




WELCOMING  
EVERYONE TO A  
BIGGER TABLE.

# THE CORNER

uhbc.org  

SUNDAY MORNING LIFE GROUPS - 9:15AM  
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP - 10:30AM  
WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY - 6:30PM

## NEWS FROM UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH

(a CBF/ABC Church)

# CRITER

Feb 2026

## Love Does: Putting Faith Into Action This February

February has a way of putting love right in front of us. Hearts in every store aisle, chocolate calling our name, and reminders that Valentine's Day is coming whether we're ready or not. Some of us have reservations planned, others of us are hoping Walgreens still has something decent left on the shelf (I do not recommend this option), and some of us think it's a silly holiday that shouldn't exist. Wherever you land on the romance spectrum, one thing is clear: love is on our minds this month.

That's why we're beginning a new sermon series on **Sunday, February 1**, called **Love Does**.

At UHBC, we believe love is more than a feeling or a phrase; it's something that gets lived out. Over three weeks, this series will explore what it looks like when love moves beyond words and becomes action. We'll talk about love that moves first, love that shows up, and love that breaks through real life barriers. This isn't cheesy Hallmark movie love. This is Jesus-shaped love—practical, courageous, and sometimes inconvenient.

Each week in the series, we'll also offer a simple, concrete challenge; small but meaningful ways to practice love where we live, work, and serve. No grand gestures required. Just faithful steps that help us live out the love God has already shown us.

On **Sunday, February 8**, the series pauses—and that Sunday is also **Souper Bowl Sunday**. We invite you to bring **non-perishable food items** to help support local food pantries and neighbors in need. All of those items will go to Grand Oak Mission's Food Drive. You are also encouraged to **wear your favorite team's gear** — college, pro, or otherwise. Whether your team is championship-bound or rebuilding (again), all fans are welcome, and there's always next year.

We're also especially excited that Dr. Pam Durso will be preaching on February 8. Dr. Durso, President of Central Seminary, is a gifted preacher and leader, and we're grateful for the wisdom and encouragement she brings as we continue this series together.

## Pastor's Corner

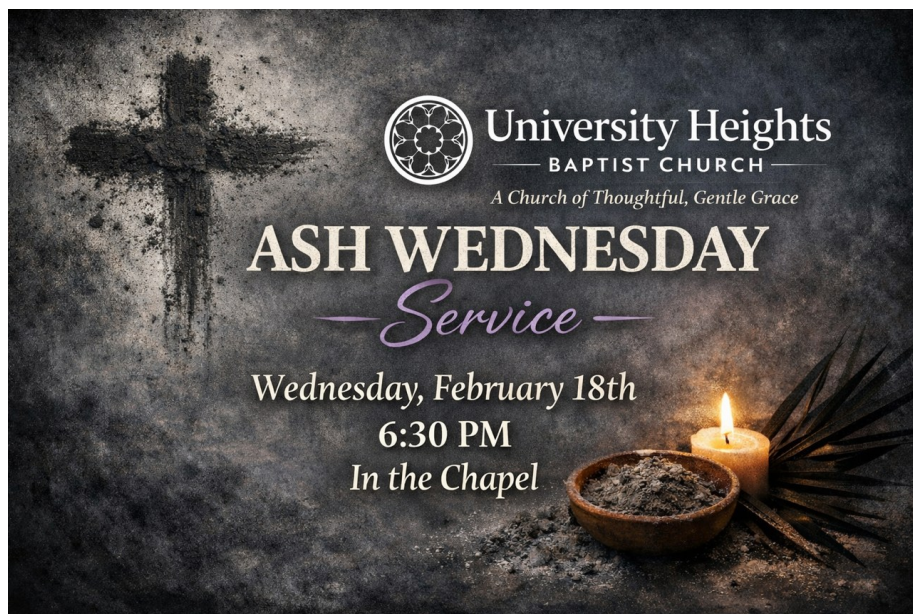
This February, as love fills our calendars and our inboxes, our prayer is that love will also shape our actions. Because love doesn't just talk. Love doesn't just promise. **Love does.**

We hope you'll join us as we begin this meaningful season together.

**-Pastor Nolan**

# Entering the Season of Lent: An Invitation to Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent—a forty-day journey (not counting Sundays) that leads us toward the heart of the Christian faith: the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The number forty echoes throughout Scripture, but it is most powerfully connected to the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness, fasting, praying, and facing the temptations that could have pulled Him away from His calling. Lent invites us into that same kind of intentional season—one of reflection, honesty, repentance, and preparation.



From its earliest days, Lent was a practice for new believers preparing to be baptized on Easter. Because faith has always been lived in community, the whole church joined them—fasting, praying, giving, and reflecting together. So, Lent became a shared journey, a way for the church to take on new holy habits and lay aside patterns that distracted from following Jesus. During this season, we refocus on Christ’s suffering and rethink what it means to take up our own crosses as people shaped by grace.

Traditionally, Lent has been marked by three practices: prayer, fasting, and generosity. Some Christians fast from certain foods or comforts. Others focus on generosity, charitable giving, or acts of service. Many choose to give something up—not so much as a test of willpower, but as a way to create space for the Spirit of the Lord. Giving something up during Lent creates experiences in our lives that help us refocus on Jesus, His suffering, and His love. Those interruptions can become holy invitations.

Lent culminates in Holy Week. It begins with Palm (or Passion) Sunday, remembering Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem. Maundy Thursday recalls the Last Supper. Good Friday leads us to the cross. And Easter Sunday bursts open with resurrection hope. In many ways, Easter’s joy is deeper when we’ve honestly walked the Lenten road that leads there.

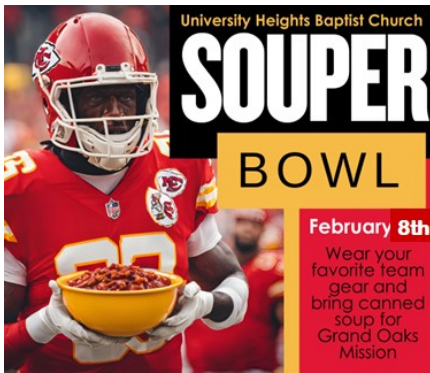
Ash Wednesday begins that journey. On this day, we are marked with ashes in the shape of a cross—a sign of both mortality and hope. The ashes remind us of our humanity, our fragility, and our need for grace: “we are dust, and to dust we shall return.” At the same time, the cross traced on our foreheads proclaims new life, forgiveness, and resurrection in Jesus Christ.

Church family, you are warmly invited to begin this sacred season with us at our **Ash Wednesday Worship Service on Wednesday, February 18 at 6:30 PM in the Chapel**. We’ve saved our palm branches from a year ago and, for those who wish, ashes will be dispensed. Come as you are. All ages are welcome. No other activities will happen on this evening, except dinner and Ash Wednesday. Come weary or hopeful, curious or committed. Together, we will pause, pray, receive the ashes, and set our hearts toward Easter—walking the Lenten road side by side.

# MISSIONS & MINISTRY



**Mission Group Meeting**  
**Tuesday, Feb 10, 1pm**  
**Fellowship Hall**  
**Ministry Project: Blankets for**  
**Child Advocacy Center**  
**ALL ARE WELCOME!**



Please bring canned goods or other non-perishable items for Grand Oak Mission. Place your donations in the Grand Oak baskets in the Narthex.

At our January meeting, we were fortunate to have our own Bob Perry as our guest speaker, sharing with us about his ministry to ICE detainees at the Greene County Jail. Bob has shared further in the article below:

## Hundreds of ICE Detainees are Imprisoned in Springfield

I have had the opportunity as a minister to visit ICE detainees at the Greene County Jail through a group called “Abide In Love.” So far, I have been able to visit with ten detainees, both men and women, from several Spanish-speaking countries. I have talked to family members on their behalf, helped them get legal assistance, and prayed with and for them. Each case is different, but some are awaiting court hearings to see if they can stay in the US, some are voluntarily departing to their home countries, and some are being deported and separated from families against their will.

Abide in Love is training people to be “pen pals” with ICE detainees by way of text messages. The next training is on Saturday, January 31, from 1:30 to 4:30 at the Library Center on South Campbell. They will show you how to download the app to text prisoners and how to use GoogleTranslate to translate between English and Spanish. These detainees have various needs, including communicating with relatives, but mostly they need to know that someone in Springfield cares for them and their wellbeing.

**Abide in Love Springfield** has a Facebook page. Just go to Facebook and search for “Abide in Love Springfield.” You can keep up with their planned activities by looking at that page. They also need funds, and there is a way on the Facebook page to give through a GoFundMe account. The money is used to pay for the texting app (\$13.00 each for the pen pal and the detainee) and for each text message that costs 25 cents for each text for each person. Abide in Love covers those costs.

Each detainee also has a commissary account to buy things the jail does not provide. For example, the jail does not provide soap, shampoo and other hygiene products. They also have to buy bottled drinking water since there are no drinking fountains available. Their jail uniforms are short-sleeved, and the commissary will sell them a long-sleeved shirt if they are cold and have the money in their account. The detainee’s commissary account is opened with whatever cash they have on them when they are detained, then it can be added to by family or friends. For those who do not have that kind of help from outside, Abide in Love uses donated funds to add modest amounts to these accounts.

Several months ago, our church donated 100 Bibles in Spanish and 30 copies of The Purpose-Driven Life in Spanish to the Greene County Jail for the use of Latino prisoners and ICE detainees. I have been able to visit and text with one of the prisoners and recommend that he read The Purpose-Driven Life. I have called him Juan in my Facebook report about him. Here is the text I got from Juan recently:

"It's crazy that you text me because I was just going to text you and tell you that the book is good. I like it. I am still reading it. That's crazy how God works. I was about to text you."

Jesus specifically called us to visit those in prison (Luke 4:18), and we have the opportunity and responsibility to represent Jesus to those imprisoned here in Springfield.

—Bob Perry

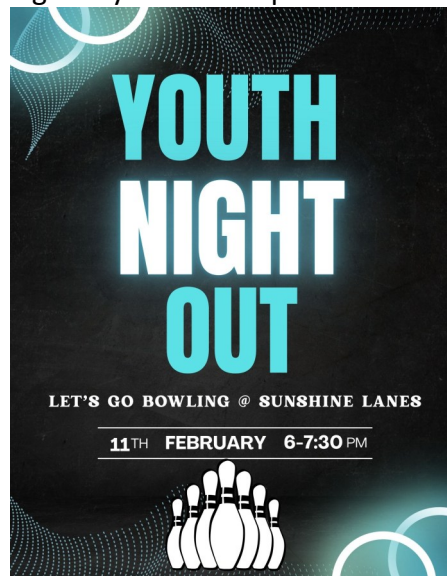
*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has anointed me  
to bring good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives  
and recovery of sight to the blind,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."*

Luke 4:18-19

# Youth Ministry

During the month of January, our youth lessons focused on The Holy Spirit and the important role He plays in our lives, grounded in Scripture. While January was a shorter month due to snow days, it was still a meaningful and impactful time. I was especially grateful for the opportunity to continue growing in my relationships with the students and learning more about them as individuals.

February is shaping up to be a busy and exciting month for our youth ministry. On February 11, the youth will go bowling in lieu of having a Valentine's party. This will be a fun night of fellowship and connection.



On February 15, we will be hosting a Bake Sale after service in the Narthex to help raise funds for camp. Thank you in advance for supporting our students through this fundraiser.

Also on February 15, we will host our Mentor Night, which was rescheduled from February 1 due to January's snow. Mentor Night will take place from 4:00–6:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall. Mentors and mentees are encouraged to bring their favorite board game if they have one or they may choose from the games

we will have available. Snacks and drinks will be provided. This is a great opportunity to connect,

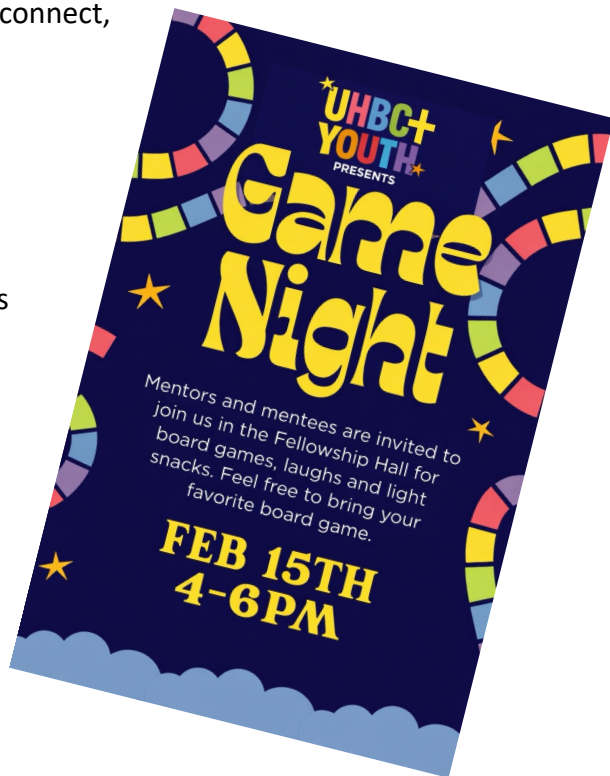
build relationships, and spend intentional time together. Mentors, please reach out to your mentee to confirm their ability to attend. Parents, you can also encourage your student to reach out to their mentor as a way of stepping outside their comfort zone.

Looking ahead to this summer, I'm excited to share that 14 students will be attending camp. As we prepare, we will need adult volunteers to attend camp with us. If you are interested in serving in this way or would like more information, please don't hesitate to reach out to me.

***Thank you for your continued prayers and support of our youth ministry.***

***With gratitude and joy,***

***Heather Twibell***



It has been a great start to the year in the Treehouse! This month's focus has been on how to practically grow our faith in God. We've discussed that just as sports and hobbies take practice to improve and grow in, faith also takes consistent practice.

We learned that:

1. We can practice talking about God with others.
2. We can practice talking to God about anything, anywhere, anytime.
3. We can practice hearing from God by reading the Bible, talking with other Christians, and by listening to the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

One of our Bible stories was from Matthew 7:24-27, where Jesus tells about the wise man who built his house upon the rock because he hears God's word and does it, rather than the foolish man who built his house on the sand. To further cement this idea (pun intended!), we had fun building Jenga towers on top of pillows and then tried again on a solid surface. Playing games, doing crafts and having fun while learning about God is just part of our time together in the Treehouse.

This coming month will fittingly be all about love! Our lessons will be about how we are called to love God and love others. We will have a Valentine's party on February 15th during Children's Church, and will have lots of opportunities to love our neighbors here at UHBC. Stay tuned for more information about a family fun night at the bowling alley later this month! As always, please reach out if you'd like to know more about volunteering in the children's ministry. We can always use more faithful role models for our young members.

***Blessings and Love,  
Alicyn Jennings***

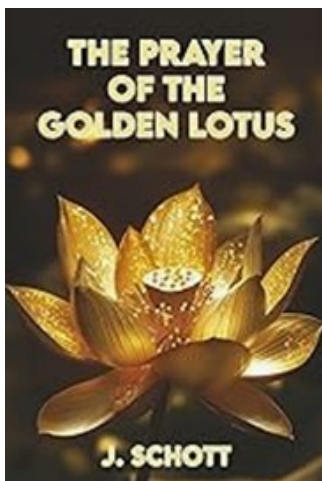
## From the Library

**Our UHBC Church Library staff is looking for a couple more staff members who can:**

1. open and close the library on Sundays, 8:45-9:15 am, and
2. check materials in & out during that time (minimal training needed & provided)

**The Church Library will welcome donations of books and DVDs that are of "very good" or "like new" quality in 2026.**

- \* Recent and hardback books are preferred, especially for children's books.
- \* The Library can place a "Donated by" sticker inside the front cover of a book when desired.
- \* Please specify whether a duplicate book should be returned to you or given away.

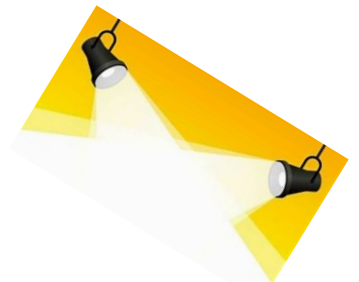


### NEW AUTHOR SPOTLIGHT!

While advancing his teaching career, **Jonathan Schott** blesses the UHBC congregation with his music ministry. The title of author can now be added to his endeavors!

The Prayer of the Golden Lotus is an enticing short story depicting the evening of a disgruntled former winemaker that is interrupted by an unfeared Mormon missionary with a message. When a tornado secludes both men in the basement of his house, the missionary's messages become noteworthy as lessons of divine intervention and spiritual gratitude, leading both down a path facing power beyond their own!

Check out this book and enjoy the interesting twist!



**Children's  
Ministry**

# What's Happening?

## THE B-I-B-L-E

Making sense of the pocket-sized library we call Scripture



Wednesdays at 6:30pm

In these sessions we will cover how we got the Bible (since the Gideons didn't deliver it to us), Old Testament, New Testament, the Bible and relationships, the Bible and science, violence and suffering in the Bible, and we will wrap it up with a session dedicated to your Big Questions!



- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>2</b> <i>Alicyn Jennings</i>  | <b>11</b> <i>Jayden Mitchell</i><br><i>Robby Prickett</i><br><i>Kay Procell</i> | <b>23</b> <i>Diane Schafer</i><br><i>Sarah Sharp</i>                     |
| <b>3</b> <i>Annabeth Jones</i><br><i>Suzana Sirb</i><br><i>Heather Twibell</i> | <b>15</b> <i>Richard Baker</i>  | <b>26</b> <i>Will Brammer</i><br><i>Cathy Megee</i><br><i>Joe Miller</i> |
| <b>6</b> <i>Bill Stone</i>   | <b>17</b> <i>Jackson Jones</i>  | <b>28</b> <i>Dane Smith</i>  |
| <b>8</b> <i>Karen Parry</i>  | <b>18</b> <i>Dana Brown</i>   |  |

## February 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> 9:15 Life Groups 10:30 Worship & Deacon Ordination	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 5:30 Bell Choir 5:45 Supper 6:30 Bible Study Kids/Youth 6:45 Chancel Choir	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8 SOUPER BOWL</b> 9:15 Life Groups 10:30 Worship w/ communion, Bap- tism Pam Durso preach- ing	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> M & M Meetings	<b>11</b> 5:30 Bell Choir 5:45 Supper 6:30 Bible Study Kids/Youth 6:45 Chancel Choir	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 10am Christian Writers' Group
<b>15</b> 9:15 Life Groups, Kids Valentine Party 10:30 Worship Youth Bake Sale 4-6pm Youth Mentor Event	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 5:30 Bell Choir 5:45 supper 6:30 Ash Wednesday Service	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> 9:15 Life Groups 10:30 Worship 4pm Board Meet- ings	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> 5:30 Bell Choir 5:45 supper 6:30 Bible Study Kids/Youth 6:45 Chancel Choir	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>



## Black History Month - Wisdom Inspired by Jarena Lee

Women have always been vital to the work of the Church. They were the first witnesses to the resurrection, they have shared the gospel with friends and family, provided resources for ministry, mentored others, and were committed to prayer. One of my favorite women of Church history was the African Methodist Episcopal preacher Jarena Lee. Born into a free black family in 1783, Jarena was the first African American female preacher. Though Church discipline did not allow women to preach, she preached wherever she could find the freedom to do so (hint: not in buildings unless it was her home).

When Jarena Lee was called, she wrestled with what God was doing in her and at the same time understanding she served within a system that did not allow women to preach. In her heart she wanted to see people connected to God through the saving power of the gospel and she felt compelled to fulfill what God was calling her to do. As Jarena wrestled with her thoughts and searched her heart, she came to some theological conclusions:

"Nothing is impossible with God."

"The savior died for both men and women."

"Mary preached the resurrection (John 20:18). Maybe 'preach' did not mean what we think it means today."

When defending her call to preach she stated, "O how careful we ought to be, lest though by our by-laws of church government and discipline, we bring into disrepute even the word of life." To quote one of our younger congregants, I don't believe "God is in the business of keeping women quiet." Women and men have been gifted to share the good news of Jesus. Jarena was encouraged as people came to faith, and her heart was moved to be a part of leading people to the Jesus who had given her new life.

***I think there are some good take aways from Jarena Lee's conclusions.***

1. Nothing is impossible for God. Are there impossibilities that get in our way, and we forget that God overcomes the impossible?
2. Are there people we have a hard time believing Jesus died for and empowered?
3. Are we looking for the new voices and younger leaders? Not just those in our church family, or those who look like us, but are there everyday people who have a gift and a call we need to be paying attention to and nurturing?
4. Who do you need to learn from this month? What new voices do you need to give your ear to?

**Blessings,  
-Joe**

**Wake Up  
and Smell  
the Coffee**

# UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH

(Located at the Corner of Grand & National)

1010 S. National Ave

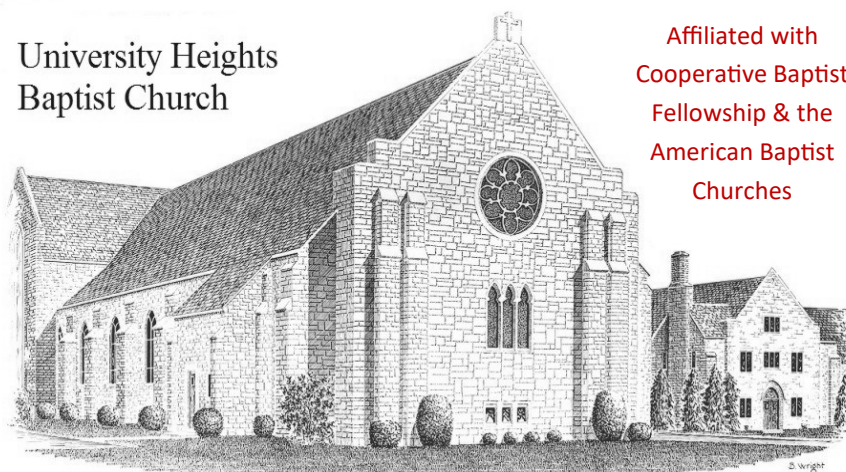
Springfield, MO 65804

Phone: 417.862.0789



Senior Pastor,  
Dr. Nolan B. Porter

## University Heights Baptist Church



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Churches

*A Church of Thoughtful, Gentle Grace*

Give us a call for more information about our services and ministries. 417-862-0789 or visit our website: [www.uhbc.org](http://www.uhbc.org). or email us at [uhbc@uhbc.org](mailto:uhbc@uhbc.org).