



Wesley Witness

Wesley United Methodist Church

February 2016

614 Texas Street, Sulphur Springs, TX 75482

www.wesleysst.org

Phone 903-885-3383

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Those
who love
me, I will
deliver, I
will
protect
those who
know my
Name.

Psalm 91:14



Because of the Lord's great
Love we are not
 consumed, for His compassion
never fails
 It is new every morning,
 great is your faithfulness. **3:22-23**



In Loving Memory of Algarine Jordan
 By: Mary Sue and Ashley Gilbreath



PRAYERS AND CONCERNS

| | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Dominic Ayala | Rhonda Bawcum | DeLana Beadle |
| Carson Bryant | Anna Campbell | Margaret Campbell |
| Stephanie Campbell | Cassie Cavaliere | Judy Cheatham |
| Surene Cody | Claudia Cook | Brayden Dixon |
| Coen Cruz Escamilla | Steve Drummond | Patricia Fisher |
| Ty and Jamie Funderburk | Jayne Glenn | Donny Godfrey |
| Robert and Mary Glover | Jack Godfrey | Reggie Hawkins |
| Magan, Tim and Easley Henderson | Doris Herman | Dora Hernandez |
| Frank Hernandez | Sharon Hughes | Shelly Huff |
| Marvin and Louise Jones | Chalisha Johnson | Charles Johnson |
| Christa and Victor Kasztelanski | Dana Jordan | Tommy Lewis |
| Mary Ann McCormick | Della Loane | Muriel Lucas |
| Tana and Gary Moon | Zane Magan | J. T. Mullinax |
| Ricky and Kay Orr | Gaylon O'dell | Sandra Parker |
| Jean Ann and Richard Raleigh | Red Penny | Remy Pibe |
| Cathy and Mike Smith | Ben Read | Durwood Smith |
| Donna and Dave Spears | Jason Stanley | Ceely Stout |
| Pat and Floyd Spears | Allan Thar | Braden Tinsley |
| Elton and Louise Stewart | Chrystal Vargas | Kati Voss |
| The Thompson Family | Ben Walker | Mark Warren |
| Andrew and Debby Trout | Gracie Winters | |

Healthy Church Initiative/HCI Team Community Chest/Cupboard
 CANHelp Backpack Buddies North Texas Food Bank
 Holy Highway Girls Home Northeast Texas Child Advocacy Center
 Dallas Bethlehem Center – Wesley-Rankin Community Center
 Way of Salvation UMC, Mytisch, Russia Abused Children and Youth
 Our Country and Our Leaders Military Personnel and their Families
 EMS, Fire Fighters, Hospital Personnel
 New additions to the prayer list are in **BOLD**

Note: Names added to the prayer list will remain on the list for 30 days. They will be relisted by request. Please help us to keep the list current

WESLEY HOMEBOUND

Doris Rawls Mary Burks Dell Cline Billie Newsom Bobbie Holder
 Bill Shell Muriel Lucas Sandra McIntire Della Loane Lloyd Hiller



Little Acorn School News

Mighty Oaks from Little Acorns Grow

Important Dates

Feb 3 Scholastics is due (you can order online or send your order to school)

Feb 12 Valentine's Party (Each teacher will have a sign-up sheet in her room.) It will not be a big party like we had at Christmas. Each class will do fun activities all day in their rooms and have a fun lunch. The kids will also be exchanging Valentines.

Feb 15 Closed for President's Day



Reminders

Supply fees are due so please get these turned in. I need all tuition turned in no later than the 10th of each month.

Devotionals

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Feb 1 - 5 | Fruit of the Spirit |
| Feb 8 - 12 | No Devotional |
| Feb 15 - 19 | Jesus Feeds 5000 |
| Feb 22 - 26 | John the Baptist |
| Feb 29 - Mar 4 | Faith |

From the Youth Minister

Fifteen years ago, I invited a young woman out for dinner and dancing. She accepted and we spent the evening talking, dancing, and getting to know one another. It was later in the evening that I learned that she was a youth pastor here at Wesley. It was at that point that I began to think to myself, "What are all the things I have said so far that were inappropriate?", and, "Maybe this wasn't the best place to bring her, and lastly, "Now that I know that she's a youth pastor, how am I supposed to act?" It's funny to look back now with the realization that not only was that night the beginning of my relationship with my wife, but also, and more importantly, on that very night, that God was using a young woman to minister to a young man who desperately needed God.

We often think that ministry is something that happens in the church or in an environment that is "acceptably clean" by the standards of fellow church goers. We don't usually think of ministry occurring in some bar on the edge of town, or in a local convenience store, or even at the work place. In fact, I would go as far to say that we often miss opportunities for ministry because we think that the setting is inappropriate or that we are simply ill-equipped. A great example of this can be seen in John 4, "the woman at the well." Jesus realized the needs of the woman, so He began to minister to her. When the disciples returned from the town (4:27), they were surprised to see Him speaking with her because it contradicted what "the church" considered to be acceptable. Although Jesus obviously had a huge advantage, because, being the Christ, He is all knowing, this story does illustrate a very important lesson, and that is, we as Christians must be willing to go into situations where no one else will go, if we want to reach people that no one else is reaching. Now I can hear your response: "How can we go if we don't know where we're going, or, how are we going to know what to do when we get there?" My response is this: Pray for a willingness to be sent, pray for a heart that sees the needs of others, and then give praise to God for the victories you will claim in His Name.

Since I made public my decision to be Youth Pastor here at Wesley, several people have asked me questions like: "How do you plan on...?", "What are you going to do about ...?", "How are you going to handle...?" And to be perfectly honest, the only real answer to these questions quite simply: "I don't know, but I serve a God who does."



Pancake Tuesday

6:00 p.m. February 9

followed by

**Children's
Gras Pa-**



**Mardi
rade**

We'll have fun as a church on Tuesday, February 9, as well celebrate Pancake Tuesday; also known as Shrove Tuesday or Mardi Gras. Its roots lie in the Christian calendar, as the last hurrah before Lent begins on Ash Wednesday. Our children will present a Parade of the Stars that night after we



**Stone Soup
and Soul
6:30 p.m.
Wednesday
February 10**

The Ash Wednesday Service will be in Wesley Hall following the meal.



Sunday, February 28, will be Scout Sunday. Members of Troup 77 will be participating in the worship service. The Cub Scouts in Troup 77 meet here at Wesley.



HCI Update January 2016

Our work is complete and the Healthy Church Initiative Self-Study is ready to submit to the Conference Office. Our Consultation weekend has been rescheduled to the first weekend in April. The dates now are April 1-3, 2016!!! The work is not done, however. There will be preparations for the weekend that will need to be made so the weekend will run smoothly. Be prepared to help as needed.

The Self-Study required interviewing Community Leaders and a suggested list was given. The team divided up into pairs and volunteered to interview leaders such as the Superintendent of SSISD (Mike Lamb), the City Manager (Marc Maxwell), the Chief of Police (Jay Sanders), a Hospital Rep (Jackie Thornton), Nursing Home Administrators (four) and a Funeral Home Director (Price Orwosky).

Here's what Mike Lamb had to say about Wesley UMC:

Greatest Community Strength: We have a "bit of magic" in our area. Mike explained it this way: Friendships are strong; there is a "love" expressed for friends; a lot of respect shown to one another, for the community; a "no retreat mentality" he experiences in the Metroplex in education.

Greatest Community Concern: Sulphur Springs has 60% children in the low socio-economic level in schools. While we have a lot of good families, we have a significant number of "single-parents."

Our Greatest Need: Once again, that "60% socio-economic" number of student families.

What do you see as the importance of the community's churches: Partnering with schools is a great asset. However, since the district is well aware of 60% socio-economic factor, reading, feeding, and mentoring could be vastly improved "working with" the lead of the school personnel. Churches do help the children/students to gain a morality base.

What role do you see the SSISD playing in our community? Education makes a difference in anyone's life! Did you know that our US prisons are being built based on the Third Grade Reading Scores? Our role is a BIG role and an essential in concert with families and with community groups.

What Education Values are promoted? Teachers and Educators promote healthy, Christian values.

How is it impacting our community? Not sure, yet. However, the SSISD does promote the "Dare to Dream" Program which is very visible in Metroplex schools. Also, SSISD has the WILDCATS Value Program (which each letter standing for a value).

What partnerships with SSISD & Community Entities? Again, Mentoring, Tutoring, Reading...working together.

What do you know about our church? You are a part of the Hopkins County Christian Alliance (HCCA), you do the Backpack Buddy Program at Lamar Elementary, and you reach out to those in need. (You do the Wednesday Meal? No, that's First UMC, but we did for a while host that even when construction was going on at First. I thought I passed once and saw it on my way to Austin...)

Specific Role/Programs/Projects our church could be doing to strengthen our community's well-being? Again, by Feeding, Mentoring, Tutoring, Reading, etc. in our schools.

If you would like to know what other community leaders had to say about Wesley, the entire report is available for your reading enjoyment. Just ask Mary Lou or Pastor Steve and we will let you see it. It is not a secret report, just a very large one so only one master copy has been printed.

Remember, HCI is a process. It helps us 'see' what we do well, areas that need improvement, things we may need to discontinue or change how we do it. Change is a scary word but this process is meant to help us discover what we can do to make disciples for Christ for the transformation of the world here at the corner of Texas and Bellview.



**Youth-Sponsored
Valentine Lunch**
Sunday, February 14
Following
Sunday School
Cost: Donation

From
Pastor
Steve

Messy Ministry!

Nothing like a good **Peanuts** cartoon to begin one's day. Lucy is at her five-cent psychology booth where Charlie Brown stopped for advice about life.

"Life is like a deck chair, Charlie," she says. **"One the cruise ship of life, some people place their deck chair at the rear of the ship so they can see where they've been. Others place their deck chair at the front of the ship so they can see where they're going."**

Dr. Lucy looks at her puzzled client and asks, **"Which way is your deck chair facing?"** Without hesitating, Charlie replies glumly, **"I can't even get my chair unfolded."**

I think all of us at one time or the other can relate. LOL indeed!

I've had the joy over the years to both be mentored by outstanding ministry folk and also be a mentor to others, especially young ministers in college. There are two constants I've always emphasized: 1. Ministry is not always anti-septically clean and 2. Always be flexible so you can bend and not break. I always told my college students to write these two things down for two reasons: 1. It would be on the final exam with me and 2. Flexibility adds life to ministers!

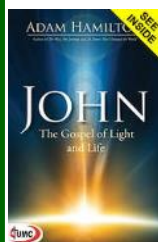
If you would allow yourself the open to stop and reflect on your life, you will note that living is more than existing. When we are born (created), we become a living being. Parents and other humans care for us and nurture us and we begin to grow. Without these touches of life, we would only exist, provided we could find food and drink to maintain an existence. It is only when someone decides or chooses to aid in our existence then we truly begin to grow.

Our spiritual life requires this same assistance. Someone, parents, friends, family, teachers, coaches, siblings., etc., took the time to introduce us to church and to God in Christ Jesus. Maybe we were even baptized as a child. That is a beginning point in our spiritual life. We Wesleyan Methodists know that as Prevenient Grace, that is, "God acting before we have knowledge of God or can even know God is there." Yet, we can get stuck in this moment if that is all we ever do. So the Bible encourages us to "grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ." Aha! There it is. The word. GROW. And how does a living being grow? Only with the help of other human beings. In the spiritual sense, we "stir up the gift that is within you" (II Timothy 1:6). Every one of us have been gifted by God's Grace to do the work of ministry, to develop Wesleyan habits of Works of Piety and Works of Mercy. To "not only be hearers of the Word but also doers of the Word" as James 1:22 tells us.

I like that word "stir." Like most words, it has both positive and negative connotations. Yes, someone can agitate you or provoke you to say or do something just by their body language or use of their voice. That'll stir you up! Likewise, I enjoy cooking soups and stews and this requires some stirring so that the broth is mixed (stirred up) with the meat and the vegetables and the herbs and spices are stirred in evenly as well. This is why I often paused in mentoring one-on-one sessions and reminded my students to watch both their body language as well as their voice intonations when speaking to an individual or small or large group. People will catch our message more often visually than verbally. Oh, us humans!

I am stirred up with our church's decisions to pursue becoming a better church with the Healthy Church Initiative (HCI) process, the affirming of "Call to Youth and Music Ministry" to Joe Clark, and being the presence of Christ in our neighborhood to live out our United Methodist Mission of "making Disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world." What we say and do at Wesley UMC is making a difference in lives. We pray. We sing. We fellowship. We visit. We celebrate. We mourn loss. We study the Bible. We give gifts of money and assistance. We love children. We love youth. We love our senior adults. We rejoice with those who rejoice and we weep with those who weep.

I thank God every day for putting me into ministry. I am grateful my Annual Conference placed me here to serve. My prayer continues to be: "O Lord, may I willingly serve you with gladness." To God be the glory. Amen.



Lenten Study

John

The Gospel of Light and Life

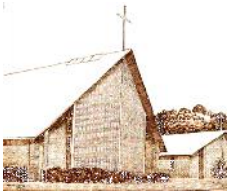
by: Adam Hamilton

7:00 p.m. Wednesdays

The study begins February 17

and continues until March 23

There is a sign-up sheet on the Wesley Hall bulletin board. Books will be available for \$13.00 each.



The Wesley Witness
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UMC,
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or

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United Methodist Women

1:30 p.m.
Tuesday
February 16

Program: Pastor Steve

**2015 Giving
Statements**
are available for
pick up.
They will be in
Wesley Hall **ONLY**
on Sunday mornings
and on Wednesday
nights.

**Tax-Aide Program
Federal Income Tax
Preparation
at No Cost**

**Tuesdays and
Saturdays**

9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
February 2 - April 16