



In the First Place

the monthly newsletter of First United Methodist Church, Sheridan, Arkansas
April 2019 Volume 2019/Issue 4

“Get Up & Give” 150 Items Lenten Season Benefit for Children at Methodist Family Health

UMW invites you to participate with us in the “Get Up & Give” collection for the Methodist Family Health. It is a way to honor the Lenten season and help Arkansas children who are abused, abandoned and neglected. Our goal is to have 150 items in honor of the 150th anniversary of UMW. You can help by donating: toilet tissue, paper towels, facial tissues, shampoo, baby wash, infant Tylenol, small jars of Vaseline, infant nail clippers, adult size socks, pencils, pencil boxes, crayons, journals (diaries), adult coloring books, and building blocks of all kinds and for all ages. There is something to choose in any part of the store you happen to be shopping in! Collection boxes are in the Sanctuary Narthex and the Grand Hall. We will be collecting through end of April.

Church Easter Egg Hunt April 20 at 10:30

Get out your child’s biggest basket and have them join us for the annual Easter egg hunt on Saturday, April 20, beginning at 10:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall at the church. First there will be a story, then the hunt will begin, rain or shine! After the hunt, everyone will gather again to go through the baskets and eat candy! We’ll make an Easter craft to take home, then eat a hotdog lunch along with delicious Easter cookies! Invite a friend to come along for the fun and fellowship. For more information, see Zoe Hines or call the church office.

Senior Sunday Set for April 28

Senior Sunday for our graduating seniors will be on April 28. The United Methodist Women will honor the seniors and their families with a breakfast at 8:30, and they will be recognized during the 10:50 service. Our three seniors are Katie Cox, Preston Scott, and Kacie Wyrick.

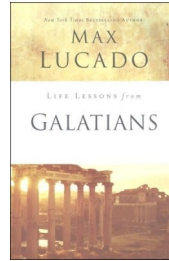


Special Music

Madison Shirron wonderfully presented “Ancient of Days” for the 10:50 service voluntary on March 31, accompanied by church pianist, Dana Teel. Madison has been a student of Teel since September, and we are happy that she wants to participate in worship services using her musical talents! Witnessing this

first of hopefully many occasions to come were sister Reagan, parents Stephen and Helen Shirron, and grandparents Joy and Phil Shirron and Durinda Gammill.

12-Week Book Study Sundays at 5:30 Beginning April 7



Life Lessons: Galatians by Max Lucado is the new book study to be led by Dee Ann Daniel, beginning Sunday, April 7 at 5:30. The class will meet for twelve weeks in the Good News classroom in the Education building. Please contact Dee Ann to order a book. The group will not meet on Easter Sunday, April 21.

United Methodist Kids Mission Focus: Heifer International

We have finished our unit in UMK on “The Rainbow Promise.” We talked about the flood and how God promised Noah to never flood the earth again and used the rainbow in our cooking, art, missions, science, and games sessions. Our next unit is a four week unit called “Holy Week,” which we will begin on Wednesday, April 3.

(The following is an excerpt from a letter by Karen Rutherford that was sent home to parents of the children in our UMK on Wednesday nights. She also has a poster she is using to show the children how much money has been collected so they can make plans on which animals they can purchase. She said they are so excited about this project! If you would like to donate to help the UMK with their missions, please see Karen.)

The United Methodist Kids have been working on mission work since fall. Their project now is to raise money to buy animals for the Heifer Project. They are very excited about possibly purchasing chickens, pigs, sheep, water buffalo, and other animals to help bring healing and hope to impoverished families worldwide. Heifer International works in areas of livestock and agriculture to develop programs that alleviate hunger and poverty, including training needed for each family or community. Also, each family who receives an animal agrees to give one of their animal’s offspring to another family; this means our gifts will keep on giving for many generations to come.

Our kids are VERY excited about helping families get meat, eggs, milk, wool, young offspring for income, school expenses, medicine, clothing, manure for fertilizer and fuel, and other items to help God’s people when they need help. Thank you for leading all the children into a life of mission for our Lord Jesus Christ. All donations are tax deductible, and if you would like donate, make your check payable to Heifer International.

From the Pastor's Desk....

In our culture, Easter is a pretty big holiday but isn't nearly as big as Christmas, and it falls behind Halloween, Independence Day, and Mother's Day. I guess culturally speaking; Easter is on par with Labor Day and Memorial Day. The symbols most often associated with Easter are the bunny, eggs, jelly beans, chicks, and lilies, none of which have explicitly Christian significance. In fact, a few years ago, the city council of St. Paul, Minnesota, felt it necessary to remove Easter Bunny decorations from its premises because they were afraid non-Christians would be offended!



The rabbit has long been regarded as the herald of spring in ancient cultures throughout the world. He has been seen as a symbol of spring's promise of new life and fertility. Sixteenth-century Germans incorporated the old pagan view of the rabbit into a slightly modified role as Oschter Haws, who was believed to actually lay a nest of magically colored eggs for all the good boys and girls. Eggs also are symbols of new life and fertility (thus answering the question of how did a bunny and eggs get connected).

So, while the Easter Bunny and eggs aren't Christian by definition, they do share a similar symbolism that at least on the surface, the religious celebration of Easter is all about: resurrection and new life. In so many ways, the cultural celebration of the day (or the season) has been mixed with the religious celebration. Indeed, for children, searching for eggs and sitting on the bunny's lap for a picture are fine things indeed, and sensitive parents can certainly use the same symbolism to begin to teach about Jesus.

I'm quite certain, however, that for diligent, mature Christians the simplistic correlation between the annual return of warmth and spring and the once-in-history resurrection from the dead of the very Son of God is a less than faithful response. The resurrection is an event that defines for us everything else and should not be reduced to the lowest common denominator of a fertility festival.

Jesus was crucified, died, buried, and resurrected. In doing so, Christ assured the promise of our salvation in this life and in the life to come, and for all time demonstrated God's great love for not only humankind but for each and every one of us as individuals. Not only does this merit a holiday,

it merits a radical change of life so that we might become disciples – followers of His Way. Without the Easter Bunny, there are no Easter egg hunts and...well, that's pretty much it. Without Jesus, there is no church (the home of the practice of our faith), and what is more, there is no salvation!

“Without the Easter Bunny, there are no Easter egg hunts and... well, that's pretty much it. Without Jesus.....there is no salvation!”

Now don't get me wrong: I'm a big fan of chocolate rabbits and Cadbury eggs. But it doesn't take long for me to realize that the more valuable gift is the one purchased on the cross and fulfilled in the empty tomb. The cultural celebration of Easter doesn't ask that much – some new clothes for the kids, a hidden basket of goodies, and brunch. After that, life returns to whatever passes for normal. But a faithful response to the true significance of Easter calls us to reorder our lives after the example of Christ, that all that we do and all that we say might reflect our love for God and love for our neighbor. It is Lent now. But Easter is coming! Thanks be to God!

-Pastor Todd-Paul

Deadline to Order Easter Lilies is April 7

Easter lilies may be given in memory of or in honor of loved ones. The lilies will be placed in the sanctuary on Easter Sunday, April 21, and may be picked up after worship. They will be ordered in seven-inch pots at \$20/each. Forms are available in the bulletin, or you can drop off your check with Betty Lancaster in the office with the names of who is giving the lily and who the lily is in memory of or in honor of. The deadline to order is Sunday, April 7.

UMY Rummage Sale Donations Needed

Spring cleaning or Marie Kondo-ing?
What no longer sparks joy for you can make someone else very happy! Donate your gently-used items to the Sheridan First United Methodist Youth group for their annual rummage sale in the church parking lot on

Friday, April 26, 3:30-7 pm
Saturday, April 27, 7 am-noon

Items can be dropped off that Friday at 3:30 pm.

Thank you for your donations to support Youth Missions!

First United Methodist Church
At the corner of Church and Main Streets
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Todd-Paul Taulbee, Pastor
Betty Lancaster, Church Secretary and Treasurer
Sandra Parham Turner, Newsletter Editor

Memorials and Honor Gifts Received

In memory of Roy Rawls (father of David Rawls): Backpacks by Zoe & Gary Hines

In memory of Robert A. Simpson: Backpacks by Dee Ann Daniel; Zoe & Gary Hines

In memory of Evangeline David: Matthew 25:40 by Shirley Phillips & Family

In honor of Hostesses for Babies' Shower: Backpacks by Mandy & Justin Deckard

Announcements

- If you are missing a dish, lid, or pan, check in the Education Building hallway. Anything left by the end of April will be placed in the Youth Rummage Sale.
- The church has a silver punch bowl that is missing. If you borrowed it, please return it ASAP.
- Funds for the Cookson Hills mission will be collected in April and May. Please mark your envelope "Cookson Hills."
- Vacation Bible School is planned for June 17-20. If you would like to help, preregister your child, or get a t-shirt, contact Jennifer Kelley. See page 4 for more details.
- Planning is underway for the Alliance Summer Feeding Program, which distributes lunches to hungry children in our community Monday-Friday during the summer. It begins on June 3 and ends on July 26. If you would like to donate, mark your envelope "Summer Feeding." If you can volunteer to help at the church or to deliver food with others, please contact Mike Carpenter.
- Sheridan Lions Club \$30 smoked pork butts fundraiser is on Saturday, April 27. To order, see Sam Green.



Zoe Hines presented the program at the Night's Circle's monthly UMW meeting on the 150 years of United Methodist Women. She and granddaughter Wesley Hines led the group in singing "Happy Birthday" before the candles were blown out on the cake made by Zoe & Wesley for the occasion.



Celebrating 150 Years of United Methodist Women!

United Methodist Women

It's hard to celebrate enough when you're celebrating 150 years. In each unit, we've celebrated with a "birthday" cake, remembered those women who are part of our legacy and considered to whom we might be a legacy. Several of us attended a conference celebration at Aldersgate; the only Arkansas UMW-supported mission institute. We've also participated in a book talk at the national level and donated to the Legacy Fund.

At the conference celebration of the UMW on March 23 at Camp Aldersgate, we were introduced to a UMW member who is the pastor at Theresa Hoover Methodist Church in Little Rock. Pastor Deborah Bell shared her encounter with a true legacy UMW. The church was named after Theresa Hoover, who required three things of the congregation: always be in mission, always have an active UMW, and "never ask her for money." They didn't have to ask for money because she sent a check every December 25. We were also led to put perspective around those women who have encouraged us in our UMW journey.

So now, how do we write our legacy? We have the opportunity locally and at the district, conference, and national levels to be in mission. We write it by being involved!

Over the next few weeks for the remainder of this season of Lent, we will be collecting items for Methodist Family Health. Our goal is to have 150 items in honor of the 150th anniversary of UMW. You can help by donating: toilet tissue, paper towels, facial tissues, shampoo, baby wash, infant Tylenol, small jars of Vaseline, infant nail clippers, adult size socks, pencils, pencil boxes, crayons, journals (diaries), adult coloring books, and building blocks of all kinds and for all ages. *(See the article on page 1 for more details on this benefit.)*

Note to readers: the UMW has a reading program and as a result, we have some really great faith-based books available. If you are a reader and looking for the next book to read, we encourage you to check out some of ours. Please let Betty Robinette, Von Williamson, or myself know if you would like to take advantage of these books being available.

On April 27, we will attend a district meeting in Warren, and I'm sure we will continue celebrating our past and future! Then we continue our planning for the Senior breakfast on April 28 and breakfast for our confirmands on May 4.

Looking to be in action in mission!

-Zoe Hines

Vacation Bible School



To Mars and Beyond

Explore Where God's Power Can Take You

This year's Vacation Bible School will be Monday-Thursday, June 17-20, from 6:00-8:00 p.m. More details for the children attending will be given later, but note that they will be in the classes for their rising grades (grade next fall).

Planning is underway at this time, and we are looking for volunteers for the following:

- Decorating Team
- Assembly Leader
- Puppet "EP3-20, The Robot"
- Snack Time Leader
- Snack Time Helpers
- Discover Time Leader
- Craft Time Leader
- Music Time Leader
- Recreation Leader
- Main Storyteller
- Story Time Actors
- Group Leader for PreK-Kindergarten
- Group Leader for 1st-3rd grades
- Group Leader for 4th-5th grades
- Provide snacks/food for volunteers on:
 - ◊ Monday
 - ◊ Tuesday
 - ◊ Wednesday
 - ◊ Thursday

Betty has the volunteer forms in the church office, and you can check what days you are available to volunteer for any of these positions. For more information, contact Jennifer Kelley at 870.718.2553, Dona Glaze, or Johni Beth Teague.

2019 Budget Pledges Report

There were 53 families who returned their "Estimate of Giving" cards, pledging \$316,197 toward the 2019 budget of \$410,648, or 77% of the budget.

Children's Church

Happy Spring!!! I would like to start off by expressing my gratitude to all of the volunteers in our Children's Church Ministry. On January 6th, a meeting was held to discuss the current procedures of the program. I personally believe that the changes that were discussed will improve this program.

One of the changes we would like to implement is changing the age we serve from ages four through six years old to age four-second grade. Children will continue to stay in the service through children's moments and are then dismissed into the education building for supervised lessons, play, and organized activities.

-Dona Glaze
Children's Church Coordinator

Thank you to our Children's Church volunteers for this quarter:

Karen Appleget
Nicole Cacciatori
Dona Glaze
Lauren Goins
Audra Hines
Jennifer Kelley
Pam Reed
Amanda Roark
Lezleigh Robinette
Helen Shirron
Johni Beth Teague
Anne Wells

Children's Moments



Pastor Todd-Paul leads the Children's Moments every Sunday. Here he is demonstrating in the 10:50 service on March 31 that when you do something wrong (oil), trying to get rid of it on your own just spreads it around (water). It takes admitting your wrongdoing and asking for forgiveness to make it better (soap). The adults learn as much as the children during these moments! *Photo by Lauren Goins*