

# The United Methodist News

YEAR 23 VOLUME 4

APRIL, 2015

SERVING GOD 122 YEARS

**Sunday School**  
 9:30 A.M.  
**Morning Worship**  
 10:30 A.M.

The Choir will  
 present an Easter  
 medley during  
 morning worship  
 April 5



Our church has been  
 serving God 122  
 years this month.

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## **PASTOR TO PEOPLE**

### ***Am I a Hypocrite?***

It's the week before Easter, the day the Church remembers and celebrates THE central and defining moment of God's great love for the world – the resurrection of Christ! Without the resurrection nothing else about all the Church teaches and believes about Jesus matters, not his birth, not his life and teaching, not his passion, not even the cross. Easter is the pin upon which all of Christianity hinges. In preacher circles Easter is also known as one of the year's two big attendance days in church (the other is Christmas Eve). Many people will attend worship only on Easter and not any other Sunday. With each passing year even that number seems to be declining. Of all the many reasons folks give for not attending or being active in church, hypocrisy is often mentioned. While I know it is rare to find religious hypocrisy today (yeah, right!), that was far from the case in the first century. Hypocrisy, especially amongst the religious leadership, was rampant, and Jesus spent much of his time teaching people the cure.

A blog I recently read by youth minister Jeremy Steele, has given me as one of those religious leaders that Jesus spent much of his time chastising, something to reflect upon (more preacher-speak for "that hits a little too close to home"). Not wanting to be alone in my squirming, I invite you to reflect with me.

It might surprise you to learn that just like today, in the first century, the church was divided. Also as is the case today although they worshipped the same God, they allowed theological distinctives to divide them. But the crazy thing is that these groups acted as if they were not worshipping the same God. They met in different places, had different leaders, and some even refused to talk to the others! Each group even had its own ceremonial bath outside the temple and would charge a fee to use it. When you did, it not only fulfilled your ritual requirement, but meant you were signing up for their sub-group.

Which did Jesus choose? Was he pro-afterlife, pro-mortality, or pro-this-doesn't-matter? How about none of the above? Instead of giving into the isolating sub-groupings, Jesus went out to a river. He opted out of the whole system altogether.

Jeremy writes:

"If only theological division were the end of it. The hypocrisy went on to compromise one of the most important pieces of their faith: personal holiness. Holiness was important because God's people were supposed to live as an example to the world. It was a blessing to seek to try to live more and more like God. But they completely missed the point. God's people were using their personal holiness to inflict pain on the rest of their world. Some

*(Continued on page 2)*

**REV. KYLE CLARK**

## APRIL CHURCH CALENDAR

### • SUNDAY •

Lenten Study, 6 p.m.

UMYF (CHAOS), 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.

### • MONDAY •

Christian Preschool Monday – Thursday

8:30 - 11:30 a.m., Education Building

### • TUESDAY •

Cub Scouts, 6 p.m., CFLC

Boy Scouts, 7 p.m., CFLC

### • WEDNESDAY •

LOGOS, 3:15 p.m.

Family Meal 5:15 p.m.

WOW (Worship) following meal

Celebration Choir Rehearsal, 6 p.m.

### • THURSDAY •

Senior Café, 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., CFLC

- 3 Living Lord's Supper drama, 7:30 p.m.
- 4 Cleaning Day at the church
- 5 Easter! Children's egg hunt following worship
- 6 SPRC Meeting, 5:15 p.m.  
Family Bingo Night, 5:30 p.m.
- 11 Treble Choir Concert, 7 p.m.
- 12 Church-wide potluck following worship  
Treble Choir Concert, 2 p.m.
- 14 Women of Faith, 2 p.m.  
Finance Committee, 6 p.m.
- 15 Membership Care, 12 noon, CFLC
- 18 Neighborhood Breakfast, 8:00 to 10:30 a.m.
- 22 Last LOGOS of the school year; program

## ACOLYTES

- 5 Brady Perry and Burke Perry
- 12 Lexi Pickle and Wyatt Holt
- 19 Waylon Murray and Nathan Murray
- 26 Ryker Holt and Lexi Pickle



### THE UNITED METHODIST NEWS

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Carol Baker, Editor

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

109 S. Harper, Poteau, OK 74953

Telephone 918-647-2217

e-mail: rogers2006@windstream.net

website: www.poteaufumc.com

Sunday School 9:30 a.m. • Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.

Weekly Communion 9:10 a.m. except first Sunday

|  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| Bishop                                     | Robert E. Hayes    |
| District Superintendent                    | Darrell Cates      |
| Senior Pastor                              | Rev. Kyle Clark    |
| Associate Pastor                           | Rev. Tracy Hoskins |
| Director of Youth Ministries               | Kimberly Hardaway  |
| Director of Children and Family Ministries | Rev. Tracy Hoskins |
| Director of Music Ministries               | Steve Clark        |
| Administrative Assistant                   | Reenea Thompson    |
| Lead Nursery Attendant                     | Jayla Craig        |
| Organist                                   | Wendy Kelly        |
| Custodian                                  | Phil Smith         |

District web page: [www.gbpm-umc.org/mc-dist/](http://www.gbpm-umc.org/mc-dist/)

## PASTOR TO PEOPLE (Continued)

were so consumed with self-righteousness that they actually thought they had stopped sinning!

What was Jesus' cure? How did he respond? In a confrontation with some of these self-righteous religious leaders, Jesus pointed out that he had only come for the "sick" people.

Jesus didn't yell or get into a theology debate. He let their self-righteousness do what it does so well: paralyze their growth and alienate them from those who need help. Jesus didn't stop there. Jesus took it upon himself to rescue the victims of self-righteous attacks. Jesus stepped in between the hate-fueled rocks and the shamed soul about to be stoned because of her sin. Jesus reminded those wielding holiness as a weapon that if sin required death, then everyone should be executed.

The pinnacle of the first-century hypocrisy was hung on the wall of their church building. God's people were supposed to be the means by which God blessed all the nations. Yet, on the wall of their church was a sign that read "the foreigner who passes this wall will bear the responsibility for their resulting death."

How did Jesus react? What was his remedy for the height of religious hypocrisy? He turned over the tables that were in front of this wall. He used their own scriptures to remind them that this place was to be a place of prayer for all the nations. He reminded them that God had destroyed their church walls before and would do it again.

I know it's hard to imagine 2,000 years later a world where church people separate themselves from non-churchgoers, where people of faith become self-righteous, and where those who are worshipping the same God fight amongst themselves over theological nuance. If we ever did find ourselves in a place filled with this sort of religious hypocrisy, we could take heart to know that Jesus showed us the cure. Jesus showed us the way to focus on our God rather than the unimportant theological minutiae. He showed us that holiness is a gift, not a weapon. Most of all, Jesus showed us that no religious idea or structure can separate us from his love and grace. It is available to everyone everywhere. All we have to do is ask."

– Excerpted from 'Am I a Hypocrite' by Jeremy Steele

<http://jeremywords.com/>

This is something to think about as we enter the season of Easter. The challenge, as I see it, is to ask and answer a few questions – What, if any, hypocritical message(s) are we sending to others and how can we stop it? How can we as a community of faith, convey in a non-hypocritical way the Good News of God's love and grace to not only the once a year church attenders but all



folks all the time? How might we cultivate such a holy way of living that would allow us to invite and encourage folks who have left the church or given up on the church to re-discover life in a community of faith, worshipping God and serving others in the name of Christ, without judgement and alienation?

I would love to hear your thoughts, ideas, and reflections.

Shalom, 

## Church Potluck/Committee Revival

What is your gift: planning activities? cooking? cleaning? greeting members? praying? organizing?

Calling all church members! Please plan to attend the Church-wide Potluck on April 12th after church. Please bring a dish to share, enjoy fellowship, and get involved and join a church committee.

## From Tracy's Desk

By Rev. Tracy Hoskins, Associate Pastor and Director of Children and Family Ministries  
 thoskins@poteaufumc.com

### Family Time

Family Bingo Night: Monday, April 6th at 5:30. Bring a potluck dish. Invite a friend. Enjoy fellowship and fun and win a prize.

There will be a bounce house for the kids.

### Kid's Korner

Do you like to work with children? Do you want to serve? We are in need of Sunday School helpers. In order for us to follow our church's safety guidelines, we need two adult partners during the Sunday School hour. If we had several helpers, then we could rotate so that it is not as big a burden. If you would like to help or for more information, please contact me at the church or talk with Suzanne Klutts.

### Vacation Bible School

VBS will be here before we know it. If you were unable to attend the planning meeting, and would like to help with VBS, please let Suzanne Klutts know of your intention. VBS will be June 1-5. Contact me if you need more information.

### LOGOS

We are visiting Crocodile Dock where fearless kids shine God's Light. We will be learning about Jesus' resurrection, and crossing the Red Sea.

- 1 Easter (bring an Easter egg)
- 8 Pirates (wear your pirate gear)
- 15 D.O.G. (Depend on God) Bring a stuffed animal to donate to Grace Cottage)

22 Closing Celebration – Join us for dinner and “Down by the Creek Bank” and support our children.

Everyone is welcome to join us any Wednesday for dinner at 5:00.

## Living Lord's Supper drama

The annual Living Lord's Supper drama will be Friday, April 3 at 7:30 p.m. as part of the Good Friday service. Please attend and see what the men of our church say in portraying the twelve disciples.

## News of Youth

By Kimberly Hardaway

UMYF (CHAOS) meets Sunday evenings from 5 to 7 p.m. and is for all youth 6th through 12th grade.

We have decided to postpone the 30-hour famine that was scheduled for April 3. So the money raised by the ugly stoles on display is being given to the missions committee.

We have a fun outing (outdoor laser quest) scheduled for May 3. We will leave at 1 and return around 8. Cost is \$15 plus money for supper.

## Our Sympathy

Our love and sympathy is extended to the families of Kay Sullivan and Vernon Roberts who passed away recently.



United Methodist Church  
**PRESCHOOL**  


By  
 Tracey Gilliam,  
 Preschool Director

Preschool will be having pre-enrollment for the next school year on Tuesday, April 14th between 5 and 7 p.m.

In April the weekly themes will be Growing Plants, People from Other Places, Animals That Change, and April Showers Bring May Flowers.

The memory verse for April is “Sing praises to the Lord.” Also in April the preschool students will be learning about the letters V, W, X, Y and Z. The shape of the month is an oval and the colors are black and gray.

### Poteau F.U.M.C. Report for February 2015

Average Attendance Figures for February: 123

2015 Budget Requirements: \$340,000.00

Needed for Budget Each Week: \$6,538.46

Needed through February: \$52,307.70

February Receipts: \$32,419.54

February Expenditures: \$29,727.99

#### New Building Fund Figures:

Deposits: \$1,838,165.44; Expenditures: \$2,579,246.98



## Cards of Thanks

Thank you for making me feel so special with all the beautiful Christmas cards. Poteau has the most special group of caring women. Thank you again.

In His name,  
Bessie Moreland

Dear Church Family,  
Thank you for your prayers and concerns. The continuous love and support is healing me quickly.

Kylanna Hardaway

*(Editor's Note: The following letter was submitted for the newsletter by Kay Sullivan a few weeks before her death.)*

### LOVE, PRAYERS AND APPRECIATION TO MY CHURCH FAMILY:

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for the outpouring of cards, calls, and prayers this year as I have battled this disease. I have felt comfort from those prayers, and I ask for your continued prayers. Knowing you care and also knowing our Heavenly Father listens to our prayers makes this journey easier. Our church is wonderful!

I would like to share some of my experiences of being a member of First United Methodist Church. When Mike and I moved to Poteau in 1966 we had 3 children under 6 years of age and Jeff was born 2 months later. We were invited to this church by Virginia Stanley and Judy Powell and for this I am grateful. It became our church home and I love it!

We were welcomed by all and I became active by teaching kindergarten with Jean Gaylor to a class of 25. This followed by my teaching 1st and 2nd grade, then 3rd and 4th, seems like another one, followed by Senior High. I assisted with Vacation Bible School and made gifts and food for the Fall Festival. Some of those children I taught have sent me cards since learning of my illness; I loved every one of them and still do! My daughter was married in this church, and when we lost Mark, his service was here.

Through the years we have added many outreach programs and I thank each member who has participated and made them successful. There is still much to do, and it is important to continue these successful endeavors. Each one of you has a talent and I pray you are led to be active in the church by giving of your gift. God provides each of us a way to serve and our church needs you. Step up and Volunteer! Ideas for growth are always needed. Work together in your loving spirit; we have members with the biggest

hearts and a willingness to share. The talent in this church is amazing! I love our choir, the creativeness of our leaders in the children and youth departments, and the big smiles and hugs exchanged among the membership.

We are experiencing some hard times, as are churches everywhere. Be concerned, be involved, come up with ideas to help our church! And invite someone to visit – maybe like me, it will be the perfect fit!

I am praying for you and I love you.

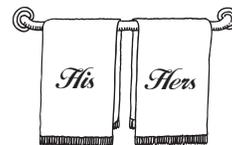
Kay Sullivan

## April Birthdays

- 1 Janell Darneal
- 3 April Remy
- 4 Dorthea Sue O'Neal
- 5 Kendy Jo Traywick and Nathan Clark
- 6 Rece Ward and Haley Clark
- 7 Dana Wheat and Bill Lancaster
- 10 Jaxon Bradshaw and Jace Bandy
- 11 Drew DeCamp
- 12 Rachel Ware
- 13 Chad Bridges and Ted Bandy
- 14 Jean Whigham and Cindy Woolbright
- 15 Brian Shore and Kylanna Hardaway
- 16 Pat Shelton and Myrna Davis
- 18 Ron Cofer, Wayne Neuharth, Lily Shore and Kay Thomas
- 19 Melissa Reyes, Katie Cox and Joshua Mixon
- 20 Brandon Fruen, Jaimie Downing and Dustin Green
- 22 Melissa Ward
- 23 Marilyn Meek
- 24 Khia Brookfield
- 26 Ashley Plumlee
- 27 Katie Redhage and Laurie Bandy
- 29 Kody Whitehead, Dorothy James and Kyle Clark

## April Anniversaries

- 9 Gary and Linda Brown
- 11 Charlie and Katie Rust  
Hank and Barbara Harris
- 18 Keith and Patty Wright
- 24 Bruce and Carol Darrow
- 28 Preston and Laney Plumlee
- 29 John and Nikki Perry



**If anyone would like to be a praying member of the prayer chain, please contact Ruth Ann DeCamp or the church office. These people dedicate themselves to praying for those with requests.**