# Happy New Year from First United Methodist Church - DeRidder



Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

~2 Corinthians 5:17



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<u>*Dastor's Ponderings!*</u> January? 2023? How in the world did that happen? It only seems like yesterday that we were celebrating AND wringing our hands about the coming of a new millennium! Have you thought about your New Year's Resolution? What is a New Year's resolution anyway? Definition is: a firm decision made on New Year's Eve or New Year's Day to do or refrain from doing something over the course of the coming year. Some people ask, why bother? You only break them anyway.

I tend to break it down this way for myself. I am setting goals. I have set goals for myself for years related to physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. <u>Physically</u> - I have come to realize and accept my body does not process food and the quantities of food in the way it used to when I was in my 20's and 30's (you think?!). So, my goal, is to eat less in the evening and to: eat to live and not live to eat.

<u>Mentally</u> - I want to keep my mind sharp - so my goal is to make sure I get at least 7 hours of sleep each night as much as possible and to exercise both sides of my brain (play sudoku and play a musical instrument). <u>Emotionally</u> - Covid taught me to stay in better touch with my friends. So, once a month, I will get together with an "old" friend(s) either in person, zoom or Facetime and do a better job of keeping up.

Spiritually - I will take at least 15 minutes each day (even if it is 5 minutes three times a day) to either read a devotional, pray, and/or read Scripture. If I am times a day) to either read a devotional, pray, and/or read Scripture. If I am awake 17 hours a day (since I hope to sleep for at least 7 of them), out of the remaining 1,020 minutes of the day, surely I can give God 15 of those minutes! Nothing big and dramatic. All of them are doable. And if I am able to do each of them, the improvement of my own body, mind and spirit will be amazing! 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 tells us, "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body." What happens if I don't do all of these things each day? The world will not end and tomorrow I will try again. God has gifted each of us with beautiful bodies. It's up to us to will try again. God has gifted each of us with beautiful bodies. It's up to us to honor God through our bodies and to utilize them the best way we can in each stage of our life and to glorify God in the process. When we do, it is good for God and good for us.

What are your hopes and dreams in 2023? What are your goals? I pray they bring you hope and peace. Can't wait to do 2023 and ministry with you!

#### **MOMENTS**

There are moments where time stands still: \*Ted and I, holding hands, pledging our love to each other in our wedding. \*The day I asked Jesus into my heart, changing me forever. \*Holding my daughters in my arms for the first time. I had a day like that just before Christmas. After a year of symptoms, pain, discovery of a brain tumor resulting in radon radiation treatments, all accompanied by the outpouring of much love and support from family, friends and church families, it was time for THE final report. I anxiously waited inside MDAnderson. My oncologist walks through the door smiling widely. Before he even sits down, he says, "I don't usually get to bring such happy news into follow-up appointments. Your MRI could not have looked better. The tumor is much smaller and will continue to shrink. The treatment worked perfectly. I consider you free and clear and won't need to see you for a year!" Praise God! Amazing! The best Christmas present possible! Though you and I have gone through tragedies and great losses in the past, God answered yes to prayers for healing in this situation. I don't understand how some situations are heart-breaking and other times are joyful. He says in Proverbs 3:5, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding ... " Also Scripture: "His ways are not our ways." Why? 1.He is infinite; we are finite. 2.He knows the end from the beginning while we see just a short part of the now. 3.He knows the whys, while we grasp for wisdom. As I rejoice in my gift of healing, I praise God for ALL He is. Think about this: First, His Son dies for me! Then He heals my earthly body! And one day, I get to join Him forever! What a wondrous God we serve!

Love and peace. Laraine

-Mary Allen



3



Church Office Closed All Day Monday, January 16, 2023 in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Sunday, January 29th **Fifth Sunday** Potato Bar for the **Honduras Mission** Trip! 11:15 AM Gym



Erin Tepley Church Office Administrator 2023 GOALS erin@fumcderidder.org 337-463-4491

> Follow all our online worship services on Facebook at First United Methodist Church -DeRidder, or on our YouTube page: DeridderFUMC

















Wednesday Evening Children's and Youth Ministry On Wednesday evenings we continue to averaging about 14 children and youth each week. In January we will be changing our format slightly. We welcome Amanda Oldaker as a teacher for the K-2nd grade group. We will start our evenings with gym time from 5:15-5:45, then move to meal time form 5:45-6:15. From 6:15-7:00 we will have our lessons. This shift in time will help our younger children better prepare for school on

Thursday.

#### Sunday Early Worshipers

Every Sunday from 9:00-9:45 our Early Worshipers meet. All children in grades K-12 are invited to attend. We provide light breakfast foods and juice to get the morning started. This time helps your child prepare for Worship and the lessons that they will learn during Children's Church. You can drop off as early as 8:45 if you are attendingone of the adult morning classes.

#### Children's Church

All children in grades K-5 are welcome to attend. Many volunteer opportunities are available within the children's programs. Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions or concerns.

> Cathy Scott (337) 396–9610 Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries

# Children's Music





The children have done an AWESOME job with their music. As you have seen and heard, they do more than just learn songs. More musical instruments will be used in the spring. Choir will begin again on Wednesday, January 4.

## Come join us!!



#### **Missions Team Report!**

Our Missions Team wants everyone to mark their calendars for January 29th as PBS: Potato Bar Sunday! It is a fundraiser for a Honduras Mission Trip. St. Luke Simpson UMC in Lake Charles has taken teams to Honduras for many years. They do medical and dental clinics, and construction and children's ministries.

Jo Blankenship and Susan Hill have joined them in the past. Susan will return this year. No skills are needed, so if you are interested in serving

God in a new way, please let us know. Catherine and Sandra are organizing the meal that will serve as our fifth Sunday meal in the Gym. Donations for the food will be accepted for the trip. To top it all off, Open Mic will be entertaining us during the meal. Singing, instrument playing, poetry reading. All talent is invited. Bring your family and friends. Contact Grant to sign up. This will be fun!

> Peace & Love, Susan Hill, Missions Coordinator



#### More information about the Honduras trip:

St. Luke Simpson United Methodist Church of Lake Charles is sending a Missions Team to Honduras February 25 - March 4, 2023. They have a long-standing relationship with the village of Potrerillos.

The team will have a dental clinic, an eyeglass clinic, and provide VBS for the children. There may be some construction projects, too.

Anyone with a passport and a heart willing to serve is encouraged to join. The team leaders are seasoned and well organized. The cost of the trip is \$1400 per person. This is an all-inclusive fee except for travel meals.

I have been with St. Luke Simpson UMC several times. We have a wonderful reationship with the

local missionaries, a retired pastor, and the church members. The outreach to the community is phenominal! They greet us with warmth and hospitality. Every day is filled with laughter and hugs.

Rev. Laraine and I have committed to be part of the team. Please consider coming along! And please pray that we will be led by the Holy Spirit while sharing God's love. Shalom, Susan Hill



We had SNOW much fun this month with the children! There were crafts galore, our annual classroom door judging competition, Grinch Day, pajama day, and Santa even came to take pictures and deliver some new toys to the classroom! Thank you to all the teachers and parents who assisted with the classroom Christmas parties. More photos to share in next month's newsletter and on our Facebook page. *Merry Christmas!* Natalie Ruano, MCLC Director





## FUMC – DeRidder Music Ministry Notes



Our Lessons and Carols service this year was outstanding due to all those who contributed and participated. We are already looking forward to next year! Thank you again for joining and celebrating the Christmas season with us.

John Schwarze Director of Music schwarze@fumcderidder.org

## come and worship!

## JANUARY ASSISTANTS

**Sunday, January 1, 2023:** Greeters: JoAnn Hagood & Lennie Hanchey Readers: Sandra Wertz & John Marcello Communion Servers: Barbara Haynes, Frances Cole, & Joyce Lewis

Sunday, January 8th: Greeters: Betty & Scotty Nease Readers: Betty Nease & Lucas Carpenter Communion Servers After Service: Mary Alice Wisdom

**Sunday, January 15th:** Greeters: Bladen Family Readers: Charlotte McGee & Gayle Bailey Communion Servers After Service: Catherine & Grant Beal

> **Sunday, January 22nd:** Greeters: Phyllis Blanton & Mary Brister Readers: D. Lamar Oliver & David Hardesty Communion Servers After Service: Susan Hill

Sunday, January 29th: Greeters: Rodney Fowler & Cathy Scott Readers: Laura Schultz & Ted Hammerschmidt Communion Servers After Service: Julie Porter & Dianne Penney

Women in Faith,

The McNeese State University Foundation would like to thank Frist United Methodist Church DeRidder for its contribution designated for the University Advancement fund. The rapid growth of business and industry in Southwest Louisiana only magnifies the importance the University plays in providing educated graduates that are prepared to enter the work force. Your gift demonstrates your committment to helping McNeese change lives by providing excellence with a personal touch as we strive to be the first choice for students, employers, donors, organizations and potetial employees. McNeese is consistently recognized for providing a greater return on investment and average starting salary for its graduates and the best college education value. Your investment in the Foundation greaty contributes to this recognition. As a donor, you play an important role in the life of

McNeese, just as the University plays an important role in the life of Southwest Louisana. Thank you for your support. Sincerely, Wade Rousse, PhD **Executive Vice President** 



## **Memorials**

In Memory of Melanie Marcello

Betty & Scotty Nease Joyce Lewis Darrell Midkiff Susan Myers Elizabeth & Dale Vincent Kinney & Ginger Hanchey Jo & Richie Bankenship Susan & Carl Slover Lennie Hanchey Monda & Brent Rutherford Susan & Brad Smith

#### In Memory of Billy Penney

Lou & Clay Hendrix Joyce Lewis Susan Myers Elizabeth & Dale Vincent Jo & Richie Bankenship Susan & Carl Slover

#### In Memory of Wilbert Curtis

Joyce Lewis **Dianne Penney** 

In Memory of Kathy Marshall Elizabeth & Dale Vincent

In Memory of Larry Jones Susan & Carl Slover

In Memory of Mr. & Mrs. EF Presley **Thomas Presley** 

> In Memory of Dick Myers **Thomas Presley**

### Where is God on Sunday Mornings? ... In the Church Nursery Too!

The Children's Ministries seem to be continually looking for Nursery staff or volunteers to provide care on Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings. I asked myself why, and determined that perhaps people don't understand how truly valuable the position is to the life of the Church and its people. In an article by Tony Kummer (link below) he laid out 7 compelling reasons why the church nursery is so valuable. I thought I would share them and ask that you ponder and pray for this valuable service our church offers. God is there. The Bible has specific promises about God's presence when children are welcomed and

loved in Jesus' name. Mark 9:36-37 states "and he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, "Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me." WOW, what an honor! It helps others. When a child is being cared for parents can focus on worship, rather than struggling to keep them quite and still during service. It not only refreshes that parent but allows for their spiritual growth. Additionally, in a way, your service is making it possible for the Pastor to fulfill her ministry. Baby's first impressions. The first (and sometimes lasting) feelings a child will have toward church is formed in the nursery department. The most special assignment. When you serve in the nursery, you are being entrusted with the most important (and vulnerable) members of the church family. There is no greater treasure on this side of heaven than the little ones God has given us. You must be someone special to have a job

that is so important. Your own growth. Your service is essential for your own spiritual growth. You may have never looked at it this way, but a growing Christian is always a serving Christian. Jesus was known for putting others first, when you serve in the church nursery you are walking in his example. Visitors first impressions. The church nursery is the first contact young families will have with your church. Your friendly greeting and exceptional care for their children can make a great first impression for your church. If they don't feel like their children are safe, they will not

please reach out to me. My phone number is (337) 396-9610 and my email is cathy@fumcderidder.org. Remember that God blesses those who serve his children. https://ministry-to-children.com/god-is-in-the-church-nursery/



return – and rightly so. Front-line prayers. Your service in the church nursery is a powerful opportunity for prayer. If every nursery worker would spend several minutes praying over the children in their care, imagine how God might begin to change this coming generation. There is no better way to create an environment of spiritual nurture than to pray while you serve in the nursery. If you know someone that may be interested in a paid position, please give them my contact information. Or if you are interested in volunteering occasionally,



January 2023

Let's

Celebrate!				1 IJ lepley 2 Jo Blankenship	5 Kelly Jones	nyrie nubilisuri Rettv Nease	6 Catherine Beal	7 Blake Hammerschmidt 10 Tyler White	11 Cathy Lockwood	12 Frank Chapman		14 Jimmy Hicks		18 Maegan Loupe			25 brenda vaugnn 26 Vincent Labue	29 Anna Wiggins 30 Phvllis Blanton	Morgan Tepley	ANNIVERSARIES		-	29 Mick & Lynn Erpelding
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