

## A Look Ahead

- February 16: Gateway Regional UMW Breakfast, 9:30 a.m.
- February 19: UMW Meeting—Mission Study, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
- February 25: Ash Wednesday Services  
6:30-8:00 a.m. - Morning Come & Go  
7:00 p.m. - Evening Services
- March 1-22: UMW Butter Braid Sales
- March 4, 11, 18, 25, & April 1: Lenten Lunches, 12:00-1:00 p.m.

Articles to be included in the February 25 *Spire* are due in the Church Office by Wednesday, February 18. You may also e-mail them to [spire@fumcstcharles.org](mailto:spire@fumcstcharles.org). Please put the word *Spire* in the subject line.

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## Give and Take of Lent

By Reverend Robin Roderick

**I**ntentionality. Introspection. Discernment. New Beginnings. The Lenten season requires us to reflect on our personal and corporate life deeply, opening ourselves

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A Look Ahead

more fully to the guiding of the Holy Spirit; to enter into life fully as one who is prepared to die. The prophet Amos calls out to us, "Return to the Lord and live!" The ashes imposed upon us remind us that we are finite beings, with only so much time to live that life God offers in its abundance.

The music becomes more somber as we enter into this time of preparation and repentance, the *Gloria* is absent until Easter Morning. The preaching deals with "Give and Take" as we address sins and habits we need to give up and the positive side of what to take up in their place. As a church we are invited to keep a "Holy Lent" as we seek a deeper meaning to discipleship and life—realizing there should be no difference for us!

I invite you to fully participate in our services. Can you make a commitment to be in worship each and every Sunday during Lent? Will you make the effort to come out for communion,

imposition of ashes, and silent prayer in the sanctuary Ash Wednesday morning (6:30-8 a.m., Come and go) or for a special service to enter the Lenten season that night at 7 p.m.? Will you pause and consider what you need to give up or take up? Will you pause and consider what we need, as the body of Christ to give up or take up on our journey toward faithfulness? May we all observe a Holy Lent.

# 2009 First United Methodist Goals

The Church Council began the planning process for 2009 with a planning retreat in November. At that meeting council and staff worked together to identify our goals.

Foremost in the minds of those participating in the session was to make sure that our goals for 2009 and beyond are consistent with our mission: *"For the love of God, by the power of the Holy Spirit, we Gather people to Christ, Grow in Christ, and Go for Christ."*

At the January Church Council meeting the following goals were approved:

- 1) We envision ourselves as a community on fire for Christ which leads to growth in all areas of our ministry. Specific goals are to:
  - Increase average attendance in current Christian Education over 2008 year end by 20
  - Increase average worship attendance over 2008 year end by 30
  - Increase participation in other small group /classes by 100

(2) As a church choosing to be embedded in a particular community we will over the next 3 years focus our ministry and membership on a 12 block radius of our church.

Specific goals are to increase members from this geographical area by 50 and establish two ministries particular to the needs of this specific area.

(3) As a church that must grow not only in activities but in spiritual depth, with an understanding that we are first and foremost spiritual leaders, we will create over the next three years an emphasis on increased spiritual depth of individuals and all leaders.

4) As a people who not only learn the faith but live it:

- 100% of our ministries\* will be involved in a minimum of one hands-on mission activity.
- Increase hands-on mission opportunities at each of our 6 vital ministries sites in 2009.

\*Ministries include small groups, Sunday School Classes and leadership teams (Worship, Evangelism, Education, Missions, Finance and Board of Trustees)

## Upcoming UMW Events

### Gateway Regional UMW Prayer Breakfast

The United Methodist Women will be hosting the Gateway Regional UMW Prayer Breakfast at FUMC on Monday, February 16, 2009.

Registration and breakfast is at 9:30 and the meeting begins at 10:15 a.m. The program is entitled *From Fear to Faith and Action* and will be presented by Rachel Bachenberg, the Missouri Conference Mission Coordinator for Social Action. A \$5.00 donation is requested for the breakfast.

### United Methodist Women - Unit Meeting

The next UMW Unit Meeting - Mission Study is Thursday, February 19, 2009, from 9:00 - 2:00 p.m. The study, led by Pam Church, is entitled *Giving Our Hearts Away: Native American Survival*. Ms. Church is the Vice President of the Gateway Regional District UMW. This is an all-church study to include men, women, church members, and people from the community. Coffee and rolls will be

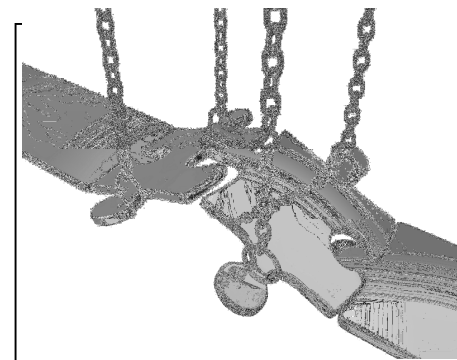
served in the morning and lunch will be served at noon. In the event of snow, the meeting will be held on February 26, 2009.



## Lenten Lunches

The Lenten Lunches begin on Wednesday, March 4 and continue each Wednesday through April 1, 2009, from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. There will not be a Lenten Lunch on Ash Wednesday or during Holy Week.

Come for a simple lunch, a short worship, a time to ponder the season, and opportunity for fellowship with others. A free-will offering is requested for the lunch and the proceeds will be donated to Bread for the World.



## STAYING connected



### Sale of Butter Braids

The United Methodist Women will begin selling Butter Braids on Sunday, March 1, and will continue through Sunday, March 22, 2009. Orders can also be made in the Church Office during the week. The cost of the butter braids will be \$9.00, which is payable when the orders are delivered. Delivery of the frozen Butter Braids will be in the church Atrium on Saturday, April 4, 2009, from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m.

*Our deepest sympathies are extended to the families of those who have died recently.*

- \* Elnora Mastin, mother of Ruth (Harold) Overstreet, died on Feb. 5, 2009.
- \* Grace Vipond, sister-in-law of Paul Vipond, died on Feb. 6, 2009.
- \* Mary Garven, mother of Paul (Lisa) Garven and grandmother of Tyler and Chris Garven, died February 6, 2009.
- \* Richard Miller, brother of Karen (Richard) Bahr and uncle of Julie (Matthew) Harrer, died Feb. 8, 2009.

## Lent Fun Facts



The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 25, 2009. Below are some interesting facts about Lent and its associated liturgical elements, courtesy of the Worship Team:

- Lent is 40 days long. The number forty has long had symbolic importance in faith. Moses spent 40 years in the wilderness, the Jews wandered for 40 years searching for the Promised Land and Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness to prepare for his ministry. Sundays are not counted in the 40 days, as Sunday is always a day of joyful celebration of the Resurrection.
- The liturgical color for Lent is purple. This calls us to remember both the pain and suffering leading up to the crucifixion of Jesus as well as His royalty.
- The word Lent comes from the Anglo-Saxon word for spring.
- The ashes we will receive on Ash Wednesday are gathered as the palms from the previous year's celebration of Palm Sunday are burned. We wear them to remind us of our mortality (ashes to ashes, dust to dust) and to symbolize our penitence, like the ashes and sackcloth of the Old Testament.