

May
2010

CREIGHTONIAN

Creighton United Methodist Church, 4900 E. Thomas Rd, Phoenix, AZ 85018
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Honoring All Those Who Have Cared For Us . . . Who Have "Mothered" Us!

Dear Lord, it's such a hectic day
With little time to stop and pray
For life's been anything but calm
Since You called on me to be a mom.
Running errands, matching socks,
Building dreams with building blocks.
Cooking, cleaning, and finding shoes
And other stuff that children lose.
Fitting lids on bottled bugs,
Wiping tears and giving hugs.
A stack of last week's mail to read,
So where's the quiet time I need?
Yet when I steal a minute, Lord,
Just at the sink or ironing board
To ask the blessings of Your grace,
I see then, in my small one's face
That you have blessed me
All the while
And I stop to kiss
That precious smile.

(from freebiesandstuff.freeyellow.com)

Easter Sunrise Service in the Memorial Garden

My friends Sharon and Bob Delaware gave me a beautiful wind chime for my birthday. The top has a cross, followed by sheet of metal and on the metal are printed the words, "Life began in a Garden." It is a gift I will cherish forever because it will remind me, not only of our friendship, but also of the Memorial Garden at Creighton.

When I was told that Sunrise Service, this year, would be at 6:00 a.m., I thought, 'you have got to be kidding, no one gets up that early!' Well, I did, and it was very dark outside. Rarely being up at that time I thought that a flashlight would be necessary to reach the garden safely. Well, of course I didn't need the flashlight, but the sun was certainly not up.

The plants and roses in the garden were beginning to bloom and all was quiet. Beautiful and peaceful.

Sunrise service began with the greeting and the beautiful song, *Morning Has Broken*. As we sat there listening to and participating in the service we could hear the birds singing and watch the sun rise over the tree tops. All around you could see and hear Gods miracles which is an amazing way to renew your faith, to know that God truly has risen, and to remember that "Life began in a Garden."

Carolyn Newman
Chairperson, Memorial Garden



May Birthdays

9 – Leroy (Shorty) Livingston
11 – Clarence Cooper
13 – Janet Kolts
19 – Josie Major
22 – Jim Harvey
23 – Jackie Roland

"Partners in Community" School Nurse Supplies Drive

State budget cutbacks have affected our schools – classroom size, teachers and more! One way the Desert Southwest Conference can help community schools is by helping supply school nurses with items they need. Let's show Tavan Elementary School that the congregation at Creighton UMC is there to help them! Watch the Sunday bulletin announcements for more information about how you can participate in the Annual Conference Mission Project for 2010 – **"Partners in Community" and the School Nurse Supplies Drive!**

Jean's Jottings

Remember when going to church meant women wore heels, hose, hat, and gloves, and men wore suits and ties every Sunday! Remember when women NEVER wore slacks to church. *Times have changed, haven't they?*

Remember when stores were closed on Sunday and going to church on Sunday morning was something *everyone* did. *Times have changed, haven't they?*

With *changing times*, congregations and churches are experiencing change as well. Many mainline churches—including Presbyterian, Lutheran, Episcopal, and United Methodist churches—have experienced and are experiencing declining numbers. As a result, more and more attention is being focused on ways in which churches can grow. Church growth, however, in and of itself has become a controversial issue. Real growth is going to involve change; growth always does. There are those who say change is good because it infuses new life and vitality into church life, and there are those who say change is good as long as it is change that is “appropriate and acceptable” and in keeping with the history and traditions of the church. Therein lies the controversy! Although many will agree that change is needed to bring growth, there will be those who will seek to put limits on how much change is “appropriate and acceptable.” All things considered, it would seem that to really encourage church growth of any kind would mean, however, reaching out to people who may look and act differently, who may think and talk differently, who may worship God differently.

Then again, when we think about it, what made Jesus' ministry so effective? Rather than being exclusive and ministering only to those who were “appropriate and acceptable” like the Pharisees did, Jesus ministered to widows and orphans, tax collectors and sinners, the rich and powerful, the poor and indigent, the sick—lame—and demon possessed, the adulteress and the thief, mothers and fathers, laborers and vineyard owners . . . and outcasts—the ones no one else wanted.

Unfortunately in today's world and in the midst of ongoing discussions about the need for church growth, many congregations become distracted from reaching out to new believers because they focus, instead, on what is deemed “appropriate and acceptable” during worship in regards to who will be welcomed to attend and various elements of worship itself—the music, the sermon, the time taken for prayer, the greeting of newcomers, and the way in which congregants respond during worship. Recently here at Creighton, it seems we're becoming distracted by the focus being paid to what is “appropriate and acceptable” behavior during worship services. *I have to admit that I am confused and troubled by the controversy.*

One issue has to do with **fussy children**. I have been told of situations in which parents with fussy children have felt unwelcomed in our church. The question that is raised then is—Should families with fussy children be allowed to attend worship? Simple question, and the answer—to me—seems to be just as simple because what did Jesus say about children?

“Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.’” (Mt. 19:14)

A second issue seems to be a more contentious one and revolves around **clapping during a worship service**. Should people be allowed to clap after a special piece of music has been played or sung or after a sermon has been preached? Of those who have clapped, I have been told that they clap in response to a piece of music or the sermon because one or the other or both filled them with joy, inspired them, brought them comfort, or “spoke” to them about what was going on in their lives at the time. Their clapping, they have explained, is in response to how the Spirit of God touched them through the music or the words that were

spoken. There are others who are adamant that clapping has no place in a worship service because clapping “ruins the mood,” and there are those who see clapping as “inappropriate and unacceptable” . . . *except* for those times when a particular piece of music has been exceptionally presented. The next question then becomes—How would one know when it is “appropriate and acceptable” to clap?

In Second Samuel chapter 6 is contained the account of King David “*danc[ing] before the LORD with all his might*” as he led the procession during which the ark of the LORD was returned to Jerusalem. Psalm 47 verse 1 tells us, “*Clap your hands, all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy,*” while Psalm 46 verse 10 reminds us, “*Be still, and know that I am God.*”

Worship is a time when every one of God’s children should be able to respond to God’s love . . . to God’s grace . . . to God’s Spirit . . . in ways that are natural and authentic to who they are. As I look around the sanctuary during worship services, I see people who are of different ages, ethnicities, backgrounds, and economic situations, so I have to ask—“How is it that if we as people are so different . . . how can it be **expected** that *all of us* would worship and respond to God’s Spirit in the exact, same way?” Should *all of us* **be expected** to be like David and dance down the aisles leading a procession of worshipers? Should *all of us* **be expected** to stand and shout “Amen!” and “Hallelujah!” during worship? Should *all of us* **be expected** to joyfully clap to show our agreement with the Spirit? *I don’t think so*, but neither do I think *all of us* **should be expected** to sit quietly and not make a sound other than to repeat liturgy or sing a hymn during the service.

When Christ commissioned His disciples to “*go and make disciples,*” (Matthew 28:19) Jesus didn’t qualify His command by saying “go and make disciples that look like us . . . that talk like us . . . that work and live like us.” Jesus said, “*Go and make disciples of ALL nations,*” and, in truth, when different people come together from different backgrounds, they will bring with them different ways of worshiping and responding to God.

For any church to be serious about growing God’s kingdom, one has to wonder if a church will grow if there are members who engage in “patrolling the pews” . . . in determining which families with children will be allowed to stay and which will need to leave . . . in determining which pieces of music and/or sermons for which it will be considered “appropriate and acceptable” to clap? The problem with “patrolling the pews” is who’s to decide what is “appropriate and acceptable” and who’s going to do the patrolling?

There are no simple answers to the questions these issues raise; there are no simple, cut and dried solutions. The more I read and study Scripture, however, the more it seems as if God’s house is meant to be open to everyone! Will everyone accept God’s offer, *no!* However, the apostle Paul wrote, “*There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*” (Galatians 3:28) Paul’s point was that differences should not divide believers in Christ for it is their faith that should unite them. Therefore, as followers of Christ, my prayer is that our differences not divide us nor cause some among us to seek to join other faith communities, but that we will work together out of love for each other and for our Lord and Savior, so that *all* people—those with fussy babies and those with quiet ones . . . those who clap in response to the Spirit and those who quietly give praise to God—will come together and find a way to worship together so as to grow God’s kingdom and, in time, Creighton UMC.

In prayer for *ALL* of God’s Children,
Jean

From Our Preschool to all of our Creighton friends...

Spring and God have been good to us and we have had great fun studying the Arizona Desert, Nutrition and Picnics, Trees and Flowers, Dinosaurs and Volcanoes. We even created a real working volcano and dug for dinosaur fossils!! How much fun is that??!!

Now we are looking forward to making gifts for our moms for Mother's Day and our big year-end celebration. So-o...

**You are cordially invited
to join us for our
Spring Celebration of Music, Art & More
Tuesday evening, May 25, 2010
at 6:30pm
Creighton Hall, CUMC**

We hope to see YOU there!

Mission and Outreach News

Honor or remember a person or special event by having the Mission and Outreach Candle lit during worship. Your donation of \$10 assists Justa Center and the Creighton Hall dishwasher fund. The candle is lighted and your remembrance shared during announcements.

Help Wanted!!

Nursery Attendant Position Open

SPRC is looking for someone who is interested in caring for our youngest disciples in our church nursery during worship services. For more information, please call the church office at 602-840-1080.

CREIGHTON CELEBRATES #95!

On July 4th, not only will we be celebrating the birth of our nation, but Creighton will be celebrating its 95th birthday! WaHOOO!! If you are interested in helping plan a birthday celebration for this special event, please see Pastor Jean.



Blessings and thanks to the fantastic musicians of Creighton UMC! – Pam Kimball (*Not pictured – Pat Palmer, Ofa Maafu, and Michael Maafu)

In a Quiet Place

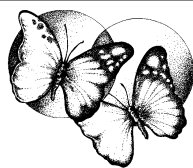
I like to hold hands with people when we pray together, but sometimes that's not possible like those times I pray with people over the phone.

I guess my *phone prayers* began with my oldest daughter, Kyle, calling and saying . . . pleading, really . . . “*Mom, I need prayer NOW!*” Sometimes the prayers have lasted for several minutes because the extra time is needed, and sometimes the prayers have been 30 second specials as she was literally preparing to walk into a job interview!

Jesus said, “*For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them*” (Matthew 18:20). Whether we are holding hands or holding phones, just as we are gathered together in His name, Jesus is with us also, and so we can pray with confidence knowing that He is listening, and answers are already on the way!

Praying over the distance!

Pastor Jean



Need Some Fresh Air and Exercise?

Do you love to hear the birds singing, smell the sweet aroma of roses, surround yourself in the beauty of the Memorial Garden and enjoy sweating? Most of the 'garden' workers are going away for the summer and we desperately need volunteers to monitor the plants and roses, to be sure that they are watered, pruned, and the weeds in garden are pulled or sprayed -- removed. It is a labor of love for us and we would like to think some others would *love* helping during the sweltering heat of a summer in Phoenix. If you are interested in helping, please call the church office at 602-840-1080 and leave your name and number, and someone on the Memorial Garden work team will contact you. Thank you.

Lifting Up In Prayer . . .

As United Methodists, we are part of a *connectional* church whereby we work with and support each other in ministry to our Lord Jesus Christ. One of the ways in which we support one another is through prayer. During the month of May, let us *lift up in prayer* the following congregations and their pastors:

Tongan UMC, Mesa – Pastor Mafileo Ma'afu
Velda Rose UMC, Mesa – Revs. Stewart Lewis and Cliff Assay
Shepherd of the Pines UMC, Overgaard/Heber – Pastor Noni Dye
Paradise Valley UMC, Paradise Valley – Revs. Kelly Bender, Kathleen Athey, Andrea Andress