

Whew!

October 2006

That's my thought as I look at this issue of The Messenger. What a lot of exciting stuff going on! I can't decide which of the many major events in the life of the church should get my attention and my column space this month. There is something very important happening every week:

- **The Senegal Mission Partnership** is being launched October 1. The Mission team is calling us to commit our money and our prayers to helping God's work in this West-African country. We have already been getting more and more excited about building a relationship with the Christians there. I hope and pray you will share our excitement, and buy a share in the partnership.
- **The Time and Talent Survey** for 2007 fell into your lap as you opened your Messenger. That's because leaders for ministry don't just fall into our laps. People become leaders when they hear God's call, and answer it. What has God been calling you to do with your time and your talents? You may be in ministry for God in many places, not just in the church. But there are certainly a lot of ways where your skills could make an enormous difference in helping reach people with God's love through the church. Please take a look at the survey, and prayerfully fill it out, either right now, or in worship on October 8. The Lay Leadership team is just beginning to meet to find leaders for 2007. We'd love it if you can tell us where you most want to serve.
- **Live, Give, Love...Beyond All Expectation!** This is the new Vision Statement of United Methodists in Wisconsin. Come hear more, and meet one of the other pastors of Circuit 9, when Rev. Jim Verkest preaches here on October 15 as part of the Circuit 9 Pulpit Exchange. Or else join me as I go to preach at Wesley UMC that day.
- **A Day for Lifting up Body and Soul!** Two major projects have reached completion at the same time: the organ, which was so senselessly damaged last spring, is now fully restored and ready to lift our hearts to God again. And after a summer of dust, mud and noise, the elevator, a gift made possible by Leonard Pivet, is ready to lift our bodies to every level of our building. Come celebrate both of these on October 22 as we rededicate the organ, dedicate the elevator, and host an Open House.
- **When the Soul is not lifted up....** At the same time, we know that souls often need more help to lift them up. October is Mental Health Awareness Month. In recognition of the most common mental health problem people deal with, our Service of Healing and Wholeness on October 29 will talk about depression. As a part of that service, we will offer laying on of hands and prayers for healing for you or people you love who struggle with depression. Rebecca Morris will also

have resources available to learn more about mental illness, and she will be leading a series of discussion groups on mental health throughout this month.

Aim at any Sunday this month, and you can't miss something important happening through First United Methodist Church this October. I am so excited to be part of it with you!