



Wesley's Vision

INVITE all in the Name of Christ
GROW disciples with the Word of Christ
SERVE all with the LOVE of Christ.

Wesley Witness

Wesley United Methodist Church

March 2020

614 Texas, Sulphur Springs, TX

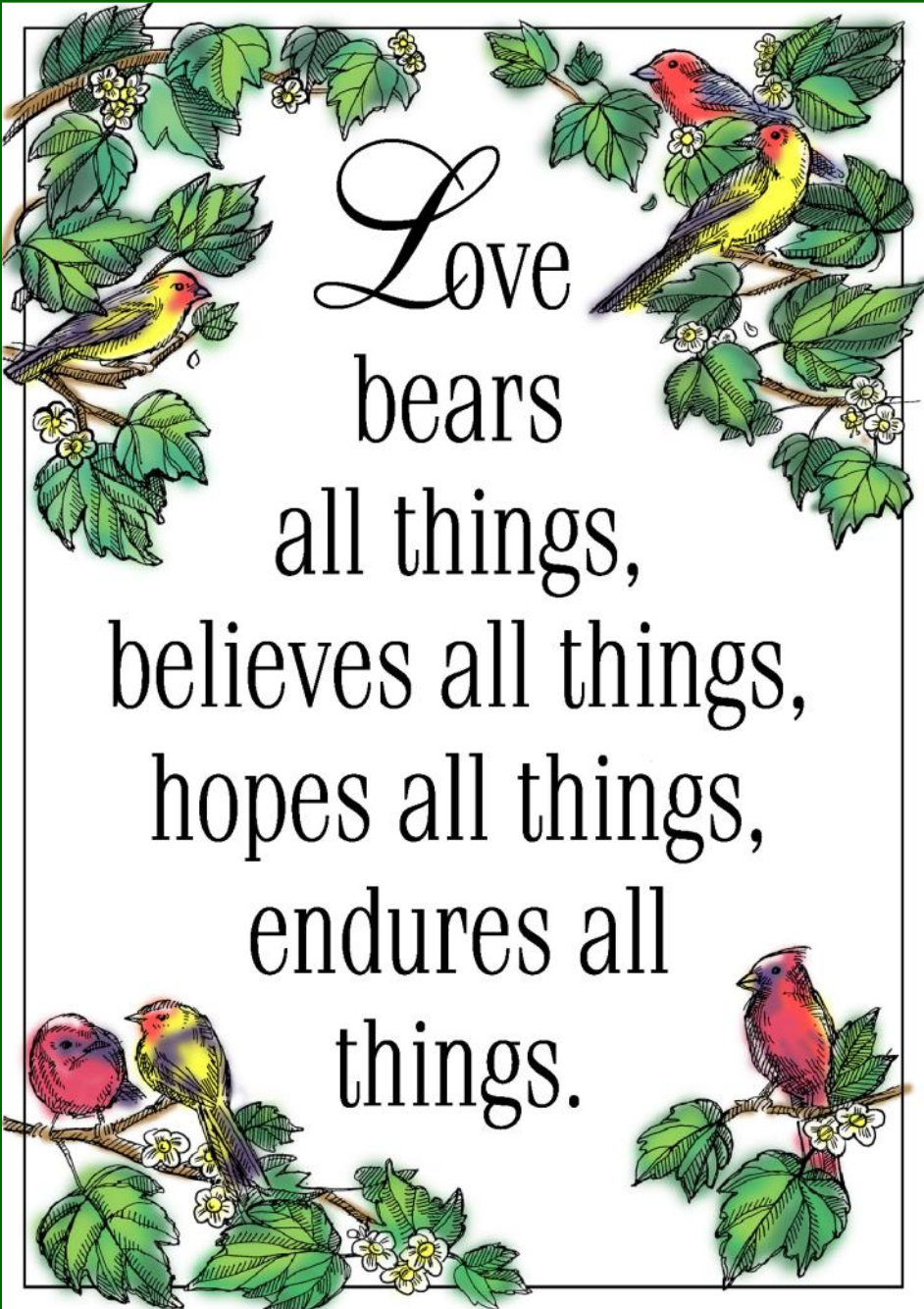
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Wesley UMC-Sulphur Springs

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Love
bears
all things,
believes all things,
hopes all things,
endures all
things.

1 C O R I N T H I A N S 1 3 : 7

PRAYERS AND CONCERNS

Richard Adams	Jordyn Ausmus	Marilyn Baxter	Delana Beadle	The Beers Family
Allison and John Bostick	Cecile Blount	Charlotte Burns	Devyn Byars	Karey Brice
Steve and Dicie Rue Cook	Sam Campbell	Wanda Clayton	Hazel Collins	Janeen Francis
Natalie Darrow	Ryan Dixon	Virginia Emerline	Steve Fitch	Troy Garrett
Eddie Fenstermaker	Mike Gilmer	Jeff Godfrey	Kristi Hodgkiss	Mindi Horne
Kathleen Fletcher	Frank Hernandez	Kaycee Ivey	Lucille Jenkins	Ronnie Jenkins
Don and Mary Gilmer	Louise Jones	Dana Jordan	Barbara Law	Jase Mabie
Jack and Janie Godfrey	Lynn Kincade	Larry Maeker	Becky Moore	Beverly Morgan
Ashley, Chris and Jeremiah	Forest Mullins	Debbie Nichols	Johnny Nichols	Tammy Nicks
Magan, Tim, Easley, and Finn	Henderson	Gaylon O'dell	Rose Raines	JoAnn Roach
James and Pat Hulen	Russell Scott	Sylvia Sellers	Nancy Stobough	Debbie Stribling
Jim and Kim Rivers	Gary Stribling	Allan Thar	Kati Voss	Lucy Vaden
Becky and Danny Walker	Randall Voss	Sara Wilkinson	Barbara Williams	Roger Wilmont
Betty and Mark Warren	Rosemary Adams	Wakefield	Ron Zitterick	



The March meeting is Tuesday, March 17. We will be creating chocolate bouquets to sell at Wesley's Chocolate Festival on May 9. It will be a fun meeting!

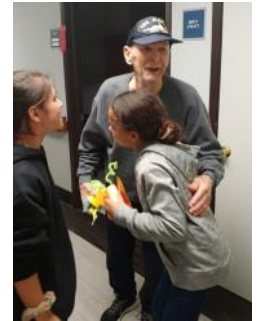
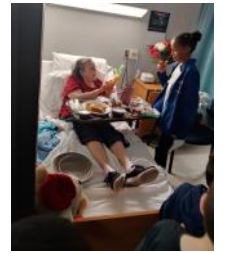


On Wednesday, March 18, we will be serving lunch to the students at the Wesleyan Center in Commerce. The menu is soup and chicken and dumplings, salad, and homemade cookies. They are crazy for the chicken and dumplings! If we ask if they would like to eat something different, the answer is always no!

The UMW annual bake sale is Palm Sunday, April 5. Do you have family or friends coming for Palm Sunday or Easter? There will be LOTS of goodies, including cakes, pie, cookies, casseroles, soups and stews, etc.

The East District Morning Apart is Saturday, March 14, at First UMC, Wolfe City. Brunch is from 9:00-9:30. The keynote speaker will be Rev. Alice Coder.

Wesley's Kids Visited Sunny Springs Health and Rehab February 19, 2020



Children's Mardi Gras Parade



Dear Wesley Family,

You have all taken me in and treated me like one of your own. I will never be able to express what you all mean to me. You've taken really good care of me the 18 years I carried your mail. You've been there for me through the loss of my brother, mom, dad and son.

I love you so much,

Pam Hughes

Hello to our wonderful church family, our Pastor Steve and Dicie Rue. Our year 2019 slipped away so fast with many blessings and so much sadness in the passing of so many of our dear friends.

It seems that Elton and I are hurting in our hearts for each family and praying that good memories will give them strength and courage with God's help to continue on.

Being homebound is not easy but we are blessed to be here together. We certainly enjoy the calls, cards and especially the visits. Thanks so much for the group that came and sang Christmas carols and the goodie bag that each one took time to prepare.

We know we are missing so much not being able to attend church, but we pray we will be better some day.

Thanks so much. We love all of you.

Elton and Louise Stewart

From
Pastor
Steve

Agreeing, Loving, and Working Together

I write as a pastor, a leader of a flock, set aside to Preach the Word, and to instruct church members {The Body of Christ}. I am not favored by God over any one church member or anyone else in the world. **Jesus loves me—this I know** is my theme song. Why? **For the Bible tells me so!** For it is in **Christ we live and move and have our being.** My testimony can be summed up in these words: **Now I belong to Jesus, and Jesus belongs to me, not for the years of time alone, but for eternity!** I have learned over and over again that **I am redeemed by the blood of The Lamb.** And I am **Never Alone: He walks with me and He talks with me and He tells me I am His own; and the Joy we share as we tarry there: None other has ever known.** This is our **Victory in Jesus!**

Most theologians and commentators regard The Apostle Paul's **Letter to the Philippians** a constant note of joy with a hymn of **Christ's Divinity (fully God and fully Human)** imbedded in chapter 2, verses 5-11. Yet, the first 2 verses in this chapter [2] stir our minds and hearts as well:

***"Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and sympathetic? Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one heart and purpose."** [New Living Translation]*

It is always the "right time" to remind one another of the Vows of Membership we share together open "joining" The United Methodist Church and Wesley United Methodist as the local church. These are the words we pledge to:

"As a member of The United Methodist Church and this congregation, will you faithfully participate in its ministries by your Prayers, your Presence, your Gifts, your Service, and your Witness?" And the answer is **I will!**

We are called as members together to **Pray for one another and without ceasing.** We pledge/vow to be in church by our **Presence.** We **depend on one another.** We pledge/vow to give of **Spiritual Gifts and God's tithes and our offerings.** We pledge/vow to serve the Lord with gladness at all times. We pledge/vow to share our **Christian witness inside and outside our church.**

One of the supreme messages of Jesus in the Bible is that **"He came to serve and not be served."** Jesus is the **"expressed image of God the Father"** and his first sermon as Luke 4:18-19 declared was:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for He has appointed me to Preach the Good News to the Poor. He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the Blind will see, that the Downtrodden (Helpless) will be freed from their oppressors, and that the time of The Lord's Favor has come."

And all of us today would say to Jesus: **"Amen!" "Praise the Lord!"** But these were the words and actions Jesus received. Luke 4:28 -30 records the reaction:

"When they heard this, the people in the synagogue (church) were furious! Jumping up, they mobbed Him and took Him to the edge of the hill on which the city was built. They intended to push Him over the cliff, but He slipped away through the crowd and left them."

Can you imagine receiving this kind of reception—a Mob Killing? It would make me think just how serious I was about "being called" to ministry! That "Greeter Job at Wal-Mart" would sound very enticing instead!

Praise God, From Whom all Blessings Flow! How fortunate we are to live in a country where the practice of Religious Faith is protected. We can even agree to disagree on **Faith and Doctrine** and not be punished, jailed, or exiled. This great **Freedom of Religion** rarely found in any other country—even if we mess up our Vows of Membership!

So let's **Encourage one another, share the Unconditional Love of Jesus with All people, enjoy Fellowship with Followers of Jesus, wholeheartedly agreeing with each other, and work together with one heart and purpose [our VOWS] while Serving our Lord with gladness. THIS IS US!**



TOP TEN LIST: THINGS YOU CAN TRY FOR THE LENTEN SEASON

- 10: Try an electronic fast. Give up TV, video gamers, texting, tweeting, e-mail, and all things electronic for one day every week. (or everyday of Lent!) Use the time to read and pray.**
- 9. Start a prayer rhythm. Say a prayer every time you brush your teeth, hear an ambulance, or check your e-mail. Before you text someone, pray for them.**
- 8. Read one chapter in the Bible each day. (Matthew's a good book to start with. Psalms too.)**
- 7. Forgive someone who doesn't deserve it (maybe even yourself.)**
- 6. Give up soft drinks, fast food, tea, or coffee. Give the money you save to help others in crisis.**
- 5. Create a quiet time. Spend 30 minutes a day in silence and prayer.**
- 4. Cultivate a life of gratitude. Write someone a thank you each letter each week and be aware of how many people have helped you along the way.**
- 3. Be kind to someone each day.**
- 2. Pray for others you see as you walk to and from classes, or drive to and from work.**
- 1. Volunteer one hour or more each week with a local shelter, tutoring program, nursing home, prison ministry, or a Habitat for Humanity project.**



What Is Lent?

Lent is a season of the Christian Year where Christians focus on simple living, prayer, and fasting in order to grow closer to God.

When Is Lent?

It's the forty days before Easter. Lent excludes Sundays because every Sunday is like a little Easter. Basically, it's about one-tenth of a year (like a tithe of time). Mardi Gras is the day before Lent, which begins with Ash Wednesday. This year it's from February 26-April 9.

Mardi Gras? What Does That Have to Do with Jesus?

Mardi Gras means "Fat Tuesday." It refers to the day before Lent starts. Since Lent always starts on a Wednesday, the day before is always a Tuesday. And it's called "Fat" or "Great" because it's associated with great food and parties.

In earlier times, people used Lent as a time of fasting and repentance. Since they didn't want to be tempted by sweets, meat and other distractions in the house, they cleaned out their cabinets. They used up all the sugar and yeast in sweet breads before the Lent season started, and fixed meals with all the meat available. It was a great feast! Through the years Mardi Gras has evolved (in some places) into a pretty wild party with little to do with preparing for the Lenten season of repentance and simplicity. Oh well. But Christians still know its origin, and hang onto the true Spirit of the season.

So the Real Beginning of Lent is Ash Wednesday?

Yes. Ash Wednesday, the day after Mardi Gras, usually begins with a service where we recognize our mortality, repent of our sins, and return to our loving God. We recognize as a precious gift from God, and re-turn our lives towards Jesus Christ. We may make resolutions and commit to change our lives over the next forty days so that we might be more like Christ. In an Ash Wednesday service, usually a minister or priest marks the sign of the cross on a person's forehead with ashes.

Why Ashes?

In Jewish and Christian history, ashes are a sign of mortality and repentance. Mortality, because when we die, our bodies eventually decompose and we become dust/ash/whatever. Repentance, because long ago, when people felt remorse for something they did, they would put ashes on their head and wear "sackcloth" (scratchy clothing) to remind them that sin is pretty uncomfortable and leads to a sort of death of the spirit. This was their way of confessing their sins and asking for forgiveness.

Where Do the Ashes Come From?

On what we now call Palm Sunday, Jesus rode a donkey into Jerusalem while people waved palms and cheered him on. Less than a week later, Jesus was killed. The palms that were waved in joy become ashes of sorrow. We get ashes for Ash Wednesday by saving the palms from Palm Sunday, burning them, and mixing them with a little water (like tears) or oil. It's symbolic.

What Do Christians Do with Ashes?

At an Ash Wednesday service, folks are invited to come forward to receive the ashes. The minister will make a small cross on your forehead by smudging the ashes. While the ashes remind us of our mortality and sin, the cross reminds us of Jesus' resurrection (life after death) and forgiveness. It is a powerful, non-verbal way that we can experience God's forgiveness and renewal as we return to Jesus.

So What Is Lent?

At Jesus' baptism, the sky split open, the Spirit of God, which looked like a dove, descended and landed on Jesus, and a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, My Beloved, with whom I am pleased." Afterward, as told in Matthew 4:1-11, Jesus was sent into the wilderness by the Spirit. He fasted and prayed for 40 days. During this time he was tempted by Satan and found clarity and strength to resist temptation. Afterwards, he was ready to begin his ministry.

Why "Do" Lent? How Do I Start?

Are you searching for something more? Tired of running in circles, but not really living life with direction, purpose or passion? It's pretty easy to get caught up in the drama of classes, relationships, family and work. Our lives are filled with distractions that take us away from living a life with Christ. We try to fill the emptiness inside us with mindless TV, meaningless chatter, stimulants, alcohol, too many activities or other irrelevant stuff. We run away from life and God.

Lent is great time to "repent" - - to return to God and re-focus our lives to be more in line with Jesus. It's a 40 day trial run in changing your lifestyle and letting God change your heart. You might try one of these practices for Lent:

Fasting: Some people have been known to go without food for days. But that's not the only way to fast. You can fast by cutting out some of the things in your life that distract you from God. Some Christians use the whole 40 days to fast from candy, tv, soft drinks, cigarettes or meat as a way to purify their bodies and lives. You might skip one meal a day or use that time to pray instead. Or you can give up some activity like worry or reality tv to spend time outside enjoying God's creation. What do you need to let go of or "fast" from in order to focus on God? What clutters your calendar and life? How can you simplify your life in terms of what you eat, wear, or do?

Service: Some Christians take something on for Christ. You can collect food for the needy, volunteer once a week to tutor children, or work for reform and justice in your community. You can commit to help a different stranger, co-worker or friend everyday of Lent. Serving others is one way we serve God.

Prayer: Christians also use Lent as a time of intentional prayer. You can pray while you walk, create music or art as a prayer to God, or savor a time of quiet listening. All can be ways of becoming more in tune with God. Christians from many different traditions celebrate Lent. How will you use the time to grow closer to God?



The Wesley Witness
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 Methodist Church
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

See us on



Wesley UMC-Sulphur Springs



1:30 p.m.
Tuesday
March 17

Program: Konnie Cross/Donna Korth
 Refreshments: Konnie Cross/Donna Korth

**United Methodist Women
 Serve Lunch at
 Wesleyan Center
 Texas A&M-Commerce
 Wednesday, March 18**



**Pot Luck Fellowship
 Sunday, March 22
 Following Sunday
 School**

**United Methodist
 Women
 Annual Bake Sale
 Palm Sunday
 April 5**

