

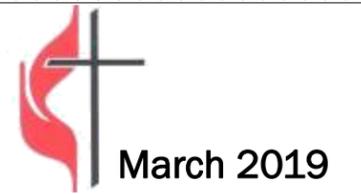
First United Methodist Church
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Sunday services: 9:00 & 11:00 am.
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The Methodist Messenger

First United Methodist Church
Edinburg Texas



“Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep.” Romans 12:15

As a pastor, I find myself invited in to the most intimate moments of people’s lives. I am invited in to the moments of their deepest pains and betrayals. I am asked to help hold their greatest burdens. I am called upon to speak life and hope into their darkest fears. I am blessed to share their most profound joys. It can be a difficult task, but above all else, each of these create holy moments, where I am allowed to participate in heaven touching earth. Where the best of who we are in Christ Jesus is shared with each other.

When I ask the Lord, ‘what does it mean to pursue a deeper relationship with you,’ God responds by bringing these moments to mind. Becoming a “safe space” for another to share deeply, transparently, and confidently is humbling. It is holy. In these last few weeks, I have not posted as many pictures as I had envisioned with the Instagram journaling. Not because there weren’t incredibly powerful moments of the sacred in the every day. Instead, these moments were so personal, so intimate, that it seemed in appropriate to take a picture, let alone post it.

Soon we will be entering into the season of Lent. A season for fasting and praying. A season of repentance. There will be different study tools, ways to engage in holy reflection available in the sanctuary. There will be Lenten study/discussion groups starting March 13th through April 11th. There will be opportunities to give and to serve in holy sacrifice. All of these things are good and will bless you. Above all of these tools and opportunities, I want to encourage you to engage the Holy Spirit and time with the Lord in new ways. If your habit is to do personal/private devotions or study time, I would encourage you to find a prayer partner for Lent. Meet and pray together for these 6 weeks. Email each other encouraging words/scriptures each day/week. If your habit is to pray at the end of the day, try waking up early and spend time with God as the sun comes up.

If your family is usually scattered in different directions at dinner, resolve to eat dinner together several times a week throughout Lent and share where you see God moving in your lives.

If you have lost touch with special people in your life, make a point to reconnect between now and Easter and pray God’s abundance and presence over them.

I pray that as we each seek to engage God in new ways, as we press into even more intentional community, that we find ourselves more and more, sharing in holy moments together. That we would be humbled, renewed, and increasingly transformed into the image of Jesus – together.

Grace and Peace
Pastor Michelle

Nursery Staff



Music Ministry

Make plans to join us on **Easter Sunday, April 21**, as the Chancel Choir presents the cantata "Hallelujah! What a Savior!" at **10:30 a.m.**



Save the Date - Friday, March 29th at 7pm. Come on out to our 2nd annual Spaghetti Dinner and support our scholarship students and the music department! We will once again have our scholarship singers perform for you while you dine. Please join us and help contribute to our scholarship fund!

Youth

Lenten Devotional/Study

Pastor Michelle will be leading a Lenten Devotional/Study discussion from "Reflections On The Writings Of C.S. Lewis: Mercy Passion Joy. Meeting times will be Wednesday evenings at 6pm hosted at the parsonage (1522 Cedar Street) and on Thursday afternoons at 2pm, hosted at the church in the Social Room. Booklets will be available starting Ash Wednesday, a donation of \$2 per book is suggested.

VBS Already??

It is time to start planning our Vacation Bible School for this summer. If you are willing to help and/or feel called to head up VBS, please be in touch with Pastor Michelle at michelle.vernone@gmail.com. A preliminary planning meeting will be held after church on Sunday March 17th immediately following the 11 am service. If you are interested in serving through VBS but cannot make the meeting, please email Pastor Michelle so you can be included on the information and updates!

A culture of Invitation

As we continue our 2019 commitment to pursue a deeper relationship with God, we remember that a deeper relationship with God means opening ourselves up to new/deeper relationships with the people around us. Part of being a healthy, vital, growing faith community and church means cultivating a culture of invitation. Stepping outside our normal comforts to invite people to church with us or invite them to the events of the church. It's not just about getting people to church, it's about inviting them into the important places in our lives. Good things are happening in this church. Great things are happening within our community. We should be eager to share it! I encourage and challenge you to be bold this month. Invite a different friend to church each week this month. Invite a friend to attend Josh Samaniego's recital on March 3rd. Invite a friend to come receive ashes on Ash Wednesday. Invite a friend to join you for the Lenten Devotional/Study discussions. Invite a friend to the Fifth Sunday Combined Worship and Potluck. Invite a friend to come for prayer on Monday nights at 6:30pm. Invite your friends to youth on Sunday nights! Invite your friends to join you for coffee or to hang out while you drop your kids at youth J. Invite someone to join you at Sunday School. Invite someone at church you don't know well to join you for lunch after church. Being friendly or nice in passing isn't really enough. There is a difference between being "friendly" and making someone feel "welcome." Invitation gives someone the opportunity to belong. It's ok if they say, "no". It's ok if you think, "church isn't their thing". Invite them anyway. Our job and our joy is to invite people into proximity of Jesus and then let God do the rest.

Volunteers Needed in the Nursery

We are looking for an additional paid nursery staff person to work Sunday mornings from 9am – 12:15pm and/or volunteers who would be willing to serve 1x a month from 10am – 12:15pm. Persons interested must be 18 years of age or older and will need to complete Rio Texas Conference required training along with a criminal history check. Thank you for loving our littles well and investing in the future of the Kingdom (and our church)!

Ash Wednesday March 6th

Pastor Michelle will be offering the imposition of ashes "to go" on Ash Wednesday in the Social room from 7am – 9am; 11am – 1pm; 5pm -7:30pm. She will also be available to bring ashes to you during the day between those times.

Fifth Sunday Combined Worship and Potluck with a Town Hall Meeting!

March 31st will be our next 5th Sunday combined worship service at 10am followed by a good ol' fashioned Methodist potluck lunch! We will also use this time to update the congregation on what is going on in the life of our church, introduce our 2019 board members and discuss some upcoming events that we need the church's input on. Mark your calendars and plan to bring your best dish!

Church Work Days!

There is some work to be done on the church property and to get the prayer garden ready for Easter! We will have 2 opportunities in March for you to help out! Thursday March 21st starting at 5:30pm and on Saturday March 23rd starting at 8:30am. This is a great opportunity to earn service hours, so invite your youth and friends to help serve! Plan to bring your work gloves and yard tools. Many hands make light work. Please contact Scott Wilke with any questions at scott-abs@hotmail.com or call him at (956) 566-2939.

Easter Boxes to Bless the Hungry!

Easter Boxes to Bless the Hungry!
 "Then these righteous ones will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?' "And the King will say, 'I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!"

Last Easter we were blessed to be able to give more than 125 food boxes for the EFUMC Food Pantry clients and plan to do so again this year through your support and generosity. Please consider contributing to/funding a complete box to bless another less fortunate than ourselves. We will assemble all the dry goods on Palm Sunday, April 14th at 5pm. We have sent out an email with a link to a survey (via Survey Monkey) to determine the best day/time for distribution for volunteer participation. In previous years, we have done the distribution on Maundy Thursday. However, last year we struggled to find enough volunteers and this year many of our "regulars" will be out of town. In the survey we are asking if people would select either Thursday morning or Wednesday late afternoon/ early evening. If you are NOT a "online survey" person and are willing and able to help with supporting, preparing, distributing these Easter Blessing Boxes, please contact the church office (edinburgfirst@sbcglobal.net or call (956) 381-9806.



Thank you! We cannot begin to thank everyone enough for the prayers, cards, calls, and delicious meals! We are so blessed to have such a caring church family. Mark is on the mend and recovering well. Thank you again for the love and support.

Mark & Kelly
Carlson



Our heartfelt appreciation goes out to the following individuals who have chosen to Remember or Honor loved ones through a special contribution.

In Memory of: Given by: Perpetuated in:

CAMPUS MINISTRY MEALS

It is our custom to do meals during the month of March for Campus Ministry - however, we will be sharing the month with another church in the area! So instead of prepping a meal to be delivered, we are asking for frozen meals that they can keep in their freezer for the off-days when hot meals are not being delivered. Some favorites are: frozen Smuckers Crustable sandwiches, frozen lasagna, taquitos, corn dogs, hot pockets, frozen pizzas, breakfast sandwiches, etc. You can drop off your frozen food donations to the church and we will make sure they get delivered to Campus Ministry. Please make sure your donated items are labeled "Campus Ministry". Donations of paper goods, canned beverages, k-pod coffees are always welcome. Thank you for investing in the lives of our college community!



UNDERWRITE OUR NEWSLETTER

If you own or operate a business and are a part of our church family, we invite you to underwrite our newsletter. The cost for underwriting is \$55 per issue. You may choose to underwrite a single issue or multiple issues. In exchange for your support, we will acknowledge your donation and place a copy of your business card in the newsletter.