



Dave Blackwell, Pastor

P. O. Box 378, Estancia, NM 87016
Church Office 384-5215
Parsonage 384-2710



*Sunday Worship 9:00 AM
Nursery Provided
Church School 10:30 AM*

Newsletter - August, 1998

AUGUST WORSHIP ASSISTANTS:

Lay Assistant: Carolyn Moore
Ushers: Pam & Mark Lambert
Greeters: Mary & Tracy Hemke
Acolytes: Alice Daniel

YOUTH SCRIPTURE READERS FOR JULY:

August 2: All to be announced.
August 9:
August 16:
August: 23
August 30:

LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

July 21, 1998
Blue Springs, MO
(15 miles west of Kansas City)

I write to you today from a metropolitan area that is under stifling heat. Last night at 11:30, the temperature was 94°. Today, the heat index reached 112° in downtown. The power and electric company of Kansas City has used a record number of whatever they use for power to help keep air conditioners and refrigerators running, while the employees of the power company work in their offices with the lights off and use only the lights from their computer screens to do their work.

The classroom where my classmates and I met finally had to be abandoned because of little or no air conditioning. Some of our brains have been a little overheated, too. We are studying various theologies: Black (African American), Liberation (Hispanic-Latino), Feminist, Conservative, Liberal, Fundamentalist, and Neo-Orthodox (fundamental with a higher twist of grace), which is the one yours truly seems to most to identify. We have had to prepare a long paper analyzing a social issue through the eyes of two of those theologies. My paper was on "domestic violence"; I chose Feminine and Neo-orthodox eyes to theologize (a popular seminary term) about it. I was also involved in a group project working through a social problem under the

views of Black and Neoorthodox theologies, and presenting issues, concerns, the options and consequences of our theology about the issue for two hours. (You thought my sermons were long??)

I volunteered to give a morning devotional prior to the beginning of class work on Wednesday, the 15th. It was about how suffering and brokenness are part of God's plan to sanctify us, to strengthen our faith, and embolden our spirit in Him. After the devotional, which lasted about eight minutes (Don't you wish I could do that in church on Sundays?), the class was informed that we were responsible for presenting the next night's worship service for the school. And gee, wouldn't it be nice if Dave could do his devotional that night as part of the service? Temptation is difficult enough to resist, but coercion by a room full of pastors to speak in front of a bigger room full of pastors is fierce. I relented and agreed to speak and plan the service. I had experience at this from my second year at school and knew what was expected. So, during the time between my devotional and the time I was to tell it again, the devotional grew into a more appropriate sermonic time of fifteen minutes. It went well, people were pleased, and the class was not bored while hearing some of the same stuff again. I promise that I will give it to you in the near future. It is called "The Oyster."

During the last two weeks, we will be studying the Old Testament and the sacraments of baptism and communion.

Speaking--or in this case, writing--about worship services, this past Sunday, my friends (from Nebraska and Texas) and I went to an African American Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in east K.C. We just happened to catch their service at a time when their Missouri Annual Conference was winding up business and ready to depart on the wings of worship. The service started at 11:00, and finished at 1:45. Nearly three hours of worship, announcements, two offerings, singing, choir, praise-, prayer, and promise went as quickly as a service of that length could. It was fantastic! We had expected the length of time because we



Sent with a prayer to:



*Estancia United Methodist Church
P. O. Box 378
Estancia, NM 87016*

Coming: Spaghetti Supper in August-Watch for Details

all attended a Black Baptist church last year in downtown K.C., and the service lasted over three hours. The zest, spirit, and acclamations of faith superceded any worries about time. Oh, I think the white Methodist churches could learn and gain so much spiritual growth, energy, and numerical growth by imparting a praisefilled services! The theme of the message, given by the Associate Bishop was, "Use What You Have, Do What You Can, and Believe God is Enough", from Exodus 2:1-10. It is so interesting how God's grace works in such different cultures with the same grace-filled message.

I certainly appreciate the cards, letters, and cookies and other baked goods that I have received. It gets a little lonely out here. I pray for you. But, to put my hands on what you have had your hands on, and to eat that which you lovingly made and sent, reflects Christ back to me. Thank you.

Lord willing, I hope to be back in Estancia on August 8 and ready to preside over services on the 9th. Hopefully, I'll have a sermon or story to share that will be reasonably well prepared. I appreciate your prayers for both deliverances. But, let us be especially thankful in prayer for the deliverance given to us through the grace of God by the body and blood of God's son, Jesus Christ.

His peace and grace continued to be given to you to share with others.

The following are lyrics to a hymn, entitled "Once More We Come Before Our God," which we sang at the African American Methodist Episcopal Zion church: (Read them slowly & pray.)

Pastor Dae

Once more we come before our God;
Once more His blessings ask;
O may not duty seem a load,
Nor worship prove a task!

Father, Thy quickening Spirit send
From heaven in Jesus' name,
To make our waiting minds attend,
And put our souls in frame.

May we receive the word we hear
Each in an honest heart,
And keep the precious treasure there, And
never with it part!

To seek Thee all our hearts dispose,
To each Thy blessings suit,
And let the words Thy servant sows,
Produce abundant fruit. Amen.