

# First United Methodist Church Commerce, Texas



Volume 21, Issue 10

October 2023 Newsletter

## MUSIC & MORE UPDATE

M&M is off to a great start! At this time, we have 13 children who attend weekly to sing, learn music, have fun, and most importantly learn about Jesus. We are currently learning "Living in the Light" to perform in church on November 5th.



## FALL FEST FOR MISSIONS OCTOBER 28 10AM-3PM

*Join us and invite your friends for a Saturday of fun, fellowship and shopping. We will have baked goods, Prayer Shawl handmade items, market items, Silent Auction, cookbooks and lunch. For the kids, there will be a bounce house and games. Mark your calendars and spread the word.*

*If you or someone you know has a carnival game we can borrow, please contact Amy Stark 903-246-1487.*

## YOUTH NEWS

Thank you to those who came out and supported our youth at the car wash. I would like to announce that Sherwood Forest Farms Wreath and Garland sales are coming back to the church. The youth will be selling wreaths and garlands starting October 1st through November 6th to help raise money for Bridgeport Summer Camp. Order at the church office or online at <https://sherwoodfundraiser.com/evergreens4umyf>. Please contact Jamie Bourcy at [jamie-bourcy@gmail.com](mailto:jamie-bourcy@gmail.com) if you have any questions.



## MISSION OF THE MONTH-HUNT COUNTY CLOTHE-A-CHILD

Cloth-a-Child has been selected as the October Mission of the Month by the Serve Team. Each year, this organization partners with Wal-Mart to permit eligible families to buy new clothes. Since the pandemic, families have been given a specially-designed \$50 Wal-Mart gift card to shop, rather than appearing in person on a specified December morning. In 2022, 205 cards were distributed, with Wal-Mart reporting no misuse of the cards, according to director Belinda Miller.

Children may be recommended for the program by family members, teachers, counselors and/or social service agencies. To qualify, a child must be enrolled in Commerce ISD. When the child's eligibility is confirmed, all other school-aged siblings are also deemed eligible.

Selected families may come by Commerce Elementary school on December 6 or 7, where they will be given a card and a list of items they may purchase. Interestingly, the sheet is not limited to clothing; since the overarching goal is to meet children's needs, it also includes groceries. For example, Ms. Miller said that a teenage mom enrolled at Commerce High School could use the card to buy baby clothes and formula for her infant.

This program operates on a strict pay-as-you-go policy. No family is notified of their acceptance until the money is in hand to pay for the cards.

FUMC-Commerce can support this organization in several ways.

1. Pray that the program is successful in meeting the needs of Commerce children.
2. Submit a student's name.
3. Drop dollar bills or a check with Cloth-a-Child in the memo line in the collection plate during the Sundays in October. If you give online just click on the appropriate button.



Let's come together this month to support this worthwhile program that benefits children in our community.

## Notes from Pastor Cheryl



*Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, so that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.* From the "A Service of Word and Table I," The United Methodist Hymnal, Copyright 1989, The United Methodist Publishing House, p. 10.

The "Epiclesis" offers a moment of transformation in our communion liturgy. Our United Methodist interpretation is that the real presence of Christ is a gift to us in the breaking of the bread and sharing of the cup. Remember the Walk to Emmaus story, when the disciples, who had been walking and talking with Jesus for hours, said their eyes were opened in the breaking of the bread.

We have not "become for the world the body of Christ" if the only thing we have done is ask the Holy Spirit to make it so. That would be no more than perhaps a lovely wish. To move from wish to reality requires us to establish and maintain relationships, systems, structures, and sometimes institutions whose purpose is to be, build, enable, and expand such "embodiment." Good intentions do not fulfill this sacrifice -- lots of good works do.

But what good works? What kinds of good works help us "be for the world the body of Christ?" Jesus showed us the essence by "preaching good news to the poor." Not preaching only by giving a sermon in church. The biblical term behind this word has almost nothing to do with sermons or churches or worship for that matter. The word is "proclaim" or "announce" or "herald the message." It means "get the word out," plain and simple. It's a directive for the whole body of Christ, primarily in its mission in and to the world.

Which brings us to the second troublesome term: "poor." In some Christian circles, this term often gets translated "lost" or "poor in spirit" (importing Matthew's version of the Sermon on the Mount into Luke's quote from Isaiah), and the whole action thus gets translated something along the lines of "proselytize people who aren't yet Christians like us."

But if we remember these words from their original languages and context in the ministries of Isaiah and Jesus, we get something much different and so much simpler that we all can do it. "Make sure that poor people are getting good news from us!" What kinds of messages and realities would constitute "good news" for poor people? It's not just food and clothing pantries, or places where folks can get financial help for past due bills, although all of these are indispensable. The top two pieces of good news poor folks could receive would be about access and connections.

"Access" means jobs that can help them and their families get out of poverty, safe, reliable child care, medical care, and legal help that actually helps, and schools that help their kids perform well. Every single one of these is a real challenge for poor people in the United States. "Connections" means real, personal relationships with people who are not stuck in poverty and who will stick with them as close or closer than those who are.

It is ultimately personal connections that see people through and beyond poverty for themselves and their families. If we're serious about being sure that people are hearing good news from us, we'll find ways not only to advocate for social change and fund and improve programs, but also to be personally involved and connected reliably and over time with the lives of people who are poor.

If we're careful what we pray, we admit we can't do it all. But we also commit to do everything we can. And in what is God's and what is ours to do, we ask the Spirit to remake us through this sacrament into the body of Christ, one with him in ministry to the whole world. It is the goodness of our Lord Jesus that in feeding us at Table, he makes us one with him, and sends us into the world with everything we need, far more than we can ask or imagine, to embody him anew wherever we are.

From the Table, to the world . . . and back again. This is the rhythm of our life, and our prayer. It is why we need constant communion, as John Wesley preached. But it is also why we can do no less than offer our praise and thanksgiving at Table with faith, and love, and grateful joy.

Come to the table of joy this week for World Communion Sunday. Then stay and enjoy a meal with your brothers and sisters in God's family. Get to know our new members who have joined our church in the last few weeks: Nan Clay and Sandy Sidwell. Church membership simply means you can participate fully in the governing and disciple-making mission of our particular congregation.

*Come to the Table of Joy!*

*This is God's table, it's not yours or mine.*

*Come to the Table of Joy.*

Barbara Hamm, 2008, United Methodist Worship & Song



## Prayer List 9-30-23

### Recent Concerns:

- ◆ Our world, country, & leaders
- ◆ Mayra Garcia
- ◆ Those affected by earthquakes and flooding in Morocco and Libya
- ◆ Joe Milligan
- ◆ Madonna St. Clair
- ◆ Betty Martin
- ◆ Rob Lee
- ◆ Rita Thompson
- ◆ Suzanne Kizer Carter
- ◆ Wyatt Bourcy
- ◆ Michael Sandel, Tiffany Evans' father

### Continued Prayers (long term):

- ◆ Mel Fox
- ◆ Priscilla McFarland
- ◆ Michael Vickers, Ginny Haight's father
- ◆ Kyle Smith
- ◆ Jack Gray
- ◆ Richard Stapleton, Al Stapleton's brother
- ◆ Tom Bailey
- ◆ Pete and Ann Chamberlain
- ◆ Carlos Rickman
- ◆ Rev. Dennis Wilkinson
- ◆ The leaders and citizens of Ukraine
- ◆ Bill Heitholt
- ◆ Janet & Jim Payne, Becky Coker's sister
- ◆ Georgia Gholston
- ◆ Manuel Henderson
- ◆ Melanie Cortea
- ◆ Judy Cortea
- ◆ Harold & Becky Coker
- ◆ Mabel and Carl Little
- ◆ Robert Seay
- ◆ Dudley Shaw (Robyn Elwell's brother-in-law)

### Austin:

- ◆ Ruby Vander Velde

### Ft. Worth:

- ◆ Mary Louise McMahan

### Legacy Oaks (Midlothian):

- ◆ Jerry Hutton

### Those serving in our military:

- ◆ Celeste Young, (Marines) & Chandler Teague (Navy), great-grandchildren of Lee Riddle
- ◆ 1st Lieutenant Cameron Lehr
- ◆ Lt. Dan Barton
- ◆ Daniel Chamberlain
- ◆ Sgt. Stephen Smith & Denise Smith



## PRAYER SHAWL UPDATE

Prayer Shawl is hard at work getting ready for the Fall Fest They are making items that sold well at last year's Merry Market and have added new items, too.



They delivered blankets and lap robes to several members and relatives in September and voted to donate cookies for the M&M after school children's choir. Their October meeting dates are on the calendar below. Everyone is welcome and invited!



If you are interested in giving flowers for the altar, please visit with Luann Huffman before worship on Sunday or contact her at 903-366-2899 or [lhuffman01@cumbytel.com](mailto:lhuffman01@cumbytel.com).

## UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES

- October 1-Potluck Luncheon** after worship
- October 5-Serve team** meets at 10:30am
- October 5-First Thursday Luncheon** at noon in the Family Ministry center
- October 7-Bishop Saenz's Visit** to the East District
- October 9-Prayer Shawl** meets at 9:30am
- October 10-Women's Study Group** at 5:15pm
- October 10-Trustees** meet at 6:30pm
- October 18-Halloween Family Night** at Little Ark
- October 19-Prayer Shawl crafting** meets at 9:30am
- October 23-27-Little Ark Decorated Pumpkin Auction**
- October 24-Women's Study Group** at 5:15pm
- October 26-Prayer Shawl Crafting** meets at 9:30
- October 26-Youth** meets from 6-7pm
- October 27-Little Ark Trick or Treating** and parties
- October 28-Fall Fest for Missions** from 10am-3pm
- October 30-Ad Council** meets at 6pm

## ONGOING WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

- Tuesdays-Men's Breakfast Group** meets at Texas Café Diner at 8am
- Wednesdays-Country Home Estates worship** at 2pm
- Wednesdays-Choir Rehearsals** at 7pm.
- Thursdays-M&M After School Choir** from 3:45-5:30pm (no M&M on October 12th due to Fall Break)

## BI-WEEKLY EVENTS

- Thursdays -Youth (26th only)** meets from 6-7pm (no Youth on October 12th due to Fall Break)



# Kicking off a New School Year!



Top Row: Welcome back PreK!; Lunch time in Toddler 1; Griddle Cakes with Grandparents; Splash pad field trip.



Bottom row: Toddler 2; First day of Preschool!

## ***A VERY SPECIAL FIRST THURSDAY***

*We celebrated Mary Means' 99th birthday on September 7th, with a great gathering of friends and family. Gene Lockhart led us in a rousing rendition of "Happy Birthday." Mary's wish for everyone was to have a life as blessed as hers.*



**In case of emergency pastoral care need,  
please call or text Pastor Cheryl at 940-613-5375.**

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