



A Monthly News Publication of Red Oak United Methodist Church | www.redoakumcstockbridge.org
"Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation" – Mark 16:15



Pastor Fert Richardson

A Word from the Pastor

Why Small Groups?

John Wesley started the Methodist movement from Small Groups. It is a proven way to provide:

- Multiple points of entry into the church.
- An effective form of evangelism.
- A way to truly care for people.
- Accelerate the spiritual growth of individuals.
- Properly shift the work of the church to the people.

We are at present beginning to train leaders for small group leadership at Red Oak. In the future there will be a small group available for each member.

Dale Galloway in his book, "The Small Group Book, *The Practical Guide for Nurturing Christians and Building Churches*," in Chapter 1, titled "Why Small Group?" Galloway states the following at the beginning of Chapter 1.

When Jesus walked this earth two thousand years ago, he was usually surrounded by faithful followers, as well as the curious and those who hoped to see -- or experience -- a miracle. Those faithful followers were referred to as "disciples." Before Jesus left this earth to return to heaven he told his followers to "go and make disciples" (see Matt. 28:18-20). In other words, the disciples were to reproduce - disciples making disciples. This command of Jesus is referred to as the Great Commission.

There is nothing more exciting than to be in a great evangelistic crusade where multitudes are "saved" or "born again" as they open their hearts and lives to the lordship of Jesus Christ. This, of course, is the first part of the Great Commission. We can't become disciples without first being converts. But the church's work doesn't end there. In fact, it is where the work truly begins.

At the point when we are converted, we are as "saved" as we will ever be; if we were to drop dead at that moment, we would go straight to heaven. But we would not have had time to become disciples. A disciple is a "disciplined one," someone who has learned from a designated teacher by example, instruction, and experience over a period of time. As a result of discipleship, the life of the student is changed.

And this is what needs to happen in the church. Most churches today are filled with broken, bruised, inexperienced converts but few healthy, dedicated disciples. That's why it is hard to find enough competent, qualified, and willing leaders to begin and maintain needed ministries. Converts are simply not yet qualified to lead. Only a disciple who has had "on-the-job" training with a mature and experienced disciple is qualified - and confident enough - to lead others.

Special Interest Articles:

- [Word from the Pastor](#)
- [Black History Tribute](#)
- [Wellness News](#)
- [Monthly Bible Quiz](#)

My goal is to train dedicated disciples to reproduce disciples who can disciple others.

Black History Month Tribute

The Rev. Dr. Joseph E. Lowery



Born in Huntsville, Alabama on October 6, 1921, the Reverend Doctor Joseph E. Lowery has been one of the nation's strongest and most consistent advocates for racial justice, human rights, and world peace. When Ebony Magazine named him one of the nation's 15 greatest black preachers, they described him as the consummate voice of biblical social relevancy, a focused prophetic voice, speaking truth to power.

As a United Methodist minister, Lowery served as pastor of Central church for 18 years, then as pastor of Cascade UMC. He was elected a delegate to three General Conferences and presided over an annual conference as acting bishop in 1966. His prophetic voice was instrumental in moving the church toward the goal of inclusiveness. Before coming to Atlanta, he served as pastor of United Methodist churches in Mobile and Birmingham, Ala.

Dr. Lowery's life of advocacy has spanned more than 50 years, beginning when he headed the Alabama Civic Affairs Association, which spearheaded the movement to desegregate buses and other public accommodations, and the hiring of black police officers. In 1957, he joined with Martin Luther King, Jr., Ralph David Abernathy, and other southern ministers to organize the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Dr. Lowery served as vice president until 1967, chairman of the Board until 1977, and as president and CEO until 1997.

In 1997, the NAACP presented Dr. Lowery with one of their highest awards and called him the dean of the civil rights movement. A number of other organizations have honored him for his effective leadership in the movement to empower African Americans as equal shareholders in American life, including the National Conference of Black Mayors; Boston University, with its Martin Luther King, Jr. Award; Wayne University with its initial Walter Reuther Humanitarian Award; and the Progressive National Baptist Convention.

Lowery gave the benediction and shared the inaugural platform with President Obama. In an interview after it was announced he would do the benediction, Lowery said he "never imagined" he would live to see an African-American elected president. On that day he prayed, "Help us to make choices on the side of love, not hate, on the side of inclusion, not exclusion, tolerance, not intolerance

On August 12, 2009, Rev. Joseph Lowery, 88, was one of 16 people who received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest honor for a civilian.

Rev. Lowery is married to Evelyn Gibson Lowery, who is the founder and chair or SCLC Women

Lenten Focus



Simplicity: A Lenten Path

By Ann Hagmann

Lent is derived from the Anglo Saxon word *lenctem*, meaning spring. The word reflects the lengthening of days as we move from winter towards summer. Lent is the 40 days (excluding Sundays) between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday. Traditionally it has been a time of fasting commemorative of Jesus' 40 days of fasting in the wilderness following his baptism. Lent also recalls the 40 days that Elijah and Moses both spent with God, as well as the 40 years that Israel spent wandering in the desert. Lent prepares the way for the greatest observance of the year, the death and resurrection of Jesus. Following Easter comes Pentecost or the coming of the Holy Spirit, and Kingdom tide, the post-Pentecost season that stretches across the summer until the celebration of Christ the King around Thanksgiving time. Lent is the perfect season of the year for solitude and self-reflection. As we spiritually journey into the desert, Lent is a time to reexamine our boundary lines and get realigned, set in right relationship with God and the world around us. This year I would like to suggest a Lenten path to travel as the days grow longer and Easter approaches. That path is one of simplicity. Simplicity, contrary to the suggestion of its name, is not a particularly simple or easy way. Life is very complex and the walk of simplicity is complicated and demanding, but the rewards are a hundredfold. Simplicity is not about poverty, or a renunciation of possessions, or a set of dos or don'ts. Rather simplicity is a spiritual discipline that

reorients one's life by deliberately organizing it for a purpose. It is spiritual because simplicity deals intimately with the beliefs and views that lend shape and order to our lives. Simplicity is a discipline because we have to work at it and practice it in order to apply it in our lives.

Adhering our life to a focused center reduces the fracturedness of our lives. Our priorities are aligned to the focus of our lives, and the way we live out our simplicity in terms of our time, energy, and money becomes a reflection of our inner beliefs. Each of our paths will be unique to our situations.

On the most basic level, simplicity means being honest and sincere with ourselves about our faith and what really matters most to us. Simplicity requires at least two things: being willing to be vulnerable by embracing openness to God and to life, and believing it is God's path to abundant life for us.

Simplicity touches every area of our lives as we open more facets of ourselves to God and the central value that directs our lives. Pick the area that draws you the most and begin your journey there, trusting in God's grace and guidance. Often times it is helpful to use a resource to focus our devotional efforts.

May the 40 days of Lent enlighten you as you allow Christ's light to shine more brightly in your lives and lead you into a path of simplicity and abundant life.

Stewardship Corner

Money Is Everything!

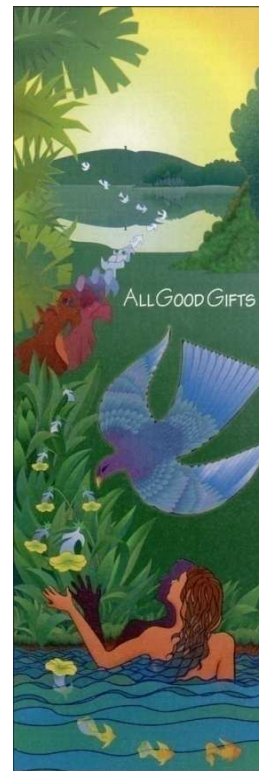


“Money plays a major role in our personalities... “The way money exerts these enormous influences in our lives is determined less by how much of it we have than by the philosophy we have adopted regarding money. “That personal philosophy determines how we think and behave regarding money, and tends to fall into one of four general patterns:

1. Some people insist that money is not important. ‘Money does not buy happiness,’ they often say.
2. Other people insist that money is the most important thing in life. ‘Money is not the key to happiness,’ they say, ‘but if you have enough of it, you can have a key made!’
3. Still other people say that life is like two lanes of traffic. ‘Money is important in the material lane but not in the spiritual lane,’ they seem to say. ‘To connect with God, you move to the spiritual lane—you pray. To be in touch with the real world, you move to the material lane—you run in the rat race, trying to make a buck.’
4. Jesus held a fourth view. Jesus said that money is everything—not in the usual sense of that term but in the spiritual sense. Jesus did not divide reality into two parts—the material and the spiritual. He said that the way we think and behave with regard to money impacts us both physically and spiritually. Its use and misuse affect our relationship with God and the quality of our life. ‘For Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also,’ Jesus said (Luke 12:34), illustrating his point with a story about a rich man who tried to achieve a quality life by building more barns to hold his wealth. The punch line says, ‘So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God’ (Luke 12:21).“ [Money Is/Isn’t Everything, Herb Miller]

Which of those four views describes your philosophy of money?

Copyright © 1999 by Herb Miller Stewardship Nuggets





Healthy Eating – Let's Get Started

Tips for a Healthy Diet and Better Nutrition

By Linda Leftridge

Healthy eating is not about strict nutrition philosophies, staying unrealistically thin, or depriving yourself of the foods you love. Rather, it's about feeling great, having more energy, and keeping yourself as healthy as possible – all which can be achieved by learning some nutrition basics and incorporating them in a way that works for you.

Choose the types of foods that improve your health and avoid the types of foods that raise your risk for such illnesses as heart disease, cancer, and diabetes. Expand your range of healthy choices to include a wide variety of delicious foods. Here are some tips for how to choose foods that improve your health and avoid foods that raise your risk for illnesses while creating a diet plan that works for you.

- Eat enough calories but not too many. Maintain a balance between your calorie intake and calorie expenditure—that is, don't eat more food than your body uses. The average recommended daily allowance is 2,000 calories, but this depends on your age, sex, height, weight, and physical activity.
- Eat a wide variety of foods. Healthy eating is an opportunity to expand your range of choices by trying foods—especially vegetables, whole grains, or fruits—that you don't normally eat.
- Keep portions moderate, especially high-calorie foods. In recent years serving sizes have ballooned, particularly in restaurants. Choose a starter instead of an entrée, split a dish with a friend, and don't order supersized anything.

- Eat plenty of fruits, vegetables, grains, and legumes—foods high in complex carbohydrates, fiber, vitamins, and minerals, low in fat, and free of cholesterol. Try to get fresh, local produce

- Drink more water. Our bodies are about 75% water. It is a vital part of a healthy diet. Water helps flush our systems, especially the kidneys and bladder, of waste products and toxins. A majority of Americans go through life dehydrated.

- Limit sugary foods, salt, and refined-grain products. Sugar is added to a vast array of foods. In a year, just one daily 12-ounce can of soda (160 calories) can increase your weight by 16 pounds.

- Don't be the food police. You can enjoy your favorite sweets and fried foods in moderation, as long as they are an occasional part of your overall healthy diet.

- Get moving. A healthy diet improves your energy and feelings of well-being while reducing your risk of many diseases. Adding regular physical activity and exercise will make any healthy eating plan work even better.

- One step at a time. Establishing new food habits is much easier if you focus on and take action on one food group or food fact at a time.

It is important that you make your health care a priority. One way to accomplish this is by maintaining healthy eating habits. Do it because you want to feel better, have more energy, improve your health and prevent or treat health problems.

Resources - Helpguide.org and WebMD.

Monthly Bible Quiz

February 2010

1. The meek will inherit:
 - a. the mountains
 - b. the garden
 - c. the earth
 - d. peace
2. Jesus gave his 'sermon' starting in Matthew 5 from which geographical feature?
 - a. on a river in a boat
 - b. on a mountain
 - c. On a plain
 - d. in a valley
3. Lebanon was at one time known for its:
 - a. Forests
 - b. Deserts
 - c. Pools
 - d. Wells
4. Matthew speaks of famines, pestilences, and these in various places:
 - a. Flooding
 - b. Hail
 - c. thunderstorms
 - d. earthquakes
5. In the beginning, the earth was without form and covered with:
 - a. Water
 - b. Fire
 - c. Debris
 - d. Forest
6. Although raised in Nazareth, Jesus was born in this city near Jerusalem:
 - a. Bethel
 - b. Philadelphia
 - c. Tyre
 - d. Bethlehem
7. To escape the Egyptians, the Hebrews crossed this body of water:
 - a. the Nile River
 - b. the Red Sea
 - c. the Jordan River
 - d. the Mediterranean Sea
8. David was king in this city before he reigned in Jerusalem:
 - a. Hinnom
 - b. Bethel
 - c. Hebron
 - d. Bethlehem
9. This Church in Asia was mentioned in Revelation and means 'brotherly love':
 - a. Agape
 - b. Magog
 - c. Philadelphia
 - d. Jerusalem
10. From which Philistine city was Goliath?
 - a. Ekron
 - b. Damascus
 - c. Ashkelon
 - d. Gath

Answers to January Quiz:

1. B - Act 1:1-10
2. A - Act 2:1-4
3. C - Act 4:4, 4:32-37
4. C - Act 6:7-15, 7:54:80
5. D - Act 8:1-3, 9:1-19
6. B - Act 9:19-25
7. C - Act 10:9-16, 11:4-10
8. B - Act 12:1-11
9. A - Act 20:7-12

Answer to February's Quiz in next month issue

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We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.redoakumcstockbridge.org



Red OAK UMC Mission Statement

The mission of Red Oak UMC is to be a community church that strengthens the community in the light of Christ by our prayers, our presence, service, and our witness in order to make disciples for Christ.

Weekly Service Schedule

Sunday

Worship Service ... 8:00 am
Breakfast9:30 am
Sunday School9:45 am
Worship Service...11:00 am
Open Gym 6:30 pm

Monday

Intercessory
Prayer 5:00 am

Tuesday

Open Gym 6:30 pm

Wednesday

Family Dinner Fellowship /
Bible Study 6:30 pm

Thursday

Noon Day Bible
Study 12:00 pm

Upcoming Lectionary Studies

February 14, 2010

Exodus 34:29-35,
Psalm 99 (UMH 819)
2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2
Luke 9:28-36 (37-43)

February 17, 2010

Ash Wednesday

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17
Psalm 51:1-17 (UMH 785)
2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

February 21, 2010

Deuteronomy 26:1-11
Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16 (UMH 810)
Romans 10:8b-13, Luke 4:1-13

February 28, 2010

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18
Psalm 27 (UMH 758)
Philippians 3:17-4:1, Luke 13:31-35

Communications Ministry



Happy Birthday Blessings!



<i>Aaron Pinkney</i>	<i>February 2</i>
<i>Jennifer Eason</i>	<i>February 4</i>
<i>Zoe Bright</i>	<i>February 4</i>
<i>Robert Nunn</i>	<i>February 7</i>
<i>Warren McNeill</i>	<i>February 8</i>
<i>Maiya Bright</i>	<i>February 11</i>
<i>Shirley Mason</i>	<i>February 19</i>
<i>Isaiah Misher</i>	<i>February 19</i>
<i>Rosalyn Hutchison</i>	<i>February 20</i>
<i>Louis Gourdine</i>	<i>February 25</i>
<i>Camryn Ford</i>	<i>February 26</i>
<i>Lloyd Crawford</i>	<i>February 27</i>

Community News

Please come out and join our Upward Basketball and Cheerleading on any Saturday, through March 27th - for what is sure to put a spark in your day. (Visit our church website for game times at www.redoakumcstockbridge.org)

Crown Financial Ministires is offering "Your Money Map Workshop" - a proven 7 step guide to true financial freedom. The workshop will be held on March 5th and 6th. Deadline for payment (\$20) is February 21st. Visit our church website for details at www.redoakumcstockbridge.org

Would you like to submit an Article or Announcement to 'The Epistle'?

If so, please send it to the Communications Ministry, **NO LATER than the 4th Sunday of each month**, 400 words or less. No personal phone numbers are allowed. Include e-mail information or church phone extensions only.

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