

Good News



Morgan Hill United Methodist Church

Opening Hearts, Opening Minds, and Opening Doors

Thoughts from Pastor Jeff...

Greetings,

We've completed our cottage gatherings. Sixty people spoke their own replies to the questions posed about our past, present, and future life as a congregation. Janet Braslin coordinated. Leaders included Wanda Garrett, Trish Catalano, Jeannie Clayton, Lynn Morgan, and Janet Braslin. Thanks to all of you who participated and assisted. Sunday, November 1st is All Saints' Day, and after worship, the whole congregation will eat and receive a summary of the cottage gathering conversations and next steps. I'll include the written summary in next month's newsletter.

Another event coming up for the whole church: On Thanksgiving Sunday, November 22, we will have a Sunday theme of Attitude of Gratitude in worship and during our church conference meeting from 11:15-noon. Bring an example of gratitude to share about this past year in the life of Morgan Hill UMC.

The Annual Christmas Party is set for Sunday, December 13th at 7:00pm. The youth will be providing a play written by John McCotter, the choir will sing several anthems, the congregation will sing carols, and we'll have refreshments. Save the date. We need extra choir members for this event. My goal is twelve choir members for this. Let me know if you're interested in rehearsing and singing for this event.

Grace and Peace,
Rev. Jeff

Flood Gets Close, But We Are Spared...

Here are some pictures of the church during the recent deluge, taken by Johnny Ringo.



During the downpour, Jan Masuda tried to obtain sandbags to protect the church and the annex, but was unsuccessful. Luckily, water did not enter either building *this* time. This brings up the question of whether we should have a supply of sandbags on the premises in case of future flooding.

Feeding the Homeless Season Is Rapidly Approaching

By Janet Braslin

For quite a few years now, Morgan Hill United Methodist church, in conjunction with EHC (Emergency Housing Consortium) Lifebuilders, has fed the homeless at the Gilroy Armory from the end of November until the end of March depending upon the weather conditions. Sometimes the Armory extends their schedule until mid-April in cold temperatures.

We collect food from the congregation and serve it at the Armory on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sunday evenings (if there is one) through the season described above.

In this time of financial difficulty in our economy, I'm sure the need will be greater, and even more urgent, than ever for our volunteer efforts. In the past we served an average of 60 folks per meal, and more recently it has grown to approximately 130 or over.

Our menu has included some "tried and true" entrees in the past, such as "Easy chicken pot pie," pasta bakes, soups and stews and baked potatoes with chili and fixin's.

Besides the entrees, we always request contributions of rolls, butter, tossed green salad and dressing, soft fruit, fruit cocktail, dessert, milk and juice. A cash gift is also welcome so we can buy additional food, if needed. Announcements in church will be made soon requesting these items. For your convenience, entrees can be made or purchased ahead of time, brought to the church and stored in the freezer in Fellowship Hall.

Also, 3 to 4 people are needed as volunteer servers at each meal. Plan to spend approximately 1-1/2 hours in this role. EHC requires servers provide documentation of a negative TB test.

Besides these nourishing meals, we collect warm socks, towels and toiletries which we also bring to the Armory on serving nights. In addition, we are going to participate in a "One Warm Coat" drive during the month of November.

Please consider participating as a server or food donator this season. Our church has a reputation of being "the best cooks of all" in this volunteer effort on behalf of many churches. Let's keep our reputation untarnished this season. Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."

For any questions, please contact the church office at mhumc@garlic.com or Janet Braslin at Igulovr@hotmail.com

Many thanks in advance !

Janet Braslin

Coat Drive Helps Local People In Need Stay Warm

Warming Communities... One Coat at a Time

By Lynn Morgan

The church has a new service project: collecting coats, jackets, and sweatshirts to be distributed free to the homeless by EHC Lifebuilders (the folks who run the shelter).

The need has never been greater and it's never been easier to make a difference in our community. Here is your opportunity to make sure that nobody goes without a basic necessity such as a coat this winter.

Our church is collecting clean, gently used coats, jackets and sweatshirts as part of the One Warm Coat community service project. Coats of all shapes and sizes are welcome for men, women, and children. One Warm Coat is dedicated to distributing reusable coats, free of charge, directly to local children and adults. The program is an easy way for you and your family to pass along coats, jackets and sweatshirts that you no longer need.

Morgan Hill United Methodist Church has made donating simple. Just bring your clean, gently used coats, jackets and sweatshirts to church on Sunday November 1, 8 or 15. Collection boxes are in the social hall. All donated coats will be given to the EHC Lifebuilders for distribution to local people in need. EHC Lifebuilders handles the shelter where we have provided food for the homeless.

“More people than ever need help these days. I am proud of the thousands of coat drive organizers whose creativity and generosity of spirit are making a real difference in their own communities.” commented Sherri Wood, President and National Coordinator for One Warm Coat.

One Warm Coat is national non-profit organization that supports and encourages coat drives. It helps individuals, groups, companies and organizations across the country collect coats and deliver them to local agencies that distribute the coats free to people in need. More than one million coats have been provided to those in need at no cost since its inception in 1992 (www.onewarmcoat.org)

For additional information, feel free to contact me at lynnmorg@ix.netcom.com, or at (408) 778-1473.

The Census Bureau Thanks MHUMC

(The following letter was received recently)

On behalf of the United States Census Bureau, many thanks for allowing us to use your facility for training Census workers. The San Jose Local Census Office, covering most of Santa Clara and all of Santa Cruz Counties, is employing more than a hundred people in this phase of the 2010 Census operation.

In these trying times, I find it personally gratifying to be able to help so many to find work. I'm sure you and many others in your organization feel the same, and are to be commended for helping our local residents.

We will be conducting much larger Census operations next year. I hope we can call on you again for your support.

Thank you so much for your help,

Betty Leasau

Assistant Manager of Field Operations

Participants Sought for Dissertation Study

(The following message was received from Jennifer Mato, a student at Alliant International University) I previously emailed a little about my research study, available online at genderstudy.info, asking for your help recruiting participants. I have not yet heard a response, so I wanted to follow up to see if you have any questions or concerns.

As a reminder, here is the salient information:.. I am looking for participants who are:

- (a) at least 18 years of age,
- (b) a California resident, and
- (c) identify themselves as heterosexual, gay/lesbian, or transgender (or are a parent of someone who identifies as heterosexual, gay/lesbian, or transgender),

The purpose of the research is to:

- (1) The study will examine gender ideologies among individuals with various sexual and gender orientations, and parents of those who identify with various sexual and gender orientations. (It is not necessary that individuals have their parents participate, or vice versa.)
- (2) I believe the knowledge gained from this study will help therapists in addressing issues related to sexual and gender orientation. I also hope that this study will contribute to further understanding of the understudied and underserved transgender population.

I would appreciate if you could help circulate the above information. Please know, I understand and respect the privacy of all my participants, and invite your members to complete my anonymous survey. Thank you,

Jennifer

Mini-Autobiography: John Braslin

For a guy of 27, I sure look and feel a lot older. I was born in New Haven, CT, and spent my formative years tormenting various teachers in the public school system. I did have a memorable French teacher, Mrs. Obrasky, who possessed the ability to pronounce nasal vowels so forcefully, the windows shook. A “bien” from her was the equivalent of a fire alarm. She did manage to get me to appreciate not only the French language, but

an alternate method of thinking which came from the way the French approach language and the creation of words. I later started on German, and found that to be somehow much easier, probably because of Mrs. Obrasky's illumination. These abilities came in handy later in life, as I discovered staying in one career more than 10 years was not for the likes of me.

I started my "professional" career as a film editor in New York City after graduating college in the sixties. Yes, it's true: if you can remember the sixties, you weren't really there! I met my lovely wife Janet on a blind date, where we discussed nuclear powered blimps and bluegrass music. She was impressed with my cowboy boots. We went to Woodstock in her '65 Mustang, but never managed to figure out where the music was, and went home after a day and a night in the rain.

The film company that employed me went bust, so I moved to the Yale University Art Gallery, where I learned more about the craft and art of photography than I would have believed possible. From there, I moved to the Medical School, where I photographed a lot of things I won't mention here. I spent a couple of years in night school learning electronics, and was recruited by Carl Zeiss, Inc., to do field service engineering an electron microscope and surgical equipment.

That was where the linguistic abilities came in handy, as I went for training in Oberkochen, Germany, to learn the systems. Janet came along, and discovered after two days that Oberkochen was not very interesting (it was so small, it made Morgan Hill look like Manhattan), so she took off on the train and called me every Friday to tell me where to meet her. Since she didn't speak any German, I was always astounded at the places she discovered to stay, and actually managed to be safe. We had a lot of great adventures traveling through Europe, especially since she was pregnant with our first son, Colin. We had no idea that the Swiss somehow possess the ability to reproduce themselves without pregnancy; when we went to restaurants there, people stared at her as if she were a space alien!

After 12 years of field service, the travel was getting old, and I had learned enough

programming to become a software developer in a small company in Westport, CT, across the street from *Martha Stewart Living* magazine. We always had a lot of laughs, looking at the slobes that worked there.

I complained enough about the coding that they put me in charge of quality assurance. During this period, I attended grad school online, a fantastic experience that opened me to a group of people who were truly amazing. We had one guy who wrote that he would be logging in to class by microwave from a cruiser in the Antarctic one week. The group's response was to ask him what horrible thing he had done to offend his commanding officer too badly!

Janet and I moved to Oceanside, CA in 1999, when I was recruited by a company there. We had a remarkable "Barnum and Bailey Circus Train" drive across the US with two teenage boys, two dogs, two cats, five finches, an iguana, and a cockatoo. None of the motels we stayed at realized this. Oceanside was where we picked up the Miata, which Janet calls "the other woman." The company I was working for decided that Southern California wasn't expensive enough for them, so they relocated to San Mateo. We followed, picking Gilroy for its proximity to the train and for the garlic. Having been raised in a predominantly Italian city, Janet and I cannot get enough of the stuff.

We saw MHUMC while we were in the real estate agent's office, and thought it looked interesting. We ventured in one Sunday when Ted was on vacation. The service was being run by Dennis Adams and we were warmly greeted by Gretchen Vandenburg, Ken Challis, and John Ward. We felt very much at home, and decided to come back the next week. After another visit, we decided that if the pastor wasn't a complete bore, we'd like to stay. Well, as you can imagine, we discovered he wasn't so we are still here, enjoying everyone's company and fellowship, the service, and serving others. We're looking forward to seeing how the church evolves (can I say that?) over the next few years!

The Huffman's Announce a Sale!

Greg and Nina Huffman would like all to know that their senior mobile home park will be putting on a sale of handcrafts and baked goods in our fellowship hall on November 7, 2009. Proceeds will go to a variety of charities. Contact Greg and Nina (408-310-7177, or gregandnina@mac.com) for details.

Youth Group News

The youth are working on a haunted house for the downtown association's safe trick-or-treat. It's been an exciting time working together as a group. We have had many members of the congregation support us with donations for the haunt and Robin C. has been working with us every week to bring it all together. She is a professional make-up and wig artist, and we plan to make the youth up in a really cool and spooky fashion. The haunt is on during Halloween from 5-7pm. Come on by and check us out, if you Dare!

The Taste of Morgan Hill was a great success, we made almost enough money to pay for the sno-cone machine and Carol S. donated the remaining portion. So the next time we sell sno-cones it will be profit! We had lots of volunteers and thanks to everyone for their help and support.

Next up the youth are working on a play written by John M. It's called *Billie Jean Reborn* and the youth will present the play during the church's Christmas celebration on Sunday, December 13 so mark your calendars.

If you are in Junior or Senior High School please join our group Wednesday Nights from 6 to 8 PM. Contact Jeannie at 981-4034, or you can also access our website at www.mhumc.com for a current schedule and list of events.

GoodNews Interviews By Members of The Youth Group.

First Interviewee: Jeannie Clayton

Jeannie Clayton, by Lorynn

Where did you grow up?

South San Francisco

Why do you go to church?

I go to church to fill up my spiritual gas tank.

What is your favorite food?

tomatoes

How long have you lived in Morgan Hill?

10 years

Which do you like better Easter or Christmas?

Easter because it's all about faith and renewal. Christmas seems more commercial. And I love the youth sunrise service.

How old are you?

That is a rude question.

What is your occupation?

Youth director

Another Interview: Robin Church

Robin Church, by Peanut (Gracie)

Where did you grow up?

Mountain View

Why do you go to church?

For a sense of community/ to get together with people in my community/ to learn more about God

What is your favorite food?

Whatever I'm craving on a particular day.

How long have you lived in Morgan Hill?

Almost 7 years

Which do you like better Easter or Christmas?

Christmas- because it's happier.

How old are you?

50!

What is your occupation?

Theatrical wig/make-up designer

A Sampling of Group Activities At MHUMC:

- 1. Men's Group**=Did you know there was a men's group at the church? They usually meet for supper on a Friday night toward the end of the month. Contact Steve Roth (408) 782-7479 for details.
- 2. Catherine Stone Circle**=We meet on the first and third Thursdays of each month in the Fellowship Hall, at 9AM, to quilt. Anyone is welcome to join us. No experience is necessary.
- 3. United Methodist Women**=The UMW is involved in a variety of activities during the church year. Most recently it headed the effort to put on the annual rummage sale. For more information regarding meetings, etc., contact Kathryn Mendoza or the office.

A Look Ahead...

Nov. 1st=Dinner following worship at which results of Cottage Meetings will be presented.

Nov. 7th=Greg and Nina Huffman's group will be using the Fellowship Hall.

Nov. 22nd=After worship, we will need help erecting the large Christmas tree on the altar.

Nov. 26th=Thanksgiving Day.

Nov. 28th=We will decorate the Sanctuary and the grounds for Advent and Christmas.