

“HE HAS SHOWN KINDNESS BY GIVING YOU RAIN FROM HEAVEN AND CROPS IN THEIR SEASONS; HE PROVIDES YOU WITH PLENTY OF FOOD AND FILLS YOUR HEARTS WITH JOY.”

- ACTS 14:17

 **First United Methodist Church**
P.O. Box 965
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Follow our livestream on Facebook at First United Methodist Church - DeRidder, or on YouTube at DeridderFUMC

Pastor's Ponderings!



Seven and a half years ago I was deeply blessed to have been adopted by two half-lab mix puppies. They have filled my life with tons of laughter with their twins' antics, their adventuresome spirit, and their unconditional love. Autumn and Sage love their giant backyard, the squirrels to chase, keeping our house safe, and the people who come to visit. Most of all they love their "mom." They love it when I am home, and we spend time playing fetch, chase, and when I cook special treats for them. They love to snuggle and to occasionally get to sit in my lap. They are ecstatic and overjoyed when I come home - even if I am only gone for ten minutes. They love to travel in the car, go camping and to watch over me when I sit outside. The main thing is they want to be with and close to their "parent." We bring each other a lot of joy. They trust I will feed them, give them water, exercise, and take care of their medical needs. If they get hurt playing, they literally come and show me what hurts. They alert me if one of them is hurt and needs help. We are very loyal to each other and wouldn't want it any other way.

As great as all that is, God's love for us is even greater! God loves us and always wants the best for us. He loves us unconditionally. God wants time with us in prayer, sharing with Him our day, joys and concerns. God wants to love on us through signs and wonders and others sharing with us. God longs to be our comforter and is with us wherever we go, whereas my dogs can only go where I take them, or they are allowed. God loves it when we play and enjoy this world He gifted us. God is our parent who is always ready to love, guide, teach, feed, comfort, forgive and redeem. Just as God has fulfilled all of his covenants through Noah, Abraham, David, and Jeremiah, God has fulfilled his greatest covenant and love through Jesus. We have just celebrated Easter, the greatest gift of all celebrating Jesus' sacrificial love and the gift of God's redeeming grace giving us eternal life with Him! God's infinite generosity is always before us providing for our needs.

How might you, during this Easter season and beyond, reciprocate that love back to God and Jesus? How might we learn how to acknowledge God's love and presence in our lives each and every day? How might we show our gratitude for his incredible sacrificial and covenant love toward us?

As much as I know my puppies give me unconditional love, and God uses them to teach me a lot about love, God's love is still far greater and provides for all of my needs. I am eternally grateful that God has blessed me with Autumn and Sage, and for gifting me with being in ministry with you! May we love as God loves and forgive as God forgives and serve as God serves! Thanks be to God our Savior through Jesus the Son!

See you Sunday if not before! Laraine


CIRCLES ON A MISSION
2024
bicycle ride
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**CIRCLES ON A MISSION
BICYCLE RIDE**

May 18, 2024
Registration is Open!
<https://www.bikesignup.com/Race/LA/DeRidder/CirclesonaMissionBicycleRide>


All funds benefit Methodist Children's Home of Southwest Louisiana in Sulphur, LA. For more information visit www.lumcfs.org

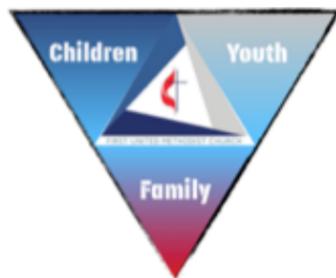


CHILD, YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRIES



VBS Cannot happen without YOU!

Vacation Bible School 2024
Monday, June 3rd – Friday, June 7th
Time: 8:30am – 12:00pm
Wesley Education Center



This year's Mega Sports Camp, Vacation Bible School needs volunteers. If you are interested in any of the following positions, please reach out to me (Cathy Scott) immediately. Lead Soccer Coach, Lead Basketball Coach, Lead Volleyball Coach, Lead Cheerleading Coach, 2-3 Huddle Coaches for each sport, Nurse/Safety Coach, Registration Coach, Refreshment Coach, Rally Coach, Media/Music Coach (Technical Assistant), Clean-up Crew. All these positions must be filled by an adult. **All adults must attend Safe Sanctuary Training.**

Youth Positions (6th grade and up) are still available, including Soccer Assistant, Cheerleading Assistant, Volleyball Assistant, Refreshment Assistant, Rally Assistant, and MEGA Fan. All youth will be considered a part of the Clean-up Crew.

The target age group for participation is Kindergarten through 5th grade. Multiple groups will be considered for each sport depending on the number of volunteers we have. Please consider giving your time to this adventure! The average number of children for each Lead Sports Coach is Soccer 24, Cheerleading 18, Volleyball 12, and Basketball 16. **To volunteer, please reach out to Cathy at (337) 396-9610.**



Yard Sale Fundraiser

The Children and Youth Ministries will be hosting a Yard Sale on Saturday, May 4th from 7:30am-11:00am. Items will be set up in the FUMC large parking lot near the Bus Barn. In the event of inclement weather, we will move under the Bus Barn Canopy. If you have items that you would like to donate, they can be dropped off during regular business hours by getting a key to the bus barn from the church office, or you can call me, and I can meet you after hours. We are requesting that all items be dropped off prior to May 1st to allow for time to be prepared for the sale. All monies raised at this event will be used to further the mission of our children and youth programs.

We are expanding our yard sale and will be offering our church members, friends, and small businesses the opportunity to sell personal business products or crafts items at this event for a small donation to the children's programs. All items sold must be aligned with the values of the FUMC DeRidder. If you are interested in having a table, please call or text me at (337) 396-9610.

Sunday Nursery and Preschool Services

Nursery and Preschool care is available on Sunday mornings during Early Church and Worship in the Methodist Childrens Learning Center (MCLC) Building. Children from 6 months to 2-years will enjoy social interaction and children 3-years to Kindergarten age will be taken to a separate classroom to enjoy a Bible story and lessons with Ms. Darla. Please remember that all children attending Children's Church must be attending Kindergarten through 5th.

Children can be dropped off as early as 8:30 for Early Church and 9:30 for Worship. However, they can also be brought over anytime during the worship service if the need presents itself. Please spread the word. If you have any questions, please contact me at 337-396-9610 or email cathy@fumcderidder.org.

WESLEY EDUCATION CENTER

The American Red Cross paid a visit to Wesley Campus' After School program earlier this spring to educate the children on fire safety and other protocols. The kids participated in crafts, including designing pillowcases. Spots are available to all youth aged K - 5th Grade. Call 337-221-1343 and leave a message.



Methodist Children's Learning Center



Spring is here! Our children have been excited for the months of March and April! Our days are busy learning and playing with our friends. We had our Easter Celebration on March 28th at the center, and Pre-K graduation will be on May 21st. Teachers are also excited about spring and have been decorating their doors to reflect as we celebrate our Lord and Savior.

Liz Maricle, MCLC Director



Children's Music



NOTES

We have a FUN time at Children's Choir. Come see what all the joy is about. Wednesday evenings 4:45 - 5:15 in the choir room. No practice during Spring Break.

Come join us!!

THANK YOU!

We received so many candy and other donations for Easter; THANK YOU for investing in our children's ministries, including Wesley and MCLC!

Women's Prayer Breakfast
Thursday, April 4th at 8:30 AM
in the Conference Room

Music Ministry Notes

"When We All Get to Heaven" in C minor

We as a music ministry hope and pray that our efforts have blessed you richly during the Lenten/Easter season. One of the hymns you heard on Maundy Thursday was an arrangement I wrote of "When We All Get to Heaven." I was inspired one day in early March by the hymn and how hauntingly beautiful it would be to set it in a minor key and slow it down, giving it a Lenten twist. I began tinkering with it, composing it with mixed success on a break between classes at Pine Wood Elementary. Unable to focus (elementary school is a noisy place with lots of distractions), I abandoned the task and tried to let it simmer in my brain a bit longer before attempting it again on Tuesday, the 12th. That evening at home the music poured out of me, and three hours later the song was finished. Wednesday, I made copies for our choir, and we rehearsed it for the first time. It went well, but today (the 14th), I made a few minor changes to the music right before writing this article for the newsletter. I'll have to make new copies for the choir. I'm sure they'll love that. Hopefully through reading this little story, you'll get an idea of the process any artist goes through to create something worthwhile, whether it be a painting, a novel, or turning unfinished wood into a beautiful piece of furniture.

John Schwarze, Director of Music Ministries

Memorials & Honorariums

In Memory of Margie Labby
Dianne Penney

In Memory of Huey Bailey, Sr.
Gayle & Kenneth Bailey

In Memory of Charlotte Butler
Brenda Bishop
Susan Johnson
Grant & Catherine Beal
Catalyst Sunday School Class

Pew Bibles

Contact the Church Office at 337-463-4491 for more information on dedicating a pew Bible.

To The Ends of the Earth

In remote jungles and dense urban centers around the world are vast communities of people who have never heard the name of Jesus, including millions of children. Through simple gift-filled shoeboxes and The Greatest Journey curriculum, we are blessed with tremendous opportunities to introduce these children to Jesus Christ. In 2022, teams took the Gospel to **99 "Ends of the Earth" communities across 38 countries in places where there are few, if any, Christian believers or churches.** They desperately need the Gospel. **Thousands of these children** enrolled in The Greatest Journey and embarked on the exciting expedition of learning to follow Jesus Christ in their daily lives. Samaritan's Purse and the Operation Christmas Child project continues to proclaim the Gospel to children wherever they are, to the Ends of the Earth!



April Worship Assistants

Sunday, April 7th

Greeters - Frances & Raymond Cole
Readers - John Marcello & Cameron Craig
1st Sunday Communion Servers (During Service) -
Grant & Catherine Beal, Jo Blankenship

Sunday, April 14th

Greeters - Jimmy Hicks & Susan Hill
Readers - Van Allen & Hunter Oldaker
After-Service Communion Server -
Tim Kindler

Sunday, April 21st

Greeters - Miranda & Hayden Chapman
Readers - Gayle Bailey & Kelley Allen
After-Service Communion Server -
Mary Alice Wisdom

Sunday, April 28th

Greeters - Betty & Scotty Nease
Readers - Ted Hammerschmidt & Betty Nease
After-Service Communion Server -
David Hardesty



From Southwest Louisiana Veterans' Home

On behalf of the Veterans at Southwest Louisiana Veterans' Home, please accept our sincere thank you for your kind donation of toiletries, snacks, clothes, and blankets for our veterans. Your donation is very much appreciated, and was most kind of you to remember these very special people.

For your information, the Home now has 136 Veterans that consider the 156 bed, long-term facility "Home", and we have the very best employees, and support staff to care for their medical, physical, and spiritual needs.

Our Reflections Unit (Alzheimer) is home to 16 Veterans. We have qualified staff on board to assist these Veterans. They are able to be involved in activity programs designed for their unit as well as participate in larger group activities organized by the Recreations Department.

We would like to thank you again for your support.

Sincerely,
Darla Price, Administrator

This article has been shared before, but the message is just as powerful as ever! Thank you, Mary, for always blessing us with insightful thoughts and heartfelt messages.

From the Heart by Mary Allen

What kind of marriage would I have had if Ted and I only talked to each other on Sundays and Wednesdays? Un-thinkable!! Why, we would have lost five days a week of our 40 years together — 40 years that included sharing and loving and raising a family! That's almost 70% of our time together empty or unused! When would our hearts have had time to meld into deep love and commitment? When would I have listened to all of his hopes and dreams or told him mine? When would we have even made day-to-day decisions and schedules or be an integral part of our daughters' lives? I would've missed a thousand stories of his childhood and those he loved. I might not have taken time to tell him about the first time I saw him at college — tall, blonde and blue-eyed — and felt butterflies inside. Which one of those minutes would I have willfully given up? None! Not one! But that's what we do with Abba, our Heavenly Father. We often think to ourselves: God seems distant and far away. But how can we feel close to him if we only talk to him or think about him on Sundays and Wednesdays? And, believe me, I'm talking to myself, included. Time at MD Anderson gave me clearer vision about this. He knows my name. He knows your name. He gave us 66 amazing books and letters to us. His Word remains alive, providing comfort, peace, joy, healing — anything we need for ANY day of our life here. Talk to Him. Read His Words. He loves and misses you



"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones."
Proverbs 3:5-8 ESV

April 2024



Birthdays

- 2 Monica Bailey
- 3 Lennie Hanchey
- 5 LeAnn Carlson
- 7 Paul Maddox
- 7 Sarah Reviel
- 8 Bambi Hardesty
- 11 Carolyn Jones
- 12 Frances Cole
- 13 Donna Marcello
- 20 Trey Elliott
- 21 Bryan Redler
- 21 Geoffrey Kay
- 24 Hunter Allen
- 25 Serena Prather
- 25 Eric Redler
- 26 David Hardesty
- 27 Keagan LeBlanc
- 27 Amanda Godair
- 28 Matthew Bennett
- 29 Carolyn Woodard

Anniversaries

- 15 Carl & Susan Slover
- 17 Paul & Melissa Maddox
- 28 Reggie & Susan Reed
- Erin & TJ Tepley

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 Easter Sunday 6:45 AM Easter Sunrise Service with Communion at Wesley 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Easter Worship in Sanctuary with Communion 2:30 PM Bicycle Riders at Bus Barn 4:00 PM Handbell Practice in the Sanctuary	1 Beauregard Parish School Spring Break 8:00 AM Aerobics Class - Gym 11:30 AM Walking Group- Gym 5:30 PM Zumba Class at the Wesley Campus	2 8:00 AM Yoga Class - Gym 9:45 AM Chapel - MCLC 11:30 AM Walking Group- Gym 3:00 PM K-2nd Grade Activity Time at Wesley 10:30 AM Prayer Shawl - LLL & Children's Classroom 5:30 PM Zumba Class - Wesley Campus	3 8:00 AM Aerobics Class - Gym 8:00 AM Morning devotional 10:00 AM MCLC Story Time in Fellowship Hall 11:30 AM Prayer Shawl - LLL Room 6:00 PM Praise & Chancel Choir in Sanctuary	4 8:00 AM Yoga Class - Gym 8:30 AM Women's Prayer Breakfast in the Conference Room 9:00 AM Homeschool Fellowship Group 11:30 AM Walking Group- Gym 3:00 PM 3rd-5th Grade Activity Time at Wesley 5:30 PM Zumba Class - Wesley Campus	5 8:00 AM Aerobics Class - Gym 9:15 AM MCLC Activity Time with Cathy in Children's Classroom 11:30 AM Walking Group- Gym 5:45 PM Erika's Zumba at Wesley	6
7 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Communion Sunday Worship in the Sanctuary and Online 11:15 AM Circles on a Mission Mtg in Choir Room 2:30 PM Bicycle Riders at Bus Barn 4:00 PM Handbell Practice in the Sanctuary	8 8:00 AM Aerobics Class - Gym 11:30 AM Walking Group- Gym 5:30 PM Zumba Class at the Wesley Campus	9 8:00 AM Yoga Class - Gym 9:45 AM Chapel - MCLC 10:00 AM Mary Martha Circle at Pat Limmer's House 11:30 AM Walking Group- Gym 3:00 PM K-2nd Grade Activity Time at Wesley 5:30 PM Zumba Class - Wesley Campus 5:30 PM Girl Scouts in LLL & Children's Classroom	10 8:00 AM Morning devotional 8:00 AM Aerobics Class - Gym 10:00 AM MCLC Story Time in Fellowship Hall 10:30 AM Prayer Shawl - LLL Room 11:30 AM Walking Group- Gym 4:45 PM Children's Choir - Choir Room 5:00 PM Wednesday Night Supper in Fellowship Hall 5:15 PM Children & Youth - Conf. Room & Gym 5:15 PM Confirmation Class in Conference Room 6:00 PM Praise & Chancel Choir in	11 Timesheets Due! 8:00 AM Yoga Class - Gym 10:00 AM Beauregard Retired Teachers Spring Luncheon in Fellowship Hall 11:30 AM Walking Group- Gym 3:00 PM 3rd-5th Grade Activity Time at Wesley 5:30 PM Zumba Class - Wesley Campus	12 8:00 AM Aerobics Class - Gym 9:15 AM MCLC Activity Time with Cathy in Children's Classroom 11:30 AM Walking Group- Gym 5:45 PM Erika's Zumba at Wesley	13
14 Volunteer Appreciation Sunday 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Sunday Worship in the Sanctuary & Online 11:15 AM Staff Meeting in Choir Room 2:30 PM Bicycle Riders at Bus Barn 4:00 PM Handbell Practice in the Sanctuary	15 8:00 AM Aerobics Class - Gym 11:30 AM Walking Group- Gym 5:30 PM Zumba Class at the Wesley Campus 5:45 PM Trustees Meeting in the Choir Room	16 8:00 AM Yoga Class - Gym 9:45 AM Chapel - MCLC 11:30 AM Walking Group- Gym 3:00 PM K-2nd Grade Activity Time at Wesley 5:30 PM Zumba Class - Wesley Campus 5:30 PM Girl Scouts in LLL & Children's Classroom	17 8:00 AM Morning devotional 8:00 AM Aerobics Class - Gym 10:00 AM Rosemary Cady Circle in the Conference Room 10:00 AM MCLC Story Time in Fellowship Hall 10:30 AM Prayer Shawl - LLL Room 11:30 AM Walking Group- Gym 4:45 PM Children's Choir - Choir Room 5:00 PM Wednesday Night Supper in Fellowship Hall 5:15 PM Children & Youth - Conf. Room 5:15 PM Confirmation Class in Conference Room 6:00 PM Praise & Chancel Choir in	18 Newsletter Deadline 8:00 AM Yoga Class - Gym 9:00 AM Homeschool Group 11:30 AM Walking Group- Gym 3:00 PM 3rd-5th Grade Activity Time at Wesley 5:30 PM Zumba Class - Wesley Campus 6:30 PM Scout Meeting - Conference Room	19 8:00 AM Aerobics Class - Gym 9:15 AM MCLC Activity Time with Cathy in Children's Classroom 11:30 AM Walking Group- Gym 5:45 PM Erika's Zumba at Wesley	20
21 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Sunday Worship with Noisy Offering in Sanctuary & Online 2:30 PM Bicycle Riders at Bus Barn 4:00 PM Handbell Practice in the Sanctuary	22 8:00 AM Aerobics Class - Gym 11:30 AM Walking Group- Gym 5:30 PM Zumba Class at the Wesley Campus	23 8:00 AM Yoga Class - Gym 9:45 AM Chapel - MCLC 11:30 AM Walking Group- Gym 3:00 PM K-2nd Grade Activity Time at Wesley 5:30 PM Zumba Class - Wesley Campus 5:30 PM Girl Scouts in LLL & Children's Classroom	24 8:00 AM Morning devotional 8:00 AM Aerobics Class - Gym 9:00 AM Merry Mailers in the Choir Room 10:00 AM MCLC Story Time in Fellowship Hall 10:30 AM Prayer Shawl - LLL Room 11:30 AM Walking Group- Gym 4:45 PM Children's Choir - Choir Room 5:00 PM Wednesday Night Supper in Fellowship Hall 5:15 PM Children & Youth - Conf. Room 5:15 PM Confirmation Class in Conference Room 6:00 PM Praise & Chancel Choir in	25 8:00 AM Yoga Class - Gym 11:30 AM Walking Group- Gym 3:00 PM 3rd-5th Grade Activity Time at Wesley 5:30 PM Zumba Class - Wesley Campus	26 8:00 AM Aerobics Class - Gym 9:15 AM MCLC Activity Time with Cathy in Children's Classroom 11:30 AM Walking Group- Gym 5:45 PM Erika's Zumba at Wesley	27
28 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Sunday Worship in the Sanctuary & Online 2:30 PM Bicycle Riders at Bus Barn 4:00 PM Handbell Practice in the Sanctuary	29 8:00 AM Aerobics Class - Gym 11:30 AM Walking Group- Gym 5:30 PM Zumba Class at the Wesley Campus 5:45 PM Guidance Team in Conference Room	30 8:00 AM Yoga Class - Gym 9:45 AM Chapel - MCLC 11:30 AM Walking Group- Gym 3:00 PM K-2nd Grade Activity Time at Wesley 5:30 PM Zumba Class - Wesley Campus 5:30 PM Girl Scouts in LLL & Children's Classroom	1 8:00 AM Morning devotional 8:00 AM Aerobics Class - Gym 10:00 AM MCLC Story Time in Fellowship Hall 10:30 AM Prayer Shawl - LLL Room 11:30 AM Walking Group- Gym 4:45 PM Children's Choir - Choir Room 5:00 PM Wednesday Night Supper in Fellowship Hall 5:15 PM Children & Youth - Conf. Room & Gym 5:15 PM Confirmation Class in Conference Room 6:00 PM Praise & Chancel Choir in	2 8:00 AM Yoga Class - Gym 8:30 AM Women's Prayer Breakfast in the Conference Room 9:00 AM Homeschool Fellowship Group 11:30 AM Walking Group- Gym 3:00 PM 3rd-5th Grade Activity Time at Wesley 5:30 PM Zumba Class - Wesley Campus	3 8:00 AM Aerobics Class - Gym 9:15 AM MCLC Activity Time with Cathy in Children's Classroom 11:30 AM Walking Group- Gym 5:45 PM Erika's Zumba at Wesley	4