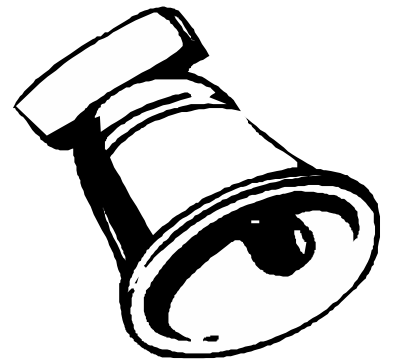




Christ United Methodist Church
P.O. Box 710
Levelland, TX 79336

THE BELL RINGER

September 2023



COMING IN SEPTEMBER

Tuesdays, September 5 & 19 - Grief Support Group with Ann Akin in the parlor at 1:30 p.m.

Sunday, September 3 – Fourteenth Sunday After Pentecost / Imagine No Malaria

Monday, September 4 – Labor Day – Office Closed

Tuesday, September 5 – S/PPR Committee Meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, September 6 – Finance Committee Meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Thursday, September 7 – Leadership Committee (Nominations) at 6:30 p.m.

Sunday, September 10 –Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost/ Shared Ministries Sunday
Shared Ministries Lunch at noon/Church Council Meeting 12:30 p.m.

Sunday, September 17 - Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost/ Gideons Sunday
Blessing of the Animals – 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, September 24 – Seventeenth Sunday After Pentecost/Laity Sunday

September Birthdays –Sept. 13 Alberto Giussani, Sept. 15 Allison Giussani, Sept. 25 Lisa Presley Bell

September Anniversaries – Jeff & Deb McVay September 25

Shared Ministries Monthly Lunch

Sunday, September 10th.

Come join in fellowship and good food.

Extending the Table

Please consider participating in this ministry.

Please contact Sue Cates if interested.

S/PPR Committee Meeting

Tuesday, September 5th at 5:30 p.m.

Leadership (Nominations)

Committee Meeting

Thursday, September 7th at 6:30 p.m.

This is an important meeting to recommend nominations for Church Leadership for 2024.

Finance Committee Meeting

Wednesday, September 6th at 5:30 p.m.

Budget Recommendations for 2024.

Church Council Meeting

Sunday, September 10th at 12:30 p.m.

Following Shared Ministries Lunch

Blessing of the Animals

Sunday September 17th - 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Front yard of Christ UMC

Bring your pets & service animals.

A Blessing of Animals, in many congregations, witnesses to God's and the Church's love, care, and concern for creation. As we recognize our mutual interdependence with God's creatures, the Church's witness of stewardship of creation is strengthened. It is also a service with special appeal to children.

A Word from the Pastor

Dear Saints of the Autumnal Equinox,

Autumn officially begins at 2:50 a.m. on September 23 this year. This bit of information from the internet may simply reaffirm what you already know: "Earth's two hemispheres will receive the sun's rays equally. Night and day will be approximately equal in

length. The name 'equinox' comes from the Latin for equal and night. But, since Earth never stops moving around the sun, these days of equal sunlight and night will change quickly."

For those of us in this part of Texas, it will be hard to think of Autumn on September 22nd when the average high temperature for Levelland on that date is 81 and the warmest high on record is 100 in 1998. The warmest low on that date for the last ten years is 67 recorded in 2010. It would seem to the stranger to Levelland that these temperatures certainly don't serve as harbingers of Autumn. We know, however, that a high of 81 is downright nippy and with the days getting shorter we will sense a touch of Fall in the air. Talking about the Autumnal Equinox reminds us that God has provided markers to help us remember changes that take place in our lives.

I am reminded of Ecclesiastes 3:1-15 which begins "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven; a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted..." We often take for granted the wonder that is the workings of our world. We hardly note the passing of the equinoxes or the solstices. We don't even think about the intricacies of it all and how fragile this world is and yet how enduring and magnificent.

Each of us lives out our years in a part of the world where the average life expectancy is in the upper 70's, (probably early 80's for women). We move through each day and talk about how hot or how cold it is without remembering the same conversation a year ago. We become so wrapped up in the here and now, that we ignore the workings of the universe and the passage of time or the changing of the seasons. Part of this may be due to our ability to be insulated from these changes today. We can watch our favorite programs on our own schedule rather than natural time and we don't have to fret about above average or below average temperatures. We can almost become persuaded that we are in control and are indeed masters of our own fate.

One might almost be persuaded that we are in control if one had not read and pondered Ecclesiastes 3:1-15 or any of the other wonderful scriptures that remind us of the wonders of God's world and that we are God's creation. None of what we have in the world came from us. Everything in it came from God; from the principles that apply in the working of any mechanism to the formulas that went into making the latest plastic.

Can humankind turn back the clock or speed up the clock? Only within the boundaries that make up the world that God created. So, start getting ready to put away those summer duds and looking for the long sleeve shirts. Just remember, we live in a world that belongs to God, a world about which we know very little. Will you need those Summer duds on the first day of Autumn? You might if it is 104 like it was nine years ago.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Dennis