

PATH *of*
RENEWAL



CAROLYN'S DESK, INK.

Renewal

We are headed in the season of Lent. This is the season when we stop the busyness of life and reflect on who we are or have become, how we are making it in life, and what our faith commitment looks like. It's that time when we ask Jesus to show us what is the good way of life and to help us shed those ways that are harmful or shallow.

I have to think of the rich young ruler in Luke. He had everything he desired, except an assurance that he would have eternal life. Read it here from the Gospel of Mark 10:17–31.

17 As he was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 18 Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. 19 You know the commandments: 'You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; You shall not defraud; Honor your father and mother.'" 20 He said to him, "Teacher, I have kept all these since my youth." 21 Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, "You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money^[a] to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." 22 When he heard this, he was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions.

23 Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!" 24 And the disciples were perplexed at these words. But Jesus said to them again, "Children, how hard it is^[b] to enter the kingdom of God! 25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God." 26 They were greatly astounded and said to one another,^[c] "Then who can be saved?" 27 Jesus looked at them and said, "For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible."

The words that impress me the most are, "Jesus, looking at him, loved him." The question the young man asked seems so earnest and sounds like something we might ask, probably in other words, but with the same desire for the most we can have. "I've been a good person. I've followed all the rules. What else could someone do to be more deserving?" And yet, even though he had such a shallow understanding of goodness, Jesus loved him. The same applies to us. Jesus loves us despite our misunderstandings and meager attempts at goodness.

The young man missed out on the opportunity to be without the worry of many unimportant things. He missed out on the opportunity to experience the satisfaction of giving to those in need. He walked away from the promise of eternal life. He walked away from a love so deep that one who loved him would die for him.



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| <u>Attendance</u> | <u>Average</u> |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Worship | 72 |
| Sunday School | 39 |

GADDIS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
 PASTOR: REV. CAROLYN MCGUIRE
 email: gaddischurch@gmail.com
 www.gaddischurch.org

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FOR OUR MEMBERS IN
ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES
OR HOMEBOUND

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Betty Johnson | Esther Stulting |
| Nina Louise Nye | Vonnie Clubb |
| Jackie Dreiss | |

| | |
|------------------|-------|
| Steve Mayo | 03/01 |
| Lester Scarbro | 03/01 |
| Myrt Telken | 03/10 |
| Crystal Tedder | 03/11 |
| Chris Cook | 03/12 |
| Jonathan Stewart | 03/15 |
| Mary Lavato | 03/17 |
| Kyndal Tedder | 03/19 |
| Bobby Dent | 03/20 |
| Dalton Neill | 03/29 |



FINANCE NEWS

| | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| | Month Ending Dec 31, 2018 | |
| General Fund | Permanent Endowment Fund | Trustees Capital |
| Budget | | |
| Income \$ 16,505 | \$ 45,254 | \$ 23,022 |
| Expense \$ 22,528 | General Savings | Parsonage Funds |
| | \$ 56,717 | \$ 50 |
| Actual | General Funds | Bell Tower |
| Income \$ 15,217 | \$ 54,800 | \$ 8,760 |
| Expense \$ 19,042 | | |
| \$3,825 | | |



- ◆ **Prayer Team**
Tuesdays at 9:00am
- ◆ **Women's Bible Study** TBA
- ◆ **Hand Bells** TBA
- ◆ **Choir** Wednesdays 6 pm
- ◆ **Admin Council** - Mar 18
6:00 pm
- ◆ **Admin Staff** - TBA
- ◆ **Outreach Committee**—Mar
10 @ 11:15 am
- ◆ **Christian Education Committee, Finance, Technology, SPRC, and Trustees**—see Ad Council
- ◆ **Lunch Bunch** - Mar 12
at 11:30 am
- ◆ **Newsletter Deadline** -
Mar 18

SPECIAL EVENTS

- Women's Prayer B'fast**
Mar 2, 8:00 am
- Jesus in the Park**
Sunday, Mar 17, 4 pm
- Emmaus Reunion**
Mar 11th 10 am
High's Cafe
- Fifth Sunday**
Mar 31
8:30 am Sunday School
9:30 am Fellowship
10:00 am Service
Potluck Luncheon



Jackie Dreiss

Jackie told Carolyn and me a story of a snippet of her life that is too good not to share with the rest of the Gaddis Community. Jackie, our hats are off to you.

Jackie was a US Army Nurse for a year during World War II. During this time, she met her husband to be, Bill Dreiss, in the Philippines and they were married there. That is a long way from Comfort, Texas and I imagine talking with Jackie about specifics would be pretty interesting stuff. Well, after the war's end they came home and Jackie was a school nurse for 18 years bucking tradition by working after marriage. So there you have a snapshot of Jackie, who went against the trend of the times a couple of times and won.



Sunday, March 17th at 4 pm.
 We're reaching out to families that don't have a church.
 We need you and your smiles and welcoming hugs.
 Here's what we're doing:
 Spreading the word and inviting all interested folks to come and meet the nice people of Gaddis UMC.
 We'll be handing out flyers about coming worship and events.
 Welcoming and getting to know folks.
 Celebrating Holy Communion with all.
 Worshipping God in a new setting.



Carpenter's Table

Every Tuesday at 7:00am, men of Gaddis meet in fellowship in the Narthex of the church. Our conversations start a little after 7 and continue throughout breakfast. We begin with a devotional and reading, and end with prayer.
 All are Welcome and Encouraged to come, and see and talk.

The Gaddis Women's Bible Study group is on hiatus, taking a deep breath before beginning a new study. Watch this space for future announcements and a new date of the start of a new study. They are always looking for fresh ideas and studies so if you have a plan or two call the office (830)995-3813.



Gaddis Lunch Bunch: We are back in business!!! We will meet for lunch on Tuesday, March 12th at 11:00 am at the new Food For The Soul Bistro on Front Street in Comfort. Please RSVP to Sally Clogston 830-995-2587

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As we are packing for our move in June, we come across so many things that we do not need but are reluctant to part with. I have packed several boxes that I want to tear open and decide again whether to keep them or not. I have too many things in my life that bring me no peace, but that I feel I have to keep.

In my life of faith I find the same thing. I am complacent, happy with where I am, seeking only the final reward. I pray out of my own self-importance. My attitudes are not grace-full but are pride -full. I think I have followed the rules and done what I “need” to do but have not done what I am called to do. And yet, Jesus looks on me with love. He knows my wisdom is shallow, my faith hangs by a thread, my possessions, physical and spiritual, rule my life.

My prayer in this time of reflection and, hopefully, of spiritual growth, is that Jesus, in his love for me, will show me how to live a more holy life. I will try to live into that last sentence, “What is impossible for mortals is possible for God.”

I think I have learned that eternal life isn’t the goal. I sure hope I have. The goal is serving Jesus by letting go of my concerns and leaning into his concerns for justice, healing, wisdom, and love.

Maybe this Lent can be a holy time for all of us. With a commitment to hear the words of Jesus, to be aware of the movement of the Holy Spirit in our lives, and to allow ourselves this time of renewal, we can face Easter with a new and boundless joy, the joy of the love Jesus holds for us.

Blessings, *Carolyn*

Brother Lawrence

- 1) Brother Lawrence (1614-1691) of the Resurrection served as a lay brother in a Carmelite monastery in Paris. Christians commonly remember him for the intimacy he expressed concerning his relationship to God as recorded in a book compiled after his death, the classic Christian text, The Practice of the Presence of God. There are two major themes in his work, love is the measure of our work and right habits increase our capacity to love.

Following is an **Excerpt from *Devotional Classics***
The Practice of the Presence of God

1. An Habitual Sense of God’s Presence

I write this only because you have so earnestly requested that I explain to you the method by which I have learned how to develop an habitual sense of God’s presence which our Lord, in his mercy, has been pleased to grant to me.

I must tell you that it is with great difficulty that I am obliged to share this with you, and I share it only with the agreement that you show this letter to no one. If I knew that you would let it be seen, all the desire I have for your advancement would not force me to send it. Nonetheless, the account I can give to you is as follows....

2. My All for God’s All

I have found in many books many different ways of going to God and many different practices in living the spiritual life. I began to see that this was only confusing me, as the only thing I was seeking was to become wholly God’s.

Thus, I resolved to give my all for God’s all. After having given myself wholly to God that he might take away my sin, I renounced, for the love of God, everything that was not God, and I began to live as if there was none but God and I in the world.

Sometimes I imagined myself standing before him as a poor criminal at the feet of the judge. At other times I beheld him in my heart as my Father and as my God. I worshiped him as often as I could, keeping my mind in his holy presence and recalling it back to God as often as I found it had wandered from him.

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3. The Difficulties That Occurred

I found a great deal of pain in this exercise, and yet I continued it even in the midst of all the difficulties that occurred, trying not to trouble myself or get angry when my mind had wandered involuntarily. I made this my business throughout the entire day in addition to my appointed times of prayer.

At all times, every hour, every minute, even at my busiest times, I drove away from my mind everything that was capable of interrupting my thought of God.

This has been my practice since the first days I entered into religion. Though I have done it imperfectly, I have found great advantages in this practice. I am aware, however, that all of these advantages are to be attributed to the mercy and goodness of God, because we can do nothing without him—especially me!

4. A Familiarity with God

But when we are faithful in keeping ourselves in his holy presence, keeping him always before us, this not only prevents our offending him or doing something displeasing in his sight (at least willfully), but it also brings to us a holy freedom, and if I may say so, a familiarity with God wherein we may ask and receive the graces we are so desperately in need of.

In short, by often repeating these acts they become habitual, and the presence of God becomes something that comes naturally to us. Give God thanks with me for his great goodness toward me, which I can never sufficiently admire, and for the many favors he has done for so miserable a sinner as I am.

5. The Very Best Return

I have never found this method I am describing in any books, and yet I seem to have no difficulty with it. I had a conversation a few days ago with a very devout person who told me the spiritual life was a life of grace. He said it begins with a holy fear, is increased by the hope of eternal life, and is consummated by the pure love of God. He said that each of these states has different stages and different methods by which one arrives at that blessed consummation.

I have not followed all of these methods he describes. On the contrary, I found that they discouraged me. This was the reason why I made this resolution to give myself wholly to God as the very best return I could to him for his love. Because of my love for God, I then renounced all.

6. Faith Alone Was Enough

For the first year I spent much of the time set apart for devotions thinking about death, judgment, hell, heaven, and my sins. I continued this for a few years, applying my mind to these thoughts in the morning and then spending the rest of the day, even in the midst of all my work, in the presence of God. I considered that he was always with me, that he was even within me.

After a while I accidentally began doing the same thing in my set times of devotion as I had been doing the rest of the day. This produced great delight and consolation. This practice produced in me so high an esteem for God that faith alone was enough to satisfy all my needs.

7. The Source and Substance of My Suffering

This was how I began. And yet, I must tell you that for the first ten years I suffered a great deal. The awareness that I was not as devoted to God as I wanted to be, the awareness of my past sins which were always present in my mind, and the great yet unmerited favors God did for me were the source and substance of my suffering.

During this time I sinned often only to rise again soon. It seemed to me that all the creatures of the world, all reason, and even God were against me. All that was in my favor was faith. I was troubled and sometimes with the thought that all of my blessings in this endeavor were merely my own presumption, pretending to have arrived at this state so easily while others arrive with great difficulty. At other times I thought that this was all merely a willful delusion and that, in attempting this, I had lost my hope of salvation.

continued from page 6

8. An Habitual, Silent, and Secret Conversation

When I finally reached a point where I wanted to quit, I found myself changed all at once. In my soul, which until that time was in distress, I suddenly felt a profound inward peace as if it were in its true place of rest.

Ever since that time I have walked before God in simple faith, with humility and with love, and I apply myself diligently to do nothing and think nothing which might displease him. I hope that when I have done what I can, he will do with me what he pleases.

As for what happens to me these days, I cannot express it. I no longer have any pain or difficulty because I have no will except that of God's, which I endeavor to do in all things, and to which I am so resigned that I would not pick up a straw from the ground against his will, or for any other motive than out of pure love for God.

I have since given up all forms of devotions and set prayers except those which are suitable to this practice. I make it my business only to persevere in his holy presence wherein I keep myself by a simple attention and a general fond regard to God, which I refer to as an actual presence of God. Or, to put it another way, an habitual, silent, and secret conversation of the soul with God. This often causes me to have feelings of inward rapture—and sometimes outward ones! They are so great that I am forced to have to moderate them and conceal them from others.

9. Full of Mercy and Goodness

In short, I am assured beyond any doubt that my soul has been with God for nearly thirty years. I have not shared it all so as not to bore you, but I think it is proper that I tell you what manner I imagine myself before God whom I behold as king.

I imagine myself as the most wretched of all, full of sores and sins, and one who has committed all sorts of crimes against his king. Felling a deep sorrow, I confess to him all of my sins, I ask his forgiveness, and I abandon myself into his hands so that he may do with me what he pleases.

This king, full of mercy and goodness, very far from chastening me, embraces me with love, invites me to feast at his table, serves me with his own hands, and gives me the key to his treasures. He converses with me, and takes delight in me, and treats me as if I were his favorite. This is how I imagine myself from time to time in his holy presence.

10. The Inexpressible Sweetness

My most useful method is this simple attention, done with a passionate regard toward God to whom I find myself often attached with greater sweetness and delight than that of an infant at its mother's breast. So much so that—if I dare use this expression—I choose to call this state the bosom of God because of the inexpressible sweetness which I taste and experience there.

If sometimes my thoughts wander from God because of necessity, I am recalled back to God soon after by inward sensations so charming and delicious that I am afraid to speak of them. I desire you to see and know my great wretchedness rather than the great favors which God does for me, unworthy and ungrateful as I am.

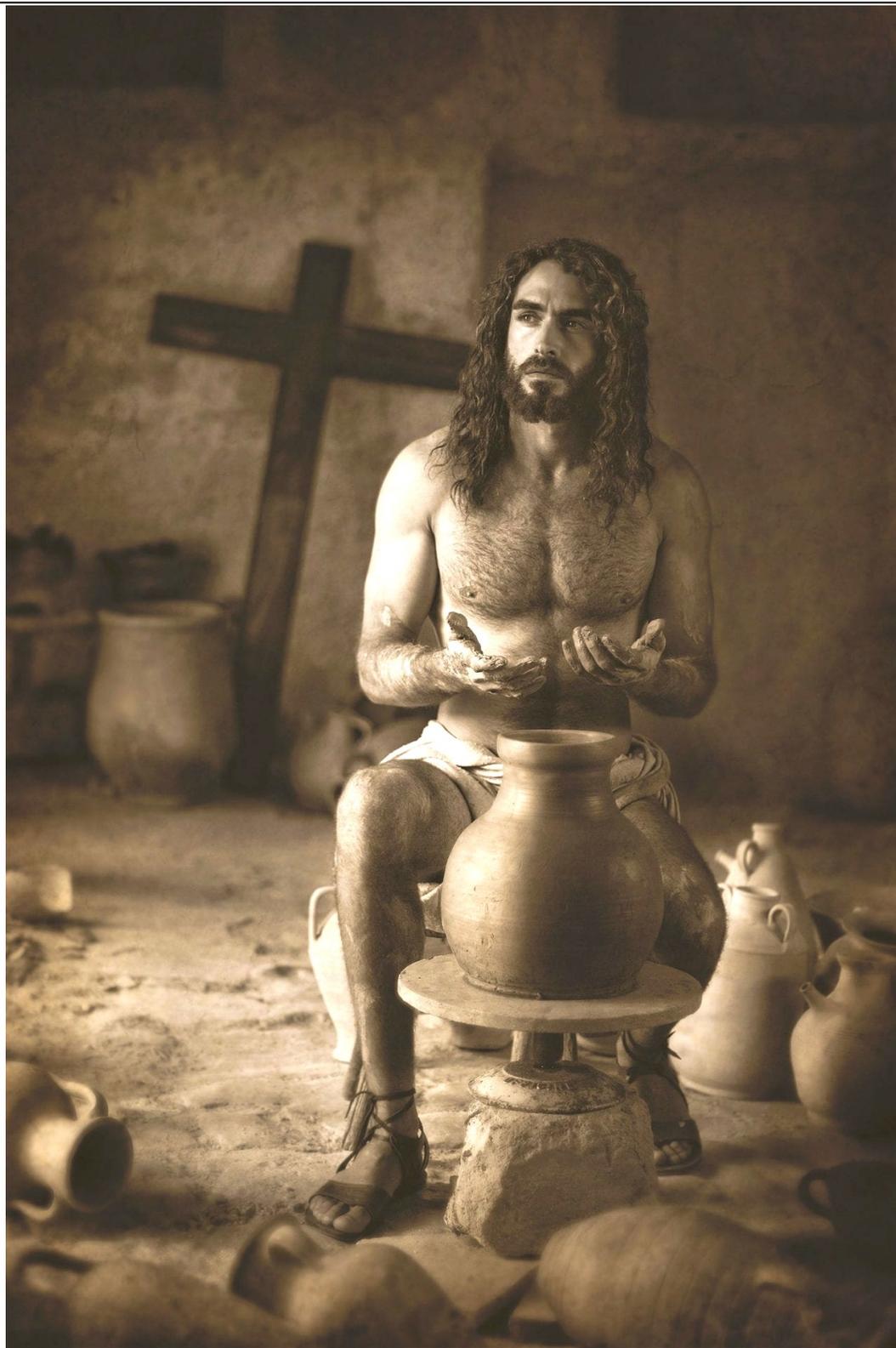
11. A Stone Before a Sculptor

As for my set hours of prayer, they are only a continuation of the same exercise. Sometimes I imagine myself as a stone before a sculptor from which he will carve a beautiful statue. Presenting myself before God, I ask him to form his perfect image in my soul and make me entirely like himself.

At other times when I apply myself to prayer, I feel all of my spirit and all of my soul lift itself up without any care or any effort on my part. It continues as if it were suspended and firmly fixed in God, as in its center and place of rest.

I know that some will accuse me of inactivity, of delusion, and of self-love. I confess that it is a holy inactivity, and would be a happy self-love if the soul in that state were capable of it, because in reality, while I am in this state of repose, I cannot be disturbed by such emotions which were formerly my strength and support, but which in that state hinder rather than assist.

I cannot allow this state to be called a delusion because the soul which enjoys God in this manner desire nothing except God. If this is a delusion in me, it belongs to God to remedy it. Let him do what he pleases with me; I desire only him and to be wholly devoted to him. Brother Lawrence



Makeover

Let the Master Artist reshape your life. Renewal at its best.

Do you recall the vivid imagination you had as a child? Wonderment was everywhere and pleasure was found in the simplest of things. Yet, somewhere along the way, we lost our natural instinct of doing what we liked to do and fell into the trap of doing what we needed to do. Over time, we designed our lives only to have our designs consume us.

Throughout the Bible, God offers a delightful alternative, "For I know the plans I have for you and they are good plans of hope and a future." Yet, why would we believe that the God who created every sunrise and sunset would know what to do with us? So, we never ask. And therein lies our struggle. Our rigid plans can lead us to resist God's shaping the "clay" of our lives.

Jesus wants us to surrender to "what we think we desire for our lives" and let Him mold us into the greatness He desires; a life so wonderful we could never conceive it on our own.

Jeremiah 29:11-13

Bold and imaginative, *Journeys with the Messiah's* images capture First Century Jesus intimately interacting with Twenty-First Century Wall Street executives, Nazis and ordinary people like you and me. This one-of-a-kind photographic journey creates a depth of feeling and emotion with images that are comforting, enlightening, full of hope and challenging. *"It is our prayer that they ignite a passion in the viewer to enter into a deeper relationship with Jesus."*

These images are the works of Michael Belk who along with his wife Cheryl do this out of the love of Jesus because one day, God asked him, "What are you doing with all that I've given to you? Using it all for yourself, or sharing it with others?" Thank you, God, for asking him.

REFLECTIONS ON UMC GENERAL CONFERENCE 2019

General Conference 2019, the called General Conference to decide how the United Methodist Church will move forward as one church has ended. The vote was 438-384, a difference of just 54 votes to keep the UMC a “traditional” church, meaning our language in the Book of Discipline that says “The practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching. Therefore self-avowed practicing homosexuals are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church,” stands as is. The plan also institutes more severe punishments for clergy who disobey that portion of the Discipline.

The Judicial Council of the UMC has decided that some portions of the traditional plan may not be constitutional under the Discipline. The plan was never fully formed by the Commission on a Way Forward; it was written by a few of the members of the Council of Bishops.

As Christ’s church we are called to love, not to build boundaries. Jesus was the great boundary crusher of his time. Once again, we are in a time of prayer and of ministry. We cannot do without both. We continue to pray for the UMC and to pray for our ministry. My very good friend, the Rev. Greg Hackett, DS of Las Misiones District (San Antonio area), says, “We are in a period of liminal space - a time of prayer, discernment, and seeking Gods will.” In my words we are in the middle of the doorway, not going one way or the other, but facing something different.

The votes from very conservative countries in our world pushed the vote tally while 66% of American delegates supported the One Church Plan which allowed churches to decide for themselves their stance about the ordination and leadership of homosexuals in the church. The issue doesn’t affect only the small percentage of LGBTQ people in our world, but also their families and those who love them. This is not yet settled. Our work now is to be the church, very simply, to be the church. The Church of Jesus Christ is still His church is today’s world.

Blessings, Carolyn

MISSIONS MINISTRY

I would like to remind everyone of the annual clothing drive which starts now. Collection will be in the front office at the administration building. Shoes and purses are now being accepted plus the usual, gently used clothing.

This will run throughout Lent; we will be collecting until April 1 as we expect pickup during that week, so let’s not wait until the last minute. They will be calling us to see how much we have so as to know what kind of truck to send for pickup. We always do real well so let’s fill up a truck and send the goods on their way where they will do the most good.

Susan Kobarg, Missions Chair

MARCH 6TH UNTIL APRIL 1ST



March Newsletter- Outreach Committee



Music in the Park- Work is under way getting this year's season started. 4 of the 6 bands have been booked and I am working on filling those last two spots. There will be a meeting for the volunteers on March 3 after church. Hope to see you there.

Women's Prayer Breakfast continues to bless all who come. We share ourselves and

our stories and support each other in friendship. Our next breakfast will be Saturday, March 2nd, at 8 am in the Narthex. You can RSVP to Karen Cooper at kcooper-sart@gmail.com. All are welcome to come and see what it is all about and bring a friend if you would like. We have had ladies from four different churches and as many towns there at one time. The more, the merrier.



We continue to serve at the ice cream social at the Golden Age Center. We serve after a pot luck lunch that our volunteers are welcome at, starting about 11:30 am on the second Thursday of the month. Each month requires two volunteers. It takes less than an hour but is lots of fun. The folks at the center are very thankful. The can't even imagine a celebration without ice cream. You don't have to be a regular committee member to serve if you want to share in the experience.

Our church birthday celebration is always a fun morning. We serve a mixed chocolate and white cake after service on the third Sunday of each month. March's celebration will be on the 17th. We have take-out containers if you want to take your piece home instead or take one to a loved one that could not make it to church. If you have not told the church when your birthday is, please do so and we will get you on the list.

We have been busy giving out visitor bags to first timers coming to church and Comfort bags to some of our homebound and rehab bound members. Other homebound folks got assorted little treats with their Valentine visit.

Our next Outreach Committee meeting is going to be on March 10th, after service in the church. New members are welcome.

Sally Clogston and Karen Stovall have agreed to maintain our phone tree to reach out to those in our congregation who don't get emailed messages about church happenings. If you want to be on the list and aren't yet, contact Dwight in the office

Submitted by Karen Cooper, Outreach Chair



The Lighter Side

Non Sequitur

NICE...BUT IF I CAN GET AN OPERATIONS SPREADSHEET, I'LL GET STARTED ON MAKING IMPROVEMENTS

THE SHORT STAY OF A SYSTEMS ANALYST

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I THINK IT MEANS WE DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT IT BEING TOO CROWDED IN THERE

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENT: ACTUALLY PRACTICED THE MORALS TAUGHT BY YOUR RELIGION

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Non Sequitur by Wiley Miller

OK, OK... YES, I JUST TOOK DICTATION. NOW DO YOU WANT ME TO SIGN IT OR NOT?

MEET THE AUTHOR!

THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

THE FIRST BOOK TOUR

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I'M HERE TO HELP!

FOOMP

YOU SHOULD'VE CHECKED THE GAS GAUGE BEFORE YOU LEFT!

HINDSIGHT-MAN... MY WORK IS DONE!

...MOST ANNOYING SUPERHERO EVER

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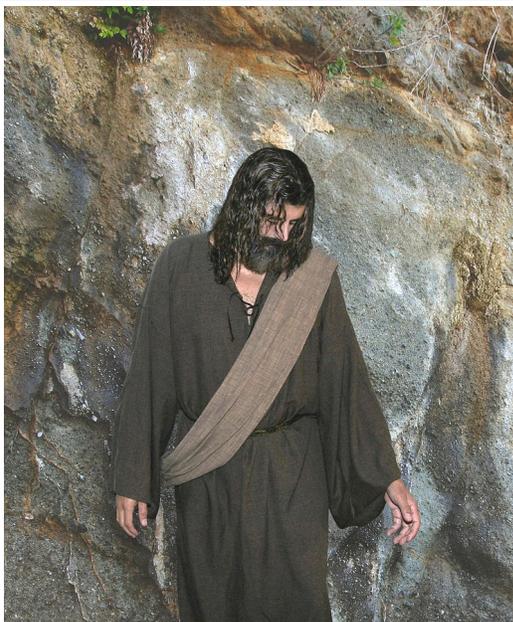
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Return Service Requested

PS - some more notes.

**Rise
and
Walk
with
Me.**



March Rail Offering. UMCOR Sunday collection for the work of disaster relief. Every year Gaddis has been very generous with giving to UMCOR. Opportunity has come again for us to help those caught by surprise.

Jesus in the Park continues in March. We will do a Church Service, March 17th at 4:00 pm in Comfort Park. Of course earlier in the day, we will have our regular service. This is our third service; let's make it a really big deal. Bring everyone you can.

March 6th is the beginning of Lent so let us not forget where we are with Christ. Lent invites us to a time of prayer, reflection, and conversion. It is the time of Renewal. Forty days until the Resurrection of the Christ and the real beginning of the Mission of the Son of God. We begin with Ash Wednesday on Mrch 6th at 7:00 pm. Please plan to come and be with us to begin this very special time for the followers of Christ.

What's in your Way to following Christ?

S t a f f

Pastor Rev. Carolyn McGuire
Admin. Assist. Dwight Barnett
Custodian Andrew Collins
Nursery Supervisor Tara Daggett

Music Director Claire Rabson
Pianist Linda Derrick
Nursery Kara Cruz

Treasurer David Barnett
Christian Ed. TBD
Nursery Help Wanted P/T