First United Methodist Church
P.O. Box 965
DeRidder, LA 70634

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Pastor's Ponderings!

As I have thought and prayed about what to write to you this month, I have struggled with what to write because there is so much I wish I could say to you. We have all just faced so much with Covid, hurricanes, friends moving away, friends and loved ones dying (I've lost three friends of my own in the last week in addition to the loss of our church members), the church closing, opening for awhile and closing again (even though it is never really closed. We are still working and ministry is still happening - including worship!).

So, then I began thinking about February. And the reality is, that in the world, February is when we celebrate love. Most commonly it is the celebration of couples and marriage. For kids and sometimes adults, its also to celebrate our friends. Truthfully, I think all love needs to be celebrated. In Jesus day they had three words for love: Agape - to love as God loves - which is wholly and completely. Eros love - which is romantic love. Philio - which is the celebration and the love of friends. Jesus told us to love the Lord our God with all of our heart, soul, strength and mind and to love our neighbor as ourselves. I know I have said this a lot lately, and I think it's worth repeating, with everything going on we need to focus on sharing and spreading God's/Jesus' love - agape love. We need to show and teach people about loving each other for who we are - not trying to make everyone think and be like us.

Love is scary and hard right now. Yet, it is so easy if we make the choice. I want to share with you something I read this morning. I do not know the author.

One day a man was crossing a bridge in life but was scared so he turned and asked God, "Can I hold your hand so I may not fall?" God replied, "If you hold my hand and something happens, you might let go but if I hold your hand, no matter what happens, I will never let you go." May the Lord hold your hand tightly in all your ways in 2021 and beyond!

Blessings my church family!
Laraine

Thank You, Church Family!

Due to your generous giving, we have finished the year in a very strong way. December brought to the church a record $124,095, surpassing our old record of 2019 by almost $9,000. Even with the pandemic and two hurricanes, our church continues to be blessed.

At the end of 3rd quarter, we were $68,000 behind on budgeted income. By the end of 2020, our church had made up all but $22,000. Our Pastor and her staff did a great job holding down expenses which left us at year-end with a positive number of $75,000. Our 2020 total income was $567,336, with expenses of $492,374. This will be a great jump-start into 2021.

Our needs will continue as we start on the hurricane repairs with limited insurance support. The needs of our community will also continue. So many people have given in some of our worst times. It's very uplifting to the church and your leadership team.

Thanks to all of you.

Robert Bennett
Finance Committee Chair

Mardi Gras!
February 16, 2021

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

FEBRUARY 17, 2021
SANCTUARY & ONLINE
7:30 AM & 6:00 PM

MORE DETAILS TO COME!

Easter Lillies!

$11 each
Deadline to order is mid-March.
You may either call the office to place an order, or e-mail erin@fumcderidder.org

Please include who they are in memory or in honor of, and the contact information if you would like the Church Office to notify the family. Thank you!

FEBRUARY WORSHIP LEADERS

FEBRUARY 7
GREETERS: BETTY & SCOTTY NEASE
READERS: MARY ALICE WISDOM & JOHN MARCELLO
POWERPOINT RUNNER: LAURA SCHULTZ

FEBRUARY 14
GREETERS: TEPLEY FAMILY
READERS: JANET & D. LAMAR OLIVER
POWERPOINT RUNNER: ERIN TEPLEY

FEBRUARY 21
GREETERS: GRANT BEAL & CATHERINE WHITE
READERS: BARBARA HAYNES & TED HAMMERSCHMIDT
POWERPOINT RUNNER: LAURA SCHULTZ

FEBRUARY 28
GREETERS: BETTY & SCOTTY NEASE
READERS: LAURA SCHULTZ & JOE ANN LILLIE
POWERPOINT RUNNER: ERIN TEPLEY

CONTACT US!

Erin Tepley & Mary Allen
Church Office Administrators
Office: 337-463-4491

erin@fumcderidder.org
office@fumcderidder.org
fumcderidder.org

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First United Methodist Church - DeRidder

Children, Teen, & Family Ministries

As we move into the second semester of the school year, we are still learning new ways to continue to reach our children during these trying times. But, Covid did not stop these kids from learning all about God. Weekly mailers went out that included all sorts of fun surprises. Each mailer had a story starting with Epiphany through Easter. Activities, puzzles, coloring pages and QR codes that lead to videos were some of the fun surprises included.

Thank you to everyone that brought in a bleach bottle or a container of bleach wipes. June Jenkins Women's Shelter is greatly appreciative of your kindness and willingness to donate during these challenging Covid times!

<u>What is coming up!!</u>

Who would like to have their house "**EGGED?**"

No, it does not mean we are going to chuck raw eggs at your windows.

This kind of '**EGGING**' is when we take a bunch of treat-filled plastic eggs, head to your house, jump out of the car, hide the eggs all over your lawn in the evening, and then hop back in the car and drive away.

When the '**EGGED**' houses' family comes outside they get to be surprised and blessed by the spontaneous egg hunt!

Would you like your house "**EGGED?**"

The "**EGGING**" will take place on the evening of Saturday March 27th. We will be there after dark, put the dogs inside please.

Please let us know if you would like to be "**EGGED**" by emailing Ashley at ashley@fumcderidder.org. Please make sure you sign up by March 14th. We need to ensure we have enough eggs for all houses. Please include in the email family name, address, and phone number.

I am excited to say the Bunny is coming back! Wednesday evening Children's Ministry on March 31 at 6:oo p.m. we will have Burgers with the Bunny.

I look forward to what Spring will bring to the children's ministry as we start planning for VBS!!! This year we will be looking to have 2 sessions. An evening and a daytime.

With Lots of Love,
Ashley - Director of Children, Youth, & Family Ministries
ashley@fumcderidder.org

First United Methodist Youth Got Bounce!

As Covid-19 continues to impact all of our lives, I consider what challenges and opportunities that it is bring to our youth. We began January hopeful that we could go back to in person meetings and were looking forward to starting a new Bible Study series. Plans changed, and when I announced to the youth that we would be pausing in person meetings to mitigate the spread of Covid-19, I watched their reactions. As you would expect they were disappointed and frustrated, but also understanding, and hopeful. We discussed ways to keep active during this time of no in person meetings and they requested to meet over Zoom. I was struck by their ability to adapt so quickly and accept the last-minute changes. I wondered if they were resilient or just resolved to a new unpredictable way of life. We began meeting over Zoom on Friday evenings and have been exploring our resiliency, it is a valuable skill that not everyone naturally has but it can be learned. Resilience is simply the ability to adapt well in the face of hard times, disasters, or high stress, how well do they "bounce?" We researched what the Bible tells us about resilience and the youth found great versus to lean on. Then we discussed ways to build their resilience. Our youth do have bounce, and we will continue to build these skills for the remainder of our pause.

Please encourage your youth to attend our weekly Zoom meetings, and have them invite a friend that may need a little help with their bounce.

Counting my blessings.
Cathy Scott

girl scouts of louisiana pines to the gulf

Girls in Troop 229 are learning that it's not all about the cookies! While the cookies taste great, raise money for future Troop activities, and have their own place in history, they are so much more! When girls participate in the Girl Scout Cookie Program, they are part of the largest girl-led entrepreneurial program in the world. The Girl Scout cookie mission is to help girls learn five skills that are essential to leadership, to success, and to life.

Skill #1 - Goal Setting: Girls learn how to set goals and create a plan to reach them!

Skill #2 - Decision Making: Girls learn to make decisions on their own and as a team!

Skill #3 - Money Management: Girls learn to create a budget and handle money!

Skill #4 - People Skills: Girls find their voice and build confidence through customer interactions.

Skill #5 - Business Ethics Girl Scout Cookie entrepreneurs are honest, fair, and responsible. They learn to always do the right thing by their Troop members, customers, and communities.

These five skills will set them up for a lifetime of leadership!

With Covid-19 it has been challenging to reach members of our community. If you don't know a Girl Scout but want to support their small businesses, please contact me and I can put you in touch with a girl from Troop 229. I am not sure at this time if our girls will be hosting booth sales for cookies. While that is a great way to reinforce the skills learned it exposes the girls and community to increased person to person contact. It may be something that we have to put off this year.

As always, if you have a service project that the girls can help with please reach out and we will do what we can to help.

Cathy Scott
(337) 396-9610

FUMC - DeRidder Music Ministry Notes

Hopefully, when you read this newsletter, we will be meeting again in our beautiful sanctuary for Sunday worship. In the last week of January our accompanists, Mary Allen and DiAnne Kindler, recorded a concert of hymns. Look for the video on the church social media accounts. The vocal ensemble is still in the process of learning Renaissance pieces and others for the upcoming time of Lent. I want to make special mention of our Praise Ensemble instrumentalists. They are so talented and dedicated to the advancement of our music ministry. Be sure to thank James Bailey, Tyler Cobb, and DiAnne Kindler, as well as well as our vocal quartet and Mary Allen. Due to COVID, we are still working with a small worship team. Continuing praying for the worship team as we plan, rehearse, and try to stay healthy in this uncertain time.

John Schwarze - Director of Music
schwarze@fumcderidder.org

METHODIST CHILDREN'S LEARNING CENTER NEWS!

The Methodist Children's Learning Center has opened an additional Toddler/One Year Old Room. If you or someone you know is searching for loving care for a sweet child, you will find a home at First United Methodist Church. If interested, please call 337-463-3750, or contact Mary Launey on our MCLC Facebook page. Thank you!

Love, Mary Launey
Director of Methodist Children's Learning Center

Teddy Bear Parade 2021!

Children's Music is Back!!!

Children of all ages are encouraged to join us on Wednesday evenings at 5:30 in the choir room. Too much going on, but still want to participate? No problem. Contact me and I will get the music to your youngster so they can practice at home. At least this way they can join us when we sing for the congregation and not feel lost. You can call or text me at 337-396-8349 or email me at Kelley@fumcderidder.com.

God gave us music to share His gospel and the teachings of Jesus through song and to encourage others in their walk with Christ. Let's join the mission of spreading His gospel.

Your Sister in Christ,
Kelley Allen,
Children's Music Director

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
G.O.(H).D. SQUAD

Rev. Laraine will be making a decision as to when we will be opening in-person service this month! We will send an announcement about this via e-mail, on our new sign, and our website/Facebook pages.

As we slowly begin getting back to the new normal of in-person service once again, we will continue to search for people to assist on Sundays. In addition to Greeters and Readers, we need Nursery volunteers, PowerPoint Slide Runners, & Camera/Livestream Coordinators.

Just like Ashley use to do for Wednesday night suppers, we will be posting a calendar in the Church Office where you may come and sign up for whatever Sunday position you feel comfortable in helping. You may also call the office and reserve your Sunday spot with Erin.

As of right now, we only have two nursery workers and no back-ups. Unfortunately at this time, Ashley Carpenter has exhausted all places in search of Nursery care workers. Erin and Laura are running slides and rotating every other Sunday. Jeff, Lucas, Mitch, and Rev. Laraine are the only individuals who are educated in running the camera and livestream. We would <u>really</u> like to get more volunteers trained and in rotation for service to not only run smoothly, but also let those who are currently volunteering their time on Sundays sit and enjoy a Sunday service.

We truly appreciate those who step up and help Sundays run smoothly every week. Let's continue to encourage, and build each other up by helping and getting our hands dirty during church!

Operation Christmas Child Crafts!

We are going to be having a class to make crafts for OCC boxes to be used as fillers. The scheduled begin date is Monday, February 8th, depending on the church campus being reopened. The class will be in the youth building from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM. Several items that we will be making will be T-shirt jump ropes, balls from the scraps of the T-shirts, ribbon chasers, crochet headbands, other crochet items, plastic canvas cross necklaces, and a pencil bag. We will also be using a pot holder as a sewing kit. The teachers are Helen Warring and Donna McCullough. The class will be limited to 10.

Please call Donna McCullough directly to sign up at 337-375-1014. Thank you!

Each December, my 2 youngest grandchildren and I go on a memory-making trip. This trip is not to Disneyland nor any other famous place. However, much preparation takes place. Shortly after Thanksgiving, Analise (9) and Rowan (7) get out freshly sharpened pencils and new paper. We gather at the table and begin listing names of grandparents, cousins, teachers, mom, dad, pets, and each other. Next comes the counting of all money - piggy banks, tooth fairy money, and money from extra chores. The total must equal $1 for each name on their lists. Finally, it is time to leave for our destination: Dollar Tree in DeRidder.

When we get there, the only rule is: stay together. As all things in the store costs $1, nothing is off limits. With their lists held tightly in hand, every item on every shelf on every row is considered. Here's where I learn about the hearts of these children. They give out of love. It matters not how long the search is, just so long as they find the perfect gift. For their bird-watching Poppy (Grandfather), a shiny bird-ornament. For Uncle David, who fixes everything for everyone, a pocket-sized set of screw-drivers. A picture frame for Aunt Merribeth to hang more pictures of her boys on the wall; a snow-globe for Cousin Emma because it might make her happier if she gets home-sick at college. Sweets-in-a-cup is chosen for Meme (Grandmother) because not only can she eat the candy, but she has a new cup for her ever-present coffee and tea. Only one time did we have to stop and have a discussion about choosing wrinkle cream for a Grandmother, even though it was chosen "to make her feel all better." The list was finished with chair-back covers featuring a brightly colored picture of Santa for the "Texas Aunts."

We went back home where they wrapped and labeled every gift with so much excitement. After the Christmas visit was over, they came home brimming with stories of how each person reacted to their chosen gift. As they get older, I am sure what they RECEIVED might be forgotten, but I am just as sure they will remember GIVING much longer. This is a picture of what my Heavenly Father wants me to do: 2 Corinthians 13:3 "Give...not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

BIRTHDAYS

2 Patty McCullough
4 Cynthia Iles
5 Rachel Robinson
6 Bobbye Nothnagel
Dr. David Jones
7 Mikey Clanton
Dianne Penney
8 Jenny Hammerschmidt
Mark Allen
Amanda Oldaker
9 Judy Kay
10 D. Lamar Oliver
12 Darrien Siddall
Richard "Kenneth" Prather
13 Quentin Reed
Tyler Cobb
14 Carl Slover
15 Susan Hill
16 Ted Hammerschmidt
21 Robert Blankenship
James Bailey
Hunter Oldaker
22 Chris Godair
23 Carolyn Burton
26 Dana Bennett
27 Liz Savant

ANNIVERSARIES

1 David & Julie Robinson
Steve & Tina Parris
14 John & Dana Morrow

Our physical address is 406 W. Shirley St. DeRidder, LA 70634

February 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Sunday Worship Service in the Sanctuary & Online 4:00 PM Bible Study	1 6:30 PM Cub Scouts meet in the Gym 7:00 PM Boy Scouts Troop 30 meet on 3rd floor of MCLC Education Building	2 5:30 PM Daisy/Brownie/Junior Girl Scouts in Fellowship Hall Building 7:00 PM Boy Scouts Troop 911 in the Youth Building	3 8:00 AM Facebook Live Morning Devotional with Communion 5:30 PM Children's Music Ministry in the Choir Room 5:30 PM Praise Ensemble Practice in the Sanctuary 6:00 PM Children & Youth Meet in LLL Room & Conference Room 6:00 PM Cub/Boy Scouts Troop 911 in the Youth Building	4 5:30 PM Cadette and Senior Girl Scouts in the Youth Building	5	6
7 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Sunday Worship Service in Sanctuary & Online 4:00 PM Bible Study	8 5:00 PM OCC Crafting with Donna in the Youth Building 6:30 PM Cub Scouts meet in the Gym 7:00 PM Boy Scouts Troop 30 meet on 3rd floor of MCLC Education Building	9 10:00 AM Mary Martha Circle 5:30 PM Daisy/Brownie/Junior Girl Scouts in Fellowship Hall Building 7:00 PM Boy Scouts Troop 911 in the Youth Building	10 8:00 AM Facebook Live Morning Devotional with Communion 5:30 PM Children's Music Ministry in the Choir Room 5:30 PM Praise Ensemble Practice in the Sanctuary 6:00 PM Children & Youth Meet in LLL Room & Conference Room 6:00 PM Cub/Boy Scouts Troop 911 in the Youth Building	11 5:30 PM Cadette and Senior Girl Scouts in the Youth Building	12	13
14 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Sunday Worship Service in Sanctuary & Online 11:15 AM Staff Meeting in the Choir Room 4:00 PM Bible Study	15 5:00 PM OCC Crafting with Donna in the Youth Building 6:30 PM Cub Scouts meet in the Gym 7:00 PM Boy Scouts Troop 30 meet on 3rd floor of MCLC Education Building	16 5:30 PM Trustees Meeting 5:30 PM Daisy/Brownie/Junior Girl Scouts in Fellowship Hall Building 7:00 PM Boy Scouts Troop 911 in the Youth Building	17 Ash Wednesday 8:00 AM Facebook Live Morning Devotional with Communion 10:00 AM Rosemary Cady Circle in the Conference Room 5:30 PM Children's Music Ministry in the Choir Room 5:30 PM Praise Ensemble Practice in the Sanctuary 6:00 PM Ash Wednesday Service Online & in the Sanctuary 6:00 PM Children & Youth Meet in LLL Room & Conference Room 6:00 PM Cub/Boy Scouts Troop 911 in the Youth Building	18 5:30 PM Cadette and Senior Girl Scouts in the Youth Building	19	20 8:00 AM Girl Scouts – World Thinking Day in the Gym & Fellowship Hall
21 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Sunday Worship Service in Sanctuary & Online 4:00 PM Bible Study	22 March Newsletter Deadline 5:00 PM OCC Crafting with Donna in the Youth Building 6:30 PM Cub Scouts meet in the Gym 7:00 PM Boy Scouts Troop 30 meet on 3rd floor of MCLC Education Building	23 5:30 PM Daisy/Brownie/Junior Girl Scouts in Fellowship Hall Building 7:00 PM Boy Scouts Troop 911 in the Youth Building	24 8:00 AM Facebook Live Morning Devotional with Communion 5:30 PM Children's Music Ministry in the Choir Room 5:30 PM Praise Ensemble Practice in the Sanctuary 6:00 PM Children & Youth Meet in LLL Room & Conference Room 6:00 PM Cub/Boy Scouts Troop 911 in the Youth Building	25 5:30 PM Cadette and Senior Girl Scouts in the Youth Building	26	27
28 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Sunday Worship Service in Sanctuary & Online 4:00 PM Bible Study	1 5:00 PM OCC Crafting with Donna in the Youth Building 6:30 PM Cub Scouts meet in the Gym 7:00 PM Boy Scouts Troop 30 meet on 3rd floor of MCLC Education Building	2 5:30 PM Daisy/Brownie/Junior Girl Scouts in Fellowship Hall Building 7:00 PM Boy Scouts Troop 911 in the Youth Building	3 8:00 AM Facebook Live Morning Devotional with Communion 5:30 PM Children's Music Ministry in the Choir Room 5:30 PM Praise Ensemble Practice in the Sanctuary 6:00 PM Children & Youth Meet in LLL Room & Conference Room 6:00 PM Cub/Boy Scouts Troop 911 in the Youth Building	4 5:30 PM Cadette and Senior Girl Scouts in the Youth Building	5	6

In Memory of Betty Blackmon
Joyce & Jerry Lewis
John & Melanie Marcello

In Memory of Artes Alston
Joyce & Jerry Lewis

In Memory of George LeRay
Judy Kay
Susan & Dick Myers

In Memory of Elizabeth Anne Jones
Judy Kay

In Memory of Rev. Doug Cain
Judy Kay

In Memory of Norman & Casey Wertz
Sandra Wertz

In Honor of Cassie & Patrick Wertz
Sandra Wertz

In Memory of Gerald Green
Susan & Dick Myers

In Memory of Willie Bea Moses
Susan & Dick Myers

In Memory of Deece LeStage
Roger & Mary Curtis

In Memory of Betty Hooks
John Marcello

In Memory of Jim Hamilton
Susan & Dick Myers

In Memory of Jack Unis
Jean Jennings Brown

In Memory of Ruby Gibson
Billy Kilman