

PASTOR'S REPORT June 27, 2018

Just before he faced the cross, Jesus gave his disciples a new commandment: "...love one another, even as I have loved you..." (John 13:34-5)

Our mission statement here at Pine Bluffs UMC: Steadfastly sharing God's unending love and redeeming grace through open minds, open hearts, and open doors with our community and the world.

A very busy June that has gone by so quickly, so filled with duties, responsibilities, and many opportunities to learn, grow, and share God's love. I'm looking forward to being home and returning to a regular summer schedule!

Attending the 2018 Joint Annual Conference at the Eccles Conference Center June 7-10 in Ogden, Utah was a challenge but in the end, worthwhile. We are not used to traveling so far and the eight-hour ride each way to Ogden was difficult. One of the scriptures used for a worship service was: "I want their hearts to be encouraged and knit together by strong ties of love." (Paul to the church in Colossae) This turned out to be the only joint Conference of the Rocky Mountain and Yellowstone Conferences. "On June 9, 2018, history was made as United Methodists who gathered in Ogden, Utah, as members of the Yellowstone and Rocky Mountain Annual Conferences overwhelmingly voted to become one: The Mountain Sky Conference. This vote culminated many years of discussions, task forces, and committees. It included the voices of hundreds of United Methodists throughout our area who gave input to help refine the Plan of Union. Truly, it is a living document as we seek to live out our common purpose: *The MountainSky Conference of the UMC will live in God's grace and abundance as we lead a re-energized peaceful and compassionate movement to claim the life-changing love of Jesus Christ for ALL people.*" (Excerpt from a letter from Bishop Karen Oliveto)

Then quickly thereafter, our mission team left for Espanola, New Mexico for a mission trip to McCurdy Ministries Community Center, June 17-23<sup>rd</sup>. The team was composed of Carmel Graves, Mady Graves, Alexis De Paulitte, and Pastor Lesley. Another long drive to get to where we could serve—this time seven hours, leaving both Sunday and Saturday at 7 am and arriving at

our destination at 5pm. We volunteered to help with the McCurdy Vacation Bible School. We scattered to serve where we were needed—Carmela with the 4-6 year-olds, Mady and Alexis to put up multiple bulletin boards throughout the school, and I helped as the Bible Story Teller and with crafts, games and songs. Temperatures were in the 95-100 degrees and we were so thankful to be inside! It was a rewarding experience, filled with unexpected blessings and with the sure knowledge that we were serving as Jesus' hands and feet in this part of the world.

Dates for your calendar for July are: July 8<sup>th</sup>, the Butlers from the midwest will be gifting us with their music during the worship service and I will be taking a vacation from July 23<sup>rd</sup> to August 2<sup>nd</sup>. My sister and nephew, Bill, and family will be visiting Colorado from Lebanon, PA. For me it will be a time of family, rest, and renewal!  
May you be blessed during this summer with time for relaxation, renewal, and special moments with family and our Lord!

Respectfully submitted, Pastor Lesley