

First United Methodist Church Commerce

Volume 13, Issue 4

April 2015

You are invited to begin Holy Week with your church family...

All Church Palm Sunday Luncheon

Sunday, March 29 12:00 Noon at Under the Oaks

(Bob and Julie McLeroy's Barn)

Bring: A picnic side dish to share (The Connect Team will provide the meat and beverages.)

Activities for all:

Hymn Singing	Croquet	Kite flying
Board games	Washers	Relaxing under the lovely oaks

Shuttles will run between the church and the McLeroy's if you would like to check out the new church bus!



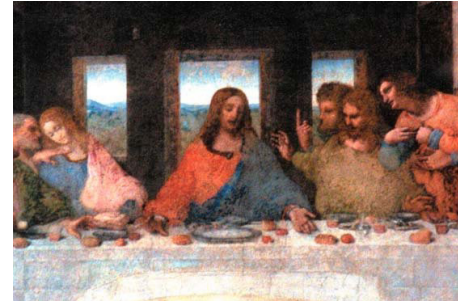
Holy Week at FUMC Commerce:



Midweek Eucharist service
at 5:30pm in the Chapel
Wednesday, April 1

Maundy Thursday worship
with Holy Communion
at 6:30pm in the Sanctuary
Thursday, April 2

A Good Friday Service in the manner of Taize
at 6:30pm in the Chapel
Friday, April 3



The Day of Resurrection: Easter Sunday, April 5

Sunrise Service at 6:30am
led by FUMC youth

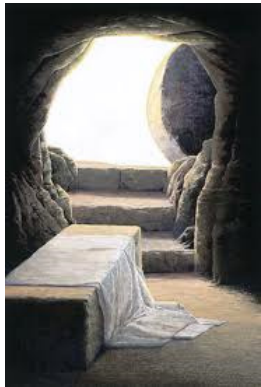
Early Service at 8:45am
in the Chapel

Children's Easter Egg Hunt at 9:45am
during Sunday School hour

Late Service at 10:50am

in the Sanctuary featuring special music by the Chancel & Youth Choirs

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



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Weeping Outside the Tomb By: Dr. Gregory S. Neal



Every time I read the Resurrection story from the Gospels – and, especially the version of the story as found in John – I cannot help but be struck by the breathtaking juxtaposition of heart-wrenching emotions: rejoicing and weeping, excitement and depression, victory and defeat, faith and doubt. Here, at the focal point of our faith’s eternal proclamation, where there should be comfort, joy, acceptance, and un-wavering faith, we find instead a whole slew of conflicting and competing emotions. Why?

Certainly the disciples couldn’t have been so blind! Certainly they could see an empty tomb and realize that Jesus had been raised! Certainly Mary Magdalene, having found the tomb empty, must have realized that death couldn’t be the end of her Lord, and that this empty tomb couldn’t be the product of nefarious activity. And, yet, there seems to be a refrain – found in all four Gospels – that the Resurrection took most of the disciples by surprise.

Their varying emotional responses, their skeptical disbelief, their confusion, their grief-filled tears ... all of this reflects a deeply seated lack of faith. They had traveled with Jesus for years, had heard him preach, had experienced the truth of his words in their inner-most souls, had seen and – in some cases, *personally experienced* – the power of his healing touch and divine presence. And, yet, when it came to the open, empty tomb, doubts and tears were what flowed rather than faith and joy. If those who were intimately acquainted with the historical Jesus could express, through words and actions, such a lack of faith, why should we be surprised when our own responses to the empty tomb, to the Resurrection message of victory over sin and death, is often tainted with expressions of doubt, fear, and even rejection?

“Mary, why are you weeping?” Jesus’ question is pertinent not only to Mary Magdalene and the other disciples – Peter and his denial, Thomas and his doubts, and most of the rest in their deserting him in fear – it is the question which each of us needs to hear, too. We also find it difficult to see the truth of the empty tomb through our tears – tears of pain and division, arrogance and skepticism; tears which cloud our spiritual senses and make it difficult, if not impossible, for us to see the risen Christ in our midst.

In John’s Gospel the one called “the Other Disciple” is not only John, he is quite frequently a literary stand-in for you and me ... for all those readers of the Gospel who are supposed to know the truth, meaning, and reality of the Resurrection. Indeed, he is far more a literary device than he is an historical person, and yet it is probable that at least some of his words and actions are those of John. It is regrettable that more of us can’t be like the Beloved Disciple ... seeing and believing. So often we either see and don’t believe, or we don’t even see. So frequently we’re like Mary, incapable of looking through the tears of this life to see the Resurrected One, standing in our presence.

I’ve had people tell me: “Greg, I just don’t believe in resurrected bodies. Souls, yes. Spirits, yes. I can accept a spiritual resurrection, but this physical stuff is beyond our experience and beyond what science tells us is possible.” While not an outright denial of *some kind* of resurrection, it is still an expression of serious doubt that allows the tears of this life – the supposedly “scientific” expectations and interpretations of “reality” – to come between us and faith in Christ. Many who say these kinds of things end up spending a great deal of time questioning, seeking, and often never finding the “truth.” The details of “the faith” go beyond their modernistic expectations, which get in the way and block their ability to see “truth.” Indeed, this is a plague that infests most of what once was called “Christendom” ... it is not unique to just Liberal or Modernist Christianity. It infects us all: traditionalist, spiritualist, modernist, and post-modernist alike.

We expect to see a Jesus who meets the preconceived notions and expectations which we bring to our faith. For spiritualists, Jesus is usually some kind of a self-help guru; for traditionalists, Jesus is frequently conceived of as being either a “prosperity preacher” or a moralistic fault-finder; for the modernist, Jesus is frequently the anemic, inconsequential, impotent creation of ivory-tower academics; for political activists Jesus is some kind of a social worker or community organizer, more interested in temporal justice than in where that justice is touched and transformed by eternal grace. The weird truth is that Jesus is, at the same time, *some of all of these* and, yet, *far beyond any*.

The true Jesus – indeed, *the Biblical Jesus* – refuses to be confined to the narrow limitations of our expectations. The Resurrected One denies our doubts and calls forth our faith – and not an anemic faith which will only see or believe that which we can understand or explain. No, the Resurrected Christ calls us to expressions of faith in the unbelievable: in real resurrections, in transformed lives, in miracles, in the Holy Real Presence of God in and for a broken and hurting world ... not a far off, distant, unknowable God, but a God made known to us in Jesus Christ.

It is in the face of doubt, the face of fear, the face of the impossible that faith is called forth, and empowered, by God’s grace. We cannot believe on our own; we must know, experience, and live within the Real Presence of Jesus in order to truly believe and then truly act on our beliefs ... we must be infused by God’s grace to *faith*e.

(continued)

Weeping Outside the Tomb (continued)

It is in this way that the Eucharist is *the* “Resurrection Meal.” Far from being just a memorial of his death, it is a present-day, every-day, “eternal-now” experience of the Resurrection power of Christ Jesus. When we partake with faith we experience the miraculous out-pouring of the love of God into us anew and afresh for our living as members of the Body of Christ. Some have asked me, again, why I hold Holy Communion so dear ... this is why! It is in and through this Holy Sacrament that the very Real Presence of God, which raised Christ Jesus from the dead, comes to be with and transform us and raise us from the spiritual death of our sin-sick souls.

This Easter – this Resurrection Sunday – I invite us to allow God to wipe away the tears of doubt, fear, pain, oppression, reluctance, and greed. Wipe away those tears that cloud our vision and obstruct our view of our Rabbi, the Resurrected One, Jesus the Christ. Wipe away the tears and look not upon the One whom we believe Jesus to be but, rather, upon the One who is our God, our Lord and Savior, our Brother, Lover, and Friend ... Jesus.



The Church Office will be closed
Good Friday, April 3 and Easter Monday,
April 6 in celebration of the Easter holiday.

Worship

- Sunday, April 2*
- Maundy Thursday*
- Sunday, April 3*
- Good Friday*
- Sunday, April 5*
- Easter Sunday*
- Sunday, April 12*
- Sunday, April 19*
- Sunday, April 26*

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

Midweek Eucharist
Wednesdays
@ 5:30pm ~ Chapel

Committee Chairs

Ad Council Chair:

Gene Lockhart
(903) 886-3498

Lay Leader:

John Heatherly
(903) 886-7070

SPPRC Chair:

Wes Underwood
(903) 886-1503

Trustees Chair:

Jim Brown
(903) 886-7439

Finance Chair:

Gil Naizer
(903) 886-1961

FUMC Foundation

President:

Anne Mills
(903) 886-6792

Connect Team Chair:

Melinda Reid
(903) 886-7623

Grow Team Chair:

TBD

Serve Team Chair:

Angela Roberts
(903) 886-2142

Lay Member:

Carole Walker
(903) 886-4450

UMW President:

Mary Lou Heatherly
(903) 886-8381



Children’s Easter Egg Hunt & Celebration!
Easter Sunday, April 5 @ 9:45

- * Story Time *
- * Crafts *
- * Egg Hunt *

Individually wrapped candy is needed. Please bring all donations to the church office by Thursday, April 2 by 12:00 noon.

Mark your Calendar!

April 19, 2015

Dr. Vic Casad, our District Superintendent, will be preaching at both services!

May 3, 2015

Rev. Dennis Wilkinson will be with us for a special Sunday, one service only (10:50 am), with a luncheon reception following the service.



Thank you to everyone who contributed to our new 14-passenger bus. We need many drivers to accommodate the needs of various ministries. Please contact Jim Brown, Melinda Reed, or the church office for details on MMM (Methodist Ministries in Motion).

The First United Methodist Newsletter is the official publication of FUMC Commerce. The newsletter is published at the beginning 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, April 20 by 9:00am****

Service Saturday

Putting Our Faith in Action

Twenty volunteers participated in Service Saturday on March 7 and accomplished a variety of projects. The Fun Loving Youth replaced 300 skid pads on chairs in the church while Jim Patton led a group that continued preparations for renovations at the Griffith Chapel parsonage, which is an ongoing Helping Hands project. Another work team was at the home of Carol Davis and her brother Ken.

They needed help with yard cleanup and a leaking sink. These siblings were happy and touched by the assistance provided. By noon, a tasty lunch was ready for all thanks to Susan Patton, Anna Blohm, and Suzanne Bailey. The Service Saturday proved to be a time for making connections with others by giving of ourselves and continuing FUMC-C's tradition of reaching out to the community to make a difference.



Kneeling: Amy Starks and Wes Underwood.
Second Row: Katlyn Gilmer, Connor Redman, Allie Underwood, Dian Underwood, Maggie Robinson, Rockney Reid, Connor Green, and Charlie Smith.
Third Row: Emily Waddle, Bill Heitholt, John Pollock, Jim Patton, Mike, Roberts, and Gene Lockhart.

Your Serve Dollars at Work

The 186 children at Commerce Elementary School and A. C. Williams Elementary School who participate in the Food 4 Kids backpack program of the North Texas Food Bank (NTFB) took home a little extra this Spring Break. The Serve team used funds collected at the Chili Cook-off last fall and raised at the Merry Marketplace to purchase supplemental food at cost from Brookshire's. Each child received a pop-top can of Chef Boyardee ravioli and two fresh gala apples in addition to the snack packs of nonperishable, kid-friendly foods provided by the NTFB.

Volunteers are needed Thursdays at 9 a.m. in April and May to load Food 4 Kids backpacks at A.C. Williams Elementary School. Contact Angela Roberts at 972.765.6547 or AQRoberts@hotmail.com to sign up.



Ruth Ann White and Kim Bruister load fresh apples and canned ravioli along with NTFB snack packs at A.C. Williams

Do you have time?

The Commerce Communities in School (CIS) needs you — for whatever time you can spare — to help the children of our community move past educational challenges. Special skills aren't required, just an interest in helping kids.

In two key subjects: mathematics and English, potentially effective programs have been implemented to help students in grades 3,4 and 5 become competent in both.

The math program, Math Multiplication Mastery or M3 seeks to ensure that the kids memorize multiplication tables from 1 to 10. Accelerated reading, or AR, helps students comprehend unfamiliar words and complex meanings.

For M3 and AR volunteers are needed during the school day and after school is out, for whatever time you can spare

All activities will be at A.C. Williams Elementary School, Commerce

We are trying to help the teachers teach and the students learn. Will you help us?

To Volunteer: contact CIS Director Nancy Laws at the CIS office in A.C. Williams by telephone at 903 866 3798, ext 5332 or 903 456 2981. For email, use nancy.laws@commerceisd.org.



Mission team with the Villanueva family after the blessing of their new home in Mexico

2015 Lenten Offering



Youth upon arrival in Lubbock for U.M. ARMY

2nd Annual UM Army Garage Sale!
Saturday, April 25th
7:00am - 3:00pm
Downtown Commerce @ Huffman's Feed Store

As you begin your spring cleaning, please consider donating your items to our youth who will be going on a UM Army Mission Trip this summer. These hard-working youth will pick up your donations at your convenience. We can store your items until the day of the sale. To donate: Call or text Melinda Reid at 903-366-6493 or email melreid@yahoo.com



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

**Saturdays,
March 28 & April 25,
9:00-10:00 a.m.**

Wesleyan Campus Ministry Building
1504 Lee Street, Commerce
The Friendship Class is volunteering to
prepare and serve the meal in March.



Get ready for a WEEKEND VBS!

We are excited to announce G-FORCE, a weekend VBS for 2015 that is all about God's LOVE in ACTION.

It will be Friday, June 19 – Sunday, June 21. (Please see website for times)

www.fumcccommerce.org

Please consider volunteering this year, it is sure to be a great time!

Bridgeport Summer Camps!

Dates: July 28 - Aug 1	Children's Camp (C-4) Check-in: 3:00 P.M.	Completing Grades 3-5 Max 220*	Registration Fee: \$350
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Registration is going on for Bridgeport Children's Camps. I highly suggest **registering early**. I have talked to the Camp, and they are filling up fast. You can register online (information is on the FUMC-C website @ www.fumcccommerce.org)

We are in need of some **volunteer counselors**. If you would be interested in having an amazing time with the kids at camp this year, please let me know.

Joanna Thrift
Director of Children Ministries



UMW will meet **Tuesday, April 21** at 10:00am.
Our April project is items for the Food Pantry.
All women are invited to join us!

In memory of...

Jean Funderburk

By: Dough Rollins SS Class
Alta Fay Peden
Pete & Mary Lambert Smith
Mariann & Mack Andrews
Loretta Kibler
Harry & Rheba Icenhower
Donna & Jim Tavener

Norma McNew

By: Dough Rollins SS Class
Jim & Janet Latham
Donna & Jim Tavener
Emerson & Becky Adams
Mariann & Mack Andrews
George & Priscilla McFarland
Mike & Barbara Beasley
Steve & Carolyn Helsel
Glenna Julian
Alta Fay Peden
Maureen & Eric Preston
Edna O'Quinn
Loretta Kibler
Bob & Norma Monday

Dale Little

By: Mariann & Mack Andrews
Edna O'Quinn
Dough Rollins SS Class
Pete & Mary Lambert Smith
Loretta Kibler

Jo Parker

By: Linda & Wayne Baron
Bob & Sally Grove
Jim & Janet Latham
Donna & Jim Tavener
Carl & Julie Squibb
Jim & Nancy Penola
K&S Insurance Agency
Eleanor Sandifier
Michael & LouAnn McLaughlin
Valarie Jorgensen
Alta Fay Peden

Clyde Robnett

By: Dough Rollins SS Class



Attendance

	Early	5:30	Late	SS
Feb 25		9		
Mar 1	35	—	80	59
Mar 8	27	—	90	64
Mar 11		9		
Mar 15	27	—	70	56
Mar 18		13		
Mar 22	34	—	92	57

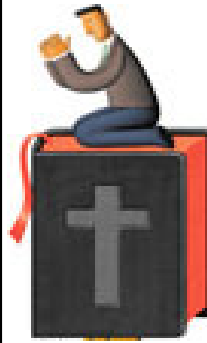
Financial Update

General Operating Fund

	as of February 28, 2014	Year-to-Date
Income:	\$ 28,350	\$556,117
Expenses:	\$ 33,842	\$64,114
	-\$ 5,492	-\$ 7,997



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:

Wednesday, Apr 1	John 13:21-32
Thursday, Apr 2	John 13:1-17, 31b-35
Friday, Apr 3	Psalm 22
Saturday, Apr 4	Mark 16:1-8 Psalm 114
Sunday, Apr 5	Psalm 118:24 John 20:1-8
Monday, Apr 6	John 20:19-23
Tuesday, Apr 7	John 20:24-31
Wednesday, Apr 8	Acts 4:32-35
Thursday, Apr 9	Acts 4:32-35
Friday, Apr 10	Psalm 133
Saturday, Apr 11	1 John 1:1-4
Sunday, Apr 12	1 John 1:5-2:2
Monday, Apr 13	Acts 3:12-19
Tuesday, Apr 14	1 John 3:1-7
Wednesday, Apr 15	Luke 24:36b-48
Thursday, Apr 16	Psalm 4
Friday, Apr 17	Acts 3:12-19
Saturday, Apr 18	Luke 24:44-48
Sunday, Apr 19	1 John 3:1-3
Monday, Apr 20	Acts 4:5-12
Tuesday, Apr 21	Acts 4:11-12
Wednesday, Apr 22	Psalm 23
Thursday, Apr 23	1 John 3:16-24
Friday, Apr 24	1 John 3:21-24
Saturday, Apr 25	John 10:11-15a
Sunday, Apr 26	John 10:15b-18
Monday, Apr 27	Psalm 22:25-31
Tuesday, Apr 28	Acts 8:26-40
Wednesday, Apr 29	Acts 8:26-31
Thursday, Apr 30	1 John 4:7-21



Prayer Lists



We pray for those who have experienced a loss.

Condolences to...

The Family of Jean Funderburk

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

Louella McIntyre, Carol Davis, Kenny Davis, Derik Humphries, Debra Burton, Lona Neal, Garrett Cramer, Luanne Huffman, Anaya Phillips (Bonnie Smith's mother), Jacob Hunter (Dennis and Judy Anderson's son-in-law), Deby Leos, Harold McFarland (Julia Robinson's father), Buck Johnson, Andrea Watson, Delores Smith, Johnnie Robertson, Lois Cranford, James Tucker (Judy and Dennis Anderson's friend), Betty Morton, Charles Ranley (at Webb Hill), David Polk, Michelle Bone, Hugh Hanby, Wendel Underwood (Wes Underwood's father), Doris Kerbow, Robert Seay

Others to Remember in Prayer...

Christians in the Middle East

Draughn's/Country Home Estate: Ahtrell Dalton, Helen Dickson, Barbara Gish, Dorothy Ingram, Joe and Mary Louise McMahan, Edna O'Quinn, Lucy Potts, Pete Robinson, Ruby Vander Velde, Euple Walker, and Jean Ward

Briarcliff: Glenna Siebenhausen

Laurell's Retirement Home: Lewis and Faye Jackson

*"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
Mike Dempsey-Basic Training
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



Phone: 903-886-3220
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office@fumccommerce.org

**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 20 by 9:00am