



## Plans underway for Vacation Bible School

With summer just a couple of months away, Vacation Bible School organizers already have started planning for this annual St. Andrew event.

VBS this year again is scheduled for June. The dates are Monday, June 20, through Friday, June 24, from 5:30 to 8 p.m.

"We're really going to start early to reach out," said **Joe Hamner**, Christian Education chair, adding that the organizing team hopes to attract even more children than last year when nearly 60 children participated.

Flyers and newspaper ads are planned to get the word out to the community.

The theme of this year's VBS is "Surf Shack: Catch the Wave of God's Amazing Love." Participating children will discover how to surf through life with God and others. Activities will include energizing music, interactive Bible fun, crafts, snacks, games and more. There also will be a mission project although that is still to be determined, **Joe** said.

Last year, the mission project was the collection of school supplies for Icthus youth groups in Mexicali and Tecate.

The spiritual emphasis of the Surf Shack program is to explore God's mission for our lives and to learn ways to live out God's amazing love, according to the curriculum guide.

Children will be introduced to Bible stories from the Old Testament and New Testament. They will discover a common water theme that ties all the Bible stories together and emphasizes the power of God's love.

The overall theme verse is from Nehemiah 4:14b: "Remember the Lord is great and awesome." The

verse will remind children that God is amazing, awesome and powerful.

The various activities, including snack time, are designed to follow the Surf Shack theme and to remind students of the biblical messages.

Volunteers are key to the success of VBS. Many St. Andrew members and friends have committed their time, talents and energy to VBS in the past, and it is hoped they will do

so again this year.

People will be needed to teach, make snacks, and help with games, crafts and music. Those who can help in any of those areas are encouraged to attend the planning meetings that will be announced soon.

Everyone also can help by spreading the word about VBS and urging friends and neighbors to bring their children and grandchildren to VBS.



**Rev. Dr. Jack Michael Loo**, center, was the guest speaker and preacher for Faith Renewal Weekend Feb. 6-7 at St. Andrew. With him at dinner on Feb. 6 are, from left, the **Rev. Dr. Bill Johnson, Joyce Johnson, Pastor Mike Wallman, Barbara and Thomas Park and Criss and Ron Kiefer**.

## Event photos delayed by increased submittals

From the editors: St. Andrew members and friends probably have

seen us snapping pictures at various church events, and are wondering what's happened to those photos.

## Creeds & Confessions classes continue

The last two of **Rev. Dr. Bill Johnson's** classes on the "Creeds and Confessions of the Presbyterian Church" are scheduled for 11 a.m. Sunday, April 3, and Sunday, April 10.

The classes began in February, but were not held the last two Sundays in March because of the farewell luncheon for winter residents on March 20 and Easter Sunday, March 27.

Because of a large amount of material submitted to *The Messenger* last month, including a lengthy letter from former missionaries **Tim and Gloria Wheeler**, who our church has supported, we had to hold most pictures. However, we will attempt to use many of them in a photo page in the June *Messenger*.

Also, a reminder that the deadlines for items for *The Messenger* the rest of this year are May 15, July 15, Sept. 15 and Nov. 15.

**“Jesus said to them, “Peace be with you.” Luke 24:36**

These were the words of Jesus to his disciples spoken often at his appearances after his resurrection. I’m sure they needed the peace as he appeared and disappeared several times. But they also needed the reassurance of God’s peace as they embarked on a new adventure post-resurrection! Many challenges would face them as they journeyed into the world to share the good news that Jesus Christ lives and therefore gives life to all who call him Lord.

As we enter a new season and we say goodbye to our winter residents we all need to remember that as we face the challenges of life in Christ wherever we go, His peace goes with us. He said, **“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not let them be afraid”** (John 14:27).

With the election year ramping

## Wheelers send final mission report

We often speak of sustainable development but rarely of sustainable mission. Gloria and I left Honduras last August. Since then we’ve been reflecting on 40 years of mission service, 25 of them as PC(USA) mission coworkers. Two texts have offered us wonderful

## Pastor’s reflections

up, there are many things to get worried about. With the economy as tenuous as it is, it is easy to fall back on our own understanding rather than to trust the Lord and live in peace. With world affairs easily ignited and terrorism on the rise we may want to default into a safety zone rather than venture out into missions. But Jesus has given us a supernatural peace to sustain us on our way. We are not to be afraid but rely on his presence and provision.

Let us commit to sharing the good news of Christ’s salvation with our friends and neighbors. Let us be adventurous as we live out the commands of love and grace with others. Let us not neglect to worship together in Christ’s communities wherever we are, blessing one another with the peace of Christ and encouraging those who have become anxious.

I believe that we have a

core values for mission. Luke 4:18 proclaims: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives  
*(Continued on page 6.)*

wonderful season of victorious living ahead as we live in the peace of Christ. When we all come back together in the fall let’s share the stories of our adventures in serving the Prince of Peace, the Lord of lords and the King of kings! It’s going to be a great season of life in Christ!

The Peace of Christ be with you,  
*Pastor Mike*



Published bimonthly for the congregation and friends of St. Andrew Community Presbyterian Church  
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Deadline: 15th of Jan., March, May, July, Sept. & Nov.

Letters and articles can be e-mailed to dcmahr@msn.com  
the Rev. Dr. Mike Wallman, pastor  
Diane Carter, office manager  
Polly Schiff, choir director  
May LeRoy, pianist  
Karen Luoto, director of bell choirs  
Malinda Becerra, youth director  
Jeff DeBeck, sexton  
Elders on Session:

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**Worship schedule:** worship service and Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.  
**Office hours:** 8 a.m.-4 p.m. T-Th  
Editors: Dennis & Chris Mahr  
Reporters: the congregation  
Mailing staff: Diane Barrie, Diane Carter, Jeff & Annie DeBeck, Sue Gates, Mary Lois Long, Chris Mahr & Beverly Watson



<b>February beginning balance.....</b>	<b>\$24,011</b>
<b>Income .....</b>	<b>\$23,936</b>
<b>Expense .....</b>	<b>\$22,923</b>
<b>February ending balance .....</b>	<b>\$26,619</b>
<b>Deacons February beginning balance.....</b>	<b>\$2,922</b>
<b>Income .....</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Expense.....</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>February ending balance .....</b>	<b>\$2,922</b>

St. Andrew member **Joe Benitez** last month was honored as the recipient of the prestigious Leonard K. Firestone Award of Merit for his outstanding service to the community.

**Joe** received the award at the ABC Recovery Center's 18th Annual Firestone Award Gala, March 4.

Riverside County Board of Supervisors Chairman **John Benoit** issued a proclamation recognizing **Joe** for achievements that were instrumental in his receiving the Firestone award. The proclamation noted that **Joe**:

- A tribal elder of the Cabazon Band of Mission Indians, served as tribal chairman for 24 years.
- As tribal chairman, led his tribe to prosperity, and, working with the California Rural Indian Health Board and the National Indian Health Board, including testifying before Congress, was instrumental in securing increased funding for health care for Native American tribes across the country.
- Served in many organizations and on numerous boards including those for the Native American Land Conservancy, FISH, the 20s-30s (service) Club and the Boys and Girls Clubs of Coachella Valley.
- For more than 40 years has been an active mentor in the recovery community, helping people in recovery live a sober life.
- Served as an elder and deacon at St. Andrew Community Presbyterian Church, and sings in the church choir.
- Has invested in helping the people of the community in all aspects of his life from church to Alcoholics Anonymous, to Native American cultural preservation, to educating local children about tribal culture. Congratulations **Joe!** Everyone at St. Andrew is very proud of you!

Each year a number of St. Andrew members and friends are involved in some way in the Riverside County National Date Festival whether its entering baked goods, quilts and art

Andy's  
Dandies



work for judging or being a part of groups that entertain fair-goers.

This year, several people from St. Andrew were involved in the Arabian Nights Pageant, one of the highlights of the fair.

**Jeff DeBeck** had a part in the pageant as did **Stacie** and **Stephanie Armendariz**.

**Jeff** has performed in past pageants. So have **Stacie** and **Stephanie**, great granddaughters of **Lois Armendariz**.

This is the fourth year of participation for **Stacie**, a seventh grader at Indio Middle School, and **Stephanie**, a fourth grader at Madison Elementary School in Indio.

"It's pretty fun," **Stacie** said. "I like getting to be with all my friends in the show."

**Stephanie** also entertained at the fair with her dance group, the Center Stage Dance Co.

Being in the pageant is a major commitment. Rehearsals started in December and continued every weekend. A week before the fair opened, there were daily rehearsals, which **Stacie** and **Stephanie** went to after school.

Also involved in the pageant were **Lois**, who spent many hours in the sewing room, helping with costumes, and the girls' dad, **Josh Armendariz** who, according to **Stacie**, "helped backstage with everything else."

**Ellen Fordham**, who enjoys traveling, recently spent five weeks in Australia and New Zealand.

Highlights of the time she spent in Australia included seeing some of the unusual animals that exist only on that continent, the wildlife in general, and the Uluru Rock in the outback, the sacred spot for the Aborigine people.

She also enjoyed the helicopter ride around the rock, snorkeling at the Great Barrier Reef and learning

the culture of the Aborigine people, which dates back about 50,000 years.

In New Zealand, **Ellen** saw some spectacular scenery, including glaciers and a mountain range called the Southern Alps. She visited a sheep farm and the Antarctic Center where planes depart to go to Antarctica. She also learned about the history and culture of the Maori people and enjoyed a jet boat ride on one of the boats built in New Zealand specifically for the narrow rivers there.

—by **Chris Mahr**

## Obituaries

**Benjamin "Ben" Beal**, a St. Andrew friend, member **Linda Beal's** father and member **Alan Harrell's** father-in-law, died March 5 at the age of 96.

**Ben** and his wife, **Ethel**, who died in 2012, often had attended St. Andrew.

A World War II veteran, **Ben** trained at Camp Young near Chiriaco Summit. After serving three years in the Army, he returned to the Coachella Valley and married **Ethel**. He managed a 20-acre date, grape and citrus ranch for over 18 years and then worked for the Coachella Valley Water District, retiring in 1982 after 18 years there.

**Ben** enjoyed gardening, going to the Date Festival and taking trips to the Salton Sea with **Linda**.

A memorial service was held March 26 at the North Shore Beach and Yacht Club.

**Michi Chamness**, a former member of St. Andrew, died in late February.

**Michi's** husband, the **Rev. Robert Chamness**, who preceded her in death, was a former associate pastor at St. Andrew.

**Michi** lived at Mirage Inn in Rancho Mirage. About a month before her death, she was diagnosed with an inflamed gall bladder and never fully recovered from surgery, according to her son **H.L. Todd**.

# Prayer Power!

St. Andrew family members in need of prayer for guidance, healing and strength.

**Avice Beetler**  
**Jacquie Bethel**  
**Lola Cizan**  
**Katie DaLuiso**  
**Annie & Jeff DeBeck**  
**Matthew Ellis**  
**Millie Fernquist**  
**Alan Harrell**

**John Hale**  
**Virginia Johnson**  
**Latta family**  
**Joe Nicholson**  
**Ralph Oakley**  
**Louis Reynolds**  
**Melba Scarborough**  
**Cheryl Sevier**  
**John Stout**  
**Bev Watson**

Persons with prayer requests or who would like to become part of the prayer chain ministry should call **Merlyn Hamner**, 398-5713.



## Mystery solved happily

This past year has been a journey filled with deep valleys and mountain peak experiences. This is part of my story.

Sunday morning, Feb. 7, during choir rehearsal, against my own volition I began walking with uncoordinated gait towards **Polly**, the choir director. I was told that I appeared to be in a trance, my body was rigid, eyes glazed, pale. When I was seated, I insisted that I felt fine, was given water to drink. Although I sang the anthem, sat with the congregation during the service, assisted **Pastor Mike** in serving communion by intinction, I was unable to recall anything of the sermon. I remember telling myself to focus several times during the message. Following the service, while others were talking about the inspirational message that had made them laugh and cry, I had absolutely no recollection. I was told that my eyes "looked like the lights were on but no one was home."

When **Thomas** and I arrived home, I took a nap. We decided to play a game of cards to check my cognition. After adding up the score, **Thomas** checked my math. I recognized that my score was higher than it should be but I was unable to see the mistake I made until he pointed it out to me. I seemed fine the rest of the day. I had been encouraged to inform my physician but was reluctant since the symptoms subsided quickly.

Finally, on Tuesday I did contact him; he was concerned enough to order

## Epistles from friends

a brain MRI, blood work, cardiology consult and neurology consult. Of course

each physician ordered more tests and additional blood work. The echocardiogram, the carotid Doppler, the 24-hour heart monitor, the lab work results all came back normal. But all the specialists agreed that I had had a Transient Ischemic Attack or TIA (ministroke).

Then on Sunday, Feb. 28, I had a similar episode during choir rehearsal. Reading the notes just did not make any sense to me. I told **Polly** that I would not be able to sing. I was again told that I was pale, had been moving my lips but not singing. Apparently I seemed cognizant, responding appropriately to questions. Later I was told that my pulse was weak but steady, that I was pale and that if I did not perk up soon 911 would be called. I have no recollection of this either. This time the neurologist ordered an EEG to check my brain waves along with aspirin daily and Lipitor, saying that my cholesterol was "on the high end." The concern was that I was "throwing off blood clots from somewhere."

During this time my prayers consisted of repeating over and over "I trust you Lord. I love you Lord. Help me to be thankful during this time; thankful that I have had a warning before a major stroke." My family, my friends, my church family, my neighbors, my Bible study core group were all praying for me. I was so grateful that I have

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## Birthdays

April 4	Patricia Stout
April 9	Jonah Ortiz
April 10	Lola Cizan
	Annie DeBeck
	Dolores Encinas
April 14	Norman Nilsen
April 16	Gertrude Gray
April 20	Nicholaus Perdue
April 25	Betty Morgin
May 7	Ellie Franson
May 8	Daisy Hale
May 12	Francisco Becerra
	James Speer
May 17	Sabrina Benitez
May 21	Carol Kocherhans
May 22	Lucille Rothfus
May 24	Steven Speer
May 26	Mark Ahrens
	Michelle Thornburgh
May 29	Nathaniel Burke
	Kathleen Collins
May 30	Stephanie Ortiz
May 31	Marrilee Uhls

## Anniversaries

April 26	Malinda & Francisco Becerra
	Jean Lew & Howard Lee
May 7	Christine & Dennis Mahr
May 13	Phyllis & Myrl Nofziger
	Denise & Steve Stiles
May 17	Ellie & Jim Franson
May 27	Kristi & Marc Benitez

If a birth date or anniversary isn't listed, the church doesn't have it in the computer. Office staff asks that those people call to update their records.

**Recurring Sunday schedule**

8 a.m.: Choir rehearsal

9:30 a.m.: Worship

10:30 a.m.: Fellowship &amp; coffee

**Friday, April 1**

11 a.m.: Bridge Club

**Sunday, April 3**

9:30 a.m.: Communion

11 a.m.: Creeds &amp; Confessions class

**Monday, April 4**

11 a.m.: Bridge Club

3:30 p.m.: Men's Bible study

**Tuesday, April 5**

9:30 a.m.: Precepts Bible class

10 a.m.: Worship Committee

11 a.m.: Bridge Club

**Wednesday, April 6**

9:30 a.m.: Quilters

**Thursday, April 7**

10 a.m.: Community Bible study

5:30 p.m.: Bell choir rehearsal

**Friday, April 8**

11 a.m. Bridge Club

**Sunday, April 10**

11 a.m.: Creeds &amp; Confessions class

**Monday, April 11**

11 a.m.: Bridge Club

3:30 p.m.: Men's Bible Study

**Sunday, May 1**

Communion

**Monday, May 2**

11 a.m.: Bridge Club

3:30 p.m.: Men's Bible study

**Tuesday, May 3**

9:30 a.m.: Precepts Bible class

10 a.m.: Worship Committee

11 a.m.: Bridge Club

**Wednesday, May 4**

9:30 a.m. Quilters

**Thursday, May 5**

10 a.m.: Community Bible study

5:30 p.m.: Bell choir rehearsal

**Friday, May 6**

11 a.m.: Bridge Club

**Sunday, May 8**

Mother's Day

**Monday, May 9**

11 a.m.: Bridge Club

3:30 p.m.: Men's Bible Study

**Tuesday, May 10**

9:30 a.m.: Precepts Bible study

11 a.m.: Bridge Club

4 p.m.: Mission Committee

**Tuesday, April 12**

9:30 a.m.: Precepts Bible study

11 a.m.: Bridge Club

**Wednesday, April 13**

9:30 a.m. Quilters

4 p.m.: Mission Committee

**Thursday, April 14**

10 a.m.: Community Bible study

5:30 p.m.: Bell choir rehearsal

**Friday, April 15**

11 a.m.: Bridge Club

**Saturday, April 16**

10 a.m.: Sorority meeting

**Sunday, April 17**

11 a.m.: New members class

**Monday, April 18**

11 a.m.: Bridge Club

3:30 p.m.: Men's Bible study

**Wednesday, May 11**

9:30 a.m.: Quilters

**Thursday, May 12**

10 a.m.: Community Bible Study

5:30 p.m.: Bell Choir rehearsal

**Friday, May 13**

11 a.m.: Bridge Club

**Sunday, May 15**

5 p.m.: Messenger deadline

**Monday, May 16**

11 a.m.: Bridge Club

3:30 p.m.: Men's Bible study

**Tuesday, May 17**

9:30 a.m.: Precepts Bible study

10 a.m.: Elizabeth Circle

6:30 p.m.: Session

**Wednesday, May 18**

9:30 a.m.: Quilters

**Thursday, May 19**

5:30 p.m.: Bell Choir rehearsal

**Friday, May 20**

11 a.m.: Bridge Club

**Tuesday, April 19**

9:30 a.m.: Precepts Bible study

10 a.m.: Elizabeth Circle

11 a.m.: Bridge Club

6:30 p.m.: Session

**Wednesday, April 20**

9:30 a.m.: Quilters

**Thursday, April 21**

10 a.m.: Community Bible Study

5:30 p.m.: Bell Choir rehearsal

**Friday, April 22**

11 a.m.: Bridge Club

**Sunday, April 24**

April birthdays are asked to contribute

\$1/year to sound system

11 a.m.: Potluck luncheon

**Monday, April 25**

11 a.m.: Bridge Club

3:30 p.m.: Men's Bible Study

**Tuesday, April 26**

9:30 a.m.: Precepts Bible study

11 a.m.: Bridge Club

7 p.m.: Deacons meeting

**Wednesday, April 27**

9:30 a.m. Quilters

**Thursday, April 28**

10 a.m.: Community Bible Study

5:30 p.m.: Bell Choir rehearsal

**Friday, April 29**

11 a.m.: Bridge Club

**Saturday, May 21**

10 a.m.: Sorority meeting

**Monday, May 23**

11 a.m.: Bridge Club

3:30 p.m.: Men's Bible study

**Tuesday, May 24**

9:30 a.m.: Precepts Bible study

11 a.m.: Bridge Club

4:30 p.m.: Registrar of Voters class

7 p.m.: Deacons

**Wednesday, May 25**

9:30 a.m.: Quilters

**Thursday, May 26**

5:30 p.m.: Bell Choir

**Friday, May 27**

11 a.m. Bridge Club

**Sunday, May 29**

10:30 a.m.: Potluck luncheon

May birthdays are asked to contribute

\$1/year to sound system

*Unless otherwise noted, all calendar activities are at the church.**"Call" indicates location was not announced.*

Greetings from the Choir loft. Going through the music library recently I found an interesting anthem that was written in 1869 by Rev. Robert Lowrey. It is entitled "How Can I Keep from Singing?".



## Notes from the choir loft

The words are:

"My life flows on in endless song above earth's lamentation.

I hear the real, though far off hymn that hails a new creation.

No storm can shake my inmost calm while to that rock I'm clinging.

It sounds an echo in my soul. How can I keep from singing?

This piece of music is a plainsong from the early American church repertoire. We will sing it sometime in the near future and you all can hear the simplicity of the

music. The words and title struck me as I hummed it to myself. Being a longtime musician and choral singer this title has been my mantra for many years— ***How Can We Keep from Singing?***

Whether in the choir or in the congregation— music fills a good portion of each service.

Consider your Sunday bulletin— there is a prelude played by the pianist, an introit sung by the choir, 3 or 4 hymns sung by the entire congregation, the anthem sung by the choir, the Gloria Patri, the Offertory, the Doxology, the closing benediction hymn sung by the congregation. All in all—singing is a huge part of our church service each Sunday.

Music can be uplifting, spirited, soft, contemplative, sad, etc.

When I actually thought about the service as a whole and how

much of the time is spent singing or listening to the music, I thought how sad it would be if there was NO music in our service. How different it would be. I hope you all consider this as it was a wakeup call to me... *How Can We Keep from Singing?* If there was no music during the service it would be completely devoid of some of the joy we have when we sing these hymns and also listen to the piano/organ/handbells/choir singing and playing the notes we love to hear.

Those in our choir who are snowbirds have been such a blessing to our church. We thank them for their service while they are here and look forward to our fall season when they come back to our Coachella Valley.

Blessings to you all,

—***Polly Schiff, choir director***

## Wheelers end mission service in Honduras

(Continued from page 2.)

and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." In Matthew, Jesus continues: Blessed are the poor, those that mourn, the meek, those that hunger and thirst after righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, the persecuted.

We've seen God's healing hand so many times and in so many ways. We've sensed a new way of it being demonstrated by improved relationships and community involvement. We've seen how healing and comforting power has transformed the lives of the forgotten and marginalized. We shared experiences with amazing people who might be dismissed as unimportant, failures or outcasts. They have shown us that God is active in this world and real change is possible. But what about sustainable mission? Will things continue now that we have left?

Rev. Dr. Phil Butin was visiting us once with a mission team. He noted that when someone else could accomplish a

task in the community or with the team, we stepped back. He noted that, by letting others lead, we empowered them.

One friend Eluterio comes to mind. Through his gentle, shared leadership he can motivate a whole community. Eluterio is from the Maya Chorti ethnic group and lives in Chonco. His community used to be part of Guatemala. When the border was redrawn, Chonco became part of Honduras. The community was owned by one large landowner; the residents had no land and no rights. Under this feudal system people gave part of their crops to the landowner. Community leaders organized through a series of secret meetings. They finally won the right to their land under a government decree in the 1990s. The land was rocky and hilly, but there they built their community. Eventually they started a housing project under Gloria's supervision and with the presence of mission teams from the United States. (Yes, short-term mission teams can contribute to social change!)

Eluterio was part of the first generation of young people to go to school. People trusted him; he became the coordinator for the housing project. They made blocks by hand down by the river and hauled them up the hill. To get materials to the village, they built a road along the river. When Gloria asked whether they were up to the task, Eluterio replied in his soft voice: "Just try us. You don't know us yet, we will build it." Forty men and boys chipped away rock every day for two months until it was done.

Building the houses was easier. They knew what they wanted and they learned the skills needed. Their previous houses, made of sticks and thatched roofs, had led to a high incidence of the life-shortening Chagas disease. The community's vision for the future and Eluterio leadership of the process impressed us.

A few years later this same drive for community improvement led to a

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# Wheelers end mission service in Honduras

(Continued from page 6.)

school project. Again the community provided labor, accompanied by visiting mission teams. They built a three-room school with a library. Again local authorities did not contribute to the cause. The community lobbied—under Eluterio's direction—to get electricity to the village. With this lobbying effort the community demonstrated that they had an effective voice that could bring about change.

Last January we invited Eluterio to talk to a visiting mission team about his community's experience and the challenges they have faced as indigenous people. He walked the 10 km into town to visit with the group. As he told his story, it became clear that they were planning a new project—to plaster the walls of their houses. A week or so later the group contacted me offering to give a donation for this project. When Eluterio was informed of the donation, he said that the village preferred to channel the gift to eight young families that wanted to build their own houses just as their parents had before. Eluterio promised to mentor the project. We were deeply moved at how the community chose to channel the gift to those with the greatest need. By July the community had

built the eight houses, this time without the assistance of mission teams.

During our last month in Honduras a proposal for a new housing project came in from a nearby village, El Rincon del Buey. We were scheduled to leave; traditional wisdom suggested that things would just stop. But we learned a long time ago that it is not our place to set limitations on the dreams of others by saying, "No, this can't be done." Eluterio agreed to coordinate this new project in the nearby village. They were also indigent people and we thought he would be the perfect mentor and organizer. Now the project is under way; Eluterio rides his bicycle to the village twice a week to meet with the people and coordinate activities. A mission team is working with them. The team will undoubtedly assist and encourage them in many ways, but the initiative is coming from the people themselves to change their own lives.

We recently spoke with Eluterio on the phone. He told us that they are working together to make their latest dream a reality: building a church.

Making mission sustainable is not easy. You need leadership, organization, an attitude of service, a clear process

with shared leadership, gender equity, a cooperative spirit open to learning and funding. Funding resources can include the community itself, local governments, and, when possible, mission teams. Community projects become a school that trains leaders to become teachers and mentors who then can continue to carry out God's plan in surrounding communities.

Mission can become sustainable! We lift up Eluterio and many others with whom we had the privilege of working. Thank you for being part of our support family for so many years. This story is also your story. For that we are deeply grateful.

For now we are in Pennsylvania, closer to our family and delighting in our new granddaughter.

Yours faithfully,

*Tim & Gloria Wheeler*

The Mission Tour on March 14 was a huge success. The three organizations which the nine of us visited were Father's Heart Ranch in Desert Hot Springs, The Narrow Door in Bermuda Dunes and Jordan Outreach Ministries in Coachella.

We were overwhelmed with information, blown away about the number of children and families who are being assisted in the Coachella Valley on a daily basis and got totally excited about how St. Andrew can become involved both financially and by putting out Bible instructions to go and do good into practice.

The Gift of the Month for April will go to Father's Heart Ranch in Desert Hot Springs. We will be collecting socks and underwear and pajamas for boys between the ages of 6 and 13. We look forward to supplying these boys with some items that seem to wear out quickly. Thanks for helping out.

—by Carol Kocherhans



The March meeting closed our activities until the fall, so place these dates on your calendar.

Oct. 27 is the Ice Cream Social. Nov. 11 we will be making enchiladas. Dec. 11 is the annual Holiday Bake Sale.

The women thank all of you who helped sell fair tickets. We sold out all the tickets on hand.

We also thank all of you who supported the annual pancake supper—especially to **Pastor Mike, Dr. Bill, Bob Barrie** and **Dennis Mahr** for flipping the pancakes. **Pastor Mike's** Mickey Mouse pancakes became a hot item.

We do have one request. If you want to donate an item to the church kitchen or pantry, please discuss it with **Betty Morgan** or **Merlyn Hamner** before you drop it off. We recently straightened up the kitchen drawers and the pantry. We may have the item and another duplicate might not be needed. We appreciate you wanting to assist, but it may not be a coveted item.

We are involved in purchasing an ice maker and hope to have it operational in the next month or two.

One of the last acts we did before our summer break was to donate to **Stacie Armendariz** a Washington, D.C., trip with her school class. If anyone would like to assist her, please speak with **Merlyn Hamner**.

—by **Lola Cizan, secretary & vice moderator**



St. Andrew Community Presbyterian Church  
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**The mission of St. Andrew Community Presbyterian Church is to glorify God, encourage commitment to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and prepare all to serve Him.**

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such a large network of Christian Prayer Warriors.

I was very cautious, keeping my cell phone with me when I was walking alone, avoiding driving. I recognized that I was becoming more and more isolative, less motivated, lethargic, sleeping excessively. My prayers of trust and thanksgiving continued. I was recalling the lessons that I have learned about being content in all circumstances, being thankful in adversity, knowing that God was in control, that He would work it all out for good in some way!

**Thomas** and I had been considering a local physician due to my increasing health issues. I had been unable to have the EEG done in Orange County where all my physicians are located and on attempting to find someone local to perform the EEG, I discovered that I would have to have a local physician write the requisition. After several phone calls and follow up on the computer, I made an appointment with a woman nurse practitioner that specialized in neurology. I arrived for my 10 a.m. appointment, filled out the appropriate paper work for a new patient. I should share that I went to the wrong office first and was told that she no longer worked there and that the office was on the other side of the parking lot. Imagine my surprise when a man walked into

### **Epistles from friends**

the patient room. I explained that my appointment was with another person. He apologized, stated that she was no longer in this office. Another choice; leave and find out where she is now located or stay and accept that I was "supposed" to see this physician? By the way, I never was able to locate that website again regarding the NP!

I believe that God had taken me by the hand and just kept nudging me along until I connected with this particular physician. Turned out he was born and raised in a small Michigan town, graduated from Wayne State University in Detroit with his MD, specialized in research, has led mission trips to Africa. We bonded. After all, he was from my home state! He was a Christian! Within 10 minutes, he asked me a question that no other physician including my primary had asked me. "Did you take Ambien the night before each of these episodes?" Well, yes I had. He then described a prior "elderly" patient that had exhibited "stroke like" symptoms after using Ambien. You have got to be kidding!

Upon returning home I immediately went to the computer to check the side effects of this sleeping medication. Unbelievable! There were many that

I had been experiencing: abnormal dreams, depression, and confusion, low energy, uncoordinated gait, cannot focus thoughts, memory loss, unawareness and rash. Even though I took this medication rarely, I realized that I was taking it more frequently in the past year. I was informed that as we age, our body's ability to metabolize medications changes.

If I were able, I would be doing hand stands and clicking my heels together! Even though I was intentionally "giving and releasing" my health to God, the relief of this burden was incredible! My prayers were for help in accepting this diagnosis and then to realize that I had a "new lease" on life was exhilarating! I feel like I am me again! Being able to share my experience is a great blessing for me! Our God IS awesome!

Relying on the Holy Spirit to pray without ceasing for me because I did not have the words has strengthened and affirmed my faith in God. Having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ has made my life whole. My love and appreciation for all those supporting me during this time is overwhelming! I have a new appreciation of just how great God is and how he personally works in each of our lives! Pray with thankfulness and expectation!

—*Barbara Park*