

# Good News



Morgan Hill United Methodist Church

*Opening Hearts, Opening Minds, and Opening Doors*

## Ted Pecot to Move

Through the last 13 years, Ted Pecot and his family have an integral part of our family at United Methodist Church of Morgan Hill. Throughout this time, Ted has had many roles. He has been our pastor, our spiritual leader, our business leader, our choir director, as well as many other roles too numerous to mention. Most of all, he has been our friend. As chair of the Staff Parish Relations Committee, it is my sad duty to announce that Sunday, June 28 will be Ted's last Sunday as pastor of our church. Ted, Harriet, and the girls will be moving to Fortuna near Eureka where Ted will be the pastor of the Methodist Church there. We share their joy in returning to an area of California they dearly love. We also share their sadness as we part.



I would like to explain the process of pastoral appointments used by the United Methodist Church. Pastoral appointments are done on a year to year basis. The congregation, through the Staff Parish Relations Committee, and the pastor make separate recommendations to the district each year. The Bishop and District Superintendents (the Cabinet) evaluate the recommendations and make the decision on the appointment. If the decision is to have the pastor stay, nothing more is done except to hold the Charge Conference confirming the appointment. If the decision is to have the pastor move to another assignment, the Cabinet

calls a pastor who meets with the Staff Parish Relations Committee. The interview takes place and a decision is made.

I want you to know that the members of the Staff Parish Relations Committee take our role as your representatives in this process very seriously. We have spent a lot of time talking about what priorities we think the congregation has for a pastor for our church. However, we want to hear from you. Please do not hesitate to contact any one of us throughout this process. We want your input. We also humbly ask for your prayers.

The members of the Staff Parish Relations Committee are: John Braslin, Janet Braslin, Wanda Garrett, Trish DeWitt, Carol Swartz, and myself.

Thanks, David Moore SPRC Chair

## Four Scholarships

Thank you for all the donations for the scholarship gift for our graduating high-school seniors. We were able to gift \$255 to each. We wish them the very best in their future endeavors and wherever life takes them they will always have a home at Morgan Hill United Methodist Church

*Kevin DeWett  
Elam Campbell  
Heather Roth  
Nick Spark*

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**New Member Orientation June 14<sup>th</sup>**  
**Training for Welcomers Next 3 Sundays (7, 14, 21)**



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## Last One

This will be my last newsletter here at Morgan Hill. Next month, I will start a new appointment at Fortuna, California way up in the redwood forests of the Northern California Coast that Harriet and I love so much. It is just south of Eureka (I had to look it up when the cabinet told me). This will begin a new adventure in ministry both for me and for this church. I have lived one fifth of my life here and have been the minister at this church for 1/10 of its life. Moving feels like prying a barnacle off a rock. I'm going kicking and screaming and throwing things. But, aside from the pain of separation I know that this is the right time for me and for the church, and I am confident of the next steps God has in mind for us.

There are some Rules: United Methodists change pastors a lot. We got started as itinerant ministers and that is still the model that we use. We have learned a lot about this process in two hundred years. The rules may hurt a bit but they are good ones for you and for me. Changing pastors is a bit like breaking up. We have found it is best to do it cleanly. Especially for the first year, I am instructed to not have contact with the church. My work at the church is done, and it is now in someone else's hands. About relationship stuff: Christmas cards are great, and stopping by my new church is a great high point for me. But I can do no more work for this church, and I won't comment on what the new pastor is doing. Harriet has a good business here and will keep one foot in the door partnering with Gretchen Merrick.

Go back to the basics:

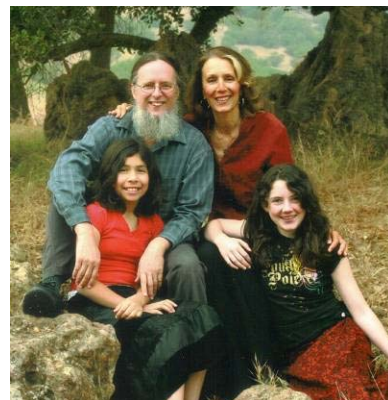
*What is the real answer to all the who and what questions in the Bible? GOD  
What is the real answer to all the how questions in the Bible? Relationship*

The good news is that in the next steps everything is about relationship and stepping out in faith.

Change is tough, and we all deal with it in a different way. So things will be a bit weird for a while. Some people who have loved me here won't like the new persona and will leave; some who have left because of me will come back and check out the changes. For the most part that is all just personal preference. But, there will be new people coming in – all the time -- and that is an important fact that wins out.

But the most important rule – actually it came from Jesus – is love one another as I have loved you -- fall in love with your new pastor. That is what made the difference for me 13 years ago. From my point of view: I came in not knowing anyone and sent with a mission to figure out what God was about in Morgan Hill. A few people here believed in me, and said yes to the church, joined with me, and started caring for each other and for the church. Falling in love is often much more of a choice than we think. It makes a huge difference in pastoral changes. And I pray that you will find that too.

Harriet and I, Jennifer and Olivia, have all grown so much in your love and in the work we have done. We will all be grateful for our time here. Thank you so much.



# Nine Rules of the Spiritual Journey

One of the favorite games I have played in the last years has been preaching and suddenly coming upon rule #857 of the Spiritual Journey. The one we keep coming back to again and again is rule #632 or is it 725 or 433, that guilt is worthless. Through the years we have had some fun talking about this.

But actually there are nine rules that I come back to again and again as we walk together in our faith journeys. They will stand as the core of a book that I have been working on for years and will probably never finish. But it is these that I leave to you as I get ready to go.

- Rule #1. Our Spiritual Companionship is Built on Confidence and Trust
- Rule #2. Everybody is Different.
- Rule #3. Acceptance and Affirmation are the best tools.
- Rule #4. Guilt is Worthless.
- Rule #5. Move Toward Concrete Experience.
- Rule #6. Carefully Assess Our Use and Fear of Power.
- Rule #7. Discern Carefully Our Use and Misuse of Gifts.
- Rule #8. The Spiritual Journey is About Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience
- Rule #9. Addiction: Go with Others to Their Hell.

## Trust

### **Rule #1. Our Spiritual Companionship is Built on Confidence and Trust**

It sometimes takes a long time to build community because it is best built not on charisma but on trust. Without confidence and trust, there can be no spiritual companionship, no church. It is why Wesley started the Methodist Church with small group meetings every week. After a year of confidences held, a healing community is formed.

## Difference

### **Rule #2. Everybody is Different.**

There are no two people who are alike and God treats everybody differently. Therefore, there are no rules for spiritual companionship. So, forget all the rest of the rules. God doesn't play by the rules (or at least any rules we can think of). I think this is one of the great gifts of this church. (But it drives some people nuts. Amen!) And our believing this has led to one of the great ministries of our congregation, the celebration of the various religious groups in town and our work for tolerance and peace.

## Accept

### **Rule #3. Acceptance and affirmation are the best tools.**

During the first years of my ministry here I noticed that many people ask for the same songs over and over in the request time. "How Great Thou Art" is Ernie's, "In the Garden" is Trish's, and Gail Llamas' was "Help us Accept Each Other". Gail's powerful ministry in this church was about acceptance. And we can't accept in others what we don't know in ourselves. So, if we find we cannot accept something in another that means we have inner work or our own to do, and we might want to suspend action or judgment until we know how to respond. In the 13 years I have been here, my records show that over 1900 people have been part of the church (not counting visitors). I think the biggest gift we gave each was acceptance.

## Guilt

### **Rule #4. Guilt is Worthless.**

We all need a conscience and we all need distress of conscience when we screw up. But, guilt is a preoccupation with ourselves, it is pride. We need to get over it, help each other get over it, and move on. I know that in one stroke this wipes out the major fund-raising strategy of the church for the last 2000 years, but I think we have other tools by now. It is ok to say no – how many times have I said that? It is ok to mess up, and apologize and move on.

# Now

## **Rule #5. Move Toward Concrete Experience.**

God exists only in the NOW. We have no idea how big this is and as we discover more about time and space, I think this fact will overwhelm us again and again. This affirmation throws into question much of our theology of Heaven and Hell, but by now you should all know that I think Heaven and Hell are very real spiritual states of being that we experience in the present. The more concretely a life event or feeling is expressed, the closer it probably is to how it is stored within that person's inner psyche. The concrete expression is then of more use to us and can be understood more universally so it is more important for our voice in the world. This leads me to the most exciting celebration of our church community, the sharing within the sermon. This has been so exciting to me. Every sermon changed beyond anything I could expect. Your wisdom in sharing your experience as we reflect together has truly been God's Word proclaimed in this place.

There is a corollary : We can accept and forgive something that is concrete in ourselves and in others more easily than something that is abstract. Concrete experience is more familiar to us in the depths of the psyche where true acceptance and forgiveness originate. We can therefore trust the concrete more than the abstract.

# Power

## **Rule #6. Carefully Assess Our Use and Fear of Power.**

“Stand up and shake someone's hand or appropriately give them a hug.” “Stand up and lay your hands (appropriately) on the person in the center or on someone laying their hands on the person in the center.” As we started to think about appropriate touch in community, we lay the groundwork for trust and healing and good ministry. I am very thankful that we have had so few encounters with inappropriate behavior or abuse of power since I have been here. It colors everything. When we stop being afraid or unaware of our power, or if we can't overcome the fear of the power in order to act, then stop being in ministry. Real Authority comes from God. Knowing this, one can claim our boundaries and even act strongly in weakness.

*A footnote in this is one of my biggest concerns about my ministry in the last 13 years. Lots of good things to celebrate but . . . We have talked about how much I have taken on in the last years and strong leadership, or too strong leadership, or just being overbearing is*

*part of the trap of it, part of thin lines I have walked (or not) in the last years. I apologize where I have taken on too much and perhaps crowded out someone who might have done a better job freeing me to do more things I should have been doing instead. I will reflect on this a lot in the next years.*

# Gifts

## **Rule #7. Discern Carefully Our Use and Misuse of Gifts.**

I am excited about the work that we have done in discerning our gifts and talents. Finding the StrengthsFinder materials that we have used over the last few years opens up doors in ministry that have been very exciting. But, my rule about this leads me to two observations. Our misuse of our greatest gifts often lead to the greatest evil we can put into this world. And the proper use of our greatest weaknesses can lead to the greatest good we will ever do. I think that this is part of the topsy-turvy world that Jesus often talks about where the first will be last and the last first. We can do the most damage where we are the strongest, and there is always a delightful surprise when someone steps out of their muck and shines. I think of the work that we have done over the years with the Enneagram looking at how some of our talents are actually defenses solidified into personality. And how the crazy group of people we call the choir stumble into brilliance each (or almost each) Sunday.

# Righteousness

## **Rule #8. The Spiritual Journey is About Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience**

Remember that the most important issue is relationship. These are about one's relationship to oneself and one's world. There are wrong relationships with them and there are appropriate and right relationships (the is what righteousness is). You aren't really walking the spiritual journey if you aren't dealing with issues centered around poverty – right relationship with possession, chastity – a right relationship with one's own sexuality, and obedience – right relationship with authority and power. (Almost everything important in the spiritual journey centers on these things. It doesn't mean we have to be poor, celibate and obedient. It doesn't mean we are going to be the same (see rule #2) It means we have to find out what the right relationship is. If we aren't talking about those things in church, then we aren't really talking at all. But there is a reason we don't talk about them. Because, when we do, we start digging into the things that really heal or hurt, really transform or imprison, really free or really abuse one another. One of the gifts of the huge financial messes we are in now is that we

need to rethink our relationships to one another and to our world in money and in power.

## **Heil** Rule #9 Addiction: Go with Others to Their Hell.

The church has gotten in huge messes with addiction and the co-dependent circles that swirls around it. But, so much of the real healing in the world begins here. I am excited about Lynn following her passion and developing courses for this church on the 12 Steps of Spirituality for Everyone. I think this will be a tremendous resource for this congregation and I encourage you all to encourage her to keep going on this and take her classes when they are ready. My rule of thumb is to take on the power of Jesus and go with people to their hell. This does not mean get all enmeshed in somebody else's problems, but to accompany. The great gift of the 12 Step programs are that addicts help other addicts by being with them as they struggle through their processes together. They hear and see the worst, they accept one another, hold each other's confidences, and so they heal one another. We develop the confidence that there is nothing bad enough that we can't hold each other's hands through.

I hope that these rules say something to you of my ministry with you. For me, these are the measures of my ministry within our church along with the caring in the community around us. I find them good rules to govern my work in community, and I hope you will have occasion to haul out Ted's Rule Number 452 on occasion and think fondly of me and of the One who sent me.

## **Charge Conference**

At an Administrative Council meeting,

For the last two years, Administrative Council has been a working group, an ongoing conversation about where we are headed as a church, a group forming the new identity and mission of the church. Anyone has been invited to come and be part of this conversation.

The conversation is over for a while. We will be following the direction of the District Superintendent and developing new ministries that move the church out the doors using the resources of the congregation, and showing the Conference the vitality of this congregation. These ministries will not change the church as quickly and fully as we had hoped, but they will set a context and style that will serve the church for decades to come.

We have chosen to begin with three basic ministries of the church and four people leading us in those ministries : we will extend our love to people in need by feeding people (Dan Skeen), we will extend our love of members of the congregation by being supportive in time of need (Jonelle Roth and Megan Richardson), and we will help and support those who have trouble (John Braslin). The growth of the church will proceed from these ministries and its vitality judged by how we move with them.

Administrative Council will watch after the business of the church and facilitate these basic ministries.

Council Chair:

Lay Leader: Megan Richardson

Lay Rep to Annual Conference: Trish DeWett

Secretary/Communications: Wanda Garrett

Financial Secretary: Eugene Davis

Trustee Chair: Jeff McMillan

Staff/Parish Relations: John Braslin

Managers for the Ministries

Feeding: Carol Swartz

Caring: Phil and JoAnne Sherburne

Employment: Chuck and Darcy Foster

## New Member Orientation

Sunday, June 14, 5:30 to 7:30, anyone interested in joining the church can gather with me in the fellowship hall for a potluck and a conversation. Bring some food to share (it looks like there will be about ten of us) and we will eat and talk about this church and its ministry.

## Finances

January to May Received	\$49,132
Year to Date Budget	\$55,419

We are finally paid up in our salaries and bills, except:  
We have \$3,660 in unpaid apportionments.  
We have \$2,500 unpaid to the District Loan

It was the decision of SPR and the Council that we cut the amount for pastoral salary significantly so we can solve these ongoing problems.

### Back Apportionment Still Owed

As most of you know, apportionments are our share of the cost of running the regional and national Methodist Church and supporting its ministers. Last year (2008) as we concentrated all of our resources on coming up with a plan for church growth, we did not pay any of our apportionments. This has now come back to haunt us. One of the apportionments is for the pension fund for ministers. This one has been reassessed and the church owes it until we pay it (or go out of existence). Furthermore, if we do not pay it in total, Ted's pension when he does retire will be adversely affected. The one that was reassessed is in the amount of \$6411. There is another, even higher, apportionment for the same purpose this year, and we have not been paying apportionments this year, so we will have to start paying the current one off as well as the old one.

Eugene Davis  
Finance Committee Chair

## Training Day

We will be initiating several parts of our new program in the next months. One will be training for the welcoming and greeting ministry. This is a beginning of expanding this ministry to more intentionally welcome and help people make connections within the church.

Gather at the church a bit early, Sunday mornings at 8:30 to 9:30, before church. We are looking at three different ministries of welcoming. A friendly presence outside the church. The Greeters as people enter the worship space. And Connectors who are meeting with people once they have sat down. We need people who truly like to make connections with others.

Come join us, for one or for all of them.

## Summer Sunday School

Here is the summer schedule. We want everyone to sign up to help twice during the summer, as a teacher or as a helper. Sign up at church or send the office an email.

June 07,	Acts 2:43	Sharing
June 14,	Acts 16:16	Always Help
June 21,	2 Samuel 9	Be Kind
June 28,	1 Samuel 25	Make Peace
July 05,	Matt 28:18	Share Faith
July 12,	Luke 10:25	Help Others
July 19,	John 13:1	Serve Willingly
July 26,	1 Cor 9:24	Don't Give Up
August 02,	Gen 18:1	Practice Hospitality
August 09,	Neh 5:1	Help the Poor
August 16,	Judges 16:4, Ruth 1	Be a Friend
August 23,	Gen 13	Be Generous
August 30,	Mark 9:33	Put Others First.
September 06,		
September 13,	Rally Sunday	
September 20,		
September 27,	Taste of Morgan Hill??	

## News from the Youth

The senior high youth completed the StrengthsFinders series in May. Working with Eugene, Pastor Ted and Jeannie the series began with both junior high and senior high taking the assessment and learning their top strengths. We worked with this program once a month for eight months. The youth learned how to draw on the strengths that are within themselves and use them to benefit in their academic and spiritually lives.

We have a golf clinic scheduled with Barry M. at Eagle Ridge in Gilroy June 20. The cost is \$10. Bring golf clubs if you have them, otherwise we'll share with the pro!

This summer the youth will hold a 30-hour famine benefit June 24-25 to raise awareness to hunger and poverty around the world. 30 Hour Famine is an international youth movement to fight hunger. It will bring your group closer together and to God, feed hungry children, and change our world forever. Students fast for thirty hours and raise funds to help feed and care for children around the world. By sacrificing and serving others, they are learning to think outside themselves and see the world as Christ sees it.

The youth will also be working with Sacred Heart in San Jose with the Faith and Justice Immersion program on July 24.

If you are in Junior or Senior High School please join our Group Wednesday Nights from 6 to 8 p.m. Contact Jeannie @ 782-2141 or you can also access our website @ [www.mhumc.com](http://www.mhumc.com) for a current schedule and list of events.



## Community Garden

The Sunday school class planted a vegetable garden for the summer growing season. We plan to get our garden growing and then engage our neighbors in the apartment behind the church to share in the harvest. Many members of the congregation helped to get this project started. Thanks to Megan for donating the earthboxes, to Etta for the bean pole and bean, squash and tomato plants, to Dan for the primo dirt and the tomato and pepper plants and to both Johns for help with watering and to Mary for the gardening tools. It takes a village and we look forward to blessed growing season.



Planting a tree on Pentecost



## Steeple Levitation

If you have been driving down Monterey in the last month, you can see that there has been a lot of work done on the church. The most hair-raising of which is John Ringo with a sky hook painting the very top of the steeple. But lots of people under John Ringo and John McCotter's guidance have been working on the church. We also had a great work day at the end of May. So, we have painting and patching and electrical, and door hanging and cleaning and organizing.



## Worship Coming Up

We are just reporting the next couple of weeks of the worship this summer because we will need to wait for what the next pastor is going to do. Pastor Ted will preach throughout June taking a somewhat playful look at what he feels are the some of the best traits of our church.

**Sunday, June 7, 2009** Stumbling Along  
Psalm 139 David and Nathan

**Sunday, June 14, 2009** Finding Our Voice  
Isaiah 6:1 Isaiah Before God

**Sunday, June 21, 2009** Staying Flexible  
Psalm 133 Two by Two

**Sunday, June 28, 2009** Saying Goodbye  
Psalm 27:4 Jesus Goes off to Pray

## Men's Group

### *Catherine Stone Circle*

We meet on the first and third Thursdays of the month at 9:00 in the morning to quilt. Anyone is welcomed to join us, no experience necessary.

### *United Methodist Women's Circle*

UMW Circle is gathering to plan to meet monthly for study and fellowship. For more information, contact the office or Kathryn Mendoza.

### *Men's Group*

Men are welcomed. Contact the office or Steve Roth for more details.

### *Serendipity Bible Study*

Has adjourned for the summer.

### *Adult Bible Study*

Has adjourned for the summer.

### *Youth Group*

We meet Wednesday nights from 6 to 8 pm. Students in Junior and Senior High are welcome. Check the schedule on the youth page of the church's website [www.mhumc.com](http://www.mhumc.com) or contact Jeannie at 782-2141.

### *The GoodNews Letter*

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