



Medina Messenger

Newsletter of the Medina United Methodist Church

August 2007

Guest Article....

GEN-X RISING: Let's decide: Are we Methodists or not?

by Rev. Andrew C. Thompson

“Denominationalism is a sin.” I have heard that notion expressed in many ways since I first entered divinity school. It is always spoken with a measure of exasperation at the state of American Protestantism, which has segmented into more than 6,000 denominations.

In at least one major way, the statement is true. Jesus said, “On this rock I will build my church” — not churches (Matthew 16:18). The unity Christ wants of his flock is physical, not just spiritual.

There is also a way this statement is erroneous. Pastors and laypeople use the “sinfulness” of denominationalism to argue that denominational identity should be downplayed. If denominationalism is a sin, they say, we should not do ministry in a way that highlights our denominational distinctiveness. I could not disagree more.

If denominationalism is completely sinful — with no redeeming qualities — then we should abandon our identity at the next General Conference. If it is inherently sinful, cleansing ourselves of it would be an act of repentance.

It wouldn't be the end of the world. It

wouldn't even be the end of the church. It would only be the end of the United Methodist Church.

You already see individual churches trying to make this happen. A common strategy in the appallingly named “seeker sensitive” churches is to call a church something like “Grace Church,” and in very tiny letters underneath, “A United Methodist Congregation.”

The idea is that unchurched people do not want any denominational baggage when they are making a decision about where to worship for the first time. They just want to be somewhere where they can explore their “spirituality” without being challenged. So by adopting a milquetoast title and hiding its real denominational allegiance, a church can get seekers in the front door without revealing its true identity.

Perhaps it would be good to remind ourselves why we are called “Methodists.”

Originally intended as an epithet, the name came to be associated with a people who shunned religious pretension, practiced a rigorous discipleship, sought furi-

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Medina United Methodist Church Worship Schedule

Sunday

9:45 a.m. – Sunday School
11:00 a.m. – Traditional Service

Wednesday

7:00 p.m. – Mid-week Study

Administrative Council meets the last Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m., unless otherwise announced.



Our Vision

“We invite everyone into the family of GOD, where the LORD is praised and felt, love is shared, and lives are blessed.”

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ously after the way of salvation and relentlessly carried the gospel to the poor and lost.

Is that an identity we really want to downplay?

The tragedy of our church today is that we are making plans to abandon ship when the leaks can still be plugged. We think we are losing members because folks today don't want a denominational label. But that's not it at all. *We're losing members because we practice a lukewarm faith: Our preachers preach a lukewarm gospel, and our laypeople practice a luke-*

warm discipleship.

Methodism may not be a perfect form of Christianity, but we should not throw the whole tradition under the bus because we are unwilling to commit ourselves to Jesus in the way our forebears did.

We are people shot through with sin, living in a world shot through with sin. But as Methodists, we are also inheritors of a tradition that has something to say about our chances for salvation. It is not the only such tradition in the world, but one with a particular history and set of doctrines defined by the label "Methodist."

I suppose it's possible we could

live as faithful Methodists and still fail to find lost sheep. If that happens, we should seriously think about closing up shop. But until that time, we should be the very best Methodist people we can be. We should do this because we believe that God has given us a special mission in this world. And we just might find that the key to our church's renewal is not in downplaying our Methodist identity but in accentuating it by once again living as Methodist people.

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Vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School was a great success. I absolutely love the way we have traditionally held VBS in conjunction with the Baptist Church. This year was our turn to host the event. I was really proud at how we all worked together for the glory of God. Both churches were well represented and at one time we had about 75 people involved!



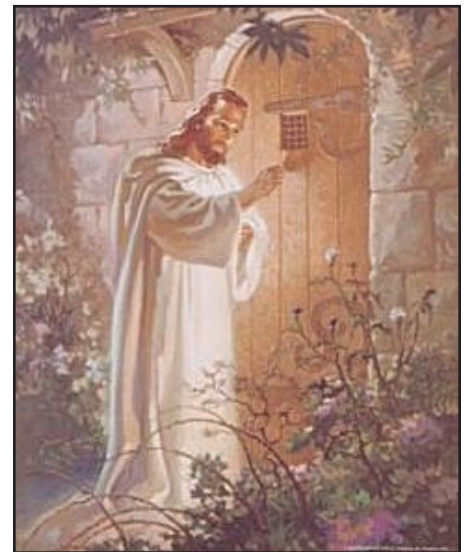
Thanks Anna!

There are so many people to thank. I want to take Pastoral Privilege to thank my wife, Anna. She took VBS by the horns and worked hard coordinating it 6 months out! Those of you who have directed VBS know what's involved in the task. Anna had so many people help her. They spent hours at the church planning and decorating. We had excellent teachers: Linda Klaassen, Megan Derry, Neita Ashley, Linda Barton, Amy Barton, Bill and Anna Stegemueller. We had an excellent

music team led by Heidi Klaassen with the assistance of Sylvia Rogers, Rebecca and Sara Taylor. Missions were led by Lacy Rogers and was assisted by John Hinds. Crafts were coordinated by Judy Windham and was assisted by Tammy Deluca, Carolyn Zirkel, Christi Stegemueller. Recreation was headed up by Coach Mills with the help of the youth. Refreshments was coordinated by Judy Moore with the assistance of Johnny Moore, Donna Payne, Carolyn Pendland, Lu Harrison, and Thelma Gallant. Pictures were taken by Clara Ann and Debbie McWilliams. A special thanks also goes out to Deer Creek Camp who fed us Friday!

There are plenty of others to thank. People who weren't able to work the whole week, but came as much as they could. There are people who helped move pews and furniture and helped clean up.

United Methodist Women



This month, Pastor Bill will be doing a special study on short pamphlet "My Heart's Christ Home," by Munger in which he will use a video tape to discuss what it means to give Christ your heart.

UMW

**This is the last meeting for the UMW before the
Saturday, September 15th District meeting.**

We would like to see as many UMW and church members attend this meeting as possible because there is much to discuss and plan for.

Your input is invited and necessary.

THANK YOU!!

UMW MEETING

(United Methodist Women)

The UMW will meet on Wednesday, August 15, 2007 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

Program:

Pastor Bill Stegemueller

SALAD LUNCHEON

Come and enjoy the Program, Refreshments and Fellowship!

Men are invited, too!!

Kitchen Project

The kitchen is almost finished and the walls in youth center have been painted. The ceramic floor tiles need to be cleaned and sealed, this to be done soon. Add in window treatments and bulletin boards to help with the acoustics and we will be completed. God bless and thanks to all who have made this project possible.

Church Work Day -

Saturday August 25th from 9AM till we finish. Bring a sack lunch and drinks. We will divide into groups to clean the sanctuary, classrooms, yard and walkways. The new kitchen will be ready for cleaning and putting up items stored everywhere. Mark your calendars and all come to help out.

Kerrville District UMW Annual Meeting -

Medina UMW will be the host. Saturday, September 15, 2007. Time: 9AM - 3:30PM. District Superintendent Rev. Bob Allen will be the guest speaker in the morning session. Lunch will be served - cost is \$7.50. The afternoon session will be led by Gloria Delaplain on Palestine & Israel. A very interesting and informative talk on what is going on over there - titled "Let Justice 'flow like a river'". All women and men should plan to attend. Send name of attendee and \$7.50 per person to Annette Mechler, Box 1439, Medina, TX 78055, Phone: 830-589-2967. Please advise if childcare is needed. Make you plans now to attend.

Welcome Back To School Sunday -

August 26, 2007 - church service will be to honor all teachers and staff personnel in our area. Also to give students a positive start for the coming school year. (A flyer will be sent to staff personal at Medina ISD in the form of an invitation for that Sunday.)

A note of

Thanks

Dear Church Members:

My heartfelt thanks to everyone for your cards, calls, prayers and gifts during my two accidents. I feel so blessed to have such a loving church family.

Hope to see you all soon!

*Love,
Beth Keating*

Newsletter Report Mid-Year (2nd Quarter)

	Jan - June 07	Budget	\$ Over Budget Ordinary Income/Expense
Total Income	41,360.48	50,329.50	(8,969.02)
Total Expense	49,073.02	50,529.50	(1,456.48)
Net Income	(7,712.54)	200.00	(7,512.54)

Our Second Quarter (Mid-Year) Financial Report shows:

Our contributions are still under our budgeted amount.

Our Expenses are still under the budgeted allotment.

The Kitchen Remodel is coming along nicely and completion is on the horizon.

A very big Thank You goes to the individuals that have helped in the purchase of the appliances. Also to the general contractor who has worked so diligently to keep us ahead of schedule.