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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 **L**ove others, **I**nvoke them to join us as we **F**ollow
Christ, who **E**mpowers us to make a difference.*

**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.



Our family game nights have been so much fun! This is a time once a month we encourage parents to stay and participate in games with their kids. Luke Vanley and myself got to play Kerplunk together (his mom volunteers in the youth). As you can see, he had a **blast**!

Game night happens every third Wednesday so make plans to come eat and spend some quality time with your kids!! — *Children's Pastor, April Cole*



Like
Us!!

www.fumcodessa.org



CULTIVATOR

Cultivating Christ's Presence in Our Congregation

Volume 16, Issue 3

March 2018

Special Events for Holy Week And Easter Sunday Services

the
ROSE-OF CALVARY

Good Friday, March 30 6 pm
Choral Presentation

COMMUNITY WIDE

Easter Sunrise Service

7 am April 1
Ratliff Stadium
1862 E. Yukon Rd.

Supported & Sponsored by
Odessa Churches

See more Lenten and Easter events on Pages 4 & 5

Living Our Mission To Make A Difference In Our Community

Pastor Todd and I recently were able to present a portion of our **Christmas Eve offering** to the students at **The House of The Sycamore Tree**. This is an incredible ministry that focuses on helping our special needs community. The students attend class Monday-Thursday during the afternoon where they are learning math skills, how to

cook, sort items, sew, make craft items, and further benefit themselves with lifelong skills. They also have Bible stories and hold VBS during the summer for the students! Interim director, Vicki Cleere (far right) was thrilled to receive our support. She asked us to let you, our generous congregation, know just how much it meant to them. —*Children's pastor, April Cole.*



Teachers at **Cavazos Elementary School** were served a hot and delicious breakfast on February 16, by members of 1st-UMC. Outreach Pastor Colin Proft says breakfast for teachers is just one of the displays of love and support provided by our church.



Todd Salzwedel
Senior Pastor

Lent. This is a specific time in the life of the Christian Church where we intentionally focus our energy on repentance, contemplation, and the final journey Jesus takes to Jerusalem en route to the Passion. So of course, given this important and solemn time of year, I want to write to you about...a nativity set!

I know it seems odd, but in about seven months, about 40 of us will travel to Israel on a spiritual

pilgrimage that I'm positive will be transformative for all who are able to go. If you are not able to go this time, don't worry, as I will plan other trips. Currently, I am trying to get a trip together for the summer of 2019 so those tied to a



school schedule might have more flexibility.

But today, I'd like to let you know about a special opportunity for the church.

When we are getting the materials together for the Christmas season a few months ago, we

realized FUMC didn't really have a centerpiece item signifying the birth of the Christ child Jesus. Given that we were going to the Holy Land, we thought it would be very special to have a one of a kind nativity created in Bethlehem that would reflect the importance of Jesus birth as well as mark the first pilgrimage of so many people from our church to walk where Jesus walked.

I received permission from the Finance Committee to fundraise \$7500 to order a hand carved nativity set. You can find factory made sets made from olive wood in Bethlehem, but the sets we are looking at are one of a kind and customized for us. These are meant to be focal points much like a pipe organ or stained glass windows.

The picture you see is a very special set that is more than six feet across and four feet tall. With shipping and insurance, the total cost of a set like that would be \$17,000. I know that is expensive, but remember, each of these sets is a work of art created by local artisans in Bethlehem. I don't know that we will be able to get the set you see pictured. But, I look forward to displaying a beautiful reminder of the birth of the Savior and a holy time for so many who are blessed to travel to the Holy Land later this fall. It seems fitting to honor this Child in such a way, especially in this period of our year where we recall His sacrifice for each of us just six miles north of where he was born.

Blessings this Lenten season, and I look forward to travelling this journey and many others with each of you!

1st-UMC To Host Bishop Listening Session

On Sunday, February 4, Pastor Todd is pictured visiting with church members after the Traditional worship service.



This informal meeting was a precursor to the Listening Sessions that the New Mexico Conference is conducting. As an alternate delegate to the 2019 General Conference, Todd shared his insight into the process of "The Way Forward Invitation" by Bishop Bledsoe. The listening sessions are conducted for input into how our denomination will resolve debates over human sexuality and maintain unity in the face of diverse options, preferences and practices.

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?

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

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



Birthdays honorees: front row L-R: Buddy McDonald, Mozelle Lowe, Dorothy Gibson; back row: Caroline Howard, and from Mackey Chapel, Keith Thompson.

The Spice of Life group met last Thursday and had a very nice meeting. There were roughly 30 in attendance. Russell Kimble, Steve and Debra Meador prepared our meal, and it was wonderful as usual. As a special treat, Debra fixed Tiramisu for dessert, and boy was it yummy! Marsha Melton provided our table decorations, and Marlene Moss provided the door prizes. What a blessing it is when people respond to God's call on their lives and become such wonderful, willing servants!

Pastor Jody provided the program based on the theme, "The best time to love is now."

If you haven't come to Spice of Life, we hope you will come join us next month and give us a try. I think you will enjoy the food and fellowship and be glad you came. We always meet on the third Thursday of each month at 11:30 – 1:00 p.m. Early arrivers are

welcome and may be put to work! Next month we will be celebrating St. Patrick's Day! Who knows what might happen!

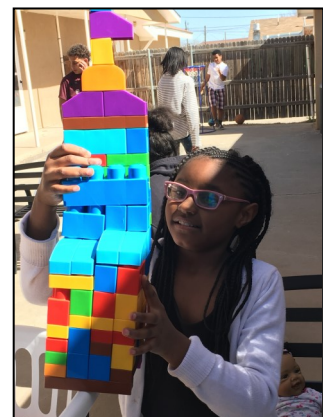
Blessings to you all, Jody Wallin, Congregational Care Pastor

Soul Food at Mackey Chapel



Mackey Chapel UMC celebrated Black History Month on February 25 with a Soul Food meal. As always, a meal is better when surround by friends and they invited us to help celebrate.

Thank you all who attended for a wonderful day of fellowship and celebration.
Pastor Karin



UMW Fund Missions Near and Far

Our UMW meeting in February was very productive. Putting our bake sale contributions to good use, we allocated \$1,500 to missions for the following ministries: on a global outreach-- United Methodist Committee On Relief, India Missionary Arthur Raj, missionaries for Timothy International, China missionary Brandon Hembree, and Global Strategy; on a regional outreach--Lydia Patterson Institute in El Paso and School in Alpine; in our community-- West Texas Food Bank, the new building for the Boys and Girls Club on the west side of Odessa, KidsFirst, and Interfaith Sewing Circle; in our church--Children's Clothes



Closet, Celebrate Recovery, Stephen Ministry, Love Packs, Samaritans By Grace, and also gave \$200 to the building fund. Thank all who donated to our bake sale and those pledges we have received.

UMW will leave the building for our March meeting! We will be

working at the West Texas Food Bank, 411 South Pagewood from 10:30 to 12:00 noon. Anyone interested in helping us fill the sacks for Kids First, just meet us at the Food Bank at 10:30. Please wear closed toe shoes and dress for the weather. Everyone is asked to bring a hand can opener for the Food Pantry. Come Join Us!

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 second of many spotlights on our youth.

Student Spotlight:
Perry Grewell
Sophomore at Permian High School.

Involved in: Band, Varsity Choir, German foreign exchange program.

Favorite musical instrument: Trumpet

Future plans: Graduate from Harvard with a Law Degree in prosecution

Involved at 1st-UMC: Perry has attended FUMC since birth, Perry went through confirmation at FUMC in 2014, Perry has been in ECHO youth group for the past five years, he is currently in the sanctuary choir and has been helping out with VBS for three years.



Sacramento Youth Camp, 2017

Tell us about your experience at Sacramento Conference Youth Camp: I made a lot of friends from other youth groups who I still keep in contact with today.

Favorite youth group moment: Sacramento Youth Camp this past summer was the most influential in my walk with Christ.

How is God working in your life? He has allowed me to attend all of my trips (band, choir and German trip) which I thought I wouldn't be able to attend. I would definitely consider this a huge blessing.

KINGDOMYOUTHCONFERENCE.COM

KINGDOM
YOUTH CONFERENCE

March 23-24 Cost \$20

March 7 6 - 8pm

10-11am
Sunday
School
for
Students
Sundays
Student
Ministry

Memorials			
In Memory of Chrystal Fouche Given by Sherry & Richard Buck Judy & Mike Withrow Kay & Doug Whitefield Lori & David Nelson Jean & Phil Stinson Nell & Glenn Smith Doris Mason	In Memory of Bill Pool Given by Barbara & Rick Browning	In Memory of Sonny Henderson Given by Mr. & Mrs. A.L. Casparis	Children's Clothes Closet In Memory of Chrystal Fouche Given by Julie, Andrew, Mason, & Karalyn Marshall 8:00am Sunday School Class
	In Memory of Rowena Byrd Given by Sally Hawthorn Margaret McBee	In Memory of An Ell Crudup Given by Sally Allen	Sanctuary Choir Fund In Memory of Bill Pool Given by Jonell & Lonnie Sims
		In Memory of Phillip Vincent Given by Doris Mason	

MARCH ELEMENT: JUSTIFICATION



What did you see and say to yourself the last time you looked in the mirror? For me it was, "is there anything between my teeth?" We are in the Lenten season, and these 40 days can be a season of inner reflection.

Almost like holding a mirror to our hearts. What do you see and say about your faith? No matter how you answer this, it is so important that you know that you a child of God.

FUMC's family ministries goal is to become a D6 church, a church that partners with the home. Based on Deuteronomy 6:4-9, we are praying and intentionally moving to become a culture that partners and equips the homes to be the ministers. *Intergenerational* is the FUMC D6 theme for 2018. Last year we launched D6 to the church with the D6 2Gen Curriculum. This month begins the third quarter of the curriculum with children, youth and an adult Sunday school class. This Spring quarter covers 13 weeks, which is divided into three monthly topics (New Testament, Old Testament, and Special Topic). March

focuses on Galatians: Justification, April on Psalms 1 of 2: Praise, and May's special topic is God's Character.

Justification of faith distinguishes Christianity from other religions. In May, as the students study the book of Galatians, they will contrast works and faith and learn to value faith as the means for justification. Discussions will include expressing their faith through works that please and honor God.

The Preschool kids will focus on the *Fruit of the Spirit*. Students will explore aspects of the fruit of the Spirit as they are reminded that *God Helps Me Make Good Choices*. They will be challenged to identify and practice choices that show a decision to follow God and His ways.

May we continue to live out our baptismal vows that with God's help we will nurture and include one another in the Christian faith and life ...for generations to come!

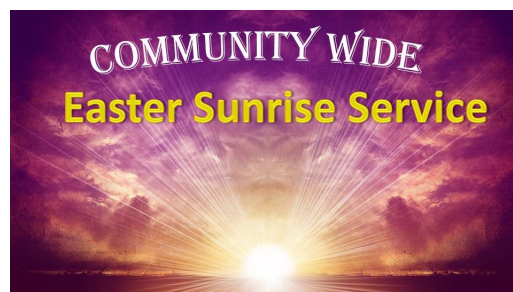
~ Pastor Karin Carlson, Associate Pastor

	MARCH 2018 NEW TESTAMENT: GALATIANS			
	Justification by faith to be a heir of Christ			
	March 4	March 11	March 18	March 25
	The True Gospel Galatians 1:1-12,2:15-21	Justified by Faith Galatians 3:1-29	Heirs of Christ Galatians 4:1-31	Household of Faith Galatians 6:1-10

Meet Our Confirmation Class



Associate Pastor Karin Carlson and Youth Pastor Caleb Eckel are surrounded by the eight of the nine students participating in CREDO, the confirmation class. Five students attend 1st-UMC and four students attend Mackey Chapel-UMC. With the dual appointment of Pastor Karin at 1st and at Mackey, it was a natural merger of eager young kids to go through the 8-weeks of classes together. Confirmation Sunday will be celebrated on April 8. Pictured are Jade, Jemima, Cameron, Dominique, Sammy, Dre, Kiki, Jayla and not pictured Mackenzie. Along with Pastor Karin & Youth Pastor Caleb.



Community Sunrise Service

Odessa pastors came together with the idea for the Odessa community to come together as the Body of Christ on Easter. The churches involved are First Christian, Westminster Presbyterian, Asbury UMC, Mackey Chapel UMC and First UMC, and it is anticipated that more churches will become involved. The people will gather in the bleachers for this hour long service of worship, music and celebration. This

service will allow people and pastors to attend an early sunrise service and then go to their local church to worship.

The sunrise service offering will go to ECISD Community Outreach Center which serves the homeless students of the school district. We can play a crucial role in partnering with ECISD to help homeless students succeed in school.

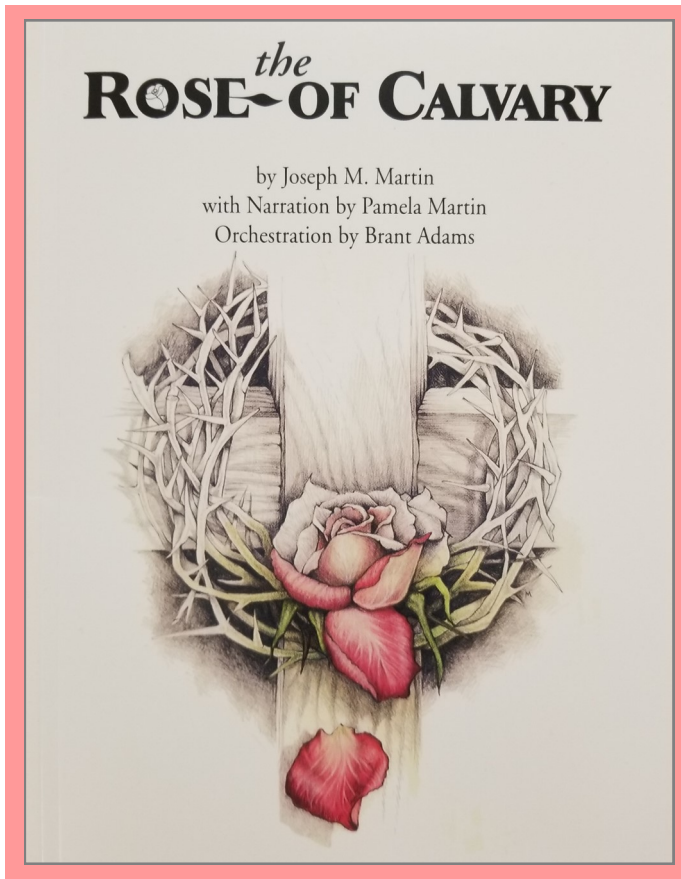
This sunrise service will be held at Ratliff Stadium at 7am on April 1. What a great way to celebrate the Risen Christ as a community of the Body of Christ. Invite your friends, neighbors or even somebody new.

This wonderful event will require lots of volunteers. For more information contact the church office at 432.337.1527. On Facebook like **Community Sunrise Easter Service**.

Good Friday's worship service will be in the Sanctuary at 6:00 PM. The choir will perform several movements from ***The Rose of Calvary*** by Joseph Martin. This poignant music was commissioned by Central-UMC Stockton in 2003.

Reviewers say this moving anthem is offered to a Savior who gave his life for us. Imagery and music combine in a reverent account of those events that lead to the cross.

Here is the foreword: "The image of a sacred flower, a divine rose, from heaven's own garden blooming in the shadows of our world is a portrait of hope and comfort. When translated into music, it becomes a song that speaks to our deepest



needs for restoration and redemption. It sings to us of gardens lost to sin and despair. It reveals to us a lonely garden where ancient olive trees stand silent witness to the suffering of the Savior. It sings of a garden meant for death suddenly springing to life in a shower of joyful alleluias. It is God's tender love song reminding us all that we are children of the garden. Finally, at its heart, it is the music of one truly perfect Rose, who, choosing grace, died for his beloved thorns."

Be sure to invite neighbors and friends. This is another

excellent opportunity to showcase the extraordinary talent of our sanctuary choir.

Lenten Observances at 1st-UMC

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

10:00 a.m. Easter Egg Hunt, Plaza Area

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?"

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| 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" |



Candy and Easter Eggs Needed

The Children's Ministry Easter Egg Hunt is Easter Sunday. Please donate candy (*please no candy with nuts*) and Easter eggs on or before March 25. A box will be placed in the foyer of the Fellowship Center as well as the Narthex of the main building.