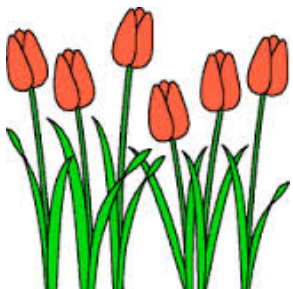




**NEWSLETTER**  
**OF THE**  
**Estancia United Methodist Church**  
600 Williams, Estancia, New Mexico  
<http://www.estanciamethodist.org>



**MARCH, 2014**

Pastor: Rev. Bonnie Hardesty  
600 Williams, P. O. Box 126, Estancia, NM 87016  
Church Office 384-5215 Parsonage 384-2710  
Pastor Bonnie: 505-271-0486  
email: [bjharde1@msn.com](mailto:bjharde1@msn.com)

Your Church Staff

Chairperson of Church Council  
Recording Secretary  
Organist  
Lay Member of the Annual Conference  
Chairperson: Board of Trustees  
Worship Team Leader  
Education  
Care and Outreach Team Leader  
Chairperson: Pastor Parish Relations  
Food Pantry  
Financial Secretary  
Church Treasurer  
President UMM  
McMurry Rep  
Sacramento Camp Rep

Melanie Chavez  
Vickie Coburn  
Morrow Hall  
Alma Wimsatt  
Bill Simms  
Julie Griffio  
Julie Griffio & Melanie Chavez  
Barbara Simms  
Nick Griffio  
Butch McGee  
Vickie Coburn  
Vickie Coburn  
Nick Griffio  
Julie Griffio  
Melanie Chavez

Bishop: Bishop W. Earl Bledsoe  
District Superintendent: Rev. James E. Large  
Visit our website at:

<http://www.estanciamethodist.org>



**Sunday Worship 9:00 AM**

### *From the Desk of...Pastor Bonnie*

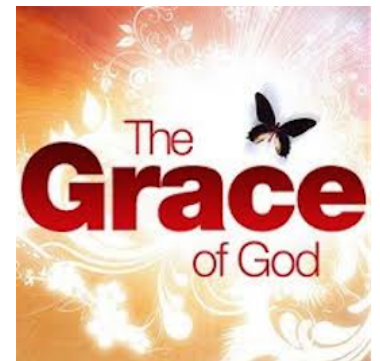
**God's GRACE** is what enables us to be saved through faith in Jesus Christ. Without God's grace, we are utterly lost – unredeemed and unredeemable. But thanks be to God, He has extended to humankind a gift of **GRACE** (from the Greek, "charis".) God's GRACE is multifaceted – like a diamond, if you will. Looking at it from different angles, different perspectives, helps us to see the true beauty of the gift which God offers us.

**PREVENIENT GRACE** is that gift which 'comes before' we have knowledge of our need of it. Prevenient is from the Latin: Pre (before) and Veni (to come.) It's the "gift that comes before." I think of this grace as it relates to our Communion liturgy, where we say, "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. That proves God's love toward us." While we were YET sinners – before we had any knowledge of our need for salvation in Christ – **HE DIED FOR US.**

Thousands of years ago, before we were born, He knew our need for salvation and He died for us.

A friend of mine compares prevenient grace with grits on a southern restaurant table. You don't have to order the grits... they just come with the meal. We don't have to ask for God's prevenient grace – **IT JUST COMES.**

John Wesley also referred to this facet of God's grace as 'Preventing Grace,' the grace which prevents us from moving so far from God that His love cannot reach us.



Another facet of God's Grace is known as **JUSTIFYING GRACE**. This is the grace we experience when we understand our need for salvation and make the conscious decision to give our hearts to Jesus. Many refer to this as the moment they were saved. And in that moment, it's as if God has chosen to put on rose-colored glasses and look at us in a whole new light – the light of Christ! We, sinful humanity, can only stand in the presence of a Holy God when our debts have been paid. Jesus' death on the cross IS that ransom. And in the blink of an eye, by accepting Jesus' gift of salvation, it's as if we've never sinned at all. It's **JUST-IF-I'D never sinned**.

Being Justified before God is not the end of the story, however. As we respond to God's outpouring of love, we become transformed over time into the very image of Christ. God's **SANCTIFYING GRACE** is what motivates and empowers us to make real changes **IN THIS LIFETIME**. In so doing, we become the hands and feet of Christ in this world. We are enabled to love God more and more and to actually love our neighbors as we love ourselves! The Gospel of Matthew (Ch. 25:31-40) reveals what's known as, "The Judgment of the Nations." Scripture says that when Jesus returns, He will put the sheep (those who fed, clothed, visited... 'the least of these') at His right and the goats (those who did not feed, clothe, or visit... 'the least of these') at His left. The sheep will enter the Kingdom of God. The goats... well, let's all hope we're NOT part of the goats! I'm reminded of that billboard, "Yes, there WILL be a TEST! ...love, God."

It's not enough to realize we need Jesus and to give our hearts to Him. We are expected to become more and more LIKE HIM as we grow in God's gift of Sanctifying Grace. If we want to enter the Kingdom, unlike my friend who thought she wanted to grow up into a beautiful gold-rimmed chalice; we should arrive at the Gates with calloused hands, swollen feet, and aching backs... like the well-loved Velveteen Rabbit, our fur rubbed thin... from serving others. Calloused hands – soft hearts overflowing with love.

But there **ARE OBSTACLES to GRACE**. Have you noticed the big "**I**" in the middle of '**SIN**'? **I** am at the heart of most of my sinning! The word, "Sin" is derived from the Greek, "hamartia," an archery term meaning 'to miss the mark.' There are two primary types of Obstacles to God's grace – two ways we tend to miss the target of obedience to God: Those things that hinder our relationship with God... and those that hinder our relationships with others. Not to belabor the point; but Scripture says that "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." Rom. 3:23. We have ALL missed the target. Some of us don't even know there IS a TARGET! Some are shooting in the opposite direction. But if we've given our hearts to Jesus, we MUST look for and aim at the target. With practice, we'll eventually start hitting that bull's eye!

Speaking of PRACTICE; like the old joke asking "How do you get to Carnegie Hall?" the answer of course being, "Practice, practice, practice!" God has made a myriad of ways for us to practice hitting the target of obedience to His Word. Those opportunities for practice are known as **THE MEANS of GRACE**. Practicing or participating in the Means of Grace facilitates the flow of God's love to us and our appropriation and application of that love in our everyday lives. The Means of Grace are like vehicles carrying the precious cargo of God's love TO US and THROUGH US to light the dark corners of this broken world. The Means of Grace include things like Prayer, studying the Scriptures, celebrating Holy Communion, being Baptized and Confirmed, participating in Worship, observing the awe of God's general revelation in Nature, Fasting, Meditating on His Word, Listening for the Holy Spirit... and the list goes on and on.

Thanks be to God, there is always more of His Grace than there is of our sin: "Grace, grace, God's grace... grace that will pardon and cleanse within! Grace, grace, God's grace... grace that is greater than all our sin!" (UMH p. 365, *Grace Greater Than Our Sin*)





## **The Other 12 Disciples**

We are still in need of Cast members for the play "The Other 12 Disciples." I have eight people so far and really need 12 plus a teenager girl, who does not have a speaking part, but her presence is important.

I have the script, thanks to Pastor Bonnie, and we will give out the parts on the evening of Ash Wednesday. If there is not a service that night, I'd like to meet with everyone at 6:30 p.m. so I can explain more about what will happen, and how we can present these stories.

We will have 4 practices and I ask that you try to make as many as you can, but it won't be necessary for you to be at all four. The first one is on Ash Wednesday. It will be a basic "this is what we will do, etc." Some background info will be provided to you as well.

If you do not memorize well, please do not let that stop you. We can work with that issue.

The second practice will be on Saturday, March 22nd at 10 am. Come when you can get there. The third practice, on Wed. April 9th at 6:30 pm, will be a dress rehearsal. If we feel it's necessary, we'll run over the basics again on April 16th at 6:30 pm. The presentation will be on Thursday, April 17, at 7:00 p.m. The difference in time is due to Daylight Savings and we need it to be darker on the set.

Speaking of the set: We need some help gathering things for the set. Does anyone have any of the following items that we could borrow? Big fluffy pillows for someone to sit on....wooden chairs as well...straw brooms ...the old fashioned kind. Wooden bowls of various sizes, wooden platters, plastic plants, fabric that looks old, and straw fans.

I also need someone to help get everything set up! As you know, I am not always able, physically, to do what I want. Any help would be wonderful.

-Terry Ann



## **HOT LAVA in the ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL MEETING!**

Our February Ad Council meeting was filled with team building, review of committee progress and great ideas about reviving inter-faith activities in our community. We started the meeting with a team building activity called Hot Lava. The Ad Council was divided into two teams. Their goal was to get their entire team across the room using the few safety stones. Unfortunately, there were not enough stones to cover the length of the room and if a stone was moved, it could only move forward. If any team member stepped off the stone, they would fall into the hot lava. OUCH! Each team was very successful because they developed a plan before trying to cross, listened to each other, held each other up and took jumps of faith!

Unfortunately, some of the safety stones were ruined and the hot lava spread over a larger area. The second time the two competing teams had the same goal, to get their team safely to the other side of the room, but had to work with fewer resources and cover a larger area. What is usually a daunting task for other groups was easy for our Ad Council team. The two opposing teams quickly stopped competing and started cooperating. They shared all of the stones, helped each other across and moved to safety in record time!

In addition to building teamwork, the purpose of the activity was to be a springboard for discussion about how we, as a Christian community of different churches, serve God by serving our community. In our effort to do God's work, sometimes we focus our efforts inward and do not remember that we are really one Christian body,



regardless of denomination. Even though Estancia is small but mighty, we need to work with other churches in our area again. We discussed the possibility of reviving the 4th of July community picnic at the park and other inter-faith activities in our area. We also discussed volunteering at Bethel Storehouse in the near future (after Easter). Very exciting!!

Each committee representative reviewed their progress and activities toward their goals. Wow, there is a lot going on!

I thank each and every one of the Ad Council members and church attendees for our church family!

*-Melanie Chavez*



Your Ad Council at Work!

### **Sweetheart Dinner**

One of the cornerstones of the Confirmation process is helping our youth to grasp and practice the notion of servanthood. Jesus came not to be served, but TO SERVE! And we are expected as His disciples to walk the footsteps of His servanthood. SO - the Estancia Confirmation Class (Jenna, Luke, Lainey, Jaimey, Jaxon, Alexandra, Julius & Michael) hosted a Valentine's Day Sweetheart Dinner on Feb. 14. The Confirmands transformed our Fellowship Hall into an elegant, candle-lit, chocolate-coated soiree that attendees will long remember! Way to go Confirmands!





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**FROM PATTY MAHONEY - Mountainair United Methodist Church**

One of the encouragements of Philip Melanchthon was a well used phrase:

In the essentials . . . Unity,  
In the non-essentials . . . Liberty  
In all things . . . Charity. [Love]

In the body of Christ it always seems to be easy to find things to argue about and separate over; some of these things are truly important, the essentials of the true faith. But we must also be careful not to draw the lines where God's Word has not placed them. "As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions". As people of His grace and mercy, let us live in peace with one another for the sake of Jesus our King.

*-Pastor Herb Hoff, The Chimes, St. Ansgar's, Salinas, CA.*

**The Promised Land-NM**

The Promised Land-NM has been distributing food from the Road Runner Food Bank since 2005. For the last 5 months, the Mountainair Methodist Church has been allowing The Promised Land-NM to use their fellowship hall to distribute food.

The food is distributed once a month, on the third Tuesday of the month. Every month, around 90 to 100 households receive over 50 pounds of food each, for free. This includes over 150 adults and 75 children each month. Many needy families in Southern Torrance County benefit from this program. Without the help and loving support of the Mountainair Methodist Church and Pastor Bonnie Hardesty, this program might not be possible.

*-Maribeth and David Nixon*

## **Looking to the Future - Calendar Items:**

Sundays @ 3pm - Confirmation Class

Sundays @ 3pm - The Story of Jesus Bible Study

Thursdays @ 3:15 - Bible Guppies

Tuesday 3/4 @ 6pm - Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper

Wednesday 3/5 @ 6pm - Ash Wednesday Service of Imposition of Ashes

Wednesday 3/5 @ 7pm - Casting for 'The Other 12 Disciples'

Thursday - Sunday, 3/13 - 3/16 - Women's Emmaus Walk in Gallup (Please see Pastor Bonnie for applications for either the Women's or Men's Walks!)

Wednesday 3/26 @ 6pm - Rehearsal - 'The Other 12 Disciples'

Thursday - Sunday, 3/27 - 3/30 - Men's Emmaus Walk in Gallup (Pastor Bonnie is serving on this team and will be out of town these days.)

Wednesday 4/2 @ 6pm - Rehearsal - 'The Other 12 Disciples'

Wednesday 4/9 @ 6pm - Rehearsal - 'The Other 12 Disciples'

Sunday 4/13 - Palm Sunday

Thursday 4/17 @ 6pm - Seder Dinner & 'The Other 12 Disciples'

Sunday 4/20 - Easter Sunday & Confirmation Celebration

Wednesday - Saturday 6/4 - 6/7 - Annual Conference in El Paso

## **ABOUT STEWARDSHIP**

Joyful, faithful Christian Stewardship is our way of living with all that God has entrusted to us, while sharing and using it on behalf of God. When we live as stewards of the gospel, we show the Good News by our actions in and out of church. We also show it by total life commitment to God, and in loving our fellow man, and all of God's creation. We as individuals need to grow more vibrant and faithful as stewards of the gifts God has entrusted to us. These gifts include our time, abilities, money, assets, relationships, involvement, and advocacy for others.

Carolyn Moore

## **Why go to church**

A Church goer wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper and complained that it made no sense to go to church every Sunday. "I've gone for 30 years now," he wrote, "and in that time I have heard something like 3,000 sermons. But for the life of me, I can't remember a single one of them. So, I think I'm wasting my time and the pastors are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all."

This started a real controversy in the "Letters to the Editor" column, much to the delight of the editor. It went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher: "I've been married for 37 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But, for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals, but I do know this. They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work. If my wife had not given me these meals, I would be physically dead today. Likewise, if I had not gone to church for nourishment, I would be spiritually dead today!" When you are DOWN to nothing.... God is UP to something! Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible and receives the impossible! Thank God for our physical AND our spiritual nourishment!

When Satan is knocking at your door, simply say, "Jesus, could you get that for me?"



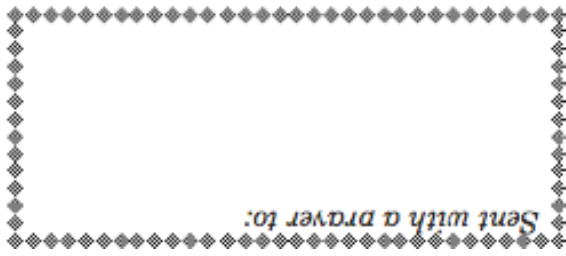


# March 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 9 AM Worship 11 AM -Mtair 2 3PM Confirmation	3	4 FAT TUESDAY Pancake Supper 6PM	5 ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE 6PM	6 3:15 PM BIBLE GUPPIES	7	8
9 9 AM Worship 11 AM -Mtair 3PM Confirmation Class	10	11	12	13 3:15 PM BIBLE GUPPIES	14	15 7:00 AM Men's Breakfast
16 9 AM Worship 11 AM -Mtair 3PM Confirmation Class	17	18	19 6:30 PM TRUSTEES	20 3:15 PM BIBLE GUPPIES	21	22
23 9 AM Worship 11 AM -Mtair 3PM Confirmation Class	24	25	26	27 3:15 PM BIBLE GUPPIES	28	29
30 9 AM Worship 11 AM -Mtair 3PM Confirmation Class	31					

Sundays @ 3pm - The Story of Jesus Bible Study      Sunday 3/2 @ 1pm - Church Council

# MAR 2014



Estancia United Methodist Church  
P. O. Box 126  
Estancia, NM 87016

## **WHAT ABOUT LENT?**

Lent, the season of the Christian Year that is typically observed as a time of simple living, prayer and fasting leading up to Easter, begins next week, on Ash Wednesday [March 5, 2014]. Some spend the time in self-examination and reflection as modeled by Jesus in Matthew 4: 1-11 where he prayed and fasted for 40 days before beginning his ministry. What happened during those 40 days of fasting and praying in the wilderness? Our friends at the Upper Room say that maybe Jesus needed some time with God to sort through the major changes happening in his life. Maybe he needed a break from family, friends and his regular routine in order to see God [and himself] more clearly. Maybe he sought more time with God as he searched for direction and answers to the question that we, too have from time to time: "What are you calling me to do, God?"

We, too are invited into this time of introspection.