

CHURCH STAFF

Reverend Steven M. Taylor, Pastor
Kathy Peck, Program Coordinator/Secretary
Tory and Adam Irgang, Youth Leaders
Jody Marsh, Parish Nurse
Julie Nagel, Music Director/Accompanist
Krista Odell, Accompanist
Art Osborne, Custodian
Ben Taylor, Winter Sidewalk Snow Removal Safety Manager
Pat Sobolewski & Sandy Crossley, JOY Center
Bert and Roberta Anderson in Haiti
Dr. Mark and Diane Abbott in Spain
Rev. Paul D. Caseman in Alaska

PASTOR'S OFFICE HOURS

Monday - 9 a.m. - noon
Tuesday - 9 a.m. - noon
Wednesday - 9 a.m. - noon; 6-6:45 p.m.

Mailing Address for Anderson's in Haiti:

Bert & Roberta Anderson
c/o Agape Flight PAP #26035
100 Airport Avenue
Venice, FL 34285

Grace Notes is GOING GREEN

Beginning with this, the April edition, *Grace Notes* is "going green". In an effort to save on publication costs (yearly postal permit, paper, ink, envelopes, stickers, etc.), we are asking that those of you who can, please use our website, www.panamaum.org, to access *Grace Notes*.

There will be copies available on the welcome table at church, beginning April 1. Feel free to pick one up. If you, or someone you know, would like to continue receiving *Grace Notes* in the mail, please let Kathy know in the church office or email Pam at alamapi@yahoo.com.

If you have any comments or questions, please send your correspondence to Pam at her email listed above.

From Pastor Steve's Desk...

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior! Welcome to *Grace Notes*, the newsletter of the Panama United Methodist. In these pages, you will find news and events of what God is doing through His people in Panama and around the world. Come serve, love, laugh, and experience at Panama UMC...

Dressing Up for Easter

I saw a commercial once that made me kind of sad and kind of mad at the same time. It was a commercial for Easter dresses that were being advertised for \$10 each. Each of the girls wearing the shiny gowns in the commercial remarked that the dresses made them look like, "a million bucks." Throughout the commercial, the girls were engaging in Easter egg hunts, finding Easter baskets, and playing in the sunlit yard with their perfect-looking family.

Now, I realize that this was an advertising ploy to get people to shop at this particular store. And I also realize that the intent of the commercial was not to degrade Christian's celebration of Easter in any way (I hope), but here's the deal: Easter dresses have no real lasting meaning if those dresses are not worn to worship the risen Jesus Christ, without whom Easter would not even exist!

Easter dresses and Easter suits and ties are a wonderful way to show respect for God...we are wearing the best we have. The part that concerns me is that the world is slowly beginning to redefine Easter as a holiday for frolicking in the grass, finding chocolate, and spending the day as a family. None of those things are wrong, but they are sadly missing something.

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians about this missing link. He writes, "But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection from the dead? If there is no resurrection from the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith." (1 Corinthians 5:12-14)

The missing link in our cultural experience of Easter, which includes Easter eggs and chocolate as the main element of that experience, is the **resurrected Christ**. I like chocolate as

(From Pastor Steve's Desk..., continued)

much as the next guy, but if the focus of our attention is anything other than the resurrected Christ, then our witness, preaching, and even our faith, become impotent and sadly cultural.

Dressing up for Easter means reliving the historical and grand stories of how Creator God has worked in the world throughout time. It's about spending time journeying with Jesus as he teaches, preaches, heals, and loves. It's about putting away all the things that distract us and putting on holiness as our main garment from the Holy Spirit. Dressing up for Easter means coming to worship on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, and Easter morning with an overwhelming expectant hope that Jesus will meet us right where we are and refuse to leave us there. Dressing up for Easter is about wearing salvation and grace, and allowing those gifts to move us to love and serve others for the sake of Christ.

Easter dresses and suits are appropriate for any opportunity to worship the Lord, but they are especially appropriate on Easter Sunday, when the Christian church celebrates its holiest and most amazing day of the year. This Easter, as you get dressed for worship, think about the *reason* you are dressing up, and the *reason* you are worshipping. It has very little to do with those experiences that our world has assigned, once again, to a Christian holy day, and has everything to do with a God who overcame death by His innate power, crushing it so you could have abundant and eternal life in Him.

I hope that family in the commercial worships the resurrected Jesus on Easter. Who knows, maybe we'll get a chance to love them and show them what we've been putting on if they worship in Panama.

Shalom,
Pastor Steve

Nursery Note... There is now child care available during the Sunday School hour, for newborns through age 3!

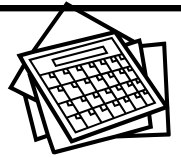
There is also nursery care available during Sunday morning worship for children up to kindergarten age. Two nursery helpers are available to care for your child/children so that you can get the most out of the worship experience.

If any adult or youth (7th grade and above) is interested in participating in this ministry, please let Tina Shaver know.

Thanks!



Pastor Steve's April Schedule



- 1-2 Sabbath and Day Off
- 2 6 p.m.-TLC at Davis'
- 3 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m.-Sunday School/Worship/Communion
- 4 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. 24 Hours That Changed the World Bible Study
- 5 11:10 a.m.-Preschool; 1-3 p.m.-Visitations; 6 p.m.-VBS Meeting; 7 p.m.-Worship Team Meeting
- 6 6 p.m.-Praise Team; 6:30 p.m.-Prayer Team; 7 p.m.-Choir; 8 p.m.-Trustees Meeting
- 7 7 p.m.-Sunday School Team Meeting
- 8-9 Sabbath and Day Off; CRM Retreat at Camp Asbury
- 9 2:30 p.m.-Pre-Conference Briefing (Henrietta)
- 10 8:30 a.m.-12p.m.: Sunday School/Worship
- 10-12 VACATION
- 13 11:30 a.m. Lunch Bunch; 6 p.m. Praise Team; 6:30 p.m. Prayer Team; 7 p.m. Choir
- 15-16 Sabbath and Day Off
- 16 8 a.m. Band of Brothers Breakfast; 10 a.m. FoF Leadership Team
- 17 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m: Sunday School/Worship
- 18 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. 24 Hours That Changed the World Bible Study
- 19 1-3 p.m. Visitations
- 20 6 p.m. Praise Team; 6:30 p.m. Prayer Team; 7 p.m. Choir
- 21 Holy Thursday Meal/Worship
- 22-23 Sabbath and Day Off
- 22 7 p.m. Good Friday Worship
- 23 Walk to the Crosses
- 24 7:30 a.m.-12 p.m. Worship/Breakfast/Sunday School/Worship
- 25 9 a.m. Food Pantry
- 26 11:10 a.m Preschool; 1-3 p.m. Visitation
- 27 6 p.m. Praise Team; 6:30 p.m. Prayer Team; 7 p.m. Choir
- 28 7 p.m. Grace Visitation
- 29-30 Sabbath and Day Off

Sunday Morning Worship Team

April

Lay Readers

4/3 - Howie Wheeler
4/10 - Sharon Passarelli
4/17 - Linda Sturges
4/24 - Paula Komarek

Ushers

George and Trudy Anderson
Mark and Karen Morton

Nursery Helpers

4/3 - Thea Kester and Corinne Edwards
4/10 - Karen Morton and Lauren Tordella
4/17 - Julia Nelson and Abby Taylor
4/24 - Kelly and Sarah Osborne

May

Lay Readers

5/1 - Carol Hay
5/8 - Jennifer Apthorpe
5/15 - Fred Croscut
5/22 - Cindy Weise
5/29 - Ted Passarelli

Ushers

Adam and Tory Irgang
Kyle and Brynne Hinsdale

Nursery Helpers

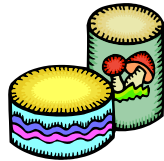
5/1 - Yvonne Calcaterra and Alyssa Jaeger
5/8 - Barb and Lauren Tordella
5/15 - Carol Hay and Corinne Edwards
5/22 - Stacy and Abby Taylor
5/29 - Thea Kester and Corinne Edwards

DON'T FORGET RED RIBBON SUNDAY MISSION PROJECTS

CAMPBELL'S LABELS for the Red Bird Mission School in Kentucky (also look for labels on Swanson products, Pepperidge Farm, Prego, and V-8). Those of you who take the time to cut just the UPC code and logo from the product for us, we thank you. Since we sent 1,200 labels last July, we now have 300 more to send - keep saving.

PENNIES for the Domestic Abuse Program offered by the Salvation Army in Jamestown. The WAM group has been promoting this program for a few years and usually have between \$75 and \$100 to send to them every March. As of now, we have about \$35 to send. If you have been saving your pennies (and other small change) please bring them in—do not roll the pennies. The bank would rather have them unrolled, and we can just drop them in the coin counter.

NON-PERISHABLE ITEMS for the Food Pantry - things like toilet paper, soap (all kinds), toothpaste and brushes, shampoo, and anything else that you feel would help those that are having a difficult time making their money go further. The use of the Food Pantry is growing. Thanks for your help!



SUMMER CAMP

Now is the time to plan your summer activities and before your summer is filled, think about including a week at Camp Findley or one of our other UM camps. There are brochures available in the Narthex to look at and decide which week is best for you. REMEMBER, if you sign up by May 4, there is a \$20 discount for a full week camp and a \$10 discount off a partial week camp. Panama UM Church will also pay half of your camping cost up to \$100.



Tape Ministry

April 3

Gerrie Simmons LSS A116
Phyllis Patterson H Green 327
Kathy Smith TW 218
Van Luther TW 208

Art & Jeanette Osborne
Barbara Hart
Trudy Anderson
Trudy Anderson

April 10

Gerrie Simmons LSS A116
Phyllis Patterson H Green 327
Kathy Smith TW 218
Van Luther TW 208

Lester & Wyona Wevers
Julia Nelson
Jean Edwards
Jean Edwards

April 17

Gerrie Simmons LSS A116
Phyllis Patterson H Green 327
Kathy Smith TW 218
Van Luther TW 208

Jack & Linda Sturges
Thea Kester
Diane Johnson
Diane Johnson

April 24

Gerrie Simmons LSS A116
Phyllis Patterson H Green 327
Kathy Smith TW 218
Van Luther TW 208

Sharon Passarelli
Eloise Smith
Bill Peck
Bill Peck

No tapes for anyone - just a visit and a bulletin

Prayer Chain

If you have a concern you would like others to pray for, please call Susie Davis (782-4611) or Jean Edwards (782-2800).

Your prayer request will be passed down the chain to 20+ others who will pray, and continue to pray, about your situation.



April **SPOTLIGHT** is on the
TRUSTEE TEAM

- The Trustee Team meets monthly. The chairperson attends monthly meetings of the Church Council and takes the recommendations of the trustees to the council for approval and action.

The Trustee Team supervises and maintains all of the property which belongs to the congregation so that the various ministries of the church can be effective. The Trustees annually conduct an inventory of all real property. Each year, an inspection and inventory of the parsonage is completed, with the assistance of a member of the SPR Team. This year, with the help of the Taylors, painting and updates to the parsonage have been completed.

Equipment is inspected and inventoried and necessary maintenance is completed. Interior and exterior work is scheduled. Cleaners, custodial services, lawn maintenance and snow removal all come under the umbrella of the Trustee Team. Service contracts are considered on large equipment. The Trustees ensure that the facilities are handicapped accessible. The Team evaluates and maintain insurance coverage. An annual budget request is presented to the finance committee and includes, but is not limited to, maintenance and repair of buildings, grounds and equipment; purchase of equipment; insurance; utilities; parsonage furnishings and future capital needs of the church.

The Trustees are “keepers of God’s house”, and ensure that the church facilities are functional, safe and ready for the work of the whole church. All areas of the facility are “sacred spaces” in the sense that they are there solely for the purpose of helping advance the church’s mission to make disciples.



Dear Friends at Panama United Methodist Church,

We have a few changes to announce this month. Our name, software, website. The Board of Directors met here in Haiti earlier this month. At that meeting, it was agreed to change the official name of the organization to Village of Hope Lazarus Project (We still use VOH as an abbreviation). As we have mentioned before, VOH is changing its relationship with Food For The Poor. What this means is VOH will be responsible for its own finances. All donations to our organization should be made payable to Village of Hope or Village of Hope Lazarus Project and mailed to 300 East Yamato Road Boca Raton, FL 33431. Please be patient with us as we have new volunteers processing the donations. I know they are working hard to get the systems up and running. Any one that has ever gone from one software program to another can imagine the challenges.

Eventually the website will have a new address as well. The current one will be set to forward inquiries to the new one so that should be a smooth transition. (Debbie posts to a blog quite regularly. Check it out.) The current website is www.lazarusprojecthaiti.org; the new one will be www.villageofhopehaiti.org

The really exciting news is that the bulldozers have arrived and the dirt is moving for the Health Center. Praise and thanks to our Lord. Please pray that the construction will proceed safely and timely.



Who knew dirt would look so good!



And, this is why it's all worth it.....

We look forward to hosting Michele and the ARM team in April. Keep them in your prayers, too.

As always, we are blessed by your prayers and your support and we thank you.

Blessings,

Bert & Roberta

With Sympathy....

Our sincerest sympathy is extended to the families of:

Helen Carpenter
Grandmother of Jennifer Apthorpe

Charlene Wiggers
Aunt of Larissa Enlow

Cathy DeRemer
Sister-In-Law of Donna Peterson

John Digirolamo
Father of Carmella Catanese

May our love and prayers continue to be of comfort to you during this time of adjustment to life without your loved one.



.Women and Missions (WAM)

The next meeting of *Women and Missions* is Monday, April 11 at 11:45 a.m. at the Rowdy Rooster. *WAM* is an opportunity for

women to have lunch (we each pay for our own), reflect on a short devotion, and engage in conversation. It's informal and fun and always uplifting to be with women who care about others. Please join us!

Births



*John Francis Cartwright,
son of Daniel and Anna (Czerniawski)
Cartwright, was born March 21, 2011.
Grandparents are
Ray and Cindy Cartwright.*

*Johnathan David Miles,
son of Matt and Lisa (Auge) Miles,
was born on March 28; 2011. "DJ" has a big
sister named Kenzie. Grandparents are
Janice Auge and Dave Auge.*



*We pray God's richest blessings upon
these children and their families.*

Baptism

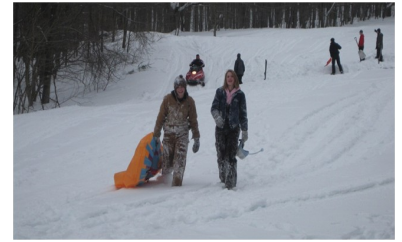
*Aiden James Keefer,
son of Joel and Jessica (Ireland) Keefer,
was baptized on March 27, 2011.
Aiden is the grandson of Jerry and Pam Ireland
and the great grandson of Margaret Ireland.*

*Thank you for agreeing
to walk beside this family
as we raise Aiden in the Christian faith.*



Youth Update

The Youth Group took advantage of all the great wintry weather to have lots of fun in the snow during February. The 3rd Annual Sledding Party at Edwards Hill saw more than 20 youth and a few adults take a run down the hill.



As part of the DCYM Winter event, several car loads traveled to Little Valley UMC and Holiday Valley for tubing. Not only did the youth have fun and hear a great message from Pastor Joe, the adults shared great fellowship time waiting to



head up the tow line!

Please pray for the teens and their leaders in April as they plan for Easter morning's early service and breakfast on the 24th. This opportunity to lead worship is special every year, and you won't want to miss this one because several special surprises are planned!

BAND OF BROTHERS

It has been a long, hard, snowy winter and spring is in the air. I know that as the weather gets better, it will be harder to get the men together. I would love to have the guys come to our next meeting on Tuesday, April 12, at 7 p.m. and we can talk this over. Our men's breakfast for April will be on Saturday, April 23, at 8 a.m. I would like to invite anyone who has not been to one of our meetings or breakfasts to come and see what you have been missing. It really is fun!

We would like to do some mission work right here in Panama. If you know of someone who could use our help in any way, contact the office or Pastor Steve. You could also call me at 763-0870. How about the Men of Panama UMC being the hands and feet of JESUS CHRIST for our neighbors?

One more thing...the men's group has been approached by the Worship Team and asked to be in charge of leading the Walk to the Crosses on Saturday, April 23. This is a great part of Holy Week, and if you have never been there, this is your chance to come and be a part of the wonderful service.

There will be a district men's retreat at Camp Findley on Friday, May 6, and Saturday, May 7. I am waiting on further information and will update you as I get it. Please keep these dates open. This is a great opportunity to meet and fellowship with other men in our district. As we move through this Lenten season, I pray that you would draw closer to our LORD AND SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST, and remember...HE did it all for you.

Your Brother in Jesus Christ Our Lord,
Howie Wheeler

Recipe from the Parish Nurse

Chicken Soup
(from Jody's kitchen)

- 2 large cans of chicken, drained
- 1/2 bag of Oreida diced potatoes with peppers and onions
- 1/2 small bag of frozen corn
- 1/2 small bag of frozen green beans
- 2 jars of low fat chicken gravy

Mix all ingredients; place in slow cooker for 4-5 hours on low...enjoy!

You can add different vegetables according to your family's likes!



Vacation Bible School: Shake it Up Café

July 10 – July 14, 2011

6:00 – 8:30 pm



A wonderful opportunity for ministry and outreach is coming again this summer! Vacation Bible School is a week full of joy and energy, and we'd like you to be a part of the fun! Please pray about where you would like to be during the Vacation Bible School week and give Stacy a call and let her know (782-2461). Many hands make light work and lots of fun memories! (ANY age: youth – adults are welcome!)

Our first meeting is Tuesday, April 5, at 7 p.m. Even if you're not sure where you want to help, come to the meeting and join in the fun! - Thanks!