

MINISTRIES



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 from 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 attending one 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



NOTES

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 relationship with the local missionaries, a retired pastor, and the church members. The outreach to the community is phenomenal! 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

Methodist Children's Learning Center!



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
 natalie@fumcderidder.org



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

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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Pastor's Ponderings!

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. Physically - 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.

Mentally - 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).

Emotionally - 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 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 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!

Love and peace,
Laraine

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!

~Mary Allen

Church Office Closed All Day
Monday, January 2, 2023



Women's
Prayer Breakfast
Thursday, January 5, 2023
Conference Room
8:30 AM



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



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