

## **Vacation Bible School 2023!**

Evenings: Monday, July 17th - Friday, July 21st

VBS presents an ideal opportunity to share the life-changing gospel of Jesus Christ with all the children in our community. We are engaged in an epic battle for the hearts and minds of our youth. Every day, they are bombarded with lies about who they are, who their Creator is, and where their salvation comes from. Thankfully, God has given his children armor to wear in this battle between truth and lies, light and darkness, good and evil.

The theme for our 2023

VBS is **Keepers of the Kingdom**. Kids will learn how they can be part of God's kingdom through salvation in his Son and will be equipped with the armor of God to become Keepers of the Kingdom who stand strong in today's battle for truth.

Register online at https://vbsmate.com/events/ FUMCDeRidder/27500

If you need more information, please contact me directly at (337) 396-9610 or cathy@FUMCDeRidder.org.

Cathy Scott, Coordinator



Where is God on Sunday Mornings? ...In the Church Nursery Too! The Children's Ministries seems 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 quiet 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 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 who may be interested in a paid position, please give them my contact information. Or if you are interested in volunteering occasionally, 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.

Tony Kummer link - https://ministry-to-children.com/god-is-in-the-church-nursery/



## Methodist Children's Learning Center!





Our children had a wonderful time celebrating Dad. They also have enjoyed water fun during the warm days of summer.

Best Wishes and Many Blessings, Natalie Ruano MCLC Director natalie@fumcderidder.org

he Choir Correct-er

In my rearview mirror, I see my four-year-old waving her arms around. The rhythm of her arms is in time with music from the radio. She notices I'm watching and says, "Guess who I am?" We've played this game MANY hours in the car, on every ride that takes more than 15 minutes! (Mothers raising children before there were iPhones and movies in the car remember the struggle.)

~"May I take your order please? But hurry! There's a BIG line of cars behind you!" Who is she? She is a McDonald's worker speaking into her hairbrush a/k/a microphone. ~

~~"Sold!!! To the man with the long gray mustache! Two cows, two goats and one Siamese cat that bites!"— Who is she? Now, she's an Auctioneer at the Sale Barn.~~

To say the least, I have seen dozens of surprising occupations acted out. This particular morning, I answered "Guess-who-I-am?" with the words, "Mom doesn't know this time." "The Choir Correct-er!!" she announces, waving her arms even wider. "Oh. Of course," I say, "but did you know it's really Choir Director?" She said, "No, ma'am. I don't think so. I've been there with you. When he quits waving his arms, y'all stop singing. He corrects you and when he waves his arms, you sing it again. And this time it must be right 'cause it sounds a lot prettier. Yes, I'm the Choir Correct-er!!"

My daughters grew up knowing "correcting" and "directing" are not necessarily punishments. They are actions to keep you singing the right notes or walking in the right direction on the right path. God is our loving Life Correct-er. He sometimes stops us when we are outside his guidance. We also get stopped by the consequences we ourselves cause. God, being omnipotent, knows all! He knows where our walk is leading and he only wants the BEST for each of us. Today, I am re-committing my trust to Him for the direction of my life. He knows the way. Let him direct us: let him be our Life Director.

"I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you." Psalms 32:8

Isaiah 30:21 "And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left."

Love, Mary Allen



Our Last Day of School Bicycle Ride and Hotdog Supper was packed with people of all ages. The little ones that still had training wheels or very new skills proudly displayed their courage as they sped down the street on the 1/2 mile course. The 5mile Route displayed riders of great endurance and diversity! One participant and his bicycle took a tumble on the pavement, got patched with a Mother's handy dandy bandaid, and returned to peddle the course. Our adult "sweeper ", who stayed at the back of the pack told of great love and support for the bandaid rider. He said that the best part of his day was seeing and hearing the profound concern of comrades for their friend. The Bladen family worked hard to impress the crowd with their fantastic grilling talents. They also supplied a list of funny jokes for the children to share with everyone. That was a blast!

Grant provided the necessary gear and expertise that was required for the music and the mic. Many people worked hard to organize and provide the meal, the snowcones, the entertainment, and the opportunity for comradeship to grow. About the Journey: The idea of a bicycle ride to earn money for the various missions of the UMW was hatched in 2018. The first event began in the summer of 2019. With 1 truck, 1 driver, and 4 cyclists, a journey of 300 miles set the stage for a new era of fundraising. The team rode bicycles from one town to another, staying the night in churches and homes. The expedition had profound effects on all those who contributed. The next 2 years were marked with restrictions of Covid 19. I rode the 300 miles solo for each year. My family drove the support vehicles. Riding for hundreds of miles, all over the state, during Covid restrictions was a huge spiritual journey. I could write a short story about that experience. The summer of 2022 was bright and beautiful for all who wanted to ride for missions. Several teenagers and adults gathered at our Bus Barn for early morning briefings and prayer before tackling the tarmac. Support drivers were super enthusiastic and encouraged us to safely persevere. The fellowship was amazing. Circumstances were strained for 2023. I had to reroute my plans and expectations for a 300 mile journey. Aggravation was an unwelcome component that your prayers and patience helped dissipate. The Journey was completed! Thanks to everyone for their contributions to the missions of the United Women of Faith. You may have heard mutterings about spandex clad mature (and NOT so mature) individuals gathering at our Bus Barn, then creating a joyful ruckus all around town. It's true and Pastor approved. Ask us anything you want to know! Then join in the fun for bicycle rides geared for everyone. Thursdays, 6:00pm. We can help you get started or use your experience to help us improve. Call the church office or Susan Hill for more information. Amen! Love. Susan Hill





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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Organization Postage Paid Permit #53 July, y'all. July is here! Half of 2023 is already gone! Are you happy with how you have spent your time? Have you grown in your relationship with God? Have you planned some balance in your life that includes worship, family time, taking care of your home, and your health? Have you planned some fun things to do?

We all need balance in our lives. The only way to get it is to plan it yourself. Rarely is anyone else going to help you have that. So, I hope you take time to plan for these things the second half of the year. Don't forget that we are worshipping in the Fellowship Hall through July 9th. Then we turn Fellowship Hall back over to our children for Vacation Bible School! Please, please let's all step up and sign up to help Cathy have a tremendously successful Bible School with our children. She cannot do it alone. She needs YOU! Please call her or the church office and she will get right back to you.

I took one week of vacation last week to take time to relax and play. My two dogs, Autumn and Sage, and I went to Lake Texoma for a week and camped in my travel trailer. One of the things that happened is that I taught my girls to swim! Now, they are part Lab, so it shouldn't take much, but they had just never had the chance. I tried coaxing them out into the water by following me - it didn't work. I tried tossing their toys into the water - it didn't work. Finally, I picked them up (one at a time) and carried them into the water. You could feel their bodies tense, yet they didn't try to escape. I slowly lowered them into the water and just talked quietly to them as the water surrounded them. They clung to me, yet looked around at the situation. I sat still while they pondered it. Finally, when they were ready, they took off and swam to shore! They then ran around playing in the sand and wrestled with each other in joy, as if they were celebrating what they just accomplished. I laughed and smiled watching them. The next time I invited them into the water they went much more willingly. Why? Because they trusted me, and they found out they could do it!

Isn't that how we are with new things? Isn't that how God is with us as we try new things? We are oftentimes afraid, and the beauty is, God gently holds us and encourages us to try new things, have new adventures and to stretch ourselves beyond what we think we can do. If we, you, are willing, we too end up celebrating and enjoying our newfound talent and opportunities if we just trust God and follow Him wherever He leads us. May you try some new adventures in the second half of this year! Including growing closer to God!

See you Sunday, Laraine



## STATE OF THE MUSIC MINISTRY:

I write this letter to the church with a tangible and measurable degree of concern. As we celebrate the birth of this nation, we also celebrate God's blessings on our church's music ministry. Our children's choir, while steadily increasing in the number of voices, has also steadily improved the quality of their performances in the service of God. Not only is it fun to watch these cute kids, but it has become a pleasurable listening experience. The same can be said of our hand bell ensemble. Although their

cuteness is debatable (lol), there is no denying they have grown musically. Numbering ten dedicated individuals, it is equal in size to the hand bell ensemble of FUMC of Lake Charles.

However, the chancel choir at FUMC of Lake Charles has around thirtyfive singers, whereas our Sunday morning chancel choir is presenting an anthem, we can count on only eight singers. For a hand bell ensemble to outnumber a choir in a music ministry is not normal, and soon, our chancel choir will lose another choir member, whose name I am unable to disclose to you currently. It should be obvious that our chancel choir needs your help. COVID-19 protocols implemented on our choir had a disastrous effect. When the restrictions on the choir were lifted, many were unable to return for several reasons. Several have experienced health issues since that has required them to make the difficult decision to withdraw from choir membership. As evidenced here, our chancel choir is in great need. I call on all members of First United Methodist Church of DeRidder to pray for our chancel choir. I call on all members to pray earnestly for the Spirit to guide you and, dare I say, convict you if you are not using the gifts with which God has blessed you for his Glory. I call on you to take a risk, join the choir, and learn from the experience. We would love to have you as a part of our wonderful choir.



Join us for Sunday worship services in the Fellowship Hall this summer!

Miranda Chapman Church Office Administrator Office: 337-463-4491 office@fumcderidder.org

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

DeridderFUMC

Our mailing address is PO Box 965 DeRidder, LA 70634

70634

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



## July Worship Assistants

Sunday, July 2nd:

Greeters: Grant & Catherine Beal Readers: Tammi Henderson & Donna McCullough Communion Servers During Service: Grant Beal, Catherine Beal & Youth

Sunday, July 9th:

Greeters: Sandra Wertz & Brenda Jones Readers: Sandra Wertz & Ted Hammerschmidt Communion Server After Service: David Hardesty

Sunday, July 16th:

Greeter: Oldaker Family
Readers: Raymond Henderson & Hunter Oldaker
Communion Server after Service: Mary Alice Wisdom

Sunday, July 23rd:

Greeters: Rodney Fowler & Phyllis Blanton Readers: Diane Penney & John Marcello Communion Server after Service: Joyce Everett

Sunday, July 30th: Greeters: Tepley Family

Readers: Phyllis Blanton & Van Allen Communion Server after Service: Erin Tepley

## OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD ("...go and make disciples of all nations)

This year, 2023, marks the 30-year anniversary of **Operation Christmas Child**. Over 200 million shoeboxes have been collected and distributed worldwide, resulting in 50 million children becoming disciples of Christ. And we have been part of that amazing ministry!

Remember school supplies are on sale this month, so take advantage of some big savings. The fact that many children aren't allowed to attend school without their own supplies stresses the importance of prociding these to them.

## JULY School Supplies (ages 5 - 9)

Pencils, pens, sharpeners, erasers, soft-back spiral notebooks, round tip scissors, soft coloring books, crayons, colored pencils, and glue sticks (no liquid glue)

All items must fit into a shoebox.

Thank you!





Dear First Methodist,

Thank you for recognizing me on Senior Sunday. Thank you also for the Bible and the devotional book.

Sincerely, Jake Cobb

Hi y'all—Miranda Chapman here! I'm so happy to join the church. My husband Hayden and I are originally from Mississippi; we met at the Wesley Foundation at Southern Miss. In 2017 we got married and moved to Alabama soon after with the Army, where my husband attended flight school. He flies blackhawk helicopters, so needless to say he's the cool one. We spend all of our free time chasing after our son, Daniel, who is 2 years old. He loves playing outside, meeting new friends, and trying new foods. I have already been so blessed by your warm welcome, and if you haven't done so, please stop by the front office to introduce yourself.





In Memory of Clarence Formby Ken & Gayle Bailey Phyllis Blanton

In Memory of Billy Blansett
Brigitte Booth
Joyce Lewis

In Memory of Carole Montgomery Joyce Lewis

In Memory of Jo Calhoun
Raymond & Frances Cole
Mary Alice Wisdom
Scotty & Betty Nease
Joyce Lewis

In Memory of James Akard Phyllis Blanton

In Memory of Carolyn Johnson Scotty & Betty Nease

In Honor of Erin Tepley
Julie Porter

In Memory of Doug Smith
Stephanie, Richard & Shelton Chavez

# **July 2023**

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BIRTHDAYS
LeRoy Ades
Barbara Haynes
Michael Clanton
Derek Nothnagel
Kelley Allen
Angie Thorne
Elizabeth Vincent
Mitch Launey
Lilly Smith
Gary Godair Sam Jones W. E. Kilman David Jones, Jr. 25 29

## **ANNIVERSARIES**

Ray & Tammi Henderson Tim & DiAnne Kindler 4