



**RETURN
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ODESSA, TEXAS
79761

Bring A Friend This Sunday	
8:00 AM	Adult Bible Class
9:00 AM	Traditional Worship —Sanctuary
10:00 AM	Sunday School, all ages
10:16 AM	The Bridge Worship, —3901 E. Yukon
11:00 AM	Fellowship Worship —Fellowship Center

First United Methodist Church, Odessa, Texas, founded in 1890, is a community of Christians who have pledged to support this church with their presence, their service, their gifts and their prayers. We dedicate ourselves to spreading God's Word throughout our community and to providing meaningful worship experiences, fellowship, and opportunities to fulfill the teachings of Jesus Christ through a variety of ministries. As United Methodists, "our doors, our hearts and our minds are open to all those who seek God's Grace."
The *CULTIVATOR* is a monthly publication whose exclusive purpose is to help FUMC-Odessa accomplish its Mission by communicating and "cultivating" the presence of Christ in the lives of this congregation.

*First United Methodist Church-Odessa
Mission Statement
We exist for **LIFE**...
To **Love** others, **Invite** them to join us as we **Follow**
Christ, who **Empowers** us to make a difference.*

Children's Ministry Invitations

**Children's Ministry
Parent's Night Out**

Every Third Friday
6:00- 8:30 pm

Feb. 16

RSVP
\$5 per child april@fumcodessa.org

**FAMILY
GAME
NIGHT**

Parents come join your kids for ...
FoundationKids Family Game Night!
Every third Wednesday for K-5th grades
Begins January 17th!
6-8pm in the Fellowship Center
Snacks provided.



www.fumcodessa.org



CULTIVATOR

Cultivating Christ's Presence in Our Congregation
Volume 16, Issue 2
February 2018

Multiple Opportunities To Commemorate Ash Wednesday

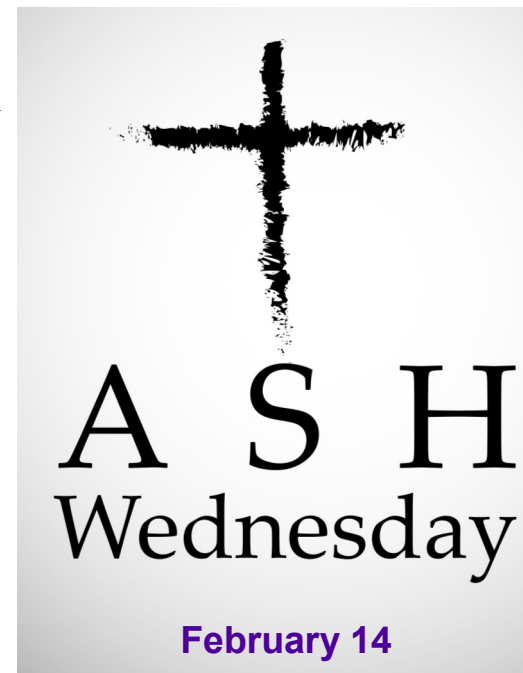
As a downtown church, 1st-UMC this year is reaching out to our downtown neighbors to invite them to Ash Wednesday rites of imposition of ashes, prayer and anointing.

You can help spread the word to your neighbors and business associates by handing out business cards which will list the hours and locations of our Ash Wednesday/Easter opportunities.

The first people to be contacted will be the parents of children in our 1st-UMC Children's Center. Others to receive a business card include downtown businesses, Odessa Police Dept., Medical Center Hospital staff, Odessa Regional Medical Center staff, Ector County library staff, and workers at City Hall, just to name a few.

also be stations for prayer and for anointing of oil on the forehead.

At **6:00 p.m., in the Sanctuary**, a fusion worship service will be conducted to include hymns, prayers, and the imposition of ashes.



Associate Pastor Karin Carlson is eager to open our church to our business neighbors in the heart of our city. The open invitation to Ash Wednesday is an easy ask. On Ash Wednesday—which coincides with Valentine's Day, February 14—the **Chapel will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.** as a convenience for people on the way to work. The **Chapel will continue to be open from 11:30—1:00 p.m.,** as a convenience during the lunch hour.

The Chapel will be set for people to receive ashes on their foreheads. There will

9th Annual Wild Game Dinner was a Success

When you look closely at the center picture, you will see about 115 people enjoying the 9th Annual Wild Game Dinner on January 27, 2018. They feasted on wild game fare of venison sausage, quail, roasted pig, and smothered venison steaks. As if the food wasn't a great reason to attend, then the door prizes of hunting-related items certainly was another fabulous attraction. Three speakers from The Texas Brigade enlightened and entertained the crowd with information about its program and summer camps for boys and girls ages 13-17. The inset photo shows Pastor Todd with volunteers Tiffany and Shay presenting a door prize to a lucky young man. Thank you to Boy Scout Troop 91 and the many volunteers. Please go to the FUMC-Odessa FaceBook to see more wonderful photos of this event.





Todd Salzwedel
Senior Pastor

Every once in a while, I look at my calendar for the week and think, “this is going to be a fairly open and free week. I really don’t have a whole lot going on!” And then, I walk in the doors of the church or glance at the text messages I’ve received over the last few hours. It’s then that I realize just how much I love getting to do what I do each and every day!

One of the myths of working in the church is that there are lull times...at least in my experience. Instead, we generally move from one season to another, on to another project, or are in a time of intense preparation for what is yet to come. Whether we are talking about the ministry in the local church or work abroad, it is clear there is always plenty to do.

Right now at First UMC, we are currently preparing for the season of Lent, when we deliberately focus on the divine and human nature of Jesus and the circumstances that bring him to Jerusalem. We conclude our time in Holy Week recalling the intense feelings and events that serve as catalyst for who we are today. Of course, Easter becomes the ultimate celebration of our new found life in Christ and the proclamation of the promises of God for us still today. But we also recognize that in the midst of our preparation, worship, mission and outreach, we have lives to live. The world does not stand still for us, nor do the issues and concerns that plague us go away. We have

responsibilities and commitments to tend to, and our calendars again become full.

This is the story for all of us. I’m no different. My family and I are blessed to call First UMC our church home and be in ministry with so many amazing disciples. Further, we are blessed to have opportunities to serve beyond the local church. During Lent, I will be travelling through the conference to the Listening Sessions our Provost Dr. Randall Partin has written about on the next page. I’ll have listening sessions here at the church pertaining to the General Conference in 2019. Alice will be involved with meetings at the conference level pertaining to health insurance and pension for clergy. These are all things we have responsibility for and the privilege to be a part of. The truth is, I wouldn’t change a thing.

Regardless of all the work we have to accomplish in our lives, I hope that all of us give God thanks that our energy, gifts, and talents are being put to good use...hopefully! I pray that we see our involvement as a blessing for ourselves and others. I also pray though, that we heed the words of the Lord recorded in Psalm 46:10 to “Be still and know that I am God.” For it is in that quiet time that we recognize the providence of God in our lives and allow ourselves to be called yet again into service for the benefit of the Kingdom of God!

Join me in a time of reflection this Lenten season and let the grace of God wash over you. May God continue to reveal himself to us in ways we simply couldn’t have imagined!

Grace and Peace, Todd



Celebrate Recovery is a Christian-based recovery program based on the eight Principles of Recovery

taken from Jesus’s eight Beatitudes and from the 12-Step Program. The program is geared to adults, 18 years old or older, and it is designed to work for any Hurt, Hang-up, or Habit. For more information, please contact Jody Wallin, Congregational Care Pastor, (432) 337-1527.

Every Monday 6:30 p.m.—9:00 p.m.
Student Ministry Building



Nine students have begun the classes for Confirmation. This important rite of passage in the Methodist tradition will be celebrated on Sunday, **April 8th.**

...who Empowers us to make a difference in our church, our community and our world.

THANK YOU
From CONNECTION CARD

On behalf of all the angelic homeless folk I’ve come to know in Odessa, TX, I’d like to say Thank You & God bless you & How much its appreciated al that this church does for those in need.
Be blessed and live in Peace,
Breezy Wilson

THANK YOU
From MACKEY CHAPEL

To the members & staff of 1st United Methodist Church,
Thank you for all that you do for Mackey Chapel. Your gift of greenery was a blessing during the Christmas season. The donations from your members provided resources that increased our joy during December.
Thank you, again,
Mackey Chapel U.M.C.

THANK YOU
From WILD GAME DINNER

VOLUNTEER CREW	Jim Findley
Russell Kimble	Jordan Groening
Jim Carlson	Britani Severance
Steve Riley	Brad Dyrstad
Brad Watts	Debra Meador
Gabe & Perry	Steve Meador
Grewell	Boy Scout Troop 91
	Volunteer Ladies

SPONSORS
Bulldog Safety Anchors
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Gun Sport
Tejas Shooting Sports
Betsy and Buzz Hurt

~Memorials~

In Memory of
Chrystal Fouche
Given by
Lynda & Bill Fowler
Dana & Michael Ashton
Gloria & LaDoyce Lambert
Joy White
Diana Hanway
Niki Wallace
Barbara & Rick Browning
Doris McElmurry
Caroline & Jim Howard
Sue & Buddy McDonald
Paula Ahders
Nancy Spano & Dub Riley

In Memory of
AnEll Crudup
Given by
Pat & Glen Larum
Dana & Michael Ashton
Johnnie & Hugh Williams
Doris McElmurry
Spice of Life
In Memory of
AnEll Crudup
Given by
8:00 Sunday School Class

Children’s & Family
Ministries
In Memory of
Shelly Weaver
Given by
Jimmie Parker
Sanctuary Choir Fund
In Memory of
AnEll Crudup
Given by
Lura & Dick Sivalls

Children’s Clothes
Closet
In Memory of
Chrystal Fouche
Given by
Robbie & Dan Brazelton
In Memory of
Jean Heggemeier
Given by
Pat & Glen Larum
In Memory of
Billie Hill
Given by
Glen Larum



With Deepest
Sympathy
To the friends
and family of
Benna Babb

To Lynn & Randy Correa,
Cindy & Phil Fouche
Ashley & Joe Dee Thompson,
Gavin, Graham & Gray
For the death of their mother,
grandmother, and great-grandmother
Chrystal Fouche

To Brandi &
Trey Henderson,
Brewster, Declan & Sloane,
For the death of Trey’s father,
Walter “Sonny” Henderson, Jr.
To the friends and family of
Rowena Byrd

We exist for LIFE...To LOVE others, INVITE them to join us as we FOLLOW Christ...



Youth Pastor Caleb Eckel wants the congregation to know the fabulous students active in Echo Student Ministry. Here is the first of many spotlights on our youth.

Student Spotlight: Grace Henry

Junior at Permian High School

Involved with: Varsity Choir, officer; Latin Club, Vice President Junior Board, Senate.

Favorite Color: Navy Blue

Future plans: Choir director or be a graphic designer.

Involvement at 1st-UMC: Grace has been in Echo youth group for 5 years: Sanctuary Choir; 1st grade Sunday School teacher; Audio-Visual Tech Team.

The Pawhuska, Oklahoma mission trip 2017 summer: "It opened my

eyes to mission work that can be done closer to home."



Grace Henry & Jordan Groening
Echo Christmas Party

Favorite youth group moment:

Sitting around a camp fire--it was a really cool moment when everyone opened up and we started to become a family.

How is God working in your life?

"I've been connecting with the church and with my friends outside the church so much better recently. Some people who don't know about

God have now been asking me about it. It's opened really great opportunities to share the gospel."

KINGDOMYOUTHCONFERENCE.COM

KINGDOM
YOUTH CONFERENCE

March 23-24 Cost \$20
Contact caleb@fumcodessa.org

D6 velocity
10-11am Sundays
Student Ministry Center

Feast
February 7 6-8pm

Children's Ministry Choir has Begun!



Children's Ministry Choir has officially started on Wednesday evenings. Alice Salzwedel is leading the 1st-5th graders in learning different songs and getting them ready to sing on Palm Sunday. I look forward to having the children sing before the church body in the coming months!

April Cole, Children's Pastor



Important Information About Listening Sessions Around Conference

This information is from the New Mexico Conference weekly email-newsletter. Updates or subscriptions are easily available at www.nmconfum.com.

Pastor Todd has scheduled an Information session for our congregation on Sunday, February 4 at 10:00 a.m. in the sanctuary and 12:15 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.

What Does a Way Forward Look Like for the New Mexico Conference?



Rev. Randall Partin

Dear Friends and Colleagues in Ministry, As you are likely aware, our denomination is facing uncertain times as we struggle through debates over human sexuality--essentially how and whether we are going to include gay and lesbian persons in ministry and the life of the church and how and whether we might maintain unity in the face of such diverse opinions, preferences, and practices.

The task of navigating us through this time has been taken up by our Council of Bishops and a specially appointed Commission on a Way Forward, which is a special, called session of the General Conference scheduled for February of 2019. While the Commission continues their work, the Council of Bishops has asked annual conferences to foster "listening sessions" for preliminary feedback on the proposed way forward (currently summarized in three loose "sketches" as outlined in sidebar.).

We have scheduled four such listening sessions with members of our delegation throughout the New Mexico Annual Conference for this spring:

Feb. 18 Western Hills UMC in El Paso 3:00 pm
March 4 First UMC in Odessa 3:00 pm
March 18 First UMC in Clovis 3:00 pm
April 22 Central UMC in Albuquerque 3:00 pm

While this divisive topic can raise anxiety levels, I believe it is right and fitting for us to gather for some further conversation and "conferencing" in the spirit of our on-going sharing that began last year at Annual Conference and the conversations from Bishop Bledsoe's Fall Itineration. As I shared at the Annual Conference session, part of what makes a conference a conference is that we talk, we discuss, we interact with each other (even when it is challenging).

One word of caution, however: because the work of the Commission is as-yet unfinished, our time together this spring will not be a debate, nor will we conclude our time together by taking votes or registering preferences. Our objective will simply be to share the information about where we are and where our denomination is in this process, learn more about the "sketches" currently being developed and proposed for a Way Forward, and discuss (together and with our delegation) how and where our values, our hopes, and our fears lie as the people called Methodist in New Mexico and far West Texas.

I ask for your fervent prayers for the Commission's work, for our delegation members, for our Bishop, and for all who would lead us. I hope you make plans to join one of our listening sessions and I look forward to seeing you there.

As always, I am grateful to be in ministry with you all!

In Christ,
Randall
Randall Partin, Provost

Questions to be addressed at the Listening Sessions:

What are your fears with respect to the current impasse in the Church?

- For you (personally), what are your most important values and convictions in seeking a way forward for The United Methodist Church?
- What implications might there be for your local congregation under each of the three sketches?
- What are your hopes with respect to the Way Forward?

The Three "Sketches":

- #1 – Affirms the current Book of Discipline language and places a high value on accountability.
- #2 – Removes restrictive language and places a high value on contextualization. This sketch also specifically protects the rights of those whose conscience will not allow them to perform same gender weddings or ordain LGBTQ persons.
- #3 – Is grounded in a unified core that includes shared doctrine and services and one Council Of Bishops, while also creating different branches that have clearly defined values such as accountability, contextualization and justice.

FEBRUARY ELEMENT: DISCIPLESHIP



It is always good to be reminded that **disciples** are *learners, students*. There is always something to learn. Thank goodness we have a lifetime of new days to learn. As believers in Christ, we are disciples in all arenas of our life, learning how to share God’s love. Parenting comes to mind when I think of “learning.” Parenting is one of the greatest gifts but it is not easy. Ask my kids (who are young adults now) how much I messed up as a parent. One of the best things my husband and I learned as parents was to find a church home. For us, it is FUMC as well as our other church family Mackey Chapel UMC. We have committed to being active learners by serving, which is instrumental in learning how to parent. For me, each time I hear the congregation state their vows at a baptism, I am reminded of what a disciple is and of God’s purpose that every family has a place in God’s family.

With God’s help we will proclaim the good news, and live according to the example of Christ.

We will surround (these persons) with a community of love and forgiveness, that (they) may grow in (their) trust of God, and be found faithful in their service to others.

We will pray for (them), that (they) may be true disciples who walk in the way that leads to life. (UMH, p.35)

I am grateful as a parent for the faithful prayers, presence and partnership of FUMC in our daughters lives. Even though both of the girls are off at college now, I am excited about February’s D6 2Gen Curriculum special topic: Marriage & Family. It still equips me for healthy conversations with them. This month will complete FUMC’s second quarter of the D6 2Gen Curriculum with children, youth and an adult Sunday school class. This month’s special topic is Marriage and Family. Most of us would agree that there is an ongoing debate in our culture on marriage and family that reflects the need for a biblical worldview on these foundational concepts. Kids and adults will be equipped to promote and defend a biblical view of marriage, family, and discipleship. The Preschool kids will focus on *what the Bible says about family*. The premise is an affirmation that God created families. Short lessons will examine what the Bible says about the family unit, and recognize that every family has a place in God’s family.

May we continue to live out our baptismal vows as a church and partner with families...for generations to come! ~ Pastor Karin Carlson, Associate Pastor

FEBRUARY 2018 SPECIAL TOPIC: MARRIAGE & FAMILY				
	God’s design of marriage, family, and discipleship			
	Feb. 4	Feb. 11	Feb. 18	Feb. 25
	God Created Marriage Genesis 2:18-24; Ephesians 5:22-33	Biblical Families Genesis 21:1-3; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 1:4; Esther 2:5-7	Generational Discipleship Deuteronomy 6:5-9; Psalm 78:4-6	Adoptive Discipleship Titus 2:1-8; 1 Samuel 3:1-10; Acts 15:36-39; 18:24-28



Believe it or not, it’s time to start thinking about and getting ready for **Vacation Bible School**. Last year’s went so smoothly and I was so blessed to see how everyone worked together. From having Sunday School classes bring meals for the workers to the youth organizing and running the games, it was an all- around success and I anticipate the same for this year!!

The **VBS date is June 18-22**, the theme is “Shipwrecked.”

Another important date: Camp for those entering 4th, 5th and 6th grades—July 9-13 Sacramento, NM.

April Cole, Children’s Pastor

Lenten Observances at 1st-UMC

Ash Wednesday at 1st-UMC

Chapel 7:00—9:00 am Imposition of Ashes, Prayer, Anointing
Chapel 11:30—1:00 pm Imposition of Ashes, Prayer, Anointing
Sanctuary 6:00 pm Ash Wednesday Worship Service

March 25 10:00 am Easter Egg Hunt
March 25 9:00 & 11:00 am Palm Sunday Services
March 29 6:00 pm Maundy Thursday Service
March 30 6:00 pm Good Friday Service

April 1 Resurrection Sunday

7:00 a.m. Community Sunrise service, Ratliff Stadium
9:00 a.m. Traditional worship service, Sanctuary
11:00 a.m. Fellowship worship service, Fellowship Center

Odessa Ministerial Alliance
Lenten Lunch Series 11:30-12:45
“Who Do You Say I Am?”

Feb 21, 2018 Central Baptist Church—1416 N. Texas
“Who Do You Say I Am? - Shepherd”

Feb 28, 2018 Highland UMC—1808 N. Dixie Blvd.
“Who Do You Say I Am? - Healer”

Mar. 7, 2018 Bethany Christian Church—4522 N. Everglade
“Who Do You Say I Am? - Lord”

Mar. 14, 2018 Westminster Presbyterian Church—4901 Maple Ave.
“Who Do You Say I Am? - The Rock”

Mar. 21, 2018 First Presbyterian Church—1401 N. Sam Houston
“Who Do You Say I Am? - Friend”

Mar. 28, 2018 All People Worship Center—2000 W. University Blvd.
“Who Do You Say I Am? - Savior”