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Volume 5 Issue 4

February 22, 2010



Dear Church Family,

We are now in the season of **Lent** and started off with a very meaningful Ash Wednesday Service. I really love it when all our choirs come together and sing.

And this past Sunday evening, we began our Sunday evening home cell groups study "**40 Days of Love in Lent**". It is never too late to be a part of this growing ministry. If you decide you want to join, contact Joy at 972-253-3531 or email joy@fumcirving.org.

As most of you know, by now we are in the beginning stages of a program to retire our debt. In April of this year we have an opportunity to pay down our loan without penalty as we enter the option phase of our loan agreement with Co America Bank. To date we have 17 gifts toward this plan totaling \$266,350. Please begin to pray and ask the Lord what you might do to help us move forward with this effort. Paying down our debt will allow us to sustain many of our ministries for years to come, and position ourselves for the future as South Irving is revitalized. It will also signal an end to the capital fund drives for the Sanctuary project, and help us start a new chapter in the life and ministry of First United Methodist Church, Irving. If you would like to visit with me personally, just let me know.

Lent is one of the most meaningful seasons of the church year. It is our time to seek God with our whole heart. As we prepare for a glorious **Easter**, I covet your prayers and support as we move forward together.

Always looking forward,

David J. Turner



.... AMONG OUR PEOPLE AMONG OUR PEOPLE

- SYMPATHY** to the **family of Penny Reagan** who passed away on February 10.
- SYMPATHY** to the **family of Christine Burkett whose mother, Mary Studer**, passed away on February 12.
- SYMPATHY** to the **family of Carrie Pearl Marshall** who passed away on February 15.

- MEMORIALS:** In memory of **Marla Dean** to Children's Ministry from Frank and JoAnn Maykus.
 In memory of **Glenn Martin** to Building Debt Retirement from Lucy Wright.
 In memory of **Edna Jones** to Building Debt Retirement from Roberta & Jimmie Phillips.
 In memory of **Mary Studer, Christine Burkett's mother**, to Building Debt Retirement from Duane & Roberta Long; from Kay Crofford, from Helen Crofford, from David & Sylvia Mayhew; from Mickey and Linda Wheeler; from Edelize Filler; from Karl Mullins; from Bill & Marjorie Houseworth; from Lucy Wright; from Allan & Pam Knott; from Allee Anderson; from Lee & Mary Moore; from Gail & Barbara Clemens. To Choir Music Library from John & Jan McCuiston. To Missions Outreach from Bill & Marni Monty. To Music Ministry from Mac & Jackie Spruce.
 In memory of **Penny Reagan** to Music Ministry from Mac & Jackie Spruce. To Bell Choir Fund from Frank & Mildred Sinclair.

- HONORARIUM:**
 In honor of **Bill Houseworth's 90th birthday** to Building Debt Retirement from Marjorie Houseworth.



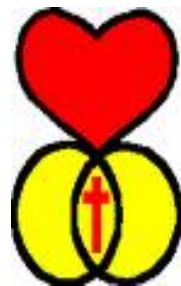
GREETERS IN WORSHIP

FEB. 28 – CAN DO ITS
YVONNE MULLEN
MARCH 7 – TEAM KINDNESS
PETE MCNABB
MARCH 14 - GOLDEN GATE
GREETERS – CONNIE HERRINGTON

Oasis Café Menus

March 3 - Gourmet
hamburgers with toppings
(guacamole, bacon, cheese)
beans, chips & desserts

March 10 - Salad, grilled
chicken, mashed potatoes,
green beans & desserts



A WEEKEND OF DISCOVERY A LIFETIME OF LOVE

Rediscover the one you love on a United Methodist Marriage Encounter weekend! Marriage Encounter is 44 hours where couples can get away from jobs, kids, chores, and phones and focus only on each other. If you'd like great depth, growth, and enrichment in your relationship, you'll like the difference a **Marriage Encounter** weekend can make! **The next weekend in the Dallas area is April 9-11.** For information and to make reservations, go to www.encounter.org or contact Mickey and Linda Wheeler, jamesw3681@aol.com or 972-594-0232.

Sermon Series
What's Love Got to
Do With It?
February 28
Patient & Kind
March 7
It Speaks Truth
March 14
Forgiveness
March 21
Selflessness
March 28 (Palm Sunday)
A Loving Heart



**PLEASE SIGN UP FOR YOUR
SPECIAL DATE ON THE
ALTAR FLOWER
CALENDARS!
CALENDARS ARE NOW
LOCATED ON THE
BULLETIN BOARD OUTSIDE OF
JOY'S OFFICE!
MANY OPEN DATES ARE STILL
AVAILABLE!**

SEAN'S SCOOP . . .

We have so many things still on the horizon for the Youth and Youth Choir. We are still preparing for the big Youth Cue weekend coming up **(Feb. 26-28)**. When you read this it is likely that we will be in Waco, TX at the Baylor campus. Please pray for all the kids and adults involved.

On **March 7**, we are attending Aldersgate UMC for a seminar called Cyber Safe Teens.

Then, **March 15-18** we have our Spring Break Mystery Trip to...somewhere!

April brings us Easter and another visit to help feed the homeless at Austin Street shelter in Dallas. And so it goes that the Youth department and Choir department are extremely busy . . .

However, we are in the season of Lent and this is usually a time when we ponder our positions under heaven. I am drawn to Psalm 103 where I read that the LORD is merciful and gracious. He is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. Really?

Even for me, a sinner, a dog, a merciless human being? The Psalmist goes on to say that, "He will not always chide (a form of disapproval and scolding), nor will he keep his anger forever." How can that be? I understand this "disapproval" thing just fine. Who hasn't felt the sting of disapproval at some level before? My earthly father has expressed his disapproval of me even in my early forties, even though I know that he loves me. But then, I read in verse 10 these words, "He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities." Wow. No wonder it seems impossible to escape some form of disapproval and scolding here on earth...because WE are NOT God.

As sinners, we are affecting and being affected by everyone else's sin, and our own, all the time. But the LORD has an unimaginable "steadfast love toward those who fear him; [and] as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us." Notice that he removes our transgressions from us as well as the implication of the sin being removed from him. I never thought of that before. You see, "as a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him. For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust." Our frames cannot maintain the substance of dust unless there is something to bind it together. Therefore, the Psalmist reminds us that the LORD "forgives all your iniquity, heals all your diseases, redeems your life from the pit, crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, and satisfies you with good." Now, that, my friends is glory. Until then, let's help each other "fear" the LORD and "keep his covenant, and remember to do his commandments," so that our "children's children" will be extended "righteousness" for his namesake.

Blessings to you.



**WATCH FOR THE SIGN-UP
FORMS FOR EASTER LILIES
IN THE BULLETIN ON
SUNDAYS MARCH 21 & 28!**

Joyful Noise from Joy . . .

March 10 - Wow Wednesday!

Great fun planned for all elementary age children k-5th. It's time to celebrate St. Patrick's Day and go on a "treasure" hunt! Wear something green and bring your friends! Cathy Ballard is planning this one, so adults, call her to help out!

Easter Egg Hunt . . .

Easter is almost here again, and the egg hunt will be happening on Palm Sunday, March 28, right after church. We have lots of empty plastic eggs that need some goodies in them! If you would like to donate some candy, please make sure it is individually wrapped. Chocolate tends to melt and make a big mess, so no chocolate please. (Tootsie rolls are ok.) There is a candy collection box in the hallway by the church offices. Thank you all in advance for your generous support for the children!

Sunday School . . .

Children's Sunday School is fun! Kids earn "points" for being on time (9:15 AM), for memorizing the Bible verse for the month or other memory work such as the Ten Commandments, or for bringing a friend to Sunday School. We are also encouraging children to help others by bringing items for Irving Cares, and collecting spare change in a big jar for missions. There will be "rewards" for points, but the greatest reward is learning about God's love for us, shown through Jesus. Be sure to bring your children, and grandchildren to Sunday School, and adults, be a good example, attend a class, too!

40 Days of Love . . .

Lenten Small Group Studies Began this week in homes across Irving. Participants shared food and fellowship, listened to the video by Rick Warren, and discussed what matters most, love. If you missed out on the first session, we will still make room for you! Call or email Joy Turner to find a home group. (972-253-3531, joy@fumcirving.org) Even if you are not participating in a group, you can still focus on being more loving during this season of Lent. Pastor David will be using the key scriptures from the study and many of the same points and ideas in his sermons. This past Sunday, our key verse was "Let love be your highest goal." 1 Corinthians 14:1 (New Living Translation). Pastor David promised a prize to those who memorize it this week! Let's all make love our highest goal in life. God is love, so to be truly like Him, as His very own children, we must be loving. God bless you all with His love this season.



Thank you for your multiple expressions of sympathy in my mother's death. What a privilege to belong to a family of faith who so lovingly express God's care with their prayers, presence, and provisions! One of the best gifts my Mom gave me was bringing me to this church as a child. It is here that I've experienced the reality of faith lived out through friends like you.

To God be the glory!

From Christine Burkett & family