



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

**April/May 2020**

614 Texas, Sulphur Springs, TX

[www.wesleysst.org](http://www.wesleysst.org)

facebook

Wesley UMC-Sulphur Springs

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**The Lord watch between  
you and me, when we  
are absent one from the other.**

**Genesis 31:49**

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# Bishop McKee: Churches Continue Online Through May

Greetings in the Name of the Risen Christ!

As we continue to serve and worship the Risen Christ during this Easter season, we do so in a challenging time because of the COVID-19 global pandemic. Since March 15, United Methodists have not worshiped in their churches or gathered in person for Sunday School classes or small groups. Yet, congregations continue to worship and study together online.

Many of us have learned how to use new technologies or have discovered social platforms that our friends, children and grandchildren often use. Thank you to the pastors and laity of the North Texas Conference for your leadership, creativity and faithfulness for proclaiming the Gospel online and for teaching and sharing the faith in unique ways. Amidst that, many of you are compassionately serving your neighbors.

Our clergy have risen to the challenges of pastor/preacher in the age of social distancing. They have learned new skills and consulted with each other. In many ways, they have worked harder, and I am grateful for our clergy and their witness. This has been no vacation, but there has been nothing but passion and joy in serving Christ. Thank you.

Laity and clergy alike have begun to ask questions about when we can return to our churches and worship together in person. The answer is "not yet."

To set a date at this time would be premature because of the ever-changing spread of COVID-19. There are areas of the North Texas Conference that have very few COVID-19 cases, but the Dallas area continues to be significantly affected. It's best to plan that congregations will not gather face-to-face through May 31. It is my hope and prayer that we will be able to re-open our churches at some point in June.

How we begin gathering together in the future will be a challenge for each church. This cannot be "let's open the doors and pick up where we were." That would be foolish and potentially cause more harm.

Guidelines are being formed for that time when we can see each other in person again.

In the meantime, let us continue to serve in our communities. Please include in your prayers:

Those who have died and their families  
Persons in the medical community who seek to bring healing and their families  
Persons and their families who have lost jobs.

Thank you again for your faithfulness. I am inspired by your creativity and your resilience and know that God is able to do a good work in you.

Peace,



Michael McKee



**Mother's Day** is a celebration honoring the mother of the family, as well as motherhood, maternal bonds, and the influence of mothers in society. It is celebrated on various days in many parts of the world, most commonly in the months of March or May. It complements similar celebrations honoring family members, such as [Father's Day](#), [Siblings Day](#), and [Grandparents Day](#).

The modern Mother's Day began in the [United States](#), at the initiative of [Anna Jarvis](#) in the early 20th century. This is not (directly) related to the many traditional celebrations of mothers and motherhood that have existed throughout the world over thousands of years, such as the Greek cult to [Cybele](#), [Rhea](#) the Great Mother of the Gods, the Roman festival of [Hilaria](#), or the Christian [Mothering Sunday](#) celebration (originally a commemoration of Mother Church, not motherhood). However, in some countries, Mother's Day is still synonymous with these older traditions.

The modern holiday of Mother's Day was first celebrated in 1908, when [Anna Jarvis](#) held a memorial for her mother at St Andrew's Methodist Church in [Grafton, West Virginia](#). St Andrew's Methodist Church now holds the [International Mother's Day Shrine](#).<sup>[10]</sup> Her campaign to make Mother's Day a recognized holiday in the United States began in 1905, the year her mother, [Ann Reeves Jarvis](#), died. Ann Jarvis had been a peace activist who cared for wounded soldiers on both sides of the [American Civil War](#), and created Mother's Day Work Clubs to address public health issues. She and another peace activist and suffragette [Julia Ward Howe](#) had been urging for the creation of a Mother's Day dedicated to peace. 40 years before it became an official holiday, Ward Howe had made her [Mother's Day Proclamation](#) in 1870, which called upon mothers of all nationalities to band together to promote the "amicable settlement of international questions, the great and general interests of peace."<sup>[11]</sup> Anna Jarvis wanted to honor this and to set aside a day to honor all mothers because she believed a mother is "the person who has done more for you than anyone in the world".

In 1908, the [U.S. Congress](#) rejected a proposal to make Mother's Day an official holiday, joking that they would also have to proclaim a "Mother-in-law's Day". However, owing to the efforts of Anna Jarvis, by 1911 all U.S. states observed the holiday, with some of them officially recognizing Mother's Day as a local holiday (the first being West Virginia, Jarvis' home state, in 1910). In 1914, Woodrow Wilson signed a proclamation designating Mother's Day, held on the second Sunday in May, as a national holiday to honor mothers. [Wikipedia](#)

The doors of our church, including our sanctuary, are closed. No “at church” ministries are happening as expected. No feeding of the community folk. No “walk-in” or “walk-up” people asking for assistance with food, gasoline, or a utility bill. No Sunday school. No Children’s Ministry. No Youth Ministry. Not even one choir practice. We can’t even visit our members or honor requests to visit in nursing homes, assisted living places, and the hospital—even when a dear member, friend, or people requesting a visit from a pastor. If there was ever a time in our generation that some Coronavirus shut us down as The Church, it is certainly now! It’s enough to make a grown man/pastor cry!

But, alas, there is another story ongoing with The Church and our church: we find other ways to “be the church” wherever, whenever, and to whomever. The Church cannot be shut down, closed, or become obsolete. You ask me why? I answer, “The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ” is built upon a solid foundation founded by our Lord Jesus, a God-ordained group of believers and Disciples of Jesus, and guided by the Fire of the Holy Spirit!

The Church is the people and not the steeple. As one saying I observed along my way in ministry says above the outside front door:

Enter to Worship and then boldly declares above the inside front door: Depart to Serve! Together in worship, we are the gathered church. And once a closing prayer, song, or benediction is shared, we leave one another and we become the scattered church! We are the church built on the foundation of Jesus Christ as Lord and “the gates of hell shall not prevail against it!” Jesus said this. I believe it. Together, The Church!

I do hope you have been able to tune in to our weekly worship services at 9:45 a.m. each Sunday morning (online). Go to:

[facebook@wesleysulphursprings](https://www.facebook.com/wesleysulphursprings) and you will be directed to see how you can get on and also host a “watch party.” When you host a watch party, it means that every friend you have on Facebook will be able to tune in with you! Our production crew is Mary Lou and Stanley Foster and Rick Spears. The worship service is led by a trio: Joe and Amanda Clark and me (Pastor Steve). Our place has moved from the vast area of Wesley Hall into the smaller, yet good on online live Facebook, of the Wesleyan Classroom in our Family Life Center (Wesley Hall).

We try to share most of the content of a regular Sunday morning service including: Call to Worship, Affirmation of Faith (The Apostles’ Creed), Pastoral Prayer followed by the Lord’s Prayer, singing, and preaching. The worship service is usually 45 minutes in length, recorded, and available on the Wesley Facebook page.

I have, this week, started a live, online “Words from Wesley” on Facebook. I plan to be online every Monday/Wednesday/Friday at 4:15 p.m. If you are one my friends, you should receive an alert the day before I plan to go live on Facebook. Click on and I’ll share a 15-minute prayer/daily thought/encouraging words/Scripture and an occasional poem/song/quote. My “studio” for this is the Community Classroom (or NA room and SoulJourney Sunday school class). I will be non-political, biblically sound, encouraging, and hopeful. I need this. You

need this. We all need this. No criticism will ever be spoken. Please keep me accountable to my above words—and pray for me often. I need your prayers.

Some of us are frightened and afraid of all the closures of restaurants and shopping centers in our towns. Some of us who are 65 years and older (that includes me!) have re-discovered the sanctuary of our homes. We can choose to be as informed as we want to be. We can learn there are good, wholesome shows and stories on our tvs. Most of us have books, magazines, journals, or newspapers we can read. Most of us have cell phones, which enable us to stay connected with one another or to research a word, phrase, or organization we have heard about, but not really complete a search for more information. In all of the above mentioned “stuff,” I often struggle seeing four walls and no faces! That is when I simply step outside and remember: Despite COVID-19, this been a glorious spring with plenty of rain, green grass, flowers, and blue skies!

*Prayer: In seasons of light and in seasons of darkness, we give You thanks, O God, for Your unquenchable light. Shine it upon our hearts and our daces as we are Your ambassadors of our Lord Jesus Christ. In His name, we pray. Amen.*

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## Ministry Reports, Cont’d

### Chancel Choir:

The Chancel Choir is not currently rehearsing but will resume rehearsals when the members of the choir feel that it is safe to do so. In early March, the choir purchased a new piece of music entitled “The Palms.” Arranged for piano, organ, and choir, “The Palms” was to be presented on Easter Sunday. However, the choir did not get the opportunity to see the music. In addition to this, several new pieces of music have been selected for purchase, but have been put on hold for the time being.

Each Sunday, Rick Spears, Mary Lou and Stanley Foster volunteer their time and technical know-how so that the worship service can be broadcast to viewers at home. With Pastor Steve delivering the message, Joe and Amanda leading music, and Mary Lou and Mary Ellen playing the piano, we join with the Wesley congregation as well as folks near and far, to sing praises to God our Father, and to be led by the Holy Spirit in the understanding of His Holy Word. While the past few weeks have been full of trials, we rejoice in seeing how God can work and how His Word cannot be muted. We look forward to each Sunday when, even though we may be miles apart, we can join together in worship, united by the one thing that lives in us all, God’s love, His Spirt and His World.

### Youth Ministries:

Wesley Youth have not conducted services since early March. As many of you know, the youth were scheduled to go on a mission trip to the Biloxi, MS area in June. Arrangements with several non-profit organizations as well as lodging reservations at an area Methodist church had been made. While it may be possible that travel and social-distancing restrictions may be lifted well before the date of the youths’ departure, current restrictions did not allow for the necessary fund-raising events needed for the trip. This, along with the overall uncertainty of health conditions in the months ahead, caused youth leadership to postpone the trip until a later time.

Stay well and I hope to see you soon.

Joe Clark

## WESLEY NEWS

### From the Lay Leader:

Dear Wesley folk,

I greet you in the Lord. Like most, I regret not being able to worship and fellowship in our church building. I know we all long for the day we can be with each other in person. Won't it be good to give a hug to each other?

I am grateful, as I know you are, to both our Worship Team and Media Team for providing a 9:45 am online service each Sunday. These are ways we can still be the Church. Praise God for these folks.

Though we are not meeting in our sanctuary at Wesley, we still have utility bills, staff salaries, and our Apportionments-among other things, though limited now. It is a challenge we can meet if we all do our part. COVID-19 has changed our normal way of doing things including being family, work, and being the church. Thank you to those of you who have been faithful in your giving. May you and I consider how we can continue to be faithful in our giving of our tithes and offerings. Perhaps some of us can give part of our stimulus checks?

I am the church. You are the church. We are the church together! May God be with us through these challenging ministry days.

Faithfully in Christ,

Lou Jane Drummond  
Lay Leader

### From the Homebound Visitation/Letter Writing Ministry:

The ladies who visit or write to the homebound each week are continuing to make contact with these folks. It was agreed in the Ad Board meeting that all of us need to be aware of these folks and we should make every effort to contact them or send a note or card. A list of the homebound folks and those who do not have email will be sent to everyone.

### From the Worship Committee:

Kudos to Pastor Steve and Dicie Rue, Amanda and Joe Clark, Mary Lou and Stanley Foster and Rick Spears for their dedication to bringing the online worship service on Sunday morning. Also, thanks to Mary Ellen Kirkland for joining the worship service May 3. We appreciate you all very much!

An outside drive-up service is being planned for Mother's Day, May 10. Participants will stay in their vehicles and receive the audio feed via a radio signal sent to their radios. If successful, it is hoped that the following three Sundays will have the same format. The Thurman twins, Allie and Mattie, will be honored during the March 24 service in honor of their high school graduation. A musical service is planned for May 31.

### Miscellaneous:

Mary Lou is investigating options for giving via credit/debit cards. (Note: You may remember that instructions were sent by email on how to give through the North Texas Conference. We have received several checks from folks using this option.)

The media team has ordered a new projector. Rick has tested it and it is ready for installation when we worship in the sanctuary again.

### From the Children's Department:

Sweet parents of Wesley's little ones,  
First of all, I hope that this message finds all of you and yours doing well. Earlier this past week, I had to put together a little report for our telephone Ad Board meeting on April 28. While doing so, it hit me that since the week before spring break we haven't been able to meet again. No Sunday school, no Wednesday night activities, no nursing home visits, no nothing...

Still I'm wanting to end this school year with a special project. I've been looking around on FB to see what other churches are doing. One project stood out to me. It will be both meaningful and fun, and we can do it from our own homes!

#### A "Wesley's Family Challenge"

I'm asking you to do 5 things during the first 3 weeks of May to grow even closer as a family and spread love doing it!

1. Bake something together as a family
2. Read a Bible story together and talk about it
3. Make a sweet card to mail to an elderly person/couple
4. Choose 5 people outside your own little family to pray for, then take turns praying out loud
5. Have a family night! (Picnic outside, moving night with snacks, game night, talent show...)

When doing this, take a few sweet/fun pictures and email them to Bonnie at the church [secretary@wesleysst.org](mailto:secretary@wesleysst.org) no later than May 24. This way she can put some heartwarming collages in the June newsletter scheduled to be mailed out June 1. I'm hoping that some day this summer, we can sit down together and share some stories while eating a big bowl of ice cream!!

Thanks and have fun!

Love,

Marieke deWitte

## UPDATED PRAYERS AND CONCERNS

Richard Adams	Jade Ausbrooks	Marilyn Baxter	Delana Beadle
The Beers Family	Karey Brice	Wanda Clayton	Jane Ann Craft
Hazel Collins	Natalie Darrow	Pfc. Ryan Dixon	Steve Fitch
Eddie Fenstermaker	Renee Francey	Rebecca Hathcoat	Mike Gilmer
Don and Mary Gilmer	Kristi Hodgkiss	Frank Hernandez	Mindi Horne
Jack and Janie Godfrey	Kaycee Ivey	Louise Jones	Lynn Kincade
Roy and Gina Lynn Herman	Debbie Nichols	Beverly Morgan	Forest Mullins
Sandra Parker	Rose Raines	Sylvia Sellers	Nancy Stobough
Pfc Devyn and Lcpl Jaxon Riggs	Allan Thar	Katie Voss	Randall Voss
Becky and Danny Walker	Sara Wilkinson		
Betty and Mark Warren	Rosemary Adams	Wakefield	
Our schools, students, teachers, staff	CASA	CANHelp	Tax-Aide
Our Country and our leaders	Community Chest/Cupboard		
Military Personnel and their Families	First Responders, Law Enforcement, EMS,		
Fire Fighters, Hospital Personnel			
Backpack Buddies	North Texas Food Bank	Abused Children/Youth	
Holy Highway Girls Home	Northeast Texas Child Advocacy Center		
Dallas Bethlehem Center	– Wesley-Rankin Community Center		

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

Marvin & Louise Jones Reid Rawls Marge Johnson Muriel Lucas  
Elton & Louise Stewart Lois Shannon Dana Jordan

## Allie Thurman

Allie is graduating at number 15 in her class and has been involved in Sulphur Springs Blue Blazes, National Honor Society, National Technical Honor Society, Key Club, and Hopkins County Leadership. She is attending the University of Texas at Austin in the fall to study for a Bachelor's of Science in Psychology with plans of becoming an Optometrist.

Both Allie and Mattie received the Bright Star Scholarship from the Gillis Foundation and the Texas Excellence Award from the University of Texas.



## Mattie Thurman

Mattie Thurman is a senior this year at Sulphur Springs High School and is graduating at number 14 in her class and with a 4.0 GPA. She has participated in Blue Blazes, National Honors Society, National Technical Honors Society, Hopkins County Leadership, Key Club, and Student Council. After graduation she will be attending the University of Texas at Austin to major in Government then move on to law school.



### In Loving Memory of:

#### Our Parents

Leroy Dixon  
W.F. and Annabelle Carlisle  
T.N. and Marietta Higgins  
Dr. Tom Higgins  
Mary and Morris Logan  
Elizabeth and Bill Foster  
Mr. and Mrs. Roy Herman

Hendrik & Marieke de Witte

Diane Dixon

Max and Ilene Massey

Mary Lou and Stanley Foster

Gina Wilder

### In Honor of:

Christine, Ria, Richard, Perla Celeste,  
Kim, Andrew, Coen and Margot

Vivian and Wade Kines  
Marcy and Max Massey, Jr.

Jana and Danny Prochaska

Paul Kirkland Family

Mr. and Mrs. Garrett Glass  
Mr. and Mrs. Everett Wilder  
Mr. Bill Wilder  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Wilder

Hendrik & Marieke de Witte

Max and Ilene Massey

Mary Ellen and Malcolm  
Kirkland

Gina Wilder





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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

See us on

facebook

Wesley UMC-Sulphur Springs

Wesley will honor  
**Allie and Mattie Thurman**  
on Sunday, May 24, during  
the drive-up worship.

Class of **20** Stay tuned for  
**20** more details!



**Sunday, May 10**  
**Mother's Day**  
**9:45 a.m.**

### Instructions:

- Remain in your vehicles
- We will be told what channel to turn to
- There will be bulletins
- Carnations for every adult female in attendance
- Offering baskets will be passed by designated users
- Honk if you love Jesus, but not too much
- The building will NOT be open for bathroom usage, so plan accordingly
- Bring your own coffee to sip on