

Making A Difference In Our Community In The Time Of Covid-19

Our church has been asked by ECISD School Nutrition to help deliver food boxes to households of virtual learners. Virtual learners are students who are "attending" school each day via internet from their homes.

The district says that 144 volunteers are needed each day to deliver all of the meals. According to Pastor Karin Carlson, this is an outreach opportunity for us to be the hands and feet of Christ to students in Odessa.

Just as if students were at a school building, meals are provided for students in their homes. Delivery of food boxes is tentatively set for Wednesday, September 9.

This is described as a "contactless" delivery service.

Here is a general overview of this volunteer service. Insulated bags with meals are placed in your vehicle at the George HW Bush New Tech Odessa, 300 E. 29th Street. You are assigned a specific route to deliver meals. The volunteer unloads the insulated bags at the front door of the student's home. After ringing the doorbell or knocking on the door, the volunteer returns to their vehicle and continues the route.

If you are interested in helping, the first step is to



complete the school district's VOLY profile, application, consent for background check and general volunteer orientation. That is done on-line at <https://ectorcountysd.voly.org/>. That is for a general volunteer assignment.

Volunteers delivering meals to the homes of virtual learners must also complete these three additional items: 1. Civil Rights presentation; 2. Read and provide electronic signature on Memorandum of Understanding – Home Meal Delivery; 3. Read and provide electronic signature on ECISD Waiver of Liability for COVID-19

*Note: Volunteers delivering meals to homes of virtual learners must sign both the COVID Self-Screen Acknowledgment and this ECISD Waiver of Liability for COVID-19.

After completing all of the trainings, then you may sign-up in VOLY at this link <https://ectorcountysd.voly.org/opportunity/view.html?id=61029> for a home meal delivery shift.

Please contact Pastor Karin for more information about this partnering with ECISD to help students.

THE WELL: Making A Difference For The Women Of Our Church



Mondays at 10am
Starting September 14

Wednesdays at 5pm
Starting September 23

THE WELL is a new ministry at FUMC for women. You are invited to join the first event: A 6-Session Study from best-selling author Lysa TerKeurst, ***Finding I Am***.

What is the deep cry of your heart? That ache in your soul that keeps you up at night? The prayer you keep repeating? Jesus not only cares about this deep, spiritual wrestling, but He also wants to step in and see you through it. Join Lysa TerKeurst on the streets of Israel to explore the seven I AM statements of Jesus found in the Gospel of John. Through this interactive, in-depth study, you will learn to:

- Trade feelings of emptiness and depletion for a more personal fulfillment from knowing who Jesus is.
- Stop living like a slave to your circumstances by training your heart to embrace the life-giving freedom God wants for you.

Gain a better understanding of how Jesus' words 2,000 years ago are so very applicable to the answers we are searching for today.

Sign up for the study on **Facebook** at 'The Well at FUMC' or contact the church office 432.337.1527.

We exist for LIFE...To LOVE others, INVITE them to join us as we FOLLOW Christ who EMPOWERS us to make a difference in our church,

What Are Your Dreams For Our Church?



Rev. Jay Armstrong
Senior Pastor

Dear Fellow Traveler,
Over the last six weeks I was blessed with the opportunity to visit with many small groups to listen, to hear, and to discover the joys and concerns of our Church Family. I have also met with the Church Council to begin the process of forming a vision for the future.

This is what I heard as I made my journey with the small groups.

You love your church. I could hear that in the stories that were told. One person recounted the fact that they were married in this church, and so were her parents. Others talked of their children being baptized and confirmed at the altar of First Church. Another couple talked about their Sunday School class and how they took the lead on opening, and staffing the food bank here. There were those who spoke of the brown bag lunches handed out to the homeless on Sunday morning, and still others who wanted me to know about the long standing ministry to children and their families through the Children's Clothes Closet. I could see your love for the church, and the heart that you have for the hurting.

You have concerns for your church and its future. You have taken note of the fact that many of those who were pillars of the church have passed away, moved, or just grown older and are not able to offer the leadership that they have offered in the past. Before I arrived you were already asking a question that many churches are asking or should be asking, "What is the future of my church?" You should know that I have seen some of that future when I gathered with the younger set. They also love this church, and they are poised to help us grow this church into the future. It will take a willingness to change and to be bold in Jesus name.

There are already some things that are beginning to stir in our church.

I am very proud of the young women who have stepped up and taken charge of supercharging our ministry for women. They have given themselves a name, **The Well at FUMC**, and they are inviting all women young and more seasoned to join them in a six week Bible Study titled 'Finding I Am.' At the end of that study they would like to have a larger meeting of women to talk about and plan for the next steps for that ministry. You can sign up for the study on Facebook by going to 'The Well at FUMC.'

From now until the end of the year we will be working to **Defeat the Virus**. No, we are not starting a research ministry, we will leave that to those who have better resources. We will be doing everything in our power to create pockets of community, and opportunities to create community. One of the things the virus seeks to take from us is community. We want to be sure that we are in contact with everyone and remind them that they are not forgotten. We want to know if our members have needs that we can help meet during these Covid-19 times. We want to think of fun things that we can do together, but in safe ways. If you have ideas, let us know.

2021 is going to be about **Rebirthing our Church**. The scriptures say that we must be born again. A church must be born again, and again, and again. There are many reasons why we are at that place in the life of our church, including the Covid-19 Virus. Specifics are coming.

Watch your email, answer the call to volunteer, and get ready for the blessings that God is going to pour down on us at First United Methodist Church of Odessa.

Pastor Jay,

Memorials

<p>In Honor of Jody & Peggy Wallin Larry & Betty Jane Johnson David & Lori Nelson Given by Anonymous</p>	<p>Children's Clothes Closet In Honor of 8 a.m. Sunday School Class Given by Susie & Fred Girard</p>	<p>In Memory of Bill Jackson Given by Builders Class</p>	<p>In Memory of Fred Clayton, Jr LaDoyce Lambert Given by Dick Sivals</p>
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Celebrate Recovery Summit 2020

As many of you know, First United Methodist Church has a very good Celebrate Recovery program. Celebrate Recovery (CR) is a Christian, 12-Step program that was developed by John and Cheryl Baker, and Pastor Rick Warren. This year marks its 29th Anniversary of helping people overcome their hurts, hang ups, and habits.

The Summit Conference was held in a different manner this year. Due to the Covid-19 restrictions in place in so many areas of our country, the Summit was broadcast over the internet rather than being held in-person at the Saddleback Church in Lake Forrest, CA.

As a result, many thousands more were able to attend the Summit Conference due to the reduced cost plus the added benefit of not having to travel long distances to attend the meetings. Our entire CR team was able to attend for less than the price it would normally cost to send one person to the live conference! What a blessing that was for all of us! We met on July 30-31 in the Fellowship building and attended the first, virtual Summit to ever be held, and we really enjoyed the experience and the training.

Our CR team can't wait until the Covid-19 restrictions relax enough and the threat of contracting the disease

diminishes enough to resume our CR program. Until we do, we all remain committed to our own personal CR programs. We are taking care of ourselves, and we are dedicated in our own recovery efforts so that we will be strong and focused and able to help those in need once we are given the go-



Celebrate Recovery Team Leaders "attended" the national CR Summit via internet. This dedicated team consists of: (L-R) Mike Parker, Lori Smith, Jody Wallin, Marsha Melton, Gary Jefferson, ChilSun Marsh, Linda Jefferson, Christine Findley and Jim Findley. Photo by Dee Melton

ahead to re-start the program.

Please know that we are here for any and everyone who is struggling with any hurt, hang-up or habit. Drugs and alcohol issues affect only about 1/3 of those who attend CR. So, if you need help and want a safe place to come and get help, please pray for us and join us once our doors open back up. You will thank God that you did. If you have questions, feel free to call Jody Wallin, Congregational Care Pastor, here at our church. I will be happy to visit with you about the program and how it works.

Yours in Christ, Jody Wallin, Congregational Care Pastor



Family Ministry Director Caleb Eckel wants the congregation to know the fabulous students active in Echo Student Ministry.

This month's student is **Grace Corman**.

Grace Corman

Freshman at Permian High School
Participates in Choir and Art

Favorite Color: Yellow

Future plans: To be an artist, singer, and/or Pastor

Involvement at FUMC: Grace has attended FUMC-Odessa for eight years. She has been active in youth Sunday School and ECHO youth group for three years. She attended three sessions of the 2020 Confirmation class, which was then interrupted by COVID. Grace is also part of the sanctuary choir; has sung with the Fellowship worship team; taught music/dance at VBS; served with Toys For Tots and Samaritans By Grace.



Grace Corman

Why do you attend ECHO Youth Group?

"The first reason I attend is when I was younger I didn't understand God and the point of worship. I saw a change in my brother, Ben, while he was attending so I wanted to join and see what would happen to me. I also like being a part of a church family that I can open up to. I love sharing my experiences and the love of God with others. Because of this experience, I've brought five of my friends to youth group with me."

How is God working in your life?

"God is protecting me from the evils of the world."



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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 **Love** others, **Invite** them to join us as we **Follow** Christ, who **Empowers** us to make a difference.*

Backpacks Blessed...Sunday Schools Return With Social Distancing

Adorable children, many with backpacks as large as they, were covered with prayers and well-wishes on Sunday, August 16, prior to the beginning of school. Pastor Jay led the 9:00 and the 11:00 congregations in lifting up all teachers and staff, and all schools facing the challenges of COVID-19.



Sunday School students of all ages begin to safely meet: (above & left photos) The Children's Family Ministry meet upstairs. (right photo) Builders Class meets in the sanctuary.

