justin Eccles. Pictured at right are former student Mary Howell and a smiling Donnie.

