

First United Methodist Church Commerce

Volume 14, Issue 2

March 2016

Holy Week at FUMC Commerce:



A Service of Palms

Sunday, March 20

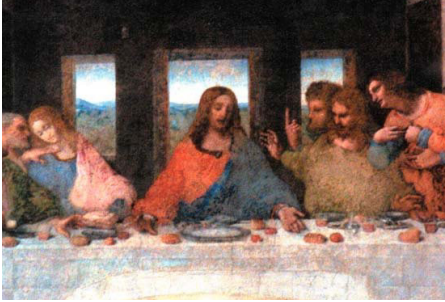
Worship in the Chapel at 8:45 am
and at 10:50 am in the Sanctuary

Maundy Thursday worship

with Holy Communion
at 6:30pm in the Sanctuary
Thursday, March 24

A Good Friday Service

at 6:30pm in the Chapel
Friday, March 25



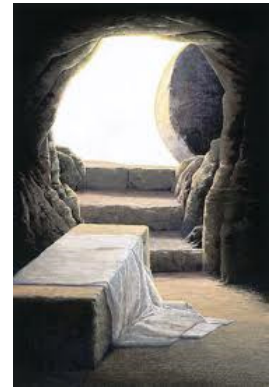
The Day of Resurrection: Easter Sunday, March 27

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, March 27 @ 9:45am

Individually wrapped candy is needed. Please bring all donations to the church office by 12:00 noon Wed., March 23.

Bring your Easter basket and get ready for the hunt!



Easter lily orders will be taken Feb. 28 -Mar. 14. See the insert in the bulletin or call the church office at 903-886-3220 to reserve yours today.

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Why We Prepare in Lent?

By: Dr. Gregory S. Neal

It is always a good idea to take a momentary step back from one's Lenten journey of self-examination to reflect upon where we are. And, it's also a good idea to begin this reflection by examining a fundamental Christian truth which we often forget amidst the chores of preparation: the reality of God's Grace.



“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God-- not the result of works, lest any one should boast. For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.” (Ephesians 2:8-10)

No amount of preparation, no amount of self-examination, no amount of self-denial will save you. Our Lenten journey must always be balanced with the continual realization that nothing we do will ever save us. It is only by the grace of God, received through faith, that we are saved. We cannot merit, or earn, salvation. As Paul said, “it is a gift of God.”

So why do we spend so much time in Lent engaging in self-examination and preparation? I can come up with two good reasons: firstly, we must be made ready to see our culpability in Christ's crucifixion and death; and, secondly, we must be willing to join him in his sacrifice and death so that we will be able to also join him in his resurrection from the dead.

You see, we are the reason Jesus hangs on the cross. We are the reason Jesus came into this world, lived with us, taught and loved us, and then died on the cross. We, just as surely as the Roman soldiers, drove the nails into his feet and wrists. We are the reason for this season. Our exercises in self-examination help us to come face-to-face with this truth. We often want to deny our culpability in Christ's death – Lord knows, I would like to – but if we try to deny it, we will also deny the gift of grace itself. It is a gift we can turn down: we don't have to accept it. But, if we open ourselves through careful preparation, we will discover that it is simply impossible for us to deny our guilt. We are the reason Jesus went to the cross. And, with this realization, it becomes possible for us to actually accept the gift of forgiveness.

When we have confronted our sins and have truly come to grips with our culpability for his death, we will finally be able to see Jesus on the cross as he really is: our savior. And, when this happens we will also be able to join Jesus there as he defeats our sin through death, and our death through his resurrection.

Yes, the gift is free. Grace actually means “unmerited favor.” But, we must not be tempted to turn down the gift by refusing to truly see Christ crucified and our role in his suffering and death. We prepare during Lent so that we won't miss him when he is crucified. We prepare during Lent so that our eyes will be opened and our hearts made ready to receive the gift of God's saving grace. It really is too precious a gift to turn down.

To watch or listen to Dr. Neal's sermons on the internet, go to:

www.revneal.org

www.youtube.com/revneal

www.facebook.com/RevNealVideo



Spring Break Office Hours

The office will be open Monday, March 14 – Thursday, March 17 from 9:00am-12:00pm and will be closed Friday, March 18. Have a fun and safe break!

Jesus said, "Breakfast is ready." John 21:12 (MSG)



Last Saturday Breakfast Community Gathering

Free Breakfast
Pancakes
Sausage
Fresh Fruit
Orange Juice
Coffee



Sponsored by
First United Methodist Church
and the Wesleyan Campus Ministry

Wesleyan Campus Ministry Building
1504 Lee Street, Commerce

Saturdays,
February 27 & March 26
9:00-10:00 a.m.

Worship

Sunday, March 6

Sunday, March 13

Sunday, March 20

Palm Sunday

Thursday, March 24

Maundy Thursday

Friday, March 25

Good Friday

Sunday, March 27

Easter Sunday

Midweek Eucharist

Wednesdays

@ 5:30pm ~ Chapel

FIRST THURSDAY

First Thursday and the Connect
team honored members who are 90+
years old on Thursday, February 4.



Harry & Rheba Icenhower



Lena Faulkner and Mary Lou Heatherly



Ahtrell Dalton, Euple Walker, & Carole Walker

Committee Chairs

Ad Council Chair:

Mike Roberts (903) 886-2142

Vice Ad Council Chair:

Loretta Kibler (903) 886-7776

Lay Leader:

Carole Walker (903) 886-4450

SPPRC Chair:

Wes Underwood (903) 886-1503

Trustees Chair:

Bill Knutson (903) 456-2487

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:

Angela Roberts (903) 886-2142

Amy Stark (903) 246-3177

Lay Member:

Carole Walker (903) 886-4450

UMW President:

Mary Lou Heatherly

(903) 886-8381

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 Monday, March 21 by 9:00am****

UM ARMY: The Hands and Feet of Jesus



Most of us are familiar with the story in Matthew 25:35-40 which begins, “for I was hungry and you gave me to eat” and ends “...Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” U. M. ARMY puts these words into action by literally being the hands and feet of Jesus during their annual mission trip. For those not “in the know,” U. M. ARMY stands for United Methodist Action Reach-Out Mission by Youth.

This summer, our Youth, under Youth Director John Pollock, will venture to Vernon, TX, the week of June 20-25th. There, they will actively participate in the community of Vernon to work at pre-selected homes owned by the residents. Their work will involve jobs such as sanding, painting, trimming trees and bushes, mowing, cleaning up yard debris, constructing wheel chair ramps, repairing windows, doors, stairs, and porches, and the like.

While the campers are working at the houses, they are also actively engaging with the homeowners. “The teams bring a lunch to share with their client each day and are encouraged to interact as much as possible,” states the North by Northwest (NXNW) Chapter of UM ARMY’s website. It’s a mutually beneficial program. The homeowners benefit from the repairs to their homes which they are unable to do themselves due to physical health, age, or financial need, and the students benefit from the work they do and the relationships they build with the owners. It’s a win-win situation! According to Jim Patton, “developing a relationship [with the owners] is as important as doing a repair.” Jim and Susan Patton have participated the last several years in order to help with the on-site work efforts and to prepare the meals for the campers. Jim is also a member of the NXNW Chapter Board.

On Thursday evening of the designated work week, the homeowners are invited to come to the host church to celebrate in a meal and worship service with the campers who have been working on their homes all week. It has been described as an unparalleled spiritual experience for both the residents and campers to have the families involved come and worship with and are served by the campers. The residents are given an opportunity to tell what the week’s worth of work means to them. Both Pastor Brian and Jim Patton describe this worship service, as well as the whole experience, to be “life-changing.” Campers go home with a new attitude and a new sense of value for others, i.e., spiritual growth through selfless service.

This year the Lenten Offering and the Drop-a-Dollar funds for the entire forty-day period of Lent will go toward building scholarship funds for our Youth to participate in this summer’s UM ARMY program. The cost for each student to participate is \$250.



Last year, ten campers participated in UM ARMY from our church and community. All ten campers and four adult chaperones attended the week-long event on scholarships provided by our church.

The \$250 participation fee is used to “buy building materials for our projects, pay for food costs, program materials for camps, and general administrative overhead for the NXNW Chapter, plus a small portion to the national organization for administrative costs and program development,” states Jim. “The kids need a little bit of discretionary funding for snacks and one meal out during the week. All other meals are provided by the camps,” he adds. Besides the Lenten Offering and the

Drop-a-Dollar campaign, the Youth host an annual rummage sale later in the spring in order to fully fund their trip. David and Luann Huffman of Huffman’s Farm Supply are always very gracious in lending their parking lot to the Youth for this purpose. The money raised from all three sources goes directly to pay for the fees for the participants of the program, youth and adult volunteers alike. Travel expenses are often absorbed by the adult volunteers; however, the church will pay for gasoline if needed.

The program is open to both junior high and high school students. The mixed groups, consisting of both junior high and high school age students, spend a five-day period at the host church, while exclusively high school age campers spend a full week from Sunday to Saturday. This year, our U. M. ARMY campers will consist of a mixed group.

UM ARMY (continued)

The Youth are not the only ones who reap the benefits of this life-changing experience. Adult chaperones are needed. If you think you can make a difference the summer by being a part of the U. M. ARMY program, please consider becoming a volunteer. You can contact John Pollock at jpollock262@gmail.com for further information.

There will also be many opportunities to serve the U. M. ARMY when FUMC-Commerce hosts another church's team the week of June 26th following the return of our campers.

So, what do the Youth actually get out of this experience? Jim Patton answers, "UM Army builds character and instills in our youth the value of selfless service to others." John Pollock adds that they gain "spiritual growth as well as leadership skills." And who doesn't want those attributes for our Youth? Please give generously during this Lenten season so that our Youth can be the hands and feet of Jesus in this unique mission and service opportunity.



Souper Thanks!

Way to go team for making a tackle against hunger at the Souper Bowl of Caring Luncheon! \$711.79 was collected through drop-a-dollar giving and donations placed in the soup pot at the lunch on February 7! The Serve team allocated additional funds bringing the total to \$1,000 so that the food pantries at First Presbyterian Church and Bread of Life Church of Nazarene in Commerce each received \$500. Thank you to all who decorated, cooked, served, cleaned-up and gave to make this one of the best Souper Bowls yet!



Choir members fellowship



Set-up crew finalizing buffet line



Over 100 huddled up to break bread

World Religions Lenten Small Group Sundays 4pm in the Friendship Room



During Lent we have been deepening our understanding of other's faith traditions and it is not too late to join us! We have already had an introductory session and a session on Hinduism. The remaining sessions are as follows:

- 2/28 Buddhism (with *possible* Q&A with Shastri Loden Nyima, ie. my brother),
- 3/6 Judaism,
- 3/13 Islam,
- 3/20 Islam led by Mr. Amir Rahman; President of the East Texas Islamic Society.

Ever since I was in Confirmation class I've been fascinated in learning about other faiths. It has been my experience that studying other faiths deepens my discipleship as a United Methodist. This small group is looking at the VERY basics of the prominent religions of the world, so we can reflect on what we have in common and learn to respect our differences. The class is also a great opportunity to ask any questions you may have regarding Buddhism, Judaism, and/or Islam. Inquisitive minds encouraged to attend!

I hope to see you there,
Pastor Brian

FIRST THURSDAY

Potluck Luncheon
March 3 @ 12pm

LAITY DAY WITH THE BISHOP

EAST DISTRICT

Saturday, March 5, 2016

9:30 a.m. Gathering • 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

First UMC Terrell

COMMERCE CARES

RECYCLE

Saturday, March 5
9:00-1:00

At the intersection of
Walnut and Campbell Streets

Remember to
Spring Forward
Sunday, March 13

Luigi's Italian Cafe has offered to support our community by donating 10% of dining receipts on the third Sunday of each month to our church. If you take your bulletin after church 3/20, Luigi's will staple it to your ticket. They will tally our receipts and send a check directly to our church. Help support our church by eating some good food!

WCM
Maundy Thursday
Service

Thursday, March 24
@ 5:30



UMW will meet **Tuesday, March 15** at 10:00am. Our March Nursing Home Bingo Prizes: sugar free cookies, 6 oz drinks, peanut butter crackers, lotions, shampoos (small). **All women are invited to join us!**

In memory of...

Pete Robinson

By: Dough Rollins SS Class
Pat & Janet Skauge
Joe & Laura Milligan
Dennis & Judy Anderson
Nancy Browning Stewart
Edna O'Quinn
Mary Carolyn Dye
Jerry Hall & Kay Hall

Frances Robinson

By: Mary Carolyn Dye

Kathy Benton

By: Edna O'Quinn

Do Heitholt

By: Fred & Anna Blohm



Attendance

	<u>Early</u>	<u>5:30</u>	<u>Late</u>	<u>SS</u>
Jan 31	32	—	87	64
Feb 3		6		
Feb 7	29	—	110	64
Feb 10		9		
Feb 14	31	—	89	38
Feb 17		10		
Feb 21	33	—	103	74



**Financial Information
General Operating Fund**

as of January 31, 2016

Income:	\$ 32,190
Expenses:	\$ 27,959
	\$ 4,231

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:

Tuesday, Mar 1	Psalm 32
Wednesday, Mar 2	Psalm 32
Thursday, Mar 3	2 Corinthians 5:16-21
Friday, Mar 4	2 Corinthians 5:16-21
Saturday, Mar 5	Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32
Sunday, Mar 6	Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32
Monday, Mar 7	Psalm 126:4-6; Isaiah 43:16-21
Tuesday, Mar 8	Psalm 126:4-6
Wednesday, Mar 9	John 12:1-8
Thursday, Mar 10	Isaiah 43:16-21; John 12:8a
Friday, Mar 11	Philippians 3:4b-12
Saturday, Mar 12	Philippians 3:13-14
Sunday, Mar 13	Psalm 126
Monday, Mar 14	Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29
Tuesday, Mar 15	Isaiah 50:4-9a
Wednesday, Mar 16	Psalm 31:9-16
Thursday, Mar 17	Philippians 2:5-11
Friday, Mar 18	Psalm 118:14
Saturday, Mar 19	Luke 19:28-40
Sunday, Mar 20	Psalm 31:14-15 Philippians 2:9; Isaiah 50:7
Monday, Mar 21	John 12:1-11
Tuesday, Mar 22	John 12:20-36
Wednesday, Mar 23	John 13:21-32
Thursday, Mar 24	John 13:1-17, 31b-35
Friday, Mar 25	John 18:1-19:42
Saturday, Mar 26	John 19:38-42
Sunday, Mar 27	John 20:1-18
Monday, Mar 28	Psalm 150
Tuesday, Mar 29	Psalm 150
Wednesday, Mar 30	Revelation 1:4-8
Thursday, Mar 31	Revelation 1:4-8



Prayer Lists

Newly Added

Joy for the birth of Carter James McLeroy,
son of Marc and Stevie McLeroy and
grandson of Bob and Julie McLeroy

We pray for those who have experienced an illness...

Derrell Harrison, Gayle Shumate, Sue Taylor, Bobby Greenwood (Lisa Greenwood's father), Emily Waddle's father, Kelly Hemingway, Jack Gray, Amy Novicke Cryan, Jennifer Oats (Jessica Morgan's sister), Lamont Cunningham, Suzanne Dickinson, Rev. Tom Waitschies (Pastor Greg's friend), Doris Kerbow, David Miller (Bob Grove's friend), Rev. Clay Yeager, Garrett Cramer, Harold McFarland (Julia Robinson's father), Lois Cranford, Betty Morton, Charles Ranley (at Webb Hill), Michelle Bone, Hugh Hanby, Wendel Underwood (Wes Underwood's father), Robert Seay

Others to Remember in Prayer...

Draughn's/Country Home Estate: Ahtrell Dalton, Helen Dickson, Barbara Gish, Joe and Mary Louise McMahan, James Moody, Edna O'Quinn, Ruby Vander Velde, and Euple Walker

Briarcliff: Gladys Gray and Glenna Siebenhausen

The Laurels (San Antonio): Lewis and Faye Jackson

River Point (Kerrville, TX): Lucy Potts

*"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...

2nd Marine Division Sgt. Stephen Smith & Denise Smith
Col. Peter Bailey Garrett Johnson
Nathan Grove Lt. Col. Keith Williams
Lt. Dan Barton
Josh Ham-Nadine and Clay Yeager's grandson-in-law
Lt. Col. Jeremy Quatacker-Mark and Frances Sartwell's son-in-law
Tyler Craig (Afghanistan)-Brad and Vickie Boynton's son-in-law
Chief Robert Starkey-Wanda Beane's brother and Tom Starkey's son
Lt. JG. Terry Starkey-Wanda Beane's brother and Tom Starkey's son
Jim Hunsicker (Afghanistan)-Carolyn Miller's brother
Alex Dech (Afghanistan)-Pastor Ron Dech's son
Captain Daniel Robnett-Clyde and Wanda Robnett's grandson
Kris Yoder-John & Rebecca Sneed's son-in-law
Staff Sgt. Geoff Abbe & Sgt. Eric Abbe-Ladonna & Chris Patterson's cousins



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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, March 21 by 9:00am