

CONNEXION

Volume 16 Issue 2

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MISSION
"MAKING DISCIPLES OF
JESUS CHRIST
FOR THE
TRANSFORMATION OF
THE WORLD"

VISION
"A BRIGHT BEACON OF
GOD'S LOVE TO IRVING
AND BEYOND"

First United Methodist Church
211 West Third Street
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The Season of Lent

And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil.

Luke 4:1

The season of Lent is the forty days from Ash Wednesday to Easter (not counting Sundays). Unfortunately, our Ash Wednesday service was cancelled due to the horrible winter storm. Last year we had our Ash Wednesday service and soon afterwards our church was shut down due to COVID-19. Through this time there have been many trials and tribulations. The pandemic has taken the lives of many. We have been living in various degrees of isolation for over a year. Just last week, homes lost power, and some are recovering from plumbing issues. As just a personal example, I am writing this the morning after my mom called to tell me that my father passed away. Life can be hard.

Thanks be to God that we have a loving Savior who knows our troubles and is with us through them. The passage from Luke 4:1 above is the basis for the forty days of Lent. Jesus had just been baptized and had the Holy Spirit descend upon him in the form of a dove. God the Father's voice boomed from the heavens, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased" (Luke 3:22). This had to have been an exciting time! Then, full of the Holy Spirit, Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. For what purpose? To fast and face down the devil. Even for the Son of God, life can be hard.

Yet, there are two phrases that comfort me through difficult times. Jesus was "full of the Holy Spirit" and was "led by the Spirit." Jesus was never alone as the Holy Spirit was always with him. The Holy Spirit would lead him *through* difficult times. "Yea though I walk *through* the valley of the shadow of death ... thou art with me" (Ps 23:4). The Holy Spirit filled Jesus and led Jesus.

Jesus reminded his followers that when he would ascend into heaven after his crucifixion and resurrection, we would receive the Holy Spirit. "I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you" (John 14:16-17). The Holy Spirit is also with me and you, filling us up when we are feeling low. The Holy Spirit is leading us, especially through difficulties. Life can be hard.

Oh, but God is so good. We have the Holy Spirit filling us, sustaining us, guiding us, keeping us, lifting us, and empowering us. Let the Holy Spirit was over you and through you. Feel the very presence of God with you and in you. Life can be hard ... but God is good!

Blessings!

Doug

ONLINE GIVING



<http://www.fumcirving.org>

2021 Bible Reading Challenge!

This year we will be reading through key parts of the Bible from the Old Testament through the New Testament. The major themes of Scripture will be encountered as you read God's inspired word. The Sunday message will almost always be taken from the week's readings.

Week (Theme)	Reading
Mar 1-7 (God Provides)	Exodus 16-17 Deuteronomy 8 John 6; Psalm 23
Mar 8-14 (Ten Commandments)	Exodus 19-20; Deut. 5-6, 10-11
Mar 15-21 (Meeting with God)	Exodus 24-25, 33-34, 40; Psalm 84
Mar 22-28 (Crucifixion)	Matthew 26-27; Mark 14-15; Luke 22-23 (see *note below!)
Mar 29 - Apr 4 (Resurrection!)	Matt 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; John 20-21
Apr 5-11	Numbers 13-14 Deut. 8-9, 30 Psalm 1

***Note:** You may prefer to read just one of these Gospel passages instead of all three. They all cover Jesus' arrest and crucifixion.

Refuge Youth

We are so grateful to have a church that loves and supports our youth. We had a night of outdoor worship and for our youth after the last Oasis and were able to raise money for the Myrtle Beard Scholarship Fund. We are so thankful to everyone who helped us raise money and there will be more information in the coming weeks about the scholarship itself! We are gearing up for another great month of youth activities, including our annual camp out! Please be in prayer for our students as they continue to wrestle with online learning and continual shifting schedules.

Rev. Kyle Powell
Associate Minister and Director of Youth Ministries



Good morning, afternoon, or evening

As I am writing this the sun is shining after a night of thunder and lightning. Our dog spent most of her time in bed on my side trying to get me to hold her. I think the term scaredy cat should transfer to dogs also. It is a normal day now after all sorts of weather changes the previous weeks. Unfortunately, we had to cancel our Valentine's gathering, I dropped off Valentines at Avante, and delivered bags to our children this past week. That is another new norm of leaving Sunday School literature and treats on the porch and texting the parent where to find it. I do not get to see the faces of most students as I go, but I know they have received it.

My hardest job is searching the internet for coloring sheets and activities that go along with our Bible readings and sermons on Sunday morning. I send these via email along with the link for our Zoom Sunday School lessons. I have faithful teachers who join in and take their turn sharing the lesson, so the children are getting fresh ideas from different perspectives each week. I want to pray for and thank Robin, Wayne, Debbie, Traci for hanging in there as our teachers. I also want to thank Ralph and Caren for their hard work and pray for them with their current activities.

This month's memory verse has been "Open our eyes so I can examine the wonders of your instruction!" Psalm 119:18. This is a challenge for all of us. Now I have a request of you. We want to serve our children by having a VBS that is instructionally sound, Spirit filled and safe. Our committee is working on ideas of how to do this so that it is fun and engaging for the children (as well as volunteers). We had to cancel one meeting because of no electricity for our Zoom meeting but we will carry on. If you have suggestions, please email or text me 940-4450738. We are using the literature we purchased last year 'Knights of the North Castle'. I had my volunteers lined up last year and I would like to hear from you if you are able to help this year. Spend some time in prayer and let us get started planning this adventure.

Blessings,

Juanell Montoya
children@fumcirving.org
(940) 445-0738 (please add to your contacts in case I try to reach you)

MEMORIALS AND HONORARIUMS
FEBRUARY 2021

In Honor of

John Tilley's birthday to A/C Fund from Mark & Patrice Tilley

In Memory of

Jerry Heckman, college roommate of Gary Husa, to Music Fund from Mary Husa Good

Lecil Moore to General Budget from Windell & Gayle Baggett

Pat Love to Myrtle Beard Scholarship from Jimmy & Christine Burkett

Ann Cox & Don Cox to General Budget from Irving Retired School Personnel Association

Herb Cooper to General Budget form Jerry Wicks

Herb Cooper to Myrtle Beard Scholarship from Jimmy & Christine Burkett

MUSIC NOTES

“EASTER MUSIC CELEBRATION”,

March 28, Sunday at 10:30 am service

FUMC Irving Music Department will present Easter Celebration Music on Palm Sunday, March 28, at 10:30 worship service by the Children's Choir, Youth small groups, Women's and Men's ensemble, Mixed Double Quartet, Tenor, Baritone solo, and piano solo. I encourage you to share our celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ with your family, friends and bring them to our church on Palm Sunday. Also, there will be live streaming on Facebook:

“FirstUnitedMethodistChurchIrving” Therefore, “Spread the word” If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at music@fumcirving.org.

David Lee

Director of Music and Worship



Parent's Day Out



Here at PDO - we have been excited about the snow (especially since it was one of our study topics in February.) We even made snow at school even before we really had snow. We are all very well briefed on cold and snow now!!

Then - we get the fell that it is the start of Spring. With Spring comes lots of "new". New flowers, new leaves on trees, new baby birds and other baby animals, new warmer weather, clothes to wear, etc. It is also the time to start opening up our registration for summer and next Fall. Then we will also have some new friends!!

Please spread the word that PDO has started registration. We are praying that we will get back to PDO's normal of having full classes. Keep us in prayer as well.

Everyone stay safe and take a minute to watch for all the Spring to begin to take place.

Sandi Parker & Staff

Director