

Laity Notes

Chuck Hall

May 11, 2003 – Number 6

HEALING...LEGACY

Each of us will respond in our own way to the shock we experienced last Sunday. In our own manner, each of us will have to find a way to digest this shock and to renew our efforts to revitalize our church. We will each travel that path a bit differently. At the same time, we experienced this past Sunday's shock as a congregation, so in some way we will respond as a congregation. While we are individuals, we are also linked to each other as a congregation. Let us permit each other our individual reactions; let us permit each other the time to heal in our own fashion. In our healing, let us be reminded of how valuable we are to each other as a congregation. We come to this house to worship God, and we come to this house together.

My own reflection this past week has in large part revolved around the words healing and legacy. When asking myself the question, "What will Pastor Gerald's legacy to our church be?" my mind has repeatedly returned to the same place. When Pastor Gerald arrived at our church two years ago, he encountered a congregation that for the most part was not very active. We had, for a combination of reasons, slipped into a slumber of sorts. Two years later, as Pastor Gerald prepares to leave our church for another, we are an active congregation. What emerged last year from an initial encounter between Pastor Gerald and Sue White, in rather short order grew into a question of whether or not we should merge with University UMC. Debate, discussion, and disagreement about that question brought our congregation face to face with the simple but difficult question: Are we going to survive as a small church? While traveling that journey, we woke from our slumber. Pastor Gerald deserves full credit for initiating this process from our side of the fence. We should be grateful for, and Pastor Gerald should be deservedly proud of, this special legacy to our church.

I have a sister who for twenty-five years has been married to a Methodist minister, and from time to time she has reminded me that a minister's wife does not always receive her just due. Karen has left her own legacy. For the past two years, she has been a valued and valuable member of our Sunday school class, where she has made important contributions to our weekly discussions. Her election this year to the presidency of the United Methodist Women in our church is testimony to what she has meant to her peers. She has consistently and quietly done those many small tasks that often go unnoticed but which contribute so much. She has been a presence in our congregation. Karen has left her own legacy.

In addition, we have the legacy of Pastor Gerald and Karen together. It has been more than a decade since we have had a pastor whose spouse was an active member of our congregation. Our last minister's spouse was also a minister, and while he was preaching to us, she was preaching to others. Before that, our minister's spouse was a musician, and while she was preaching to us, he was playing music for others. And before that, our minister was a bachelor, and while he was preaching to us, his cat was napping. So we have good reason to appreciate not only the separate legacies of Pastor Gerald and Karen, but also their legacy to our congregation as a couple.

We wish them well along the way to their new calling. God speed!

CHURCH DINNERS

On Wednesday the 14th we will have our next monthly evening dinner between five and seven. Everyone is encouraged to come and eat together and hopefully to bring along a friend. There will be a \$5 charge for this meal. This is part of a series of Wednesday evening meals designed in large part to attract visitors to our church.

On Sunday the 18th we will have our monthly potluck lunch after church services. There is no charge for this meal, but donations will be appreciated. This is part of a series of Sunday luncheons designed to give us the opportunity to learn more about each other as a congregation.

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Please email me at cjhall_45@yahoo.com or leave a telephone message at 404-1894.