



Yet Another New Beginning
The Rev. Eun-sang Lee, Pastor

Now that I'm alone in Utah for the time being, I think about the days back in Colorado when my wife and I would drive to a mountain spot far enough away from the city lights

on New Years Day. We would start late, and as it got dark we would watch stars come out through the opening in the woods. We would immerse ourselves in serenity, and in the sense of awe and thankfulness as we offered prayers to each other.

"God means us to delight in His world ... Just observe. And remember. And compare. And be always looking to God with thankfulness and worship for having placed you in such a delightful corner of the universe as the planet earth," wrote Jesse Brand weeks before his death to his son, Dr. Paul Brand, famous for his work with leprosy patients in India, Louisiana, and other parts of the global village.

Wonderful words. God means us to delight in God's world, in this very moment. As we begin together the 140th year of First Methodist Church's ministry in our "delightful corner of the universe," I pray for your deepened sense of connection to God, to each other and to God's world. I pray that our church community is where we learn to delight in each other's precious uniqueness in that world. When one is diminished, God's world is diminished that much. All are welcome. And all means all. The love of God encompasses all God's creation.

Happy delightful New Year!

ALL CHURCH MISSION AND MINISTRY WORKSHOP

Saturday, January 23, 2010 – 9 to 1

Breakfast and Lunch Provided!

This is for everyone – a half day mission and ministry worship, during which we will discuss our existing and developing Nurture, Outreach and Witness ministries at FUMC and create and empower everyone to get involved in missions and ministry. Men and women, children and youth – there will be something for everyone! It takes the whole people of God to do the work of building the Kingdom! **PLEASE COME!**

CHARGE CONFERENCE THURSDAY, JANUARY 14 7:00 PM

All church members are invited to attend this year's Charge Conference, as we review events and achievements from 2009 and plan for 2010.

CALLING ALL PLEDGES!

If you have not yet turned in your pledge cards for 2010, please send them to the church office as soon as possible. The Finance Team is finalizing the 2010 operating budget, and the Committee on Lay Leadership is seeking members willing to serve in leadership and on committees. Please help us plan for the year ahead by getting your pledges to us by the end of the year!

WHY DO I GIVE?

This testimony was shared during our 10:30 AM worship service on Consecration Sunday, November 15, 2009:

My father passed away about a year and a half ago. He died from complications as the result of a car accident that left him paralyzed. A few days after he passed, I remember the minister visiting my family and asking each of my brothers and sisters if they would like to share any memories of my father with him. You see, he was trying to put together his funeral sermon for a man he'd only gotten to know four months earlier. Although my father was raised in the Methodist church and all eight of his children were baptized and grew up within its walls, he had

stopped attending regularly when I was still very young.

I don't remember what I or anyone else told the reverend that day, but I do remember two things from the service. The first was how my father often made the statement that nothing good happens between the hours of midnight and 6AM, to which one day my brother replied, "that's why I never come home until after 6AM." The other was a reoccurring theme that he noticed as he had talked to each of us about my father. That theme was, you can always come home. You see, to my father, nothing was more important than the understanding of what that meant. You can always come home. No matter where you go or what you do, we are here. No matter how long you're away, there's always a place for you at the table upon your return.

That's the way I've always thought of First Church. Although Brooke and I are very close to our families, the closest one lives 900 miles away. But from the first service we attended over 6 years ago, this place has always had a very familiar feel to it. At first it was the building itself, the big sanctuary, the organ pipes, very much like the church I grew up in, then it was the structure of the service and hymns and then, as we became more active, the familiarity became you. You, the people. Some of you I know better than others, some of you know who I am. The choir probably thinks of us as the couple that thinks church starts at 10:35. Regardless of whether I can put the name with the face, I have to thank all of you for making us feel as though we're a part of this family. And as I think about all of us and the future of our church, I feel excitement and comfort. My excitement stems from the new energy surrounding Reverend Lee and what lies ahead. My comfort comes from knowing we always have a home.

- Barb Sterns