



In the First Place

the monthly newsletter of First United Methodist Church, Sheridan, Arkansas
March 2019 Volume 2019/Issue 3

Children's Summer Feeding Program

This school year has gone by so fast, and the Children's Summer Feeding Program will be here in three months! Last summer was a tremendous success with the program providing over 13,500 lunches. The Alliance will again distribute lunches to hungry children in our community during the weekdays starting on June 3 and finishing on July 26. Current plans are to serve meals at Sheridan High School, Sheridan Junior High School, Poyen schools, Leola, The Well in East End, and to deliver meals in Sheridan, Clearwater, and East End Communities. The I-Can! facility will be unable to support this mission in East End; however, The Well will take on this effort.

We have already received two grants. One is from the UMC's 200,000 Reasons to Fight Childhood Hunger for \$2,500, and one is from the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance for \$2,500 to purchase an additional commercial refrigerator. The refrigerator is needed due to the increase in the number of lunches we are serving.

We will continue to pursue other grant opportunities along with donations from local churches and businesses! We continue to need your financial support and your support as a volunteer. Last summer, it cost over \$37,000, and this year's projected budget is \$45,000. This mission continues to grow, reaching out to more of our hungry children in our community! Just ask any of the volunteers from last summer: Not only are we affecting children's lives, we are changing volunteers' lives!

If you would like to donate to this mission, please mark your envelope or your check to the Summer Feeding Program. Thank you for volunteering and your continued financial support. We are making a difference in our community!

-Mike Carpenter
Children's Summer Feeding Program Director

Ella Reed played "Amazing Grace" as the beautiful voluntary for the 10:50 worship service on February 17, accompanied by her piano instructor and FUMC pianist, Dana Teel. Ella has been taking piano lessons for only a short time, and we are blessed to have her already willing to share her gift of music with the congregation. Ella is the daughter of Corey and Pam Reed and a granddaughter of David and Charlene Holloway.



First Female Ushers at FUMC Sheridan



Female ushers are in the 2019 monthly rotation for the first time in the history of Sheridan's FUMC. This was only because none ever had volunteered, but these women stepped forward when it came time to make the yearly usher schedule. Pictured above are Charlene Holloway, Sandra Turner, Summer Scott, Virginia Lancaster, and Gail Harrington. Not pictured is Carolyn Duncan.

Stuffing Needed for Pillows Going to Arkansas Children's Hospital



The quilters in the UMW Day Circle are working on a new project for Arkansas Children's Hospital. They are making pillows (like these) to be used in the radiology/surgery department for children to lay their arms

or legs on for comfort. They have asked that if anyone has polyester fiberfill they do not need, consider giving it to them to use as stuffing for the pillows. At this time, they only need the stuffing as they have plenty of fabric. Contact Becky Ross if you have any to donate.



The UMY collected \$500 during "Souper" Bowl Sunday on February 3. Presenting a check to Callie Heath of the food pantry at Kathy's Closet are (l-r) Jameson Archer, UMY Pastor, Robin Roark, Joanna Loretz, Jackson Appleget, Karalina Scott, and Emily Baker.

From the Pastor's Desk...

On March 6 we will enter into the season of Lent. Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. It is, above all, a season of preparation for celebrating Easter. Historically, Lent began as a season of fasting (about which I shall say more in a moment) and preparation for baptism by converts and then became a time of penance for all Christians.



Lent culminates with the Great Three Days – sometimes called the Triduum or Pasch – from sunset Holy Thursday through sunset Easter Day. This is the climax of not only the season of Lent, but of the entire Christian calendar and is a bridge into the Easter season. These days proclaim the paschal mystery of Jesus Christ's passion (suffering), death, and resurrection. During these days, which our church marks with our worship service on Maundy Thursday, the community of faith journeys with Jesus from the upper room, to the cross, to the tomb, and to the garden.

One of the ways in which Christians mark the Lenten season is by the spiritual discipline of fasting. There is a strong Biblical base for the practice of fasting, which is lifted up in both the Old and New Testaments. Fasting has been a part of Methodism from its early beginnings. John Wesley considered fasting an important part of a Christian's life, and he fasted every week. To Wesley, fasting was an important way to express sorrow for sin and penitence for overindulgence in eating and drinking (a particular sin for most American Christians). He believed that it allowed more time for prayer and was more meaningful if it was combined with giving to the poor. Wesley advised against extreme fasting and fasting for those in fragile health. Anyone who seeks to fast by abstaining from food for any period of time should consult with his or her physician.

Fasting usually refers to any practice of restricting food. But fasting during Lent can be a very personal and spiritual time. The United Methodist Church does not have any official guidelines on how persons should observe Lent. Some choose to give up a meal every week or a day of meals each week during Lent. Another spirit of fasting can include a restriction of activities such as watching television, shopping, or social networking. Others may choose to give up a specific food for the duration of Lent.

The spiritual discipline of fasting is just that: a spiritual discipline. It is not intended as a means of losing weight or dieting (though for many the practice may bring about a side benefit of increased health). Fasting is also something that is

done in recognition of the good gifts that God has bestowed upon us, but with the understanding that we are not bound to the gifts, rather to the Giver. Thus, we do not use fasting as a means of quitting a bad habit (such as smoking). While I'd encourage you all to quit any bad habit you may have (including smoking), fasting as a spiritual discipline intends for us to abstain from certain gifts (be they food or Facebook) for a time with the intent of returning to them.

Finally, when we fast during Lent, we do well to remember that the season of Lent is forty days (not including Sundays) which also mark the forty days that Jesus spent in the wilderness before he was tempted by Satan. We remember also that every Sunday, whether in Lent or not, is a mini-celebration of the resurrection of Jesus, and thus a "feast-day." Feast-days are days of celebration (and if there is anything that a Christian would celebrate, it is the resurrection of Christ!). It is not appropriate to fast on a feast-day.

Pope Francis commented a few years ago on the practice of fasting and encouraged Christians world-wide to give up overlooking the disenfranchised, poor, and alien in our midst. I would add my humble voice to Pope Francis' encouragement for Christians to fast by urging each of you to participate in a fast of some sort this Lenten season, in preparation for Easter this year. I hope that in your fast you experience God's presence with you.

-Pastor Todd-Paul

Ash Wednesday Service March 6 at 6:30 p.m.

Our Prayers and Deepest Sympathy

To Dixie Simpson and the family of **Reverend Robert A. Simpson**, who died on February 9.

To Sharon Skorcz and Susan Spears and the family of **Bernadine Brewer Dorsey**, who passed away on February 3.

Memorials and Honor Gifts Received

In memory of Roy Rawls (father of David Rawls): Matthew 25:40 Fund by Shirley Phillips; **Youth** by David & Charlene Holloway, Sparky & Cindy Hedden; **Backpack Food** by Jack Bush

In memory of Robert A. Simpson: Youth by Sparky & Cindy Hedden; Jim & Betty Lancaster; **Matthew 25:40 Fund** by David & Leisha Rawls

In honor of Charles and Alexis Tadlock: Tadlock/Snell Scholarship Fund by Libby & John Conder; Katie Beth & Andrew Tadlock

In honor of Stephanie Smith and Emily Grimmatt: Summer Feeding Program by Jerrod & Brandi Williams

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United Methodist Women

United Methodist Women is celebrating 150 years on March 23, 2019. One hundred fifty years ago, five to six generations ago, some of our great-great-great-grandmothers or aunts recognized that if they joined together in mission work, they could do so much more. They also understood that women recognized the needs of women, children, and youth. So through many predecessors' names, we have joined together; we have "united" to address those needs. I have offered a prayer of thanksgiving for all those before me and a prayer of hopefulness that 150 years from now, others will remember us in the way we remember as those "greats" we will remember on March 23, 2019. I know that God gave each of us unique resources and we have proven that uniting them extends His power and grace.

The 150 Legacy Fund has opened as part of ensuring the continued mission of UMW. If you have a foremother or possibly a future UMW member you would like to remember or honor, please consider giving on the Day of Giving – Mar 23, 2019, at unitedmethodistwomen.org/legacyfund.

I invite you to join us in a celebration at Camp Aldersgate, on Saturday, March 23, 2019. Please let me know if you would like to participate in this fellowship.

Back to our reality of 2019: A Southeast district UMW meeting will be April 27 in Warren; we are planning recognition of our seniors on April 28, 2019, and our confirmands on May 5, 2019.

God is certainly calling us; let's listen and react!

*-Zoe Hines
UMW President*



Lancaster Awarded at Banquet

On February 2, Jim Lancaster received the Larry Frier Community Service Award from the Grant County Chamber of Commerce on Grant County's 150th Anniversary. Jim has been a long-time leader in the church and community, and we congratulate him on this well-deserved award! Presenting Jim with his award is Marilyn DeMoss.

(Photo by Lauren Goins)



Baby Shower for Deckard Twins

There will be a baby shower for Mandy Hedden Deckard on Sunday, March 10, 1:30-3:00 in the fellowship hall. Mandy is having a boy AND a girl and is registered at McCoy-Tygart, Amazon, and Walmart.

Turner Receives International Award for Conference Website Design

Jacob Turner was recently awarded 3rd place in Website Visual Design at the annual meeting of the international United Methodist Association of Communicators (UMAC), which was held February 21-22 in St. Louis, Missouri. He received this award as one of many given by the association in recognition of excellence in communications. Jacob, who is the son of Steven and Sandra Turner, is a senior at Hendrix College and works part-time for the Arkansas conference as their Website and Analytics Specialist.

UMW Day Circle Make Days for Girls Kits

The Day Circle of the UMW have completed another project of sewing Days for Girls kits to be distributed where sustainable personal feminine hygiene is necessary. The women sewed the pads and liners. Assisting them financially was the Hampton UMW, who also sewed the bags for the kits. The women completed 40 kits this year, adding up to many, many hours of work along with fellowship. Now the Day Circle is working on pillows for Arkansas Children's Hospital (see story on page 1), but they are always looking for a way to use their sewing abilities. They also are planning to help with the Grant County Museum's 150th-year anniversary of Grant County by displaying and doing crafts while on site.

Among the women who helped make the kits are pictured clockwise from top right: Barbara Horn; Gail Damron and Becky Ross; Betty Robinette; and Becky Ross, Norma Daniel, and Betty Robinette. We thank all of these women for their heart for others and using their gifts to help those in need.

United Methodist Kids

Our UMK program is two weeks into our series called the "Rainbow Promise" and God's covenant. The next two series will focus on Easter and the events surrounding this sacred time.

Pam Reed has started a singing time each Wednesday at 6:15 then we dismiss our classes at 6:30. We have been blessed with help from the older youth Preston Scott, Reid Roark, Haze Robinette, Jameson Archer, and Rivers Wells with the science and cooking sections of our lessons with the 1st- thru 4th-grade classes. Having the youth help has been a great opportunity for our UMK children to learn and recognize there are ways to serve our church even if you are not an "adult." As a church, we are very blessed to have a great group of youth who our UMK kids can look up to.



Preston and Reid demonstrate condensation to the 3rd -& 4th-grade class

Our mission project, led by Karen Rutherford, will focus on Heifer International. Look for more information to follow! Thank you to all of the volunteers we have on Wednesday nights to help make our UMK program successful.

*-Nicole Cacciatori
UMK Director*

Ozark Mission Project Summer Camps

Ozark Mission Project (OMP) is conducts camps for children and youth to participate in to give "campers a glimpse into the lives of Arkansans who are in situations unfamiliar to most participating youth." Camps offered this summer are OMP 101, a three-day camp held July 29-31 for students who have completed 4th and 5th grades. There are two sessions to choose from: Morning (8-12) or Afternoon (1-5). Campers will "learn how to serve others through hands on mission projects, games, worship and fellowship." The cost is \$90 per camper (includes snack and t-shirt). Camp will be held at **St. Paul United Methodist Church** at 2223 Durwood Road in Little Rock. Three of our UMK, Baylor, Carter, and Tatum, have registered for the morning sessions and invite others to attend as well!

There are high school six-day camps (four work days) for youth who have completed 8th-12th grades and middle school five-day camps (three work days) for youth who have completed 6th and 7th grades. Dates of these camps can be found on their website. For more information or to register, please visit <http://ozarkmissionproject.org/camps>.

Youth Ministries



Youth Sunday was on February 10 with the UMY leading both services and UMY pastor, Robin Roark, delivering the sermon.

Pictured above at the second service are: (front row) Rivers Wells, Mary Taylor, Jameson Archer, Joanna Loretz, Cooper Cody; (middle row) Bryce Terry, Addison Savage, Sara Taulbee, Emily Baker, Karalina Scott, Emily Taylor; (back row) Jackson Appleget, Nick Cacciatori, Reid Roark, Haze Robinette, Preston Scott, and Robin Roark

Cookson Hills Offering

This month, we begin collecting funds for Cookson Hills, a Native American mission in Oklahoma, and their missionary director, Meredith Whitaker. Cookson Hills provides home, school, and therapy for kids who are at-risk. We will continue to collect in April and May. Please mark your offering envelope "Cookson."

United Methodist Men

Monday, March 18, at 6:30 p.m. is the monthly Man Church. Norman Frisby will be the guest speaker.

Snack Supper Volunteers Needed

Thank you to those who have volunteered for youth meals! We still have dates that need volunteers. Can you provide the youth with a light meal at 5:30 on any of these Sundays? We need meals on April 14 and May 5, 12, and 19. There is a signup sheet in the Narthex so you can volunteer for any of these Sundays or you can contact Sandra Turner, UMY snack coordinator, at sparhamturner@gmail.com. The Youth really appreciate you!