

Vista de la Montana United Methodist Church

Reaching our community with Open hearts, Open minds, Open Doors



Reverend Monte J. Baker
Senior Pastor

had grace in his gait. There was a glide to his weaving toward our awaiting vehicle until he got just up to the front of it. He tripped and almost fell! The fact that he was able to balance the drinks on the tray was absolutely heroic. And the fact that he did not fall all the way to the ground was a triumph over the laws of gravity. When he stumbled over to the car, momentarily undone by what had happened, he said, "Some idiot put stones out here."

The second event happened outside a big box home improvement store on a Friday around noon. Friday is my day off; the day to get chores done. There was a hot dog stand in one of the entry bays of the store. Two young men were sitting on one of the benches looking kind of green. There was another young man holding a cell phone and he was talking to his boss. He said to his boss, "Well, I cooked them just like you told me, but I have two guys who are saying they have been throwing up since an hour after they ate the 'dogs'." Actually, I had intended to purchase a couple of those "dogs" for my lunch, but that report and the septic look on the faces of the two former customers modified my lunch menu that day.

There must come a time in our lives when we need to not

make excuses for ourselves and take ownership for what we do or fail to do. This brings us to some suggested resolutions made not at the beginning of the year but in the middle of the year.

- *No more excuses related to what didn't get accomplished.* We will try to do the impossible, but will settle in on what is possible and let it go.
- *No more apologizing that we do not live up to other people's expectation.* We will heed their advice and will appreciate their constructive criticism, but, at the end of the day, the assessment of what was accomplished will be based on the vision created by our value system.
- *No more using the excuse that we were blocked from doing what we had agreed to do.* We will own what we do, and will take responsibility for correcting the problems we have created ourselves.
- *Finally, there will be a moratorium on blaming the past, our parents, or the plots that have been set against us.* We cannot change what has been, but we have much control over what will be.

Continued on page 2

There is a great deal one can learn by watching and listening if there is patience and awareness. I remember two events that provided an important life truth. The first was a visit to a fast food restaurant; one of those retro-drive-ins where you pull up to a spot under an overhang and push a button to order and then a car-hop roller skates to your car with your food. On this particular summer evening, the car-hop was a young man of considerable skating prowess. He carried a tray with an iced coffee and a frozen strawberry drink. He also carried off the image of Olympic gold medalist Evan Lysacek. He did a pirouette en route to our car. He



Dinner For Six

It's that time again!!

Please read the following carefully as there are some sign-up changes.

If you want to participate in the Spring 2011 Dinner For Six please let us know. In the past we have automatically included anyone who did not tell us NOT to include them. This has resulted in 3 to 5 couples asking to be removed from the list AFTER the lists were made up and sent out. This really messes up the system.

We will send out an RSVP for everyone who we have an email address for. We will attempt to call those who don't have email.

PLEASE decide on your participation before the groups are formed. It is very important that we hear from you so that everyone who wishes will be included.

If you wish to participate please call for email:

Nedra Thomason - 869-4425
nedrathomason@comcast.net
 OR

Sandy Schwartz 818-9792
sandyschwartz@wbhsi.net

For general information regarding Dinner for Six go to:
www.vistaumc.com/socialopportunities/

(Note to our new members: click www.vistaumc.com/socialopportunities/ for information on this great program.)



Cooperating Together so that we may become:

People of God

- Who proclaim the Kingdom of God as the starting place of ministry
- Who commit our lives to Jesus Christ as author of our salvation
- Who are called to help others to know what Christ has taught us
- Who intentionally look to the future expecting to do great things by the power of the Holy Spirit at work within us
- Who expect the best and highest of ourselves and our ministries as a response to God's grace

People of the Bible

- Who, through the words of Scripture, experience the God of the Bible who leads us to wholeness, justice and freedom
- For whom Holy Scripture is normative and central, our fundamental and decisive authority for faith and practice
- Who intentionally study Holy Scripture, listening with the ear of faith to the word of God

People called a Family

- Who believe that family takes many forms and includes all people of every age and station and race
- Who welcome the least, the lost, and the lonely
- Who nurture one another by teaching and example to the fullness of humanity that we see in Jesus Christ

People called United Methodist

- Who strive for unity in essentials, liberty in nonessentials, charity in all things
- Who practice open hearts, open minds, open doors

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Pastor's letter continued from page 1

Sometimes, the loneliest place to stand is face to face with ourselves. Our faith continues to remind us that we are sons and daughters of God, and our Christianity will always call us to the future. My seminary theology professor, Harvey Potthoff, reflected on seeing God as the "Wholeness-Reality." Dr. Potthoff believed that seeing God in this way "is to know the worth of being alive as a person. It is to discover a firm basis for self-acceptance and self-affirmation. To accept the gift of life in this light is to celebrate the gift of one's own uniqueness as a human being. It is to worship the God of life."

The time has come to live like we worship the God of life.

MJB

A Word from Your Council

While looking ahead towards a new year at Vista, I've been reflecting on what a blessed celebration of Christmas we enjoyed. As always, the Christmas Eve services, beginning with the family service followed by the traditional candlelight service, and ending with communion at midnight, were beautiful and moving. Throughout the season we were reminded of the peace and love brought to us by Jesus.

Another celebration of the Christmas season stands out in my mind: the Walk to Bethlehem which attracted nearly 600 people. This was perhaps the greatest gift that we have given to the communities around us. The expressions of gratitude from so many who attended were a testimony to the inspiration that the experience provided.

The Walk to Bethlehem could not have happened without the efforts put forth by the 150 or so church members who volunteered their time and talents. It was wonderful to see so many work together to stage this event, but, more importantly, to see the joy and satisfaction that the volunteers gained from it.

The same satisfaction was felt by those who collaborated on Scrooge: A Christmas Carol. They spent untold hours adapting the script and rehearsing their roles and songs. The result was a wonderful, polished performance that was enjoyed by a packed house. And, again, those involved in the production gained as much pleasure as they gave.

As we prepare for the changes and challenges that we will face in 2011, it is perhaps more important than ever that we come together as members of our Christian family at Vista. The strength and vitality of Vista is the responsibility of each one of us. Through individual giving of our time and talents as well as our prayers, Vista will continue to be a source of strength for all of us and a vital presence within the greater community.

It has been proven time after time that the more one is involved in any group or activity, the more that person gains from it. That was certainly evident in the Walk to Bethlehem. I suggest that each one of us make a commitment to increase our involvement in Vista this year. Then, enjoy the blessings that follow!

Elsie Hathaway
Council Chair

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This is my last Echoes edition. Please be kind to Barbara Sherman and get your articles & ads in on time, the 15th of the month. M Yohe



United Methodist Men

Vista de la Montana's Men's Group for this last quarter of the year was in full-bore operation. We hope everyone had a Merry Christmas.

Our Vista Men's Members have really had their best foot forward in recent days. Highway clean-up detail went well and 11 members showed up. We had blue bags all along the highway and a good time picking up the junk. This time I don't recall Anyone picking up a dollar bill. This is not too uncommon by the way. Imagine someone driving along and throwing a dollar out the car window; probably a reflection of true value, etc. By the way, I'll bet great-grandpa never threw a dollar out the carriage window.

Your men's group provides a monthly one-hour break from the faster, better scene. We slow down (every one but Duane and Dillis) and we have a nice breakfast then we retreat to Vista for fellowship and an erstwhile business meeting. We do our best to help around the community in little ways. Our group is open to all Vista men. Come in with an outgoing countenance. I'm sure you will have a good time in the company of like-minded men.

Hope you make this year the best. Slow down as much as you can. Pay attention to the moment. Enjoy the company of those around you. Happy New Year every one!

Jim Bless
President, UMM

ATTENTION PARENTS!

Save Sunday

January 16th

4:30 p.m.

Education Center

All parents of

Vista children

and youth are invited

to participate in a

focus group discussion

to explore the direction that

you would like

Vista's ministry to proceed.

We'll share a light supper

with separate activities

and food for your children.

Please call the church

office at 825-1985.

Let us know the number of

adults and children

planning to attend.



Vista Book Club January 2011

We are reading Same Kind of Different as Me by Ron Hall and Denver Moore with Lynn Vincent. It is on the UMW reading list this year.

From the Amazon website: "A dangerous, homeless drifter who grew up picking cotton in virtual slavery. An upscale art dealer accustomed to the world of Armani and Chanel. A gutsy woman with a stubborn dream. A story so incredible no novelist would dare dream it.

It begins outside a burning plantation hut in Louisiana . . . and an East Texas honky-tonk . . . and, without a doubt, in the heart of God. It unfolds in a Hollywood hacienda . . . an upscale New York gallery . . . a downtown dumpster . . . a Texas ranch. Gritty with pain and betrayal and brutality, this true story also shines with an unexpected, life-changing love."

Meeting

Please note new date

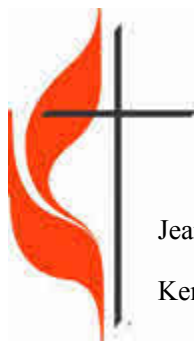
Jan. 20, 2011

5:30 p.m.

Education Building

All adults are welcome

Contact: Kay Gragg 544-2545



Birthdays and Anniversaries

January Birthdays

Jeanette Watkins	1/1
Ken Stevenson	1/2
Linda Freel	1/5
Dennis Higgins	1/7
Jim Jose	1/7
Ursula E.J. Price	1/8
Carole Whitney	1/9
Larry Farnum	1/10
Pat Stoddard	1/11
Barbara Johnson	1/13
Dolores Nistler	1/14
Janice Evans	1/15
Belinda Essenpreis	1/16
Joyce Holm	1/17
Joyce Holman	1/17
Mary Cary	1/18
Charlene Dedrick	1/18
Howard Kaste	1/19
Lori Campbell	1/20
Karen Diana Gurian	1/20
Pat Reykdal	1/20
Duane Waldo	1/22
Sharon Kaste	1/23
Nancy Yob	1/23
Bailey Baker	1/25
Keith Tracy	1/25
Ken Wolfe	1/25
Jim Tayburn	1/30

January Anniversaries

John & Carolyn Edris	1/1
Don Smith & Pat Reykdal	1/1
Marlin & Sally Bolar	1/5
Craig & Pam Holder	1/6
Tom & LaVerne Tucker	1/9
Larry & Jeanne Farnum	1/12
Jim & Judi Nibbelink	1/19
Tom & Susan Tjossem	1/20
Greg & Carol Lindahl	1/20
Rev. Matt & Cathy Colby	1/28
Tex & Carole Whitney	1/31



February Anniversaries

Don & Marcia Isch	2/1
Jim & Ginny Jackson	2/1
Robert & Barbara Johnson	2/13
Charlotte & Rod Stevenson	2/14
Marion & Ron Ramsey	2/14
Loretta & Tom Hayden	2/18
Marilyn & Marvin Rutkowski	2/25
Jimmie & Jim Simon	2/28
Rita & David Bahos	2/28

February Birthdays

Allred, Kathy	2/1
D'Agostino, Don	2/3
Bellah, Mary	2/4
Conklin, Jim	2/4
Morse, Betty	2/4
Schaefer, Jackie	2/6
Thomas, Joanne	2/6
Behrendt, Margaret	2/7
Campbell, Alan	2/7
Colby, Andrew	2/9
Mullin, Dave	2/10
Davis, Arlo	2/11
Baker, Marion	2/12
Reeves, Bobbie	2/12
Sanders, Teresa	2/13
Schick, Hal	2/13
Hudson, Jan	2/15
Landrum, Mattie	2/15
Null, Jerry	2/15
Sharp, Becky	2/15
Bless, Jim	2/16
Radtke, Paula	2/17
Esch, Joan	2/17
Hilgendorf, Martha	2/22
Baker, Asheley	2/23
Springer, Evonne	2/24
Null, Kay	2/25
Pankonin, Thelma	2/26
Ward, Dillis	2/26
Roberts, Candy	2/27
Holder, Craig	2/28



Mission Outreach Ministry

What a gift we have just celebrated, the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ. The next gift that is ours is a brand new year to enjoy God's presence in our lives. We do not know what this year will bring, whether there will be days for us in sunshine or in darkness. We do have the promise that God will be with us and walk beside us as His Holy Spirit dwells in us. All we can do is say "Thank You Lord" and accept this precious gift. We look forward to where He will lead us in Mission Ministry at Vista in 2011.

Fuente de Vida, Agua Prieta, Mexico

God is working in a mighty way in the life of our Sister Church. In November they finished the first part of their long-range building goal, the completion of their fellowship hall. For now it also serves as their sanctuary space. It can hold 250 and is full each Sunday. It was finished just in time for the District-wide youth rally. Over 160 young people attended and it was a great experience for all who were there. Many of the youth dedicated their lives to Christ. Their District Superintendent and their new Bishop, Eduardo Carrillo, were present for a dedication and blessing ceremony. It was a standing-room-only crowd. Their ultimate goal is to complete as soon as possible the upper floor Sanctuary which will accommodate 450 as well as space for a Sunday School. It seems like a miracle to see all of this accomplished from the plan our own Duane Waldo gave to Pastor Diego.

Their Christmas events have included a number of visits to the homes of their congregation, singing carols and retelling of the Christmas message. At one home they gathered outside in the cold, around a log fire sharing a bowl of Posole, a traditional hot stew-like meal. They visited four Senior Care Homes, distributing small personal-care gifts, singing Christmas music and reading of the Christmas Story to the shut-ins. Also, their youth musical Praise Group has been much in demand. They have been invited to a number of other Christian churches to perform and share their testimonies.

Catalina Community Services

The number of families being helped by Catalina Community Services continues to grow. CCS is very grateful for the generosity of Vista congregants. We continue to collect your food items/donations on the first Sunday of each month. One item has changed. Previously, CCS could take each dollar donation and get \$9.00 worth of food at the Agency Market. That source has closed and the food is now given to CCS free of charge. Now every dollar that you give buys \$3.00 of food at the Community Food Bank downtown and allows CCS to focus on specific needs. The latest volunteer opportunities include: driver for home meal delivery, meal preparation during the holidays and afterwards as well as helping sort clothing donations in the afternoon. As you clean your closets in this new year, remember Vista de la Montana. We are collecting your extra COATS, JACKETS, WRAPS and SHAWLS. These should be nearly new or gently used, without holes or stains, for the needy in our community. We need items for all ages and sizes. Look for the box labeled COATS in the Narthex. Let's overflow the box with our warmth and love!

THANK YOU VISTA!

The Christmas party for the boys at Catalina Mountain School was a big success and much appreciated by them. Thanks to the generous contributions of money by the Vista members, we were able to fill their gift bags as well as provide a Christmas sheet cake, ice cream cups and soda.



Tucson Hospitality Inn

Many, many thanks to Sandy Kaper and John Crown who helped me decorate the Inn for Christmas. We put up an eight-foot artificial tree and decorated it, decorated the fireplace mantle with greens and stockings for each room, put up a large nativity scene and decorated the arch in the living room with garlands and ornaments. We also decorated the outside with a giant wreath which welcomed guests as they drove into the parking lot, luminaries in the courtyard and a lighted garland around the double entrance doors. It looked festive and comforting for those who had to spend the holidays away from family and friends.

The Inn continues to need supplies. It provides a continental breakfast to the guests and can always use items for that. Please see the brochure in the Narthex for a more complete list of needs. It always helps to have gift cards in any amount from any grocery store so Lou can purchase exactly what is needed. You can send the cards directly to the Tucson Hospitality Inn, 2539 E. Edison Street, Tucson, AZ 85716, or give them to me when you see me at church. I will deliver them. For more information, call me, Kay Gragg, at 544-2545. The church has been very generous in the past. Lou Tompkins and I appreciate your involvement and heart for this mission.

Creative Hands

We want to give you an opportunity to share your hands with this great group of ladies. We meet at 9:00 a.m. on Friday mornings and would welcome your participation. We did not receive any corduroy fabric this past month in 3-yard minimum amounts. If you are near any store that sells yardage, please stop in and pick up some corduroy fabric. Also needed is soft flannel in a plaid or child-design. This can be used for making warm pajamas for the children in our community who would appreciate this special gift. Please call Jan Bohe at 825-9725.

Mission Outreach Ministry Meeting

We urge you to join us for our next Mission Outreach Meeting on Wednesday, January 5 at 1:00 p.m. Michael McDonald, head of Habitat for Humanity in the Tucson area will be our special speaker. This will be an interesting and informative talk. We want to show our support for the great work they do. We look forward to a great turn-out.

I will close by wishing you a very happy New Year 2011.

Dee Berman



The **2011 Human Relations Day** poster and leaflet offering envelope highlights the *Redemption Kids* Ministries in Oklahoma which offers a safe and loving environment for the children of incarcerated persons. *Redemption Kids* Ministries provide guidance, protection, and care to at-risk children and youth in hopes of breaking the cycle that leads toward prison.

The **Human Relations Day** offering provides support for other programs such as: the Youth Offender Rehabilitation Programs, Community Developers, and United Methodist Voluntary Services.

Be generous on Human Relations Day! Sunday Jan 16, 2011

WALK TO BETHLEHEM 2010

Many of you were blessed to be able to take part in Vista's family Christmas journey, Walk to Bethlehem. For the 600 attendees over the evenings of Dec. 9 and 10, the experience was overwhelmingly spiritually uplifting and joyous, as visitors felt what it might have been like the night Christ was born. Complete with live animals, the set design and costumed actors thrust visitors back in time to walk among village shops, meet and mingle with shepherds, a prophet, Roman soldiers and town residents. There was an opportunity beforehand to have photos made, sing carols, provide children with crafts, and mingle with each other over hot cider. The evening concluded with a visit to the Nativity, and freshly prepared refreshments.

A special thanks goes out to the more than 150 people in the congregation and community who contributed – cookie bakers, sandwich makers, kitchen workers, servers, set designers, builders, set-up and clean-up crews, parking lot attendants, publicity person, costume people, photographers and assistants, musicians, actors, registration people, welcome and hospitality center people, childcare workers and other production people. And of course, our wonderful experience could not have been possible if not for the leadership of our director Matt Colby, assistants Gerry Alberts and Barbara Johnson, publicity leader Mary Cox (who was responsible for newspaper ads, posters, and news media), and set decorators and builders extraordinaire, Sue Hedrick and Duane Waldo.

We had nothing but praise from our visitors, including the reporter from Channel 13 who deemed our Walk the best he had ever seen. What a blessing for our church and community to come together to provide and take part in this most valuable gift!



WALK TO BETHLEHEM PROPS

Did you pick up the props you loaned for Walk? We have a number of things left and will be packing them away in the next few days.

Did you happen to pick up the wrong 3 foot plant? There is one at the church but it's not the one Lue Satterfield loaned for Walk to Bethlehem. She has a varigated one and the one remaining is not and has "toothed" leaves. If you have it please give her a call at 825-4709. She's also missing a small light-colored rug.

Again, thanks to all who loaned props or helped in any way. That includes nearly half the church members!





United Methodist
Women

January 2011

Mary Martha Circle

January 6 9:30 AM
Hostess - Sandy Schwartz
62367 E. Star Crest Dr.
818-9792
Please call if attending
Program -Barbara Johnson

Susanna Wesley

January 18 - 9:00 AM
Vista - Bldg. A
Program - Dee Berman

WITH APPRECIATION

The title Pastor Emeritus is an honorary one. The warm response given me after the Council resolution was read at the All Church Conference was a real thrill! It meant a great deal to me and to Carolyn who has always been a vital part of my pastoral ministry.

The opportunity to serve Vista at a pivotal time was very special to me. Moving from the smaller worship space into the new worship center, the excitement of the congregation, and the leadership and service on the part of so many men and women were highlights of my pastoral career! It was an outstanding privilege to serve at that time. I thank the Vista Council for this honor!

Jon Leonard

**HONOR
BESTOWED**



Upon The recommendation of the Vista Council, the honorary title of Pastor Emeritus was bestowed upon the Reverend Dr. Jonathan Leonard by Pastor Monte Baker at the December 6th All Church Conference.

Pastor Leonard served as Senior Pastor of Vista de la Montana from 2001 through June 2004. During that period, he helped to shepherd Vista through a very difficult time for our congregation. Having restored stability within our church, he then saw us through a strong period of growth. Under Pastor Leonard's leadership, our currant worship center was built and the congregation doubled in size.

Since his retirement, he has continued as an active and supportive presence at Vista. We congratulate him on receiving this honor and look forward to his and Carolyn's continued involvement with Vista.

Elsie Hathaway
Chair, Vista Council



Thank you, Ken Wolfe for the hard work. The cross looks wonderful!

As I sit down and write this thank you, sixty four women are feeling loved and validated this Christmas because, sixty dear Vista's members joined me in filling "Sister Stockings" and "Love Stockings". Sister Stockings went to single mothers at Tucson Metropolitan Ministries or Wesley Community Center, and Love Stockings went to our homebound or shut in members.

At this time of year when everyone has to much to do, you all eagerly chose to take stockings to fill. To Susannah Wesley Circle and Barbara Johnson's 4th and 5th grade Sunday School class a special thank you for leading the way in this special project. And to everyone who came up to me and asked for stockings, what an inspiration you were by asking to take one my more project this Advent Season. I pray that all of you were blessed with a Christmas of peace, love and joy. For you have been a blessing to so many women.

Judi Nibbelink

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEAM NEWS

What a hustling, bustling, busy Advent season we have had! The children picked up their Advent bags and then embarked upon a wonderful journey. The SonQuest group just finished up their study of Christmas Around the World, and the Live BIG class enjoyed their unit on A child Is Born. During this time, many also participated in the Walk to Bethlehem, the radio play "Scrooge: A Christmas Carol", and the family worship service on Christmas Eve.

The children also showed an understanding of the true meaning of this wonderful season of giving. The Live BIG class worked with the UMW to make "Mom Stockings" – stockings filled with small gifts to mothers in need. Just as children from needy families receive gifts from Toys for Tots, these are gifts for the mothers. This was especially meaningful to the children as they thought about their own mothers and how much they love and appreciate them. They also continued collect

ing money from their own class and the SonQuest class (even the Youth Group got into the act) in their "church bank" for their Jesus gift, presented on Dec. 26. The class voted to have the money go to the pediatric center at University Medical Center to help those children who are in the hospital, especially during this season. They also made "Snow People" out of baby socks to be given to the younger children.

As January brings a new season of promise and hope, the SonQuest class will embark upon their new Rotation Unit looking at Acceptance, while the Live BIG class will focus upon prayer with their unit We Can Talk to God. Keep our children in your prayers as they continue their journey on God's path!

Blessings,
Barbara Johnson

THANK YOU for your Gifts to the Library



Walter Davidson :hymn books, sacred music, reference books
Arlene Lehto: many, many resource books of compassion and care
Dee Berman: "cleaning out her library"
Carol Witt: excellent reference books
Karen Tryon: the new Strong's Concordance!
Jim Bless: Dewey the Library Cat" ☺ and other goodies
Kim Lauger: Kinkade novels
Children's Ministry: extras
Dottie Lou Colby: A4some of Pastor Bill's books

THEY'RE WONDERFUL !!!

But we are almost out of room – we cannot accept any more.
If you have one or two books that you really want to share, please see Joy.
PLEASE buy our duplicates -- \$1.00 each – funds for library supplies

The Librarian and Staff ☺
Joy Oram, Becki Daniels, Sally Innes, Jan Creason

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**Open hearts, Open minds, Open doors
The people of the
United Methodist Church**

<http://www.vistaumc.com>

We invite you to visit our website.

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Vista Fine Arts 2011

February 20, 2011

Home of the TJI Ellington Big Band

Voted #1 Community Band in the USA

Wynton Marsalis and Jazz at Lincoln Center



March 6, 2011

Scott Michael Bennett is an inspirational young singer whose sincere goal is to dramatically inspire people of all ages to reach for a higher life with God as its center and other people as its focus. He began to sing at the age of 15 and then worked hard to earn his Associates Degree in the Liberal Arts with music emphasis at the age of 18. He was a member of the acclaimed and Grammy Award winning Phoenix Symphony Chorale and Arizona State University's debut of its Men's Chorus.

