



The STEEPLE

Succasunna United Methodist Church



February 2012

Ash Wednesday – February 22

Ash Wednesday, the start of Lent, is a time to reflect on who we are – not who we pretend to be, but who we really are. It’s a time to acknowledge our need for God. There’s only one place to begin: in worship. This year, we offer three opportunities to mark the start of this holy season.

Noon & 4:00pm – VERY brief times of prayers, scripture & ashes

7:30pm – Ash Wednesday Worship



Lenten Soup Suppers—Spiritual Gifts

We continue our tradition of Lenten Soup Suppers beginning on Wednesday, February 29. This year's topic for study and discussion for the five-week series is Spiritual Gifts. We'll be using the book *Understanding Spiritual Gifts* by Kay Arthur. "Here you will uncover what spiritual gifts are, where they come from, who has them, and how they work within the church. As you study you will have a new vision for how you can use your God-given gifts to bring hope to your home, your church, and a hurting world." Based on last year's success, this year we'll again be including children and youth in the study/discussion portion of the evening in age-appropriate formats.

The Soup Suppers will also be held on March 7, 14, 21, and 28. Please pre-register by Sunday, February 19 by contacting Doug or Maribel Wilson, Education co-chairs (mwilson235@optonline.net) or Pastor Sharon (scyarger@optonline.net), so we know about how many books to purchase. Cost for the book is \$5.00. And please sign up on the sheet in Fellowship Hall to bring soup, bread, salad, children's meal, or dessert.

91 Main Street
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www.sumcnj.org

Church Staff

Joseph P. Monahan, Pastor

Sharon Yarger, Associate
Pastor for Faith Formation

Audrey Schultz, Choir Director

Charlie Schubiger, Sexton

Sandy Richenaker, Secretary

Church Information

Office Hours: 9am-1pm
Tuesday-Friday

Phone: 973/584-7349

Email: office@sumcnj.org

Sunday Worship Schedule

9 am Contemporary Worship

11 am Traditional Worship

10 am Sunday School

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A Word from the Pastor...

“Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”

– Paul, Galatians 6:2, NRSV

Last summer, we took the girls to Disney World. I know Disney drives some people crazy. But Steph and I love it. It's a break from reality, a place where everything seems perfect, everyone is happy, and all the staff are nice to you. I know it's an illusion (and an expensive one at that), but I gladly play along.

I realized during my last visit that the way the Mouse manages his house can teach us something about how to create a church where people will want to keep coming back:

Details matter – We met another New Jersey couple at our hotel on the Disney property. They had just returned from Universal Orlando, a non-Disney park. They were disappointed. “It just wasn't the same as being here,” Dad said. He went on to detail the brutal heat and lack of shade. But that wasn't the biggest complaint. “You know, Disney goes to such great lengths to create an atmosphere,” he said. “Every place you go has its own background music, but you never see where it's coming from. My eight-year-old noticed the difference. ‘Dad,’ he said, ‘they didn't even try to hide the speakers!’” Small details make a huge difference in how people perceive a church, your home, a business, or a theme park. What details will help to create a memorable experience, especially for our visitors?

Use the power of story – In the Animal Kingdom Park, there is a ride called “Kilimanjaro Safaris.” It's not much more than a trip through a zoo in an open-topped truck, with animals in very naturalistic habitats with no fences (this scared Zoe a little until I pointed out places where you could see the moats separating us from the lions – *details*, remember?) Now, most zoos would have been content to have the driver go through the attraction and say, “look to your left and you'll see African Elephants. African Elephants grow to 13 feet tall and can weigh more than 13,000 pounds...” Zzzzz. But in the Disney version, you are on a mission: tracking and capturing poachers who have been spotted in the area. Disney knows that stories communicate in ways that facts never can. Our brains are wired for story. Next time you want to pitch an idea for ministry (or business!) to skeptics, tell them a good story.

Anticipate people's needs – I was looking for a restroom in the hotel lobby. I saw an alcove that looked like it might be the right place. As I stepped into the hallway, there was a sign in front of me that read, “Restrooms on the other side of the lobby near the Café.” In many venues, I would have had to walk the whole way down the corridor to learn that the restroom was not there, and then turn around and go in search of it. Not in Disney. How are we doing at anticipating our visitors' needs and questions? How is our signage?

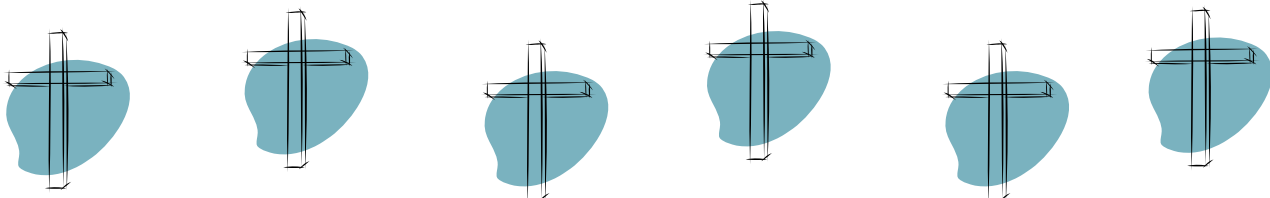
Have more people than you think you need & train them well – On the waterfront at the hotel there is a dock where you can rent boats. The (former?) industrial engineer in me was surprised to see that they had four people working there. I tried to picture a scenario where they got so busy they'd really need the four people, and I couldn't. They could have managed easily with three. This is common throughout the parks – everywhere a more people than what was strictly necessary. Why? To reduce wait times and to make sure

A Word from the Pastor continued...

someone has time to greet you warmly, listen to your concerns, or answer your questions. And *everyone* is trained to answer basic questions and interact in helpful ways with guests. When we plan an event that brings people from the community into *our* house, let's make sure we have plenty of well-trained people to provide hospitality.

Until you find someone who can solve the problem, you own the problem – This is a core principle of good customer service, regardless of the industry. When someone has a question, concern, or need and you can't help them, the answer is never, "I don't know," "Sorry, can't help you with that," or "Please go to the next window." Instead, you take them by the hand and tell them, "I'm sorry I can't answer that, but I *will* take you to someone who can." And then you don't leave until you are certain that this person can, in fact, help. It is a basic demonstration of care and concern – a testimony to your belief that the face in front of you matters as a human being and not as a dollar sign. It's so simple, and yet so little practiced in America today. For the church, this should be a no-brainer. You walk with someone as long as it takes to help them get the help/comfort/answers/prayers they need.

Do you have other lessons from Mickey that apply to the church? I'd love to hear them: pastorjoe@sumcnj.org. Blessings,

Sermon Series for Lent: Living in the Shadow of the Cross

The cross is more than an ornament around your neck or a tattoo on your arm. The cross is a way of life, a constant reminder of the sacrificial life and death of Jesus. Join us this Lent for a series about life in the shadow of the cross. Sundays at 9:00am & 11:00am.

Feb 26 – Turning It Around

Mar 4 – Resetting our Priorities

Mar 11 – Holding on to Integrity

Mar 18 – The Remedy for Sin

Mar 25 – Facing Hardship

Shop Rite, Acme & Sussex Meat Packing Gift Cards

GIFT CARD UPDATE: Gift Cards will be sold by Bruce Hopper in Fellowship Hall after the 9:00 worship service. Please note that we will no longer carry Acme cards once our current inventory runs out. In addition, we will no longer carry an inventory of gift cards for Sussex Meat, however, if you would like to purchase Sussex Meat gift cards, I will assist you with this. Please speak with me directly. Shop Rite Gift Cards will remain and continue to be a tremendous success for our church. You can purchase denominations of \$10, \$20, \$25, \$50 and \$100. I will still be very much involved in this activity, as will Vi Haggerty. You can speak to any one of us regarding gift cards. If you have not tried to use this program as of yet, please consider it. To all my wonderful current "customers", thank you for using this program and please continue supporting this program. It is absolutely worthwhile for our church. If you have any questions, please call me or speak to me at church. Thank you, Joanne Page (973)584-6650

Being Christian: Exploring Where You, God, and Life Connect

The next Men's study will begin on Saturday, January 28. The content will be drawn from a book titled Being Christian by Steve Arterburn. This inviting book addresses the questions and concerns of newer believers and will inspire those looking for a refresher on what it means to be Christian. Wherever the readers are in their faith journey, they'll find their questions addressed with biblical, theologically sound answers written in an engaging and conversational style. Relevant Bible passages are used throughout the book to enhance the reader's understanding of how Scripture informs its answers. Among the subjects discussed and deeply explored are God, the Bible, the church, sin, what it means to be saved by grace, how to discern God's voice, how to deal with guilt, and much more.

Stephen Arterburn is the founder and chairman of New Life Ministries--the nation's largest faith-based broadcast, counseling, and treatment ministry--and is the host of the nationally syndicated "New Life Live!" daily radio program heard on over 180 radio stations nationwide. Steve is also the founder of the Women of Faith conferences, attended by over 3 million women.

Come and join us for some fellowship and conversation on Saturdays at 7:30 am.

Prayer Shawl Ministry



The women of the Prayer Shawl Ministry meet every Monday at 7pm and are always looking for new members. If you would like to learn how to knit or crochet you are welcome to join us. If you know someone who would appreciate receiving a shawl please contact Pastor Joe or Nancy Schubiger (973/252-3770) and we will

make sure that they get one! If you are unable to join us on Monday evenings but would like to knit or crochet from your own home that is also appreciated. Let us know and we will be happy to provide with you with the pattern that we use. We also can provide knitting needles and yarn, so please don't hesitate to join us for some creative fellowship.

\$5 Parking Lot Campaign

Your continued financial support of \$5 a week is needed to help service the loan payments for our newly paved parking lot. We know money is tight for most people, and if a weekly gift is a burden,

than \$5 every two weeks or every month would be most appreciated. Of course, if you're able to give more, or would like to make a larger gift of \$100, \$500 or \$1,000, this project will be paid for that much more quickly.

MISSIONS FOOD PANTRY



The items are brought to Roxbury Social Services and distributed to those in need. Each month we will be collecting specific items. The box for these items is located in back of the sanctuary and in the entrance way to our church school. The list for the New Year is

Jan	canned goods
Feb	boxed goods
March	soups /microwave meals
April	canned meats
May	breakfast foods
June	juice boxes
July	condiments
Aug	soaps
Sept	canned veggies
Oct	paper goods
Nov	Thanksgiving foods
Dec	Christmas foods

Caroling



The visit and carol singing by the group of men and women from our church before Christmas was great. Ed was especially thankful for their kindness and thoughtfulness. The cookies were appreciated also.

God bless,
Ed & Iva Sweeney

Adult Sunday School Class—10 AM Sunday

Come Join Us - All are welcome! Great discussions, good coffee and cake and a wonderful group of people. See how God can work in your life and how God has touched others. Come find out for yourself what makes this group so special. For more information contact Deb 973 -784-4564 day/973 442-4642 night.

Acolyte Schedule—11 AM Worship		
Feb 5	Sarah Waldron	Robbie Waldron
Feb 12	Samantha Humphries	Amanda Melchers
Feb 19	Mirian Yarger	Joseph Hills
Feb 26	Kara Wilson	Melissa Priester

2012 Church Council Meeting Dates

- Tuesday, February 7—7:00 pm Youth Room
- Tuesday, May 1 —7:00 pm Youth Room
- Tuesday, June 12 —7:00 pm Youth Room
- Tuesday, October 9 —7:00 pm Youth Room
- Sunday, December 16 —12 noon Youth Room

Another Chance to be Generous! – SUMC is again collecting gently used coats and jackets for those in need. Helping others enables us to show our gratefulness to God for all God gives us. Please leave your item in the Whitefield room, behind the sanctuary. Thanks from all who will receive – Bonnie Hinkle (973/927-3486) and the Missions Committee



THE FLU SEASON has not gained much press this year. It looks like just an average year, but the severity of the flu has not diminished. We all need to do everything we can prevent the flu and other upper respiratory infections through the winter season. There are some very simple rules to follow:

- Get your flu shot. They are still readily available at your local pharmacy or doctor.
- Practice good hygiene-wash your hands before touching your face, mouth or eating (you don't know if the person that touched that doorknob just before you washed theirs)
- Take your kids to: www.scrubclub.org/home.aspx for fun games and stories promoting a better understanding of why hand washing is important and proper technique.

If you are sick cover your cough, dispose of tissues properly, wash your hands frequently and if you are very sick, stay home. For further information on how to keep your family well this winter check out <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/preventing.htm>

Faith Formation Matters



The Jane K. Hopper Memorial Library

Looking for a good book? Browse the shelves of the Jane K. Hopper Memorial Library located in the Epworth Room behind the sanctuary. The books cover a variety of subjects including Bible Study, Prayer, Parenting, Life in Bible Times, and Spiritual Inspiration. One section is primarily geared to children and youth. Instructions for checking out books can be found on the wall next to the library shelves. Grow your faith - read a book!

Mitten Tree - Thank You!!

Thank you to all who contributed to our Mitten Tree. On Sunday, January 15 in our 11:00 worship service we blessed the over 80 pairs of gloves and mittens donated for the children of Head Start. Thank you to the 3rd/4th grade Sunday School Class and their teachers, Beth Cerqueira and Peggy Groh for coordinating this project. And thanks to Michelle Priester for delivering the items to her students at Head Start. Well done, faithful servants!

TABS

Tuesday **Adult Bible Study** invites you to join us! We meet the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month at noon in Fellowship Hall. Bring your Bible and a brown-bag lunch - we provide coffee and a thought-provoking study and lively discussion of the scriptures. Bring a friend! We're currently studying the Old Testament book of Genesis.

February 14 - Genesis 25 & 26

February 28 - Genesis 27 & 28

BASIC

The February meeting of Brothers And Sisters In Christ will take place on Friday, February 24. We're planning a bowling night. Details to come. All 6th, 7th, and 8th graders are welcome to join us. See you then! Bring a friend!

Sunday Schoolers at the Faith Kitchen

SUMC Sunday Schoolers will be serving lunch to needy persons at the Faith Kitchen in Dover on Saturday February 25. This is a wonderful opportunity for families to be in mission together. Children in grades 1 - 5 and their parents (and/or grandparents) are welcome to participate. We'll also need Sunday School families to provide the food we'll take with us to the Faith Kitchen. Please contact Sharon Yarger, Associate Pastor for Faith Formation, to volunteer to serve or provide food. Thank you!