



TENAHAWESLEYAN



Tenaha Charge of The East Dist

February 2008

From the Pastor

Lent is a season of soul-searching and repentance. It is a season for reflection and taking stock. Lent originated in the very earliest days of the Church as a preparatory time for Easter, when the faithful rededicated themselves and when converts were instructed in the faith and prepared for baptism. By observing the forty days of Lent, the individual Christian imitates Jesus' withdrawal into the wilderness for forty days. All churches that have a continuous history extending before AD 1500 observe Lent. The ancient church that wrote, collected, canonized, and propagated the New Testament also observed Lent, believing it to be a commandment from the apostles.

Fasting is a spiritual discipline that does not involve starvation or dehydration. Quite often, our bodily appetites control our actions. The purpose of fasting is to make your bodily appetites your servant rather than your master.

Because Sunday is the day of the Resurrection, we skip over Sundays when we calculate the length of Lent. Therefore, in the Western Church, Lent always begins on Ash Wednesday, the seventh Wednesday before Easter.

In many countries, the last day before Lent (called Mardi Gras, Shrove Tuesday, Carnival, or Fasching) has become a last fling before the solemnity of Lent. For centuries, it was customary to fast by abstaining from meat during Lent, which is why some people call the festival *Carnival*, which is Latin for *farewell to meat*.

The purpose of the liturgical calendar is to relive the major events in Jesus' life in real time, which is why Lent is forty days long. If Jesus were born on 25 December, then His conception would have been nine months earlier, on about 25 March. That is when the angel Gabriel would have announced Jesus' birth to Mary. Thus 25 March is known in the historic church as *The Annunciation*.

Bro. Jim

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Thought for the Month

Are the things You're living for worth Christ dying for?

Happenings Around the Charge

February 3, 7:30 am Men's Breakfast
February 5, 10:00 am UMW
February 6, 6:30 pm Ash Wednesday Service
February 6, 7:30 pm Administrative Board
February 13, 6:30 pm Fellowship Dinner
February 14, Valentines Day
February 19, 10:00 am UMW
February 24, 8:30 am Gideon Speaker at Woods

February Birthdays

February 2, Mary Graves
February 11, Jean Parker
February 13, Laura Bowers
Brooke Harrison
February 23, William Weeks

Celebrate Recovery meets every Tuesday night at
7:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall

Prayer Warriors Needed

Our web site now includes a prayer request page. We need volunteers that are willing to accept those prayers and intercede on behalf of those who send in a request. If you are interested contact Bro. Jim. I can have an email assigned to you for the soul purpose of receiving those request so you do not have to give out your personal email address. But the person sending in the request never sees the email information anyway. All request come to the website inbox and then get distributed from there. This is just one more way for us to reach out beyond our walls.

Prayer Request

Evelyn Alford	Scott & Jenny Nease
Laura Bowers	Louann Parrish
Wes, Victoria & Jonathan Bradley	Karen Reader
Crawford Family	Aileen Roberson
Bill DuBose	Clay Scull
Ed Dykes	Alan Standley
Jim & Juana McCann	Charles Weeks
Dorthy Tims Moore	Joanie Windam
Twinkle Lockleer Everett	Harry Hunt
Aileene Dean Family	

UMARMY

The Tenaha Charge will be going to UMARMY in Silsbee, Texas this year. We will be the week of June 22 to 28. Brother Jim is going to be the camp director this year. He is the process of putting together his team of workers and leaders. He has already had several volunteers wanting to go and some volunteers that decided to go so he would leave them alone (just kidding).

We will be joined in Silsbee by Deer Park , Lake Houston in Huffman, Russell Memorial - Wills Point. So far there will be around 50- 60 people converge on Silsbee that week to continue to help with relief work after Hurricanes Katrina & Rita almost wiped out the East Texas Gulf Coast. UMCOR is still working in the area and is going to help us secure some of the sites we will be working on.

Amazing Grace

by John Newton

John Newton was born in 1725, and died in 1807. It seems that the only Godly influence in his life, was his mother, who died when he was only seven years old. When she died, John was virtually an orphan. His father remarried, sent him to a strict military school, where the severity of discipline almost broke his back - he left in rebellion at the age of ten. One year later, deciding that he would never enter formal education again, Newton became a seaman apprentice, hoping somehow to step into his father's trade and learn at least the ability to skillfully navigate a ship.

By and by, through a process of time, Newton slowly gave himself over to the devil, determining that he would sin to the fill without restraint, now that the righteous lamp of his life had gone out. Later drafted into England's Royal Navy, he deserted, was captured like a common criminal and beaten publicly several times at the mast, and dismissed from the service. After enduring the punishment, Newton again fled, entertaining thoughts of suicide and made his way to Africa, deciding that would be the place he could get farthest from anyone that knew him. Again he made a pact with the devil to live for him.

Somehow, through a process of the events, Newton got in touch with a Portuguese slave trader, and lived in his home. He was married to a wife who was brimming with hostility and took a lot of it out on John. She beat him, making him eat like a dog on the floor of the home. If he refused to do that, he would be whipped with a lash.

From there, penniless, and owning only the clothes on his back, Newton fled to the shoreline of Africa where he built a fire, hoping to attract a ship that was passing by. A skipper took him on thinking he had gold or slaves or ivory to sell and was surprised because the young man was a skilled navigator. It turned out to be a slave ship, and John lived on this ship for a long period of time. It was not uncommon for as many as six hundred blacks from Africa to be in the hold of the ship, down below, being taken to America. During these years, on a number of occasions, Newton went through all sorts of narrow escapes from death. One time he opened some crates of rum and got everybody on the crew drunk. The skipper, incensed with his actions, beat him, threw him down below, where he existed on stale bread and sour vegetables for an unendurable amount of time. When the skipper brought him above for another beating, Newton fell overboard. Because he couldn't swim, the skipper harpooned him to get him back on the ship, and John lived for the rest of his life with a large scar in his side. On board, inflamed with fever, John was enraged with the humiliation. A storm broke out, and he wound up again in the hold of the ship, down among the pumps. To keep the ship afloat, he worked as a servant of the slaves. There, bruised and confused, bleeding, diseased, he became the epitome of a degenerate man. It was then that John Newton remembered the words of his mother, and cried out to God, calling upon His grace and His mercy to deliver him, and upon His Son to save him. The only glimmer of light he could find was in a crack in the ship's floor above him - he looked up to it and screamed for help.

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Soon afterwards, while reading "The Imitation of Christ", Newton's heart was softened. At first he tried to justify his work by improving conditions on his ship, and even holding worship services for his crew. Later he served as a clerk at the Port of Liverpool and became a strong crusader against slavery.

Newton married a childhood sweetheart, entered the ministry and was ordained in 1764. Everywhere he preached, rooms had to be added to the building to handle the crowds that came to hear the presentation of the Gospel and the story of God's grace. At age 39, he became Pastor in Olney where one of his "extremist" practices was the singing of hymns which expressed simple heartfelt faith rather than the staid singing of Psalms. Not finding enough hymns of this nature, Newton began writing his own. In 1780 he began a long pastoral ministry in London. When advised to retire, Newton replied, "What, shall the old African blasphemer stop while he can still speak?" His epitaph, which he wrote himself, reads:

John Newton, Clerk
Once an infidel and libertine,
A servant of slavers in Africa,
Was, by the rich mercy of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ,
Preserved, restored, pardoned,
And appointed to preach the Faith
He had long laboured to destroy.

First entitled "Faith's Review and Expectation", this hymn, was sung to the plantation melody known as "Loving Lambs".

2008 General Conference to welcome online visitors

People unable to attend the 2008 United Methodist General Conference in Fort Worth, Texas, still can watch the proceedings and gather related information online with Internet access.

Since the 2004 assembly in Pittsburgh, United Methodist Communications has expanded and upgraded its Internet capability to meet users' needs and expectations, said the Rev. Larry Hollon, the agency's top executive.

"The Internet is the window into the General Conference for people around the world," said Hollon. "Live video and audio streaming offer an opportunity to view and listen to many of the proceedings of the General Conference."

About 1,000 delegates from around the world will gather April 23-May 2 to determine priorities and set direction for the 11.5 million-member denomination. The proceedings will be available through GC2008.umc.org and also through the church's Web site at umc.org. Worship, special addresses, celebrations and other selected sessions will be available on live video streaming.

"We are confident we will not have the issues that affected many persons who followed the work of the General Conference on the Internet four years ago," said Hollon.

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The denomination's Web sites often were overloaded during the 2004 meeting, resulting in shut-downs and lengthy delays in accessing information.

After 2004's General Conference, United Methodist Communications selected Kintera Inc., a San Diego-based software service provider, to host the church's Web site. Through Kintera, Hollon said, the church's communications agency can handle high volumes of Web traffic and meet the demands of a growing Web audience.

"Kintera is focused on continually providing our clients with the software they need to meet their mission," said Scott Crowder, chief technology officer for Kintera. "Kintera's fault-tolerant and redundant data centers help to ensure that clients like United Methodist Communications can safely increase Web traffic without sacrificing performance."

Multimedia resources

Significant multimedia resources related to the 2008 General Conference already are available online at GC2008.umc.org. Among them are video and audio recordings of panel discussions from the Pre-General Conference News Briefing, held in January in Fort Worth and sponsored by United Methodist Communications to provide information to delegates and journalists about significant issues facing General Conference.

Additional informational videos are available about General Conference, and related news stories also are posted at the General Conference Web site, as well as through United Methodist News Service (umns.umc.org). The January-February issue of Interpreter Magazine, the denomination's official ministry magazine, focused on the 2008 meeting and featured stories on how previous General Conference sessions have shaped The United Methodist Church. The articles are available at www.interpretermagazine.org.

Anyone wanting to learn more about General Conference and how it works can take a free five-session online course called "Exploring General Conference" through United Methodist Communications. To register, visit <http://training.umcom.org>. More than 600 people have already done so.

During General Conference, United Methodist Communications will send a daily e-mail digest of UMNS assembly coverage to anyone who subscribes to the free service. The agency also will provide an RSS feed allowing church and annual conference Web sites to list General Conference headlines as UMNS stories are posted. Coverage will include print stories in English, Spanish and Korean; video stories; audio newscasts; and a General Conference photo gallery.

InfoServ, the church's free information service, will staff the meeting and respond to questions by e-mail at infoserv@umcom.org, as well as by phone.

Hollon said the goal of United Methodist Communications is to be the online leader among major denominational organizations.

"We live in a different Web world in 2008. We learned from 2004, and we are benefiting from expanding technology," he said. "We are better prepared. We have the right systems in place, and we have the right people positioned to deal with any issues."