

Methodist Messenger

Prague/Arlington Charge

February, 2017

The Future Uncertain

*I don't know about tomorrow
I just live from day to day
I don't borrow from its sunshine
For its skies may turn to gray
I don't worry over the future
For I know what Jesus said
And today I'll walk beside him
For he knows what is ahead.*

I remember my grandma singing this old hymn, then I looked it up and the copyright is 1950. That would have been fairly new music back then. I always thought it kind of interesting, especially the "I just live from day to day" line. It is echoing Matthew 6:34 that says, "*So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today.*" But we also know that those folks who fly by the seat of their pants are not thought of well. So, what do we do with an uncertain future? Well, we are told not to worry; it doesn't say not to plan.

I am a planner by personality. I like to have a plan, so I can be flexible. I know there are folks out there who understand what I am saying. If I have a plan, I know what is supposed to happen, so if something unexpected comes up, it doesn't fluster me, because I have an idea of the direction things are supposed to be headed. It is like planning a trip and mapping out the route, but if you hit construction or other detours, you know the general direction you need to go and which road you need to get back to, so you really aren't lost. I have found it works very well for me, and planning is at times therapeutic for me. I plan vacations I may never take, and for a future that may never take place. But it is fun to dream.

Proverbs tells us "*The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance, but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty.*" (21:5) If we want to be wise, we will plan for the future. It also says our plans may not always turn out as we thought. "*Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand.*" (19:21). So, we can make our plans, but God's plans will take precedence. God's plans are better than we could ever plan for ourselves anyway, and our plans will only align with God's, if we plan carefully and prayerfully.

With this in mind, this is what I would like for us to do as a church—plan together—prayerfully and carefully seeking God's wisdom as we look to the future of the ministry of the United Methodist Church in Prague and Arlington. At Arlington, we will work together as we have, discussing new ways to share God's love to the community.

At Prague, I will have a "**Total Church Cottage Meeting**" **March 12 at 5 pm**. At this meeting, we will discuss what insights came up at the cottage meetings and work together to plan for a future for

FUMC. Everyone is invited to come, and those who attended one of the cottage meetings are highly encouraged to be there. This is our opportunity to make plans for the church, so all those who are interested in the future of the church should attend.

My prayer is that we may seek where God is leading us for the future. May we commit ourselves to unity of mind and spirit, as well as an atmosphere of love and grace. And may God bless us and the ministry of the churches.

Grace and peace,
Rev. Sonja

Dollars and Sense

As I have been looking over the budget and spending of 2016, and looking to a budget for 2017, I discovered that there is a shortage between the budgeted income and budgeted expenses. Now, this is not the first church ever to have that situation, and it isn't likely to be the last time it happens. In churches that do pledge or commitment cards, as I am told you have in the past, it is easier to look at giving and what is necessary to make ends meet. The finance committee is charged with working on a budget, presenting it to church council which will vote on it, and then the finance committee needs to make sure the money to cover the budget is raised. They aren't the "let's cut this and short that" committee. The church has ministry that needs to be covered and the funds to do that must be raised.

I also discovered that if everyone who currently gives to the church were to raise their giving by as little as \$35 a month, we would have all the money necessary to cover the 2017 budget. That's all, \$35 a month--\$420 a year. I know that some people cannot, and I know that some people can do even more than \$35 a month.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Am I committed to the ministry of our church?
- Have I prayed about what God wants me to give to the church this year?
- Have I examined this yearly? Or am I still giving what I gave 20 years ago?
- Am I giving what God has laid on my heart to give?
- Am I willing to commit to giving this amount?

Prayerfully consider what you currently give and what God is calling you to give. If you are willing to covenant with other committed members of the church to support the mission and ministry of the church, I would invite you to return the commitment information below to the church by either placing it in the offering plate or mailing or bringing it to the church office. May God bless the future of our church!

Commitment Card

Name _____ Member Yes No Wish to join

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

I am willing to commit to giving the church \$_____ per (circle one) week, month, year



UNITED METHODIST MEN

Information from secretary/treasurer Jerry Opela

The United Methodist Men met January

1. Pres. Jack Vaughn led the election of officers: 2017 president is OlaBon Fouquet and secretary/ treasurer is Jerry Opela.

Other business included setting the take-down of the nativity scene in the Prague Park for January 9 at 1 p.m. The men also decided not to have a potato bar in February due to the youth Valentine Dinner that month.

Robert Clark is responsible for the March meeting devotional. That **meeting** will be **7 am Saturday, March 3**. All interested men and boys are invited to attend.



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

The United Methodist Women of Prague and Arlington met 6 pm, Thursday, January 19. Pres. Lisa Hefner led the group in an extensive discussion of this year's kolache baking (YES! It is that time again.) As in the past, we will be organized into sub-groups according to the task. However, this year those divisions will be more formalized with recognized chairs responsible for each task group.

The intention is to improve communication and to facilitate incorporation of volunteers as they become available throughout the day. **Tentative baking dates are April 22 and April 29**. Each baking day is preceded by many individuals preparing fillings, a small group measuring ingredients, and a larger group mixing the dough. Baking day itself is all-hands-on-deck. Even if you are unable to join in the work, please keep the effort in prayer, then drop by as you are able, to see it all happen and to offer an encouraging word. Why do we go to all that work? The UMW is all about mission. While

the Harvest Dinner keeps hungry children fed through the Backpack program, the kolaches fund our entire annual budget, providing much needed support for a long list of missional efforts.

The next **UMW meeting** will be **6 pm Thursday, February 9**, in the Prague Fellowship Hall. All women and girls are invited to attend.



Camp packets went home **January 4th**. There is an **early bird pricing**, so we need to know who is going **by March 26 - or sooner** - to get everyone in. The church will pay for one camp per child. You choose which camp you want the church to pay for.

WARNING: If you wait until after March 26 to register, the church will pay the discount price and you will need to pay the difference, assuming the camp still has room. See Tina Thompson [tina.thompson405@gmail.com, 567-3792] for more youth information and Melinda Pruett [melindapruett@rocketmail.com 405-202-8550] for children's information.



VALENTINE DINNER FEBRUARY 12

Eric Capron has consented to prepare the pork loin for this dinner which will take place in the Prague Fellowship Hall after the morning service. Youth will be serving the meal. Proceeds will help support Youth Force, our youth's major mission project. Tickets are \$10 and may be purchased at this time from Tina Thompson. Youth and Tina are selling tickets.



Written by Children's Coordinator Melinda Pruett

I am so excited for this New Year. We have been having lots of fun learning about Native Americans. The kids have been building dream catchers and building bird feeders. We are getting ready for something a little different. It's called *Touch the Water. Taste the Bread*. I am also excited about getting ready for VBS, so if you would like to help, please contact me.

Camp registration deadline will be here before you know it, so please try to figure out which camp your kids will be attending. [See page 3 for more registration information.]

If anyone would like to help on Wednesday nights, we are growing in both the children's and youth groups. Come talk to me or Tina.



Serve the Lord with gladness; Come before His presence with singing.

- Psalm 100:2 NKJV



united methodist youth fellowship

UNITED METHODIST YOUTH

Written by Youth Team Leader Tina Thompson

VIOLENCE IS NOT JUST PHYSICAL

Our Quest youth have been learning about violence & how it doesn't have to be physical to be considered violent behavior! Enrollment continues to grow. We have had up to thirty-one youth at one time.



Approximately eight youth and two adults brought in the New Year at *The Flame*. They spent the evening in fellowship, playing games and listening to music. They said they had a great time!



This quarter's noisy offering is going to UMCOR, a ministry through the UMC that provides humanitarian relief when war, conflict, or natural disaster disrupt life to such an extent, that communities are unable to recover on their own. One of their many projects is the development of clean water resources, such as shown in the picture below.

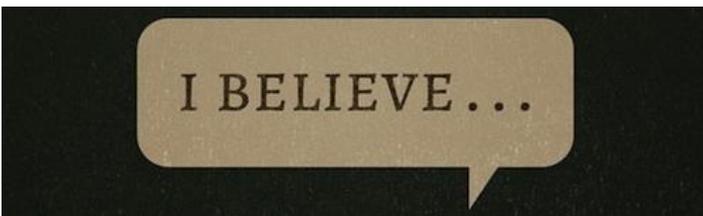


Courtesy of B Porvenir



Let the Waters Flow!

We are in the middle of a worship series entitled "Water of Life." It is based on the blessing of water found in our baptismal covenant. As an ending to the series, we will be having a reaffirmation of our baptismal covenant in worship February 12th. If you have not yet been baptized and are desiring baptism for yourself or your child, please contact the church office at 405-567-3126 to schedule an appointment with Rev. Tobey to discuss this sacrament and means of grace.



The Season of Lent

Lent—or the 40+ days before Easter—is quickly approaching. It begins on Ash Wednesday (**March 1**), which is a time of reflection and repentance. We will have an **Ash Wednesday service at 6:30 pm** to gather as a community of faith and prepare our hearts, minds, and spirits for the Season of Lent.

The worship series for the Season of Lent follows the Apostle's Creed. This series will begin on Ash Wednesday, and the first line "I Believe in God" starts on March 5. Come and learn about and affirm your faith as we prepare ourselves for the life, death, and resurrection of Christ.



WILMA JEAN STONE

Wilma and her husband, J.L. Stone, moved to Prague in 1957. She is probably best known for the many years she worked for the Parks family, primarily at the hardware store, but also at the funeral home. Ever active, Wilma was well known through her many group involvements like Eastern Star, PEO, her square dance club, and Business Professional Women.

After losing a leg to disease, she inspired others with her courage and tenacity for life. Most recently she was honored at the Prague UMC as a 50 year member.

Wilma cherished her upbringing in the Paden area and her years at Paden High School. With J.L. and then later with a friend, Wilma was faithful to lunch with the Paden Senior Citizens, right up to her last illness.

Wilma passed away November 26, 2016. She is, and will continue to be, missed by many, many friends.



SIGN LANGUAGE

Written by Director

Rev. Sharon Capron

Children's Sign Class varies from one to six in attendance with a dozen kids making up that number each week. In spite of the variance, the children are enjoying learning "Tell Me the Stories of Jesus" and hope to participate soon in services at both churches. Please watch your bulletin insert for a date. **5**

FEBRUARY 2017

Wednesday, February 01

11 am Arlington Ladies Day Out
Quest
3:30- 5:30 pm Recreation
3:45- 4:15 pm Sign & Music
5:30- 6:30 pm Dinner, Worship
6:30- 7:30 pm Classes
6:30 pm Vocal Choir practice

Thursday, February 02

BD Sue Farmer

Friday, February 03

6 – 7 pm AA & Al-Anon

Saturday, February 04

7am United Methodist Men

Sunday, February 05

9:15 Arlington worship
9:30 Prague Sunday school
10:30 Arlington Sunday school
10:45 Prague worship
5 – 7 pm Bell Choir practice

Monday, February 06

Tuesday, February 07

6 – 7 pm AA & Al-Anon

Wednesday, February 08

11 am Arlington Ladies Day Out
Quest
3:30- 5:30 pm Recreation
3:45- 4:15 pm Sign & Music
5:30- 6:30 pm Dinner, Worship
6:30- 7:30 pm Classes
6:30 pm Vocal Choir practice

Thursday, February 09

6 pm United Methodist Women

Friday, February 10

6 – 7 pm AA & Al-Anon

Saturday, February 11

BD Bonnie Smith

Sunday, February 12

Worship/Sunday school - Arlington
Sunday school/worship - Prague

VALENTINE DINNER

Monday, February 13

Tuesday, February 14

6 – 7 pm AA & Al-Anon
BD Bruce Pfeiff

Wednesday, February 15

11 am Arlington Ladies Day Out
5:30-7:30 *Quest*
6:30 vocal choir
WA Gary & Debra Kinslow

Thursday, February 16

2 pm Parkland birthday party
BD Ned Bureson

Friday, February 17

6 – 7 pm AA & Al-Anon

Saturday, February 18

BD Tanner Peterson
BD Aaron Fridrich
BD Lucille Sargent

Sunday, February 19

Worship/Sunday school - Arlington
Sunday school/worship - Prague
BD Vicki Pfeiff

Monday, February 20

Tuesday, February 21

6 – 7 pm AA & Al-Anon

Wednesday, February 22

11 am Arlington Ladies Day Out
5:30-7:30 *Quest*
6:30 vocal choir

Thursday, February 23

Friday, February 24

6 – 7 pm AA & Al-Anon
BD Danny Morgan

Saturday, February 25

BD Kim Beachler
BD Derrek Belase
WA Donnal & Janette Smith

Sunday, February 26

Worship/Sunday school - Arlington
Sunday school/worship - Prague
BD James Pruett

Monday, February 27

BD Seabrook Griffin

Tuesday, February 28

6 - 7 pm AA & Al-Anon

Upcoming dates to note:

March 1 - ASH WEDNESDAY

March 2-5 - Chrysalis weekend

March 5 - weekly Lenten Study

March 12 - Prague TOTAL church
cottage meeting

March 26 – last chance for free
camp registration

BD = birthday

WA = wedding anniversary