

Notes From Cheryl

PASTOR'S REPORT CHARGE CONFERENCE 2026

Blessings Table

Our location across the highway from East Texas A&M University and a low-cost motel next door make our neighborhood a perfect opportunity to feed hungry people. We stock a Blessings Table with portable convenience food and water, and we have a faithful following of people who utilize this resource. We keep prepared canned meals (ravioli, soup etc.) with pop tops, plus protein snack bars and other items as available. We have volunteers who shop for the Blessings Table weekly, and others put out new stock each day. If you happen to be out restocking the table and some neighbors come by, you can have engaging conversations and make new friends. Several members have helped individuals with special needs, such as a new wheelchair, food for cats and dogs, camping gear, and so on. Some of the clients have come to worship service to express their thanks. We are helping with their physical needs as well as building relationship to care for all the souls who help, shop, stock and receive food. We advertise and invite our neighbors to join us for meals after worship inside.

Commerce Homeless Task Force

We tried working with city leaders, other churches, and campus ministries to offer a Warm Center during adverse winter weather. We learned from our mistakes but will try to make improvements to our system and try again this winter. We have joined with Greenville's Homeless Task Force to transport people by bus to Greenville to take advantage of weekly Street Showers offered there through Wesley UMC and a nondenominational church.

Finances

We have a diminishing base of member givers. But we have taken the opportunity to make Little Ark Nursery and Preschool a major income stream for the church. In recent years, Little Ark will have paid approximately \$39,000 in reimbursements for building usage and \$24,000 as a percentage of tuition contribution. Our Little Ark ministry team consists of mostly church members, whereas before the team for Little Ark had only one or two church members. We no longer consider our ministry team a "board" because Little Ark is not its own entity. We filed paperwork to join Little Ark to the church so that it is an integral part of First United Methodist Church Commerce and will remain so. Not only does Little Ark help sustain us financially, it provides a wealth of opportunity to share Jesus with children and their families.



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This year we are instigating Wiggle Church weekly during the morning, and we are advertising this worship time on social media, at the library, and other places where preschoolers and their parents congregate. The children participate by singing, moving, and praising God, plus giving in the offering plate and hearing a Bible story. We also encourage everyone to participate in prayer time. We repeat worship service once a month in the evenings at pick-up time. We provide a simple meal so supper is taken care of, and we encourage the whole family to join in, plus anyone who wants to attend is welcome.

Serve Team

Our Serve Team organizes the volunteers for the Blessings Table and collects money during worship designated as "Drop A Dollar" funds for local, denominational, and global ministries such as Commerce ISD, UMCOR, Angel Tree Prison Ministry, Wesley Campus Ministry at East Texas A7M. Serve Team and Prayer Shawl puts on a Merry Market in December to raise money for missions, involving the entire church.

University Ministry

We work with Wesley Campus Ministry to invite and welcome college students into our church on Sundays, as well as supporting our campus ministry. We have seven students who sing with the church choir as section leaders. Most of them take part in other church activities as well. We are planning a Christmas music worship event which will utilize university students and youth as readers, actors, and singers, and we will get the word out to invite students to attend as a "front porch" activity.

Reconciling Ministries

We welcome all people to worship and fellowship with us. For several years we have held a Friends giving Rainbow Potluck after worship during November.

Youth Ministry

We have youth who especially love Bridgeport Camp and concentrate most of their fundraising efforts on getting there each summer! This year they will make the trip to Winter Camp as well.

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Children's Ministry

We have a few families from our Little Ark Daycare who have joined the church and are active in leadership. We offer a children's choir after school weekly, and the children sing in worship regularly and at a local retirement home seasonally.

Bible Study & Small Groups

The Friendship Sunday School class is a long-time active group in the church. We offer seasonal Bible studies as well. The men's group meets weekly for breakfast, and a women's group meets in the afternoon every other week. This year we will add a prayer group utilizing ancient prayer practices, plus offer a pastor's Bible study on Wednesday evenings.

Prayer Shawl is a well-organized active group that meets monthly to create hand-made gifts for sick, hospitalized, and grieving people. They stay in touch with elderly and disabled persons to keep them connected to the church.



Spooktacular Trunk or Treat!

OCTOBER 24 5-7 PM

Join us for a night full of fright and fun!
Bounce House, Games, & Hot Dog dinner for all!

We are accepting candy donations at the office. If you are interested in handing out candy or volunteering to help with food and activities please contact Jamie Bourcy at fumcccommerce@gmail.com or call/text (903) 243 3038

Angel Tree



Each Christmas Season we invite the children from families with a parent or family member who has been incarcerated to the church for treats, gifts and Santa. This is a wonderful and joyful ministry of our church and we are looking for volunteers to help with the party. If you are

interested in helping please contact Ashlyn Woods at ashlynrenee12@gmail.com.

Save the Date

