

UPCOMING NEWS & NOTES

- We will observe **Pledge Sunday** on January 24th. You are invited to prayerfully discern your financial support of the ministries and mission of CCUMC. Please connect with Pastor Emily should you have any questions.
- The **Knit/Crochet Fellowship** will meet on Sunday, January 31st, at 12:30PM. Bring your projects or start a new one. Everyone is welcome. Join us and learn this fun craft and have great fellowship, too!
- **Lunar New Year Pot Luck** will be on February 14th. The Chinese and English congregation will welcome in the Lunar New Year together!
- If you would like to be an **Altar Flower contributor**, please connect with Helena to sign up for your preferred Sunday. Suggested donation is \$10.
- Share your gift of **Hospitality** by signing up with Laura to provide refreshments (and clean up) during our fellowship time after service.

Ways to honor and celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day:

In the Name of Love: 8th Annual Musical Tribute Honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Sunday, Jan. 17th @ 7:00 p.m.

Oakland Scottish Rite Center, 1547 Lakeside Drive

Admission Fee

A Day of Service @ CCUMC

Monday, January 18th, 8:15 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Join others from our church to serve at the Alameda County Food Bank! Pastor Emily, along with Wendy, Rich, Becky, and others will be transporting our collected Food Donations to the Food Bank. If you'd like to participate, connect with Rich or Emily today.

THE MESSENGER

Chinese Community United Methodist Church
321 8th Street, Oakland, CA 94607
(510) 452-1020 phone/fax www.chinesecommunityumc.org
9:30am English Sunday School / 11:00am Worship Service

Sunday, January 17, 2010
2nd Sunday after Epiphany
Human Relations Sunday



Timing: Mine, Yours, God's

Rev. Emily Lin

VIEW FROM THE EMC CHAIR

It is often that my Sunday School students ask me tough questions during class. Such was the case last Sunday when Jason asked me, “What are the benefits of membership at a church?” I had to pause for a moment. I explained that it was not like membership at a club where you pay a fee to be a member which gives you privileges like discounts or access to facilities, etc. Rather, it was part of our on-going faith journey along the way from accepting Christ into our lives toward that eventual day when we meet Jesus in Heaven. It was a milestone that represented the higher level of commitment in our relationship with God. Unfortunately, this was quite abstract and I think I caused some eyeballs to roll. Then my students went on to ask the more difficult follow-on questions, “Aren’t you still a Christian if you are not a member of the church? Can’t you do the same things like prayer, offering, attend worship, serve, etc?” Fortunately, we ran out of time and it was off to worship.

During worship, Pastor Emily’s message reminded me of the example of marriage. The analogy is the progression in a relationship from dating to engagement to marriage to being married for the rest of your life. I remember in the 1970s when divorce rates were high and values were being redefined, there was a debate about whether living together was just as good as marriage. I do not think that anyone won that debate, but the de facto prevailing wisdom seemed to be that marriage was a stronger commitment by two individuals (even with the option of divorce) that made the relationship more intimate and valuable to each side. Whether it was that piece of paper saying two people were married or the vows each made at a ceremony, each side entered into a new life of commitment to contribute to each other’s life through good times and bad.

At our Lay Speakers gathering earlier this week, we were asked to share how our soul was based on John Wesley’s three simple rules, “Do good. Do no harm. And stay in love with God.” I shared how I had been struggling with my involvement in a volunteer organization. The organization was declining because the leaders who had been active for many years were burning out and there was no one to take their places. I too wanted to step aside, but felt the call to help by recruiting new organizers. We were successful in attracting several committed young

professionals to plan new volunteer projects but they have yet to feel a sense of ownership and take the initiative to keep the organization running. My sense is that they need more time to bond with one another and develop as a core group. But this likely involves me being more active in developing these relationships. On one hand, I want to exit; on the other hand, I need to be more engaged. I am left in a quandary, “Can I do good if I am not committed?”

Similarly in our church lives (even if we are not members, we are generally connected to a church in some way), we reach a point where we have to ask ourselves, “Can we continue to grow unless we make that outward commitment to God and to the members of the community?” And if we are members, we need to ask ourselves, “How am I committed to this community?” – Derek Lang

An Invitation to respond to the devastation in Haiti:

Tragedy struck the already-beleaguered nation of Haiti on January 12th. The magnitude-7 earthquake effectively flattened the capital city of Port-au-Prince, affecting an estimated 3 million people and killing untold tens of thousands.

In these times of trouble we cling to our God who gives us both safety and strength for the days ahead. We come together to create safe spaces for those who mourn deep losses, encourage one another and gather strength for a new day.

The United Methodist Committee on Relief is already responding. We can also help by donating to UMCOR. Checks should note in the memo line: **“Haiti Emergency Advance #418325.”** Additionally, those interested in discerning together how we might be called to participate as a congregation are invited to gather following worship at the front of the sanctuary.

*God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea.
Psalm 46:1-2 (NIV)*

ECUMENICAL PRAYER CYCLE FOR JAN. 17-23, 2010

The Ecumenical Prayer Cycle enables us to journey in prayer through every region of the world and through every week of the year affirming our solidarity with Christians all over the world, brothers and sisters living in diverse situations, experiencing diverse problems and sharing diverse gifts. This week, we pray on behalf of and in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in *Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, and Western Sahara*. – World Council of Churches, www.oikoumene.org

Give thanks for:

- The testimony of St Augustine and other theologians of the early church.
- The harsh beauty of the desert.
- The tiny minority of Christians who live faithful lives of love and witness.

Pray for:

- An end to civil unrest and terrorism in Algeria.
- An openness that recognizes and values differences, especially among religious faiths.
- Children and youth, who comprise more than half the population of these countries.
- Those who must live with the presence and impact of landmines, particularly in Libya.
- Those who risk their lives to cross the sea for entry into Europe.

Prayer: ***All shall be Amen and Alleluia.
We shall rest and we shall see.
We shall see and we shall know.
We shall know and we shall love.
We shall love and we shall praise.
Behold our end which is no end.***

THIS WEEK: MINISTERS AND LEADERS

January 17, 2010, Sunday after Epiphany
Human Relations Sunday
Focus Scripture: John 2: 1-11
Preacher: Rev. Emily Lin
Ushering: Frances and Charlie
Scriptures read by: Peggy
Prayers of the people led by: Burt

HUMAN RELATIONS SUNDAY: The United Methodist Church sets apart six "special Sundays" each year to raise awareness around important ministries and to take up special offerings for these ministries. The purpose of Human Relations Day is "a call to the Church to recognize the right of all God's children in realizing their potential as human beings in relationship with each other." Our special offering today goes to support the Community Developers program, the United Methodist Voluntary Service and the Youth Offender Rehabilitation Program. You are invited to learn through the UMC website: www.gbgm-umc.org.

COFFEE HOUR AND ALTAR FLOWERS

Please join us for coffee and refreshments after our worship service. We give thanks to **Helena, Jasmine, and Pastor Peter** for their gift of hospitality during Coffee Hour. The flowers in church are given to the glory of God by **Ben Lang**.

WORSHIP WITH US NEXT WEEK:

Sunday, January 24th, 3rd Sunday after Epiphany
Focus Scripture: Luke 4:14-21
Preacher: Rev. Emily Lin
Scriptures read by: Richard
Ushering: Adrienne and Richard
Prayers of the people led by: Becky

HAITI: A CALL FOR HELP

Haiti Emergency, #418325



Residents search for survivors among the debris after a 7.0 magnitude earthquake in Port-au-Prince Jan. 13. The Haitian president said he feared tens of thousands were dead after the presidential palace, schools, hospitals and hillside shanties collapsed, leaving the Caribbean nation appealing for international help.

REUTERS/Eduardo Munoz/Courtesy of www.Alertnet.org

"We are working with our partners on the ground to provide immediate relief to the people in Haiti," says Melissa Crutchfield, UMCOR's international disaster response executive. "UMCOR is coordinating with the Methodist Church of Haiti to send a team to assist with relief efforts."

In the short term, UMCOR is responding to basic needs for food and shelter. In the weeks, months and years ahead, UMCOR will stay to provide for those who are homeless, injured, and bereft.

UMCOR is working with partners, Action by Churches Together, Church World Service, Global Medic and the Methodist Church to respond effectively to the people of Haiti after this devastating earthquake shook the nation's capital, Port-au-Prince on Jan. 12. Haiti is often referred to as "the poorest of the poor." 100 percent of your donation will go to help the people of Haiti.

HEALTH KITS NEEDED

UMCOR Sager Brown in Baldwin, La., and UMCOR West, Salt Lake City, Utah are accepting much-needed health kits for distribution to Haiti. Health kits provide basic necessities to those affected by natural disasters or human conflict. The kits also serve as learning tools in personal hygiene, literacy, nutrition and cooking classes. A health kit contains:

- 1 hand towel (15" x 25" up to 17" x 27", No kitchen towels)
- 1 washcloth
- 1 comb (large and sturdy, not pocket-sized)
- 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)
- 6 adhesive plastic strip sterile bandages
- \$1.00 to purchase toothpaste (toothpaste purchased by Sager Brown)

Contact: UMCOR Sager Brown Depot, 1-800-814-8765, or UMCOR West Office and Depot at 1-801-973-7250.

How to Give

Year after year UMCOR's greatest need is for funds that aid international emergency relief efforts. Please give to **Haiti Emergency, UMCOR Advance #418325**. Include the Advance # and name on the memo line of your check.

Online

www.umcorhaiti.org

By Offering

For local church and Annual Conference credit, put your gift in the offering plate on Sunday.

By Check

Make your check to **UMCOR** and mail to UMCOR, PO Box 9068, New York, NY 10087

By Credit Card

Call toll-free (800) 554-8583



January, 2010

The United Methodist Committee on Relief delivers hope and enhances human dignity through food, shelter, health and peace projects.

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www.umcor.org

UMCOR is a part of the General Board of Global Ministries.