

First United Methodist Church Commerce

Volume 15, Issue 4

April 2017

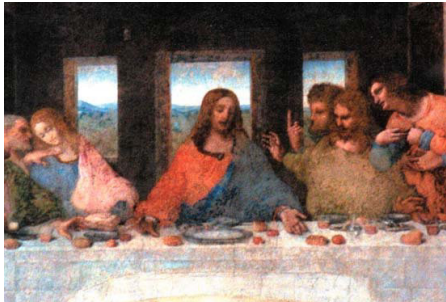
Holy Week at FUMC Commerce:



A Service of Palms

Sunday, April 9

Worship in the Chapel at 8:45 am
and at 10:50 am in the Sanctuary



Maundy Thursday worship

with Holy Communion
at 6:30pm in the Chapel
Thursday, April 13

A Good Friday Service
at 6:30pm in the Chapel
Friday, April 14



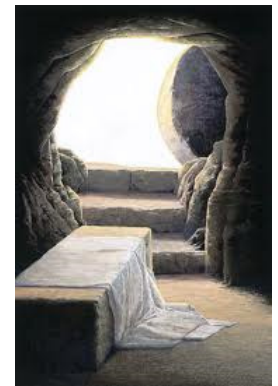
The Day of Resurrection: Easter Sunday, April 16

Sunrise Service at 6:30 am

Led by FUMC youth

Worship:

at 8:45 am in the Chapel
at 10:50 am in the Sanctuary



Bring a breakfast treat to share! Fellowship and hospitality will be ongoing in the Family Ministries Center throughout the morning. Come fellowship and worship!



Children's Easter Egg Hunt
Sunday, April 16 @ 9:45am

Individually wrapped candy is needed. Please bring all donations to the church office by 12:00 noon Wed., April 12.

Bring your Easter basket and get ready for the hunt!



Easter lily orders will be taken until April 10. See the insert in the bulletin or call the church office at 903-886-3220 to reserve yours today.

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Holy Presence

By: Dr. Gregory S. Neal

"I will never leave you or forsake you."

(Hebrews 13:5c NRSV)

I was standing at the Western Wall in Jerusalem when I felt it. It began like a shallow wave across the surface of pool, but as I reached out my hand and touched the cold, hard stones that shallow wave became a surge, an overwhelming flood which rushed my spiritual senses and washed over me with cascades of all-encompassing, life transforming peace. It was one of the most powerful experiences of God's holy presence that I have ever had. Standing there, with my hand resting upon the ancient stones comprising the last remnants of the Second Temple, I had absolutely no doubt that I was being touched by Almighty God.

It's not as if this were a new or foreign experience for me. As is true for many Christians, throughout my life I have had moments in which I knew that I was in the immediate presence of the Creator. It has happened at times when one would normally expect it, such as when I knelt before Bishop Blake, he placed his hands on my head, and I was ordained. It has happened at high, holy moments of worship and in times of private prayer and meditation. It has also happened when one least expects it, but often most needs it: at difficult moments in the midst of hospital calls, while struggling for words when counseling someone, and even while trying to fight one's way through the insanity of afternoon traffic. And, then, there are those glorious times when I have found myself in the real presence of God as I have been witness to the glorious beauty of creation from the deck of a ship or while standing in my back yard gazing through my telescope at some celestial sight. The experience of being in the real presence of Christ is not foreign to me, nor am I necessarily surprised when I feel it, and this was particularly true while standing at the base of the Western Wall in Jerusalem.



This is the holiest site in modern Judaism. It is the closest that Jews can come to the site of the Holy of Holies in the Second Temple. The stones that make up the Western Wall are a continual, historic and spiritual reminder of the connection that exists between the children of Israel and the land, walls, and Temple Mount which make up the Old City of Jerusalem. The very presence of the stones that make up that wall serve as a reminder that the Jews, as a people, belong in Jerusalem; despite what politicians might say, or the prevailing politics of any given era, this is an incontrovertible truth.



I was standing at the Western Wall amid the press and noisy den of hundreds of praying people. It was the Sabbath day and the site was jammed packed with the faithful, all of whom had one objective: making their way up to the wall and praying. I was just one lone gentile standing in the middle of the shifting sway of a crowd of Jews, and yet there was no pressure to keep me away. I had wormed my way through the mass of people and, here I stood, my hand on the wall, being literally encompassed by the real presence of Christ Jesus my Lord. It was an amazing, soul-fulfilling experience. I stood there for a few moments, allowing that inner sense to rage through me. And, then, I began to pray. In accordance with long-standing tradition, I had brought with me some slips of paper with the names and concerns of others written upon them; as I prayed I committed those people and their needs to God by placing these slips of paper into the cracks of the Wall. And I knew – ***I knew*** – that God had not only heard my prayer but that those people,

and their many varied needs, were as much in the immediate presence of God as I was at that moment. Truly, it was a realized experience of *Holy Presence* that I will never forget.

It was at that very moment, with the sensations of being in God's presence flowing over me, that the words from Hebrews 13:5 went ringing through my head: "I will never leave you or forsake you." God has said these same words to many different people and in many different circumstances in the past, and now he was saying them directly to me. Suddenly, a shudder of confirmation ran through me as I heard those same words a second time, only now they were in Hebrew and were coming from the fellow to my left who was praying. He was quoting from the book of Deuteronomy in his prayer, repeating the phrase: "Lo yarepekha velo yaahzevekha" over and over again. This was a powerful, unmistakable affirmation of the message which God was giving to me. No matter where I am, no matter what God calls me to do or be, I know that I will never be alone: God promises to go with me. And, glory be to God, this same promise is true for us all.

THE LIGHT

A Contemporary Service

launching April 23rd @ 6pm

Email: vickie@fumcommerce.org

Follow us on Twitter: @TheLightWorship

Instagram: @TheLightWorship

Join our Facebook page: The Light - Contemporary Service @ FUMC Commerce

Greetings,

I'm Vickie McMurray, and I am your new Worship Leader for the Light Contemporary Service – launching April 23rd. If I haven't met you, you should know that I'm on fire for Jesus, His word, music and ministry. I strongly believe in corporate worship and have been blessed to experience it in a variety of venues and churches. I believe our songs and voices united during worship are the most beautiful moments as we sing together our praises for Jesus!

Some of us sing on key and some of us don't – some of us feel the beat and some of us don't—some of us stand quietly while others sing praises loudly – it is FABULOUS! At the end of the day, we are all hot messes when we stand united to sing to Jesus – but what beauty and possibility there is in our mess!

Let's take our messes and our complicated lives and be united in growing our church. To be specific, let's blow it out of the water, and everyone show up for the launch of the new service! I understand that this may not be your type of worship, but one time is all I ask of you.

Our worship committee has dreamed BIG and wants to invite our community – our friends who are unchurched, our friends who are still looking for Jesus, our friends who are still trying to find a church home. Let's collectively work together and show our visitors FUMC-Commerce IS their new church home.

You see, we have this amazing opportunity the FUMC-Commerce Foundation gave us. We have an opportunity to go beyond ourselves and create a new ministry for our sweet church. So, we figure everyone gets hungry around 5pm, so we asked Dick King to provide his YUMMY brisket! Our part is to provide the sides to this amazing meal. I know you know how fabulous Dick's brisket is, and I know you can think of one easy dish you can make to share. I'm asking for your help – will you please consider providing a dish for our community meal and celebration? One BIG dinner for Jesus!

Let's have fun that day! Let's enjoy each other's company and worship together on April 23rd! There will be an insert in the bulletin for a few weeks to invite you to please participate on the 23rd. Thank you for considering this invitation to make a difference. It is a blessing and honor to serve as your Worship Leader.

Change the World,
Vickie McMurray



Congregation-Wide Confirmation Class

- Once a month during the Sunday School Hour on the dates listed below. EVERYBODY is invited to join us.
- Class dates: *Apr. 30, *May 21 (*tentative/open to adjustment).



Adult Confirmation

BBQ for Lunch on last Friday of March!

Hunt County Shared Ministries – FISH is bringing the "Best of the Best" BBQ to Commerce this Friday for lunch. Dine in or carry out service will be available in our Family Ministry Center from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The \$15 ticket price includes your choice of three winning meats, traditional sides, and banana pudding. The proceeds will help FISH provide food and emergency financial assistance to those most in need in our community and county. FISH serves approximately 50 families from Commerce monthly and in 2016, distributed over \$45,000 in resources to Commerce families.

Volunteers are needed starting at 10 a.m. to sell tickets, serve food, box to-go orders, and bus tables. Contact Angela Roberts today at 972.765.6547 if you plan to volunteer.

Hunt County Shared Ministries (FISH)
brings our annual

"Best of the Best" BBQ
to Commerce!

Friday, March 31st
Lunch from 11:00 - 1:00 Dine In or Carry Out

First United Methodist Church
1709 State Hwy 50, Commerce, Texas
(across from Texas A&M University—Commerce)

Enjoy the Ultimate Hunt County Combo Plate!
Brisket · Sausage · Ribs · Pulled Pork · Chicken
Beans · Cole Slaw · Potato Salad · Banana Pudding
(Ticket price includes your choice of 3 meats plus sides and dessert!)

Food provided by these award-winning restaurants:
Baker's Ribs · Soulma's Bar-B-Que
Tanner's Smokehouse BBQ · Rib Crib

Tickets \$15—available at the door or online at www.hcsmfish.org
Sponsored by



A Little Extra over Spring Break

As school let out for Spring Break, 180 Commerce elementary children went home with extra heavy backpacks. Each child participating in the Food 4 Kids backpack program through the

North Texas Food Bank received two cans of Chef-Boyardee and two cans for Vienna sausages. The purchase of the supplemental nutrition was made possible through generous donations of the Commerce Lions Club, Brookshire's, and Wal-Mart as well as your mission dollars.

More volunteers are needed from now until the end of the school year to load backpacks on Thursdays from 9 to 10:30 a.m. at A.C. Williams Elementary School. Contact Angela Roberts at 972.765.6547 to sign up.



Amy Stark, Judy Rudoff, and Mimi Dobbs loaded canned ravioli and Vienna sausages for Spring Break along with NTFB snack packs at A.C. Williams

Help "Hatch" Food Security in Hunt County

Our 2017 Lenten offering will benefit Hunt County Shared Ministries – FISH. FISH stands for Faithfully Involved in Sharing Hope.

You are invited to select an egg from the Easter tree in the Gathering Area, fill it with your gift, and place the egg in one of the two Easter baskets below the tree. Our Lenten offering will help FISH provide food and emergency financial assistance to those most in need in our community and county. FISH serves approximately 50 families from Commerce monthly and in 2016, distributed over \$45,000 in resources to Commerce families.



COMMUNITY GARDEN TIMES

Issue 1 ♦ Volume 1

March 2017

COMMUNITY GARDEN TO BE REVITALIZED *STAKE YOUR CLAIM!*

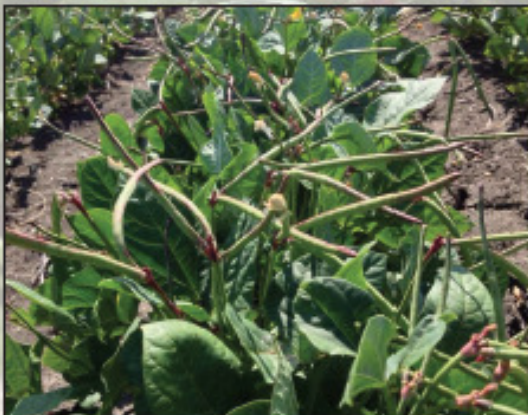
Directly behind The First United Methodist Church - Commerce on Highway 24



**4' X 12' plots outlined
with wooden frames and
convenient water supply.**

Cost is \$35.00 annually.

Scholarships are available.



*For more information and applications stop by Huffmans Farm Supply
1100 Bonham Street • Commerce, TX • Mon - Sat 6:30 am - 5:30 pm*

Wally Shares His Hopes for FISH

Wally Jeffers, executive director of Hunt County Shared Ministries – FISH, shared a Lenten mission moment during worship on March 26. He described how every day at FISH is “sharing the heart of Christ with people who enter their doors”.

The ministry has grown and evolved from a food closet serving a few families to an agency serving 1,100+ families a week thanks to a county-wide partnership of churches, businesses, organizations, and community members.

Wally invited everyone to the BBQ on Friday, March 31, during which they plan to share more about the new opportunities for FISH and Hunt County with the North Texas Food Bank.



Wally Jeffers (right) visited with Wyman Williams and others after worship.

Wesleyan Celebrates Wall Repairs



About 60 or 70 students and sponsors came out to the Wesleyan backyard the evening of Thursday, March 23d to celebrate the new repairs. We ate hotdogs and hamburgers, enjoyed table fellowship together, played video games and danced! It was a fun-filled night to show off the new wall repairs and enjoy our improved backyard. Dead trees have been removed to open up the space and prevent further problems with the new gutters. Members of the Foundation, Trustees, key people involved in the repairs, WCM Board members, students and Rev. and Mrs. Cassad were in attendance.



Thanks to the generosity of the Foundation and WCM donors, two walls have been covered in metal for a long-term fix, new gutters have been added, roof repairs have been completed, and trees have been removed. These repairs were desperately needed to prevent further water damage, maintain the use of the building, and greatly increase the curb-side appeal. Thanks to these donors and repairs we can now utilize the backyard much more for events like the Spring Fling!

If you weren't able to come to the Spring Fling, feel free to contact me for a good time to come by and see the new improvements!

God Bless,
Brian



Children's Ministry

Sunday School News:

- Our bible verse this month in Children's Sunday School is Matthew 21:9.
- The children did a wonderful job singing on Sunday, March 26.

- Our Easter egg hunt will be Easter Sunday (April 16) at 9:45. We are still in need of candy to fill the eggs.
- We would like thank each and everyone that donated for Children's Church Camp in June. We will continue to take donations but this has really helped several families already and we can't thank you all enough for your generosity!

Children's Choir News:

- Our last day of choir for this semester will be Wednesday, April 12.
- The children will perform their songs for the congregation on Palm Sunday, April 9. They can't wait to show you what they've learned!
- We will begin choir again in September with a new group of kids. We will miss our 5th graders dearly but look forward to ministering to the incoming 3rd graders as well. It's been a wonderful year!!



Little Ark Happenings

Little Ark News:

- Little Ark PK loved singing and saying the prayer at the First Thursday Luncheon in March. We hope to make this a monthly event!
- Special thanks to Vickie McMurray. She blessed our Little Ark parents with coffee and donuts and spent time telling them all about the wonderful services offered at our church.
- Our preschool class spent most of last month learning about healthy lifestyles. They learned about healthy foods and the importance of exercise. After many activities and crafts, they took a field trip to Commerce Fitness where they were able to participate in Zumba!
- Pre-K was able to visit the recycle bins at the university and were so honored to have Angela Roberts teach us all about recycling, reducing and reusing! Thank you Angela! They also went to Sonic for the letter S where Sonic generously donated 12 wacky packs so our kids could enjoy lunch on the patio.
- In April we will be going to In-Sync Exotics in Wylie, the movie theater in Rockwall to watch the Earth Day movie "Born in China," and we will get to tour Commerce Veterinary Clinic thanks to Kelsey Lytle.
- Little Ark will honor mother's from all classes with a Mother's Day Breakfast. Vickie McMurray will be joining us to give a brief encouragement to all these moms. We will be serving breakfast items and juice. If you would like to provide a breakfast food or just come welcome mothers for this special event, please see Shelly Oats.



April Bible Verses:

- Psalm 91:4
- John 6:47
- Romans 8:37
- Galatians 6:14
- Matthew 5:14
- Psalm 97:8

Mission:

Little Ark's March Mission was "Coloring for a Cause". We collected coloring books and crayons for the local emergency room. We need more donations so we are continuing this mission through April. If you are at the local Dollar Tree, pick up some things and drop them by the Little Ark front desk. Kids that have to spend hours in the ER will greatly appreciate them!



All Church
WORK DAY

The church will hold a work day on Saturday, 8 April from 8:30am to 3:00pm. Breakfast donuts, juice and coffee and lunch will be provided. Bring your shovels, rakes, hoes and wheelbarrows. There will be a list posted of tasks to be done. We will give the church and the church grounds a face lift for Easter! The Trustees will ensure that there are large yard bags and the necessary cleaning products for use inside the church.

We will see you on Saturday, 8 April.

Blessings and Peace from your Trustees team

Worship

Sunday, April 2

Sunday, April 9
~Palm Sunday~

Thursday, April 13
~Maundy Thursday~

Friday, April 14
~Good Friday~

Sunday, April 16
~Easter Sunday~

Sunday, April 23

Sunday, April 30

8:45am ~ Chapel
10:50am ~ Sanctuary



VBS 2017: Hero Central

Mon, June 26- Fri, June 30
9am-12pm

Vacation Bible School is coming up quickly! This year's VBS theme will be Hero Central!! The date is June 26-30 and will take place from 9-12 each morning. If you would like to be a Super Hero, please contact Shelly Oats. We could use volunteers for stations, as shepherds, and to provide snacks and drinks for each day.

Committee Chairs

Ad Council Chair:

Mike Roberts (903) 886-2142

Lay Leader:

Carole Walker (903) 886-4450

SPPRC Chair:

Jim Patton (903) 886-4612

Trustees Chair:

Pat Skauge (903) 259-9875

Finance Chair:

Gil Naizer (903) 886-1961

FUMC Foundation President:

Anne Mills (903) 217-2615

Connect Team Chair:

Susan Patton (903) 886-4612

Grow Team Chair:

Craig Jensen (903) 886-8713

Serve Team Chair:

Amy Stark (903) 246-1487

Lay Member:

Gene Lockhart (903) 886-3498

UMW President:

Mary Lou Heatherly
(903) 886-8381

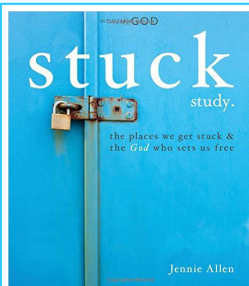


Luigi's Gives Back Sunday April 16

If you take your bulletin after church, Luigi's will send us 10%. Help support our church by eating some good food!

**FIRST
THURSDAY**

Potluck Luncheon
April 6 @ 12pm



8-Week Women's Summer Bible Study

Thursday evenings
7-8:30pm

Beginning June 15th
Childcare available

Study: *Stuck* by Jennie Allen

Contact Vickie McMurray to register: vickie@fumccommerce.org

The First United Methodist Newsletter is the official publication of FUMC Commerce. The newsletter is published at the end of the month. Inputs may be submitted to the Church office to Bonnie Smith, Communications Specialist, at communications@fumccommerce.org, or call the office at 903-886-3220. Questions may be addressed to the Church office.

****The next deadline is Tuesday, April 17 by 9:00am****



UMW will meet **Tuesday, April 18** at 10:00am. The Climate Justice Program will be brought by Carole Walker. Our April project is: project items for the Food Pantry. **All women are invited to join us!**

UMW is still collecting Box Tops for Education and Labels for Education.



Give Online

Remember, you can always give your monthly contributions securely online.



To set up a recurring contribution, visit the church website at www.fumccommerce.org, and click on 'Ways to Give' and create a profile if you haven't already.



Attendance

	<u>Early</u>	<u>Late</u>	<u>SS</u>
Mar 5	28	91	42
Mar 12	23	80	52
Mar 19	24	88	56
Mar 26	26	102	50



**Financial Information
General Operating Fund**

	<u>as of February 28, 2017</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>
Income:	\$ 24,592	\$ 50,542
Expenses:	\$ <u>26,609</u>	\$ <u>57,168</u>
	-\$ 2,017	-\$ 6,626

Reading the Bible Daily



As you seek to grow closer to God through daily prayer and Bible study, you may have your own favorite daily readings. If not, you will find Scriptures for each day listed below. We hope you'll read daily and ask yourself: "How will I be different today because of what I just read?" Some other questions you might ask are: What does this text say about who God is?" "What does this text say about who I am/who we are as human beings?" "What does this text say about our relationship with God?" You may want to reflect on paper with a journal or note pad. We hope this will become a part of your daily prayer time.

Daily Scripture Readings:

Saturday, Apr 1	Ezekiel 37:1-14
Sunday, Apr 2	John 11:1-15, 38-45
Monday, Apr 3	Psalms 118:1-2, 19-29
Tuesday, Apr 4	Isaiah 50:4-9a
Wednesday, Apr 5	Philippians 2:5-11
Thursday, Apr 6	Psalms 31:9-16
Friday, Apr 7	Matthew 26:14-16, 31-56
Saturday, Apr 8	Matthew 27:11-26
Sunday, Apr 9	Matthew 21:1-11
Monday, Apr 10	John 12:1-11
Tuesday, Apr 11	1 Corinthians 1:18-31
Wednesday, Apr 12	Isaiah 50:4-9a
Thursday, Apr 13	John 13:1-17, 31b-35
Friday, Apr 14	John 18:1-19:42
Saturday, Apr 15	Matthew 27:57-66
Sunday, Apr 16	John 20:1-18
Monday, Apr 17	Acts 2:14a, 22-32
Tuesday, Apr 18	Acts 2:29-32
Wednesday, Apr 19	Psalms 16:1-6
Thursday, Apr 20	Psalms 16:7-11
Friday, Apr 21	1 Peter 1:3-9
Saturday, Apr 22	John 20:19-23
Sunday, Apr 23	John 20:19-31
Monday, Apr 24	Acts 2:14a, 36-41
Tuesday, Apr 25	Psalms 116:1-4, 12-19
Wednesday, Apr 26	Psalms 116:15
Thursday, Apr 27	1 Peter 1:17-23
Friday, Apr 28	Luke 24:13-21
Saturday, Apr 29	Luke 24:22-27
Sunday, Apr 30	Luke 24:28-35



Prayer Lists

Newly Added

Marsha Shepherd
Mary Carolyn Dye

Jason Smith (Lavonne Wells' grandson)

Continued Prayers

Healing and peace for our hurting country and world, Loretta Kibler, Gayle Shumate, Pat Skauge, Myra Terrell, Harriet Williams, Allen Martin, Rev. Tom Dudley, Preston Helton (Jan & Jeff Helton's grandson), Debbie Hood (Cathy Giles' sister), Rev. Carolyn Allbritton, Suzanne Bailey, P.K. Kirkpatrick, Vanessa Paulin, Allyson Tuckne (Judy Rudoff's niece), Jason Jarvis (Gene and Betty Casselberry's family member), Dick Walker, Zachary Madden, Sally Grove, Jessica Lauren Coe (Diane McDowell and Susan Lampe's friend), Brad Standlee (Gene and Betty Casselberry's friend), Harry Icenhower, Jennifer Oats (Jessica Morgan's sister), Gene Casselberry, Doris Kerbow, Rev. Clay Yeager, Garrett Cramer, Harold McFarland (Julia Robinson's father), Lois Cranford, Betty Morton, Robert Seay

Draughn's/Country Home Estate:

Ahtrell Dalton, Barbara Gish, Joe and Mary Louise McMahan, Edna O'Quinn, Euple Walker, and Ruth Ann White

Oak Manor: Madeline Sullivan

The Haven (San Antonio): Faye Jackson

River Point (Kerrville, TX): Lucy Potts

Austin: Ruby Vander Velde

*"The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective."
James 5:16*

Help us hold each other in prayer by contacting the church office with new prayer concerns and updates on existing prayer requests.

If you have someone you would like to add or remove from the prayer list, please let the church office know (903-886-3220).



Remembering those serving in our military...

Daniel Chamberlain
Mike Dempsey
Col. Peter Bailey
Col. Keith Williams
Lt. Dan Barton
Sgt. Stephen Smith & Denise Smith
Josh Ham-Nadine & Clay Yeager's grandson-in-law
Kris Yoder-John & Rebecca Sneed's son-in-law
Staff Sgt. Geoff Abbe & Sgt. Eric Abbe-Ladonna & Chris Patterson's cousins

To watch or listen to Dr. Neal's sermons online, go to:

www.revneal.org
www.youtube.com/revneal
www.facebook.com/RevNealVideo



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First United Methodist Church
1709 Highway 24
Commerce, TX 75428
Senior Pastor – Dr. Gregory S. Neal

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THE
NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**
Articles for the next newsletter are due
Monday, April 17 by 9:00am