

First United Methodist Church
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Sunday services: 8:15, 9:45 & 11:00 am.

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The Methodist Messenger

First United Methodist Church Edinburg Texas



Happy Easter! Christ Is Risen! And we are reminded that we are a people of the Resurrection! We are new creations in Christ! We are promised lives of fullness and abundance as children of God. And as children of God, we are called into something greater than ourselves. We are called and charged with being bringers of the Kingdom of Heaven to earth. As disciples, we have a responsibility to both the church and to the community; those who are part of the body, and those who have yet to experience the love of Jesus.

No matter what great programs we have, events we have, studies we can offer, a healthy, growing church community begins by cultivating a culture of prayer. Everything we do, every decision we make, every success we enjoy in bringing new people into relationship with Jesus begins with prayer. Starting this month, I'm going to ask each of you to start in a very simple way. I'm asking every person who receives this newsletter, every person who attends EFUMC, to start prayer walking their neighborhood. As we walk, we'll be intentionally praying for ourselves, our church, our neighborhood, and our city. We'll be praying and working towards our own individual health as well as the health of our community. Through the Church Health Center, we will provide monthly prayer walking guides (free of cost) that you can pick up at church or can send you through an email (just email me at the church office and I'll send it to you). The walking devotions are focused on guiding individuals, so I would ask that as you meditate on

the scripture the devotional gives you, you would include the question, "How does this apply to my church life and my church family? How do we as the church, live into these ideals and teachings from scripture?" The devotions for April revolve around The Abundant Life and what scripture offers us in an abundant life.

In the Fall, we'll be starting prayer walking groups. So far, we have 2 planned. One will be led early in the morning once a week (before work) by our Wesley Nurse Cindy Bishop. I will lead one once a week after work hours. We'll begin by prayer walking the neighborhoods surrounding our church. We'll also schedule walks in which we will prayer walk locations that represent the 7 spheres of influence in our city. For example, we will prayer walk the area around City Hall, asking for God's provision, favor, and influence in our government and praying God's wisdom and grace for political leaders. We'll prayer walk around schools, places of commerce and finance, media outlets, etc. asking for God's favor and protection in our city and our country. We will pray, then watch to see how God begins to transform us and our community.

I know there are many of you who enjoy different modes of exercise than walking. These devotions can be used in a variety of activities. If you are a cyclist, I encourage you to put together a group (I'll help you get the word out) to ride and pray as your ride. We have a few people in our community who are runners. This would be another great avenue to gather, run and pray together. If we each take the

section of the city/surrounding areas that are closest to us, we can cover the whole city in prayer. Imagine that. Imagine being a people committed to physically covering our community in prayer.

In *Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory* by Tod Bolsinger, the author makes the statement that if we want to see change and growth in our faith communities, people have to see our personal transformation. Our willingness to live out our faith openly (flaws, failures, victories, and all) builds trust within the community that engages others to follow that example and pursue transformed lives as well. So, it's important for you to know that anything I ask of our community I am doing first. I have already begun to prayer walk the neighborhood around the parsonage. Before I asked the church to tithe, I tithed to the church. In asking each member to find a place to actively serve inside and outside the church, I serve and support the food pantry and serve on the board of campus ministry, as well as the Health Ministry through our Wesley Nurse. I pray that you will see those places of transparency and come to trust how deeply committed I am to this community. I pray that growing trust will give birth to new ways we as a community will partner to bring the Kingdom of Heaven to our corner of the world. I pray that we will pray – pray with purpose, power, and joy for what God is doing in this season.

Blessings,
Pastor Michelle



Mark your calendar NOW for the

Graduation Lunch

Come join us as we honor our graduating high school students on **April 29th at 11:00am immediately following a COMBINED SERVICE at 10:00am.**

We will be changing our worship service times...for this Sunday ONLY:

April 29th is our first 5th Sunday Potluck! On 5th Sundays we will have one combined service at 10am followed by a potluck lunch at 11am to encourage fellowship and relationships in our church family. It's also an excellent opportunity to invite people to join you for worship and fellowship who maybe have not been in a while or invite someone who needs a church family!

So bring your best dish and help us celebrate our graduating seniors.

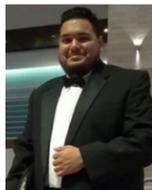
If someone in your family is graduating this year, please contact Lynn Noe ASAP at 956.381.9806 so that no one will be left out!



From the EFUMC Music Department...

We are blessed to have wonderfully talented students serve in the Chancel Choir, and I wanted to give you a chance to know more about them.

Angel Gomez (tenor) is a sophomore at UTRGV where he studies vocal performance. He is a former four-year Texas All-State Choir member and a graduate from McAllen Memorial High School. Angel will be traveling to England to be a part of the Cornish American Song Institute this summer.



Haley Guerra (soprano) is a senior at Robert Vela High School where she is involved in the Choir program. Haley, a former Texas All-State Choir member, will be attending UTRGV next year and plans to double major in political science and music.

Joshua Samaniego (baritone) is a sophomore at UTRGV where he studies music education with an emphasis in choral music. Joshua, a two-year Texas All-State Choir member, graduated from McAllen Memorial High School and currently teaches voice lessons at Musicademy. Along with singing with the Chancel Choir, Joshua serves EFUMC as a part of our worship team, Crossroads.



Victoria "Tori" Frias (alto) is a senior at McAllen Memorial High School where she is a part of the school's choir program. She's also a dedicated volunteer at the McAllen Boys & Girls Club. Tori plans to attend Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio where she will major in Social Work. Along with singing with the Chancel Choir, Tori serves EFUMC as a part of our worship team, Crossroads.



Please keep these students in your prayers and consider supporting the music ministry so we can continue our student scholarship program.

Blessings, Omar Samaniego
Music Director, EFUMC



Congregational Care Team

In response to Christ's call to love one another, the Congregational Care Team seeks to extend Christian care, concern, and support to the homebound, hospitalized or any member or friend of our congregation needing help. That care includes: visitation, offering communion that has been blessed by our pastor, delivering meals or offering Christ's love in someone's life in many other ways. Please pray that all those needing care can be identified. If you would like to be part of the Congregational Care Team or would be willing to cook a meal upon request, please contact Michelle Vernone or Nancy Murray (956) 309-7376. **"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Colossians 3:12"**

Changes to Worship Times

After evaluating the needs and opinions of the community and recommendations of the Ad Board, I believe we will work toward changing service times and setting a designated Sunday School hour to begin Sunday, July 1st. The recommended times are to have contemporary worship at 9am, Sunday School from 10am to 10:50am, and traditional worship to remain at 11am.

I understand the difficulty of adjusting when it's "your" service time that is changing. However, I ask you to consider the overall benefits to the church. Those who attend the 8:15am service can have the exact same service at the 11am hour. By creating a designated Sunday School hour that is not in competition with a worship service, we create the opportunity to get entire families into Sunday School. There were many contributing factors to making the decision, however the greatest among them was the desire expressed repeatedly to have greater unity in the body. Though we could have chosen to move to only one service, it is important to offer alternative expressions of worship in resilient and growing church community.

To that end, the contemporary service will also be rebranding come July 1st. It will be known as Crossroads. Jeremiah 6:16, "stand at the crossroads and look. Look for the ancient path, the good and Godly way and walk in it. You will find rest for your souls." This service will examine what it means to navigate the ancient path of faith and discipleship in the modern world. It will include emergent/responsive worship elements and then offer small group sessions during the 10am Sunday School hour.

I know change is difficult. I would ask you to prayerfully consider how to transition into one of these two services. I would lovingly and gently remind you that our Sunday worship is for God. We come to bless God and tell God we love him and that we are committed to him. These changes might feel inconvenient, but I would ask you to consider them a holy inconvenience, where let go of something to press into the new thing God is offering. If you are struggling with these changes, I encourage you to give me a call. Let's go have coffee and talk about it. Let's find a way to move through these changes in unity.

Sermon Series Starting

April 8th will start a 5 week series based on the movie Risen. What does the truth of the resurrection mean to each of us? How do we live as people of the resurrection? We'll be viewing the movie at Lynn and Mark Noe's house (101 E. Kiwi, McAllen, 78504) on Thursday April 5th at 6:30pm. Please call the church office to RSVP or Lynn's cell (956)369-6055. Please bring a snack to share!

April 8th - John 3:16-17 - The Jesus You Never Knew

April 15 - John 14:12 and Matthew 14:28-29 - The Jesus Who Calls You To Stop Playing It Safe

April 22 - Luke 24:5-6; John 20:19;1 Peter 3:15 - Resurrection: Myth or Miracle

April 29 - John 11:25 - The Greatest Come Back In The History Of The World

May 6th - John 10:10; Revelation 3:16; Mark 12:30-31 - The Jesus Who Wants You Fully Alive

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:

Clare Wilson

Marilyn Dunphy

Mary Grace Messmore

Marilyn Dunphy

Food Pantry

Richard Auen

George & Sidney Jackson

Marilyn Auen

George & Sidney Jackson

Richard Auen

Cindy Bishop

Marilyn Auen

Cindy Bishop

FEED THE HUNGRY – THANK YOU!

Food Pantry Easter Blessing

This year's Easter Box food distribution was a huge success! We handed out all 125 boxes of food, fed lunch to approximately 200 people. Thank you so much to all who helped make this event possible, from donating a share/box, to packing boxes, to serving hot dogs, to loading boxes in food pantry client's cars.

We could not have done it without you!

