

## Parson to Person by Pastor Dave

*“What is the essence of life? To serve others and to do good.” – Aristotle*

I have been in ministry for nearly 35 years, and so far as I remember, I have never written an article like the one you are reading now. I have been blessed with wonderful churches, vibrant leaders, inspiring superiors, and the loving support of every congregation that has had me as its pastor. None of that has changed, but the world has been shifting, drifting ever farther away from some of the values that we church folk usually take for granted. And it is growing more and more apparent that we need to support, model, and actually *teach* one of the foundational aspects of our society before it withers away and becomes the casualty of outrageous self-absorption. I am talking about the social construct known as *volunteerism*.

Here's a fine definition: *Volunteerism is the act of contributing free labor to conduct community service or to support a non-profit organization. It is the principle of donating time and energy towards a greater cause. Volunteers help change the lives of those in their community as a social responsibility rather than receiving a financial reward.* In other words, volunteer activities are, literally, *pro bono* – that is, for the public good.

You are reading this in the context of our Trinity UMC newsletter, so we are talking here rather specifically – volunteerism within the walls and/or ministries of our church, modeling the selfless, contributory ways of the saints and of Christ Jesus. And while many volunteer positions in society at

*(Continued on page 2)*

**Our Purpose**  
**To ENGAGE people in joyful relationships with God and with each other, so we will GROW in Christ-like compassion, and SHARE the blessings of the Holy Spirit.**

### Inside this issue:

UWF Notes	3
December Finance Report	5
Birthdays & Anniversaries	6
Prayer List	7
Worship in February	8

(Continued from page 1)

large can take volumes of time, energy, and financial resources, the tasks we need volunteers to accomplish around here are usually much more manageable.

Since I am writing anyway, let me give you some easy examples. We have an ongoing need for money counters following the 10:30 service. The legal requirements for teams of two are wearing our poor Finance folks out! But seriously, volunteerism doesn't get much less demanding than this – fifteen or twenty minutes, sitting down, with pleasant company and a clear, compact goal. You have been counting money all your life, balancing check-books and budgets... not a new skill set for any of us!

Maybe you don't want to miss the social time after church, and want something more interactive. Perfect! Perhaps you could help coordinate and/or serve the goodies one Sunday per month? We always need volunteers to donate edibles, to plate them up attractively, and to tidy up after the fact. If you are staying to visit anyway, why not visit from the service side of the food and drink? I am sure if mobility or fatigue are your current reality, we can even create seated and stationary service positions.

A third and final volunteerism that is interactive and essential in a church is to be an usher. These fine folks are the face of our hospitality, greeting and assisting and passing plates and such. Some measure of mobility is required, but it's not exactly a decathlon! And again, it isn't a fifty-two week per year commitment – we are *very good* around here at flexible scheduling for services offered.

I could talk about this at length, and maybe I will try my hand at an inspirational sermon on this subject someday. But in the meantime, please enjoy the words of some excellent people who discovered the joys of helping out as a *gift*, not only to their churches and charities, but to themselves.

*“Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on Earth.”* **Muhammad Ali**

*“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.”*

**Mahatma Gandhi**

*“Our generation has the ability and the responsibility to make our ever-more connected world a more hopeful, stable and peaceful place.”* **Natalie Portman**

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

### UWF Notes

*“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, what are you doing for others?”*

**Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

*“The purpose of life is not to be happy, but to matter– to be productive, to be useful, to have it make some difference that you have lived at all.”* **Leo Rosten**

*“The smallest act of kindness is worth more than the grandest intention.”* **Oscar Wilde**

AND FINALLY...

*“Volunteers don’t get paid, not because they’re worthless, but because they’re priceless.”* **Sherry Anderson**

At their first meeting of the New Year, twelve members of the UWF gathered at Hadley Hall to discuss and debate the budget and elect new officers. Neva Wacker presided, Lucille Wanee gave the prayers and meditation, and Marian Ware prepared the refreshments.

Marian reported that she'd spoken to Rich about Linda who had suffered a series of strokes and after examinations at UCSF the source had been discovered and she had a treatment plan that was working well.

After the minutes were read and accepted by consensus, Treasurer Coleen presented the final report for 2023. The



A list of the 15 charitable groups sent money included the church, regular amounts to local groups and a special amount for the disastrous fire of the Lahaina, Maui, UMC.

Then followed a long discussion and debate of groups that should be included or eliminated. Two national groups were eliminated and four local ones added.

A pledge service had been planned but questions rose about the necessity of pledging but after some discussion, it was decided pledging would continue and pledgers could turn in checks while

(Continued on page 4)

*(Continued from page 3)*

others could write notes promising amounts they would donate.

The new officers for 2024 are: President Katya Yarosovich; VP/Sunshine chairperson. Neva Wacker; Secretary Lily Loughlin; Treasurer Lucille Wanee.

Neva announced the Sewing Group would meet Jan.25th while Carol Riley announced fabric for 150 dish towels has been ordered for the new round of embroidering, the most popular and profitable continuous Bazaar project.

Lucille's ending prayer and the announcement of the next meeting on February 21 closed the meeting.

Submitted by Lily Laughlin

Trinity United Methodist Church

285 East Fifth Street  
Chico, CA 95928

Phone: 530-343-1497  
Email: chicotrinity@yahoo.com

**ENGAGE**

**GROW**

**SHARE**



## **WORSHIP IN FEBRUARY**

### **Sunday, February 4 The Sixth Sunday of Epiphany**

Epiphany winds down with much healing, as the inner light flows from Jesus into the world. Our text is Mark 1:29-39, and the message will be entitled “Where Ya Been?” Holy Communion will also be enjoyed today.

### **Sunday, February 11 Transfiguration Sunday**

The final Sunday of Epiphany is always dedicated to the Transfiguration, the full revelation of Jesus’ divine inner life to his closest friends. Our text is Mark 9:2-9, and we will hear the sermon “Full Disclosure”. And although we will not celebrate Mardi Gras during worship, expect the music to reflect the joy that comes before Lent.

### **Sunday, February 18 First Sunday in Lent**

Lent begins, as it always does, with the baptism of Jesus and his immediate banishment to the wilderness. Our text is Mark 1:9-15, and the message will be called “Triumph Over Temptation”.

### **Sunday, February 25 Second Sunday in Lent**

This season of Lent establishes itself immediately with our dwelling on its core teachings. Our text is Mark 8:31-38, and the homily will be called “The Least Popular Teaching”. Come find out why...