



STEWARDS OF OUR CHURCH

United Methodist Church
of Westlake Village

Spring
2014

“With ourselves it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God.” (St. Mark 10:27)

A Note from Our Pastor



What Is The Price Tag?

What is an area of stewardship that pays the greatest dividends but isn't realized for years to come? It is our children, young people, and youth. Without a doubt, a church needs to focus on its youth programs as part of its active stewardship. Wait a minute; can you put a price tag on youth? I'm not talking about money; I'm talking about stewardship of our resources to make sure that our youth are ministered to. Our investment in our young people won't be realized for years

because we are preparing the leaders of the church to serve other churches for the next generation. Other churches are preparing their leaders to serve here one day. Young people do not often stay in their home, go to school locally, and get jobs in the community where they were raised. Therefore, we only have our youth for a short period while they are with us. That's why this is such an important area of stewardship to the church. We have a great youth program headed by Eric Hall, dedicated parents, and other adults seeking to give young people a place to belong,

grow in their faith, and develop their leadership. Your faithful giving as part of our stewardship program means young people's lives will be touched and changed. That is an exciting thought! No, there is no price tag on that because you could never pay enough for it! However, I can guarantee you that the dividends will be enormous for the present and future church. Thank you for your dedication to the youth in our church and their leaders. Your faithful giving enables us to be faithful to them. Thank you for keeping the vision before you.

GARY

Trustees at Work

Wish List Idea

Under \$250

- Sound proof the choir room door
- Shelving for the pit

\$251 - \$500

- Security cameras

\$501 - \$1000

- Ping Pong table for the youth
- Upgrades to Alton Hall kitchen
- Flat Screen TV for the WFR

• Flat Screen TV for the YB

\$1001 - \$5000

- Patio concrete
- Automated Electronic Defibrillator (AED)

• LCD Projector for the sanctuary

\$5001 and over

- A/C for Alton Hall
- Replace carpet in the sanctuary

Any financial donations accepted

Trustees

2014

Jeff Falgien, *Chair*
Tom Sutphen
Sunny Benjamin

2015

Ron Glass
Janet Todd
Phil Severance

2016

Sharon Kenney
Mike Stone
Bill Snell

Treasurer's Report

1st Quarter Income \$208,877

1st Quarter Expenses \$206,396

Fiscal YTD Income \$208,877

Fiscal YTD Expenses \$206,396

Attendance

January	February	March
248	275	264
285	294	275
268	293	281
256	271	238
		274

A Note from Finance: David Cutbill

OUR LEGACY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

As we look into the future, how strong is our Church?

There are clearly many positives about the state of our Church and how it serves our congregation and the community. However, each year, we are finding it more difficult to fund the operations of the Church through current giving. I would suggest that on our current course, ten years from now, our giving may be less than half of what it is today.

How can that be if our Church attendance has been stable and members of our congregation continue to give of themselves?

Let me digress into the story of home entertainment, of which we are all consumers. There has been a decline in the sales of DVDs over the past few years with the ability to download films and shows online. It appears in the short term to have stabilized, and sales of DVDs are still significantly more than those online. You may then project forward and think that sales will remain strong for DVDs in the future. However, when you look

below the surface and see how different generations view entertainment, it is clear that 10 years from now sales of DVDs will have significantly declined.

So how does that shed light on our situation?

When we joined the Church 20 years ago there was a mix across generations, including active families in their 20s and 30s with young families. As you look around the Church today, you will see that this is no longer the case, with the majority of our congregation over the age of 60 and limited numbers of families with parents below the age of 40. If you fast forward 10 years you will start to feel the decline in Church attendance and especially those in their highest income earning years with the ability to fund the Church's operations.

Are we just a victim of the environment?

It is easy to equate it to environmental factors: Westlake Village and adjoining neighborhoods have an aging population and Church attendance across the nation is declining. Should we accept this or are we called to make a differ-

ence? It is not going to be easy but we need to act now even though there may not appear to be an urgent need to act. As C.S. Lewis' devil Screwtape says in his letters, "Indeed the safest road to Hell is the gradual one--the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without milestones, without signposts."

So what is it that we ask of you?

To truly believe that it is part of our calling to be stewards of the *Church on the Corner* for future generations, and to leave it a stronger place than when we joined.

To recognize the urgent need to act now and commit the right resources and focus to seed and grow the generational diversity of our congregation (even though the majority of our time and resources will still be focused on the current congregation).

It is that easy and that hard – we need to open our hearts, open our minds and open our doors, with God's help to future generations.

David Cutbill, Finance Chair

Highlighting Youth Ministries: Steve Ames

Being a part of the youth fellowship groups at the United Methodist Church of Westlake Village provides enlightenment about religion and helps participants grow in their faith.



Leader

UMCWV has two main youth-related organizations, the Covenant Youth Fellowship (CYF) and the Junior Youth Fellowship (JYF). Eric Hall has been director

of youth ministries since August 2012. Originally from West Union, Ohio, he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in communications from Mount Vernon Nazarene University. He has a Master of Arts in theology degree and a second master's in intercultural studies at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena.

Hall has worked with junior high, high school and college youth in Christian summer camps and other settings. He is excited to be working with the youth and adult volunteers at UMCWV and growing closer to Christ together. The aspect of his position that drives him the most, he says, is "our regular CYF and JYF meetings, held sepa-

Youth Ministries: continued

rately, to be able to have a discussion about youth, about Jesus and other biblical principles.

“If I didn’t get to do that, I don’t know if I’d be in ministry at this church. The youth know I’m available to them when they need me to talk in person, phone or text.”

Groups



The Youth Building

JYF is for grades six to eight and meets weekly on most Sundays at various times. It provides a great place to build fellowship with youth who have committed to making the church an important part of their social circle, to participate in fun activities, explore issues that they face in a complicated world and participate in community service projects. A weekend retreat is held in August.

For students in grades nine to 12, CYF meetings are on most Sundays at various times. It is also an opportunity to build fellowship with youth who have committed to making the church an important part of their social circle. The teens participate in fun activities, explore issues that they face in a complicated world and participate in community service projects. Annual activities include a weekend retreat, work trip and a Mystery Ramble, the latter planned by the graduating seniors.

Students

Robert Webb, 18, is CYF presi-

dent, a senior at Agoura High School and, as a member of the football team, played right guard on offense and nose guard on defense for the Chargers. He plans on majoring in aeronautical science at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Prescott, Ariz. Webb is the son of Tom and Terri Webb.

“It (CYF) gives back to the community,” he says. “It teaches me leadership skills, how to overcome obstacles, brings me closer to God. Coming from four years of football and being captain, I make decisions, work on leadership and the drive to help people and succeed in everything I do. I love that I can give back to the church in my role.”

Isabella “Izzy” Anderson, 18, is serving this school year as CYF vice president. She is a senior at La Reina High School, Thousand Oaks. Her parents are Tom Anderson and Chris Lindsay.

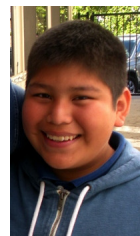


Tyler Jacques, Robert Webb, Isabella Anderson

Anderson appreciates being a part of CYF meetings. “You are learning about God and having discussions,” she says. “So, it’s not listening like in church. Fostering conversation, you are learning from other’s perspective. In college I can continue my involvement in a church.”

For JYF, Tyler Jacques, 13, is president this year. He’s in the eighth grade at Oaks Christian School, Westlake Village. Jacques likes the fact that he can meet with his peers each week. He’s the son of Heather McLeod and Steve Jacques.

He says he likes “making new friends and hanging out with them. I learn a lot about God and my friends.” Jacques enjoys the opportunity for fellowship. “I did not know how outgoing I was. I enjoy seeing Eder. We connect really well.”



Eder Poot, 14, JYF vice president, is in the eighth grade at Colina Middle School, Thousand Oaks. He has been a part of the UMCWV community since 2001.

His parents are Manuel Poot, church custodian, and Rebeca Martinez.

“I came to youth group because my dad works at the church,” he says. “The best part is getting to know God better and increase my faith within me. During our youth meetings we just get to hang out and learn more about God. I’ve learned how God loves us, and he’ll always be with us and will never leave our side.”

Poot says the highlight of JYF participation is that he gets to spend some time with his friends, and, he adds, “best of all, I feel very comfortable and know it’s the right place” to be.

For more information about either youth group, contact Hall at eric@umcwv.org or by calling the church office, (805) 497-7884.

Lay Leaders

Church Council

Charles Laing
Paul Krajewski
Deb Lyons
Janet Todd
David Cutbill
Lee Friel
Carol Ames
Judi Robinson
Chris Soltow
Sunny Benjamin
Eric Hall
Boyd Donavon
Steven Langberg
Barbara Ghosh
Terri Webb

Finance

Jeff Falgien
Boyd Donavon
Charles Laing
Deb Lyons
Rick Schroeder
Lee Friel
Gene Cooper
Mark Suzumoto

SPRC

Staff Parish Relations Committee

2014

Deb Lyons, Chair

Pam Pearson

Jim Lawson

2015

Tom Hopkins

Bob Carman

Jeannine Hanson

2016

Natalie Ruge

Jon Birmingham

Lynn Guess

Who We Are



*United
Methodist
Church of
Westlake Village*

open hearts open minds open doors

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The Focus Statement of Our Church

The United Methodist Church of Westlake Village is a caring Christian community that welcomes everyone to experience the loving embrace of God, nurtures one another,

and reaches out to the community and the world through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

INVITE INVOLVE GROW SHARE

Serving the people of the greater Conejo Valley and beyond in ministry since 1969.