

the
MESSENGER

a publication of Lenexa United Methodist Church | July 2021



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FOR JULY**

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church **staff**

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worship with us in the park at 8, in the sanctuary at 9 or 10:30, or on livestream at 9 or 10:30 every Sunday!

[facebook.com/lenexaumc/live](https://www.facebook.com/lenexaumc/live)

The deadline for the August issue of the Messenger is noon on **Wednesday, July 21**.

Email articles to Lauren.Lanigan@lenexaumc.org.

The Messenger is available online or at church. If you'd like a copy mailed to you, please contact the church office.

PASTOR'S CORNER



Greetings in the name of the Good News of Jesus!

Is life getting you down? Do you turn on the TV or the radio, or scroll through your favorite social media site and come away feeling hapless, hopeless, and helpless? Are you concerned about people in your life because of health, wealth, or stealth? Is your stress leaving you feeling depressed? Are your fears overcoming your faith? And most importantly, is your life boring instead of soaring?

If you can say "YES" to any of the above, let us take a little drive together, because I want to steer you to some GOOD NEWS!

Well, it has been three Sundays since we made face masks optional in worship. It has been wonderful to gather together again as a church and sing loud. I am thankful to God that the time for "exile" is over. We ought to thank God for the discovery of the COVID-19 vaccine. Perhaps we did not expect our time of separation to last as long as it has, but from the Lord's providential and good hand, we did experience the longest time of exile from the corporate body of Christ on Earth in recent history. And, by that same hand, we are slowly coming out of exile. Praise him for this sweet mercy!

Since we came back, nursery, adult, youth and children's Sunday school, and small groups have resumed with record numbers. Spectrum has an average of 16 people, Foundations has an average of 8 people, and 13 attended Saturday men's group in June. There are more fun things coming up. Our block party is on September 22, and we're figuring out how to do Fresh Start Sunday without the kitchen. We are still roping off every other pew to provide space for social distancing, but you're welcome to sit with friends if you're both comfortable with it. I beg your prayers and patience as we seek to navigate the ever-changing waters in which we are all swimming. If things keep going the way they are now, we're going to end the year well.

I know that there are numerous opinions about the many issues surrounding present circumstances in our church. The Enemy would love to see the Church destroy itself in division. Let's seek the peace and unity of our particular church family and the Church universal. Keep these Scriptures close to the heart: *Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor* (Romans 12:10); *If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.* (Romans 12:18); *So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.* (Philippians 2:1-8).

It has been my joy to see nearly everyone able to go without a face mask in church. Since we made masks optional, every Sunday has been a time of celebration. It is very encouraging to see your smiling faces. I would encourage you to come to church every Sunday if you are able, prepared for the time of celebration and opportunity for the Lord to feed our souls by songs, fellowship, prayer and His word.

Finally, I want to thank you for your continued faithfulness to the Lord and to LUMC! I am so grateful to be the pastor of this wonderful church, and I am amazed every day by the generosity of its volunteers and leadership. I know that the Lord is with us, as He is with you. May we continue to praise Him and keep our eyes on Jesus. And please do not hesitate to contact us if you need anything (contact info on page 2).

Blessings in Christ,

Ezekiel Koech

Pastor Ezekiel Koech

WORDS ON WORSHIP

JULY 4 | 6th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

“The Relationship Between Our Faith & Civil Duty”

Matthew 22:15–22. Jesus respected the government of the day, and, as followers of Jesus, we owe our respect to the state in which we live. Christianity has long understood that God has set up the civil state to provide for the peace and justice of its citizens. That is the biblically-ordained role of government in the world. Some nations, of course, fulfill that role more faithfully than others. Pastor Ezekiel preaching.

HOLY COMMUNION: Communion will be served by the congregation coming up the center aisle. Communion servers will wear gloves to hand out bread and prepackaged juice cups. Those who wish to continue taking communion with the wafer in the cup instead of receiving bread are welcome to do so. After receiving the elements, you may kneel at the communion rail or return to your seat to consume the elements. At the park, you come to the front to receive communion in the same way and then return to your chair. Those worshipping at home can either supply their own bread and juice or pick up prepackaged elements at the church office or during the Dinner’s On Us drive-thru Wednesday, June 30, 5:30–6:30 p.m.

JULY 11 | 7th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

“Growing In Faith”

Hebrews 7:23–28. Jesus is our pioneer, and our completer. Therefore, we should go on toward complete humanity. Let us trust our creator and sustainer to make us whole—not perfect, not flawless, but whole enough that we might serve as living testimonies to grace. Pastor Ezekiel preaching.

JULY 18 | 8th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

“How to Grow in Faith: Trust the Process”

Colossians 1:1–14. In Paul’s letter to the churches in the ancient city of Colossae, he gives thanks for their growth in faith. Paul uses an organic metaphor to describe this growth. Here, growth in faith is depicted as if faith were a kind of plant that has a natural tendency to grow. It’s as if, once we have the seed of faith in us, all we have to do is to be patient, to wait, and the power of the seed will do its work. Pastor Ezekiel preaching.

JULY 25 | 9th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

“Faith Is Taking a Risk”

Joshua 3:1-17, Matthew 14:25-29. That boy didn’t just give over his lunch because he knew exactly what would happen—that he would get more. That boy risked his own hunger, which others likely didn’t. That’s the reality of faith. Faith is taking a risk. Pastor Ezekiel preaching.

worship with us

*outside, inside
or online!*

8 AM | **Worship in the Park**
Sar-Ko-Par Trails Park

9 AM | **Contemporary Service**

10:30 AM | **Traditional Service**

catch the 9 & 10:30 services on livestream at
f [facebook.com/LenexaUMC/live](https://www.facebook.com/LenexaUMC/live)

Worship in the Park takes place at 8 a.m. Bring a chair or blanket and join us Sundays at 8 A.M. at Sar-Ko-Par Trails Park by the gazebo. Please maintain at least 6 feet of space between families when choosing a place to sit.

Worship takes place at 9 and 10:30 a.m. both in the sanctuary and via livestream on Facebook for those who are more comfortable worshipping from home. Tune in at www.facebook.com/LenexaUMC/live.

Masks are optional but not required in worship for fully vaccinated people, and COVID safety protocols are in place. If you choose to attend services in person, please read our protocols first at www.lenexaumc.org/covid/.

Missed last week? Watch previous services at <https://lenexaumc.org/online-services/>.

Staying home? Participate in Sunday worship remotely in any of these ways!

#1: LIVESTREAM

At 9:00 or 10:30, you can watch the worship service live at [facebook.com/lenexaumc/live](https://www.facebook.com/lenexaumc/live). You do not need a Facebook account to be able to watch. If you go to the website before the video has started, it will not automatically show up when worship begins. You will need to refresh the webpage for the video to load.

#2: WATCH LATER

The videos from both worship services are posted each week on our church website at [lenexaumc.org/online-services/](https://www.lenexaumc.org/online-services/). They are posted shortly after worship ends on Sunday morning and are available to watch anytime during the week. Videos are left on this page for at least 3 months, so you can go back and watch previous weeks if you missed them or want to watch them again.

#3: LISTEN TO A CD RECORDING

If you don't have internet access available or would prefer to listen on CD, we have audio recordings of the 9:00 and 10:30 A.M. services available on CD. Contact the church office at office@lenexaumc.org and we can mail you CDs every week.

NEWS, EVENTS, & ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE'RE OPEN AND NEED YOUR HELP!

As LUMC moves toward a more normal worship experience (congregational singing, no masks for fully vaccinated worshipers, etc.) the Inviting Ministries Team is preparing to restart regular greeter and ushers programs. With more worshipers returning to in-person worship, we anticipate that more visitors will be joining us. Because of that, we need to make them feel welcome and comfortable. To that end, beginning Sunday, July 4, we hope to have greeters at the North, East and West doors to greet our returning visitors and members. If you were a greeter before the pandemic, we need you back! If you are willing to resume your greeter position, please call the office and let them know which Sunday and at which service you can greet. This is a vital program in the life of our church. Please sign up to help! If you were a pre-pandemic usher, please contact the church office to let us know which Sunday and at which service you will be able to usher. As visitors and members return, a friendly face and a "we're so glad to have you!" is important. The Inviting Ministries Team thanks you for your help!

PATRIOTIC SING-A-LONG

Sunday, July 11 | 7 p.m. | The Sanctuary / Facebook Live

Lift every voice! Please join us for another sing-a-long on July 11. Tune in at <https://www.facebook.com/lenexaumc/live> or come sing in person in the sanctuary. As congregational singing is back, we will have both options this time. We will be celebrating with patriotic and other favorite hymns and songs. Feel free to leave a comment with your favorite hymns or patriotic songs on the Facebook page for the event!

KITCHEN UPDATE

They say you should move every 5–10 years so you don't accumulate clutter. So it is safe to say that, after 60+ years, the LUMC kitchen has accumulated clutter—LOTS of clutter! On Monday, June 7, at the stroke of 9:00, several wonderful church members helped pack up the LUMC kitchen in advance of the kitchen remodel demolition that will begin soon. A big thank you to Connie and Chuck Sheppard for packing up all of the LUMC china plates before driving to Hillcrest to selflessly volunteer more of their time; to Marilyn Jordan, who worked tirelessly and stayed until the last punch cup was packed; to Frank Rounds, who made trip after trip to the recycle bin and dumpster, and who loaded the dolly numerous times with packed boxes bound for the basement; to Angel Schuerman, a self-starter who never took a break. She was instrumental in helping make decisions about what to keep and what to purge. She never flinched seeing the mouse traps and droppings or old expired food, but shied away from the black mold in the refrigerator. She is one terrific gal! And to Jesse Shackelford. He was the brawn of the group. He helped Frank move the freezer outside to defrost and back inside to its new home at the north end of Schneeberger until after the remodel. Jesse made continuous trips up and down the stairs to our temporary kitchen storage area. We could not have accomplished so much in such a short time without his help.

Together we packed up 70+ glass plates, 200 glasses, 100 punch cups, punch bowls, cleaning supplies, silverware, utensils, coffee pots and supplies, pots and pans, and lots of water pitchers. We used every plastic tote (gathered by Van Rose from Hillcrest), all of the boxes, and yards of bubble wrap provided by Linda Stokes. Frank took a carload of random odds and ends to Hillcrest. We also filled half a recycle bin and almost filled a dumpster! Please, no more plastic silverware or black plastic tongs in our kitchen ever again! Thanks again to all of the volunteers who gave up their Monday morning on a beautiful June day to help pack up the kitchen. Here's hoping our future kitchen will be kept clean—and, most importantly, clutter-free!

On Monday, June 14, Linda Stokes, Keith Stokes, Marilyn Jordan, and Wendy Clay met with Derick Shackelford of Shackbuilt, to sign his contract and the appliance package contract. The total was \$287,958.38 to Shackbuilt, and \$70,893.36 to Index Restaurant Supply. We don't have much wiggle room for the \$360,000 approved by the Church Conference.

There has been a slight delay in the permitting. Derick and crew will begin prepping and start demolition this week but the majority of the remodel work won't begin until mid-July. The dumpster has been set in the west parking lot and you may see a wheelbarrow in the kitchen. The demolition will not affect the Asbury room at this time.

We are so close to beginning our long-awaited remodel project. Thank you all for your patience!

GREAT PLAINS UMC 2021 ANNUAL CONFERENCE REPORT



On May 28 and 29, Pastor Ezekiel and Pastor Jennifer (as clergy members) as well as Linda Stokes and Charles Cooper (as lay members) attended the Great Plains Annual Conference on behalf of LUMC. Due to concerns about COVID, this year's conference was held by Zoom. Though we were all remote, the conference included music, prayer, a sermon by Bishop Saenz, and communion. Jesi Lipp, who many of us know, served as the Conference's parliamentarian.

The Conference included a celebration for leaders in the conference who retired and celebration of the lives of those who passed away. We also voted on nominations for new people to fill leadership rolls where needed. Other actions taken during the conference included:

- the passing of the conference's \$14,000,000 annual budget
- authorization to seek a permanent home for the Great Plains Conference office (office space is currently being leased)
- changes to the clergy benefits, salary, and retirement plans
- a vote of approval for those to be ordained
- recognizing and honoring 13 churches that chose to close (there are over a thousand in the conference)
- celebrating churches that held their 100th, 125th, and 150th anniversaries this term.

Rev. Adam Hamilton, Chair of the Great Plains General Conference delegation, gave a brief update on the General Conference. He explained that the General Conference, which was originally scheduled for 2020, and then rescheduled for this year, has been moved to the fall of 2022. It is expected that the General Conference will vote to allow individual churches, conferences, and jurisdictions to decide how they will treat issues regarding LGBTQ+ clergy and weddings. In light of this change, some churches will choose to leave the UMC to start a new more traditional Methodist Church. Four Churches disaffiliated this year and others will make that choice in the future, though it is believed that the majority of churches will remain part of the United Methodist Church.

It was also noted that the Jurisdictions of the UMC were not able to hold their regularly scheduled meetings due to COVID. As a result, many Bishops have not been replaced as would normally happen and many other Bishops have had to take on greater roles to cover the period until the meetings can be held. Bishop Saenz, for example, will oversee the Central Texas Conference in addition to Great Plains Conference until a replacement can be appointed.

SPOTLIGHT on WORLDWIDE METHODISM

INTERDENOMINATIONAL COOPERATION FUND

As COVID-19 temporarily shut down houses of worship, schools and community agencies, people discovered new ways to work together to provide essential services such as food for children restricted to online classrooms at home. United Methodists cooperated with people of many religious beliefs to respond to such critical needs.

That somewhat simplistic example illustrates the importance of United Methodism's Interdenominational Cooperation Fund. Through this fund, United Methodists participate in the vital work of the World Council of Churches, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA and Churches Uniting in Christ.

"The United Methodist Church strives toward greater Christian unity through its participation in councils of churches and/or covenantal relationships," says The Book of Discipline 2016 (Par. 434). "The United Methodist Church may establish covenants with other Christian churches through bilateral or multilateral efforts."

Through the Interdenominational Cooperation Fund, one of seven apportioned funds we support, United Methodists extend their reach at home and around the world.

YOUTH SERVICE FUND

We will take a special offering for the Youth Service Fund on Sunday, July 18. Across the United Methodist Church, the Youth Service Fund inspires young people to reach out to others. Teens raise money, decide which projects to support and spend their contributions on ministries that help youth do ministry in their churches and communities impacting poverty, illiteracy, absenteeism and social justice.

70 percent of the money raised stays within our conference to be administered by the Council on Youth Ministry. The remaining 30 percent is forwarded to the United Methodist Youth Organization (UMYO) to support global projects.

KIDS & FAMILY MINISTRIES

NURSERY CARE is available in room 206 for kids 3 & under during both the 9 and 10:30 worship services.

KIDS CONNECT SUNDAY SCHOOL for kids 4 years old–5th grade meets during the 10:30 a.m. worship service. We start in the Sanctuary, then after the Children’s Moment we walk to the Education Building for Sunday school. Parents/guardians pick kids up from the 2nd floor of the Education Building after worship. Children are always welcome in worship, and there are activity packets and crayons available in the Narthex.

FAMILY NIGHT AT THEATER IN THE PARK

Friday, July 9

We will be heading to Theater in the Park at Shawnee Mission Park on Friday, July 9 to see Rodgers & Hammerstein’s Cinderella. Gates open at 7 p.m. and the show starts at 8:30 p.m. Tickets are \$5 per person (free for ages 3 and under). Please RSVP to Mary.Clow@lenexaumc.org by July 8 and pay by cash or check to LUMC. Bring chairs and/or blankets. You can also bring food and frisbees/balls to play with before the show starts.

LUMYOUTH

SUNDAY SCHOOL | 10:30 a.m. | The Loft

Come join us every Sunday morning for discussion, snacks, and time together! If you would feel more comfortable joining us via Zoom, contact Teila at Teila.Creekmore@lenexaumc.org for the link.

YOUTH GROUP ACTIVITIES & TIMES

SUNDAY, JULY 4	—	NO YOUTH GROUP—enjoy the holiday!
SUNDAY, JULY 11	4–6 P.M.	Youth Group
SATURDAY, JULY 17	9 A.M.–4 P.M.	Institute Day at Camp Chippewa
SUNDAY, JULY 18	4–6 P.M.	Youth Group—Tie-Dye!
MONDAY–FRIDAY, JULY 19–23	9 A.M.–4 P.M.	Virtual Institute Conference
SUNDAY, JULY 25	—	NO YOUTH GROUP
WEDNESDAY, JULY 28	5:15–6:45 P.M.	Volunteering at Dinner’s On Us We need at least 5 servers! Let Teila know if you can help!

YOUNG ADULTS

Young Adult Ministries is going “great guns” at LUMC. Our numbers are climbing and we’re just plain having great times together. Join us for any and all of these gatherings...



YAC: YOUNG ADULT CONVERSATIONS

Sundays | 10:30 a.m.

Meet us in the Underground on Sunday mornings. Coffee, tea, hot chocolate, and chilled drinks are always provided. Many Sundays we also feast on yummy baked goodies. Our coffee corner and cabinets are outstanding! On Sunday mornings, BYOT—Bring Your Own Topic anytime!

UFO – UNDERGROUND FELLOWSHIP ODYSSEY

Wednesday, July 21 | 6:30–8 p.m.

Underground Fellowship Odyssey is definitely a hit; adults 18 years and older gather for a casual conversation and a crazy-but-fun game of some sort. Mark the third Wednesday of each month on your calendar! There will be food...there will be fun...there WILL be friends.

WORK/HIKE/CLIMB: YOUNG ADULT CHALLENGE 2021

Sunday, July 11–Saturday, July 17 | Salida, Colorado

LUMC Young Adults will make our 6th trip to the Buena Vista Valley of Colorado this summer. All young adults are invited to spend the week of July 11-17 on this adventure. The week usually goes like this:



SUNDAY: Travel from LUMC to Salida UMC (our housing for the week).

MONDAY: Hike a bit, with the goal of reaching 12,500 feet for altitude adjustment.

TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY: Work with Chaffee County Habitat for Humanity building a house in Nathrop, CO. Ground has not yet been broken on this year’s build, but it will be very soon.

THURSDAY: Participant's choice: summit a fourteener OR work at the Habitat build site.

FRIDAY: Work a half day, then enjoy a float trip down the Arkansas River.

SATURDAY: Travel home to LUMC.

We have a few young adults who would like to join us for this mission trip but prefer not to climb the mountain. No problem! We are recruiting an extra “old” adult or two to join us in Colorado and work at Habitat on Thursday with the young adults who prefer not to climb that day. Participation fee is \$175 for young adults ages 18–35, \$350 for older adults. Contact Lisa Freeman at (913) 649-6748 or soaringhogs@sbcglobal.net to reserve a seat.

MIXED NUTS 2022

It is never too early to mark your calendars for our January mission trip! Next year we will travel down south January 2–8. No more details have yet been set, but plan to come along. Note that Young Adult Missions haven’t skipped a beat. You really should be a part of it.

Questions about Young Adult Ministries? Contact Young Adult Facilitators Lisa Freeman at soaringhogs@sbcglobal.net or Bruce Freeman at brfviet@aol.com.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

MAY 2021

General Operating Fund Contributions Received	\$35,280
Building Use, Fundraising and Other Income Received	\$227
Employee Retention Credit Received	\$3,114
Income from Endowment for Budget	\$1,250
Total Operating Income Received	\$39,871
 2021 Annual Budget	 \$512,000

GIVING ALTERNATIVES

There are several options for giving your tithes and offerings to the church. You may support the operating budget, kitchen project, special offerings, and any of the many causes we give to in any of these ways:

- Place your gift in the offering plate on Sunday morning.
- Mail a check to LUMC at 9138 Caenen Lake Road, Lenexa, KS 66215. Designate the desired fund(s) in the memo line.
- Give online. Go to www.lenexaumc.org/online-giving for information and the link to give online.
- Give via mobile app. Download the ShelbyNext Giving App on your smart phone and search for "Lenexa United Methodist Church." Follow the instructions to make a one-time or recurring gift.
- Give via text. Text the amount you would like to give to (913) 444-5960.
- Use your bank's Online Bill Pay to have your bank mail a check to the church.

GIVE JUST BY SHOPPING ONLINE!

Do you shop online? There are two ways to support the church while doing so.

#1: UMCMarket (powered by iGive): Donate while you shop at hundreds of your favorite retailers. The church will receive a percentage of the amount you spend, plus you'll receive exclusive offers and instant savings. Donations vary by retailer, but can be as high as 4 or 5% of your purchase. It's easy and a win-win!

1. Sign up at www.iGive.com/LenexaUnitedMethodistChurch. Your registration automatically supports LUMC.
2. Download the iGive button. This is optional, but it guarantees you'll never miss a chance to make a donation when shopping at a participating merchant.
3. Shop!

#2: Amazon Smile: If you're purchasing from Amazon, start your shopping at www.smile.amazon.com. Choose Lenexa United Methodist Church as your favorite charity and LUMC will earn 0.5% on your purchases. Save the link <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/48-0845671> and all your purchases will support LUMC! You can use your Amazon Prime account and still benefit the church.

SMALL GROUPS FOR ADULTS

PATHFINDERS

Pathfinders Sunday School Class meets at 9:15 a.m. in Room 119 (location temporarily changed due to the kitchen remodel project) and on Zoom. They study a wide variety of topics including biblical studies and current events. For the Zoom link, contact Keith Stokes at keith@mightymac.org. All are welcome!

FOUNDATIONS

Foundations Sunday School Class meets at 9:00 a.m. on Sundays in Room 105 and on Zoom to discuss thought-provoking questions and support each other on our faith journey. The class is named for the foundation that Christ provides in our life. Contact Tammy Shepherd at shepherd.tammy@yahoo.com for the Zoom link.

DASHERS

Dashers Sunday School Class meets every Sunday at 10:15 a.m. in the Wesley Room and on Zoom. We typically have 8 to 10 people in person and via Zoom combined. Lately, we have focused on Bible study using the methodology outlined by Bill and Marjorie Power. Each passage is read from multiple translations and discussed in terms of what the passage tastes, smells and feels like, as well as what it tells us about God, the human condition and our relationship with God and each other. Finally, the question is posed as to what we will do differently, having better understood the passage. To join, contact Dave Glisson at daveglisskc@gmail.com.

SPECTRUM

Spectrum Sunday School Class meets at 9 a.m. in Room 122. For more info, contact Wayne Dothage at wdothage@gmail.com.

LADIES BOOKCLUB

Ladies Bookclub meets at noon on the 3rd Wednesday of the month, either at the church or a member's home. Most books are available at the public library. We will NOT meet in July. Our August book is *News of the World* by Paulette Jiles. Contact Linda Stoker at lstoker98@gmail.com for more info. Visitors are always welcome!

CHRISTCARE

The Friends and Followers ChristCare group meets in Room 105 on the 4th Thursday of each month. The group is a caring, confidential circle of friends with Christ at the center where the ups and downs of life can be shared in a safe environment. After catching up with joys, concerns, and activities of the past month, we share a brief devotion together. If you'd like more information or want to join, contact Linda Stokes at lindalipp@gmail.com.

DINNER'S ON US OUTREACH

Lisa Freeman coordinates the group of members who serve at and bake cookies for our Wednesday evening drive-thru free dinner. Contact Lisa Freeman at soaringhogs@sbcglobal.net if you'd like to volunteer!

MEN'S GROUP

Men's Group meets on the 2nd Saturday of each month at 8 a.m. in the Wesley Room for discussions and presentations of interest to Christian men of all ages. On July 10, we will be doing cleanup items in the basement of the church. Please be prepared to help at whatever activity level you are comfortable doing. All men are invited to attend! Anyone who would like notifications about meetings should contact Erik Troy at troysinks@hotmail.com, Jay Soper at jcs@jcsoper.com, Chuck Sheppard at shepcr@sbcglobal.net, or the office.