From: **Marilyn Jones** pastor@fumcstephenville.org
Subject: March 2025 FUMC Newsletter
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To: Marilyn Jones* pastor@fumcstephenville.org

MJ

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Stephenville, Texas

Welcome to March!

Please enjoy the March 2025 edition of the FUMC Stephenville Newsletter! Please find below a message from Pastor Marilyn, our music ministry, and notes about important events happening around our church.
If you have any submissions for the monthly newsletter, you may do so using the link below.

Submit a Newsletter Item

A Note from Pastor Marilyn

Dear Marilyn,

March is here, and so is our next holy season in the church year. As we enter the sacred season of Lent, our theme will be “Everything in Between.” Our journey will

be guided by the Gospel of Luke, following Jesus as He "sets His face toward Jerusalem" (Luke 9:51). This series will lead us through some of the most well-known and well-loved stories of our faith—the Good Samaritan, Mary and Martha, the fruitless fig tree, the Lost Sheep, Zacchaeus, and more. These stories are not just familiar within the church; they have shaped history, language, and culture. Even in secular spaces, phrases like "Good Samaritan" and the tale of Zacchaeus climbing a tree remain widely recognized.

Yet, when we look deeper into these scriptures, we see how Jesus' ministry was never about simple, easy answers. His teachings shocked His audience because they defied expectations and disrupted long-held social, religious, and political divisions. A Samaritan—a person despised by Jewish society—is lifted up as a model of compassion. A tax collector—a man who had grown wealthy through corruption—is invited into grace. A convicted criminal hanging beside Jesus is promised paradise. Again and again, Jesus challenges what we think we know about who is worthy, who belongs, and where God's love reaches.

This Lent, we are invited to consider how these same divisions exist in our world today. How do we label others? Where do we draw lines between "us" and "them"? What assumptions do we carry about who is deserving of grace? The stories of Jesus push us to move beyond binaries, beyond black and white thinking, and into a fuller, more complex understanding of God's presence.

For those who feel caught between worlds, for those struggling with uncertainty, for those weary of division, this Lent is an invitation. It is an invitation to hold space for complexity, to seek understanding instead of certainty, and to trust that God meets us not just in clear answers, but in the in-between places.

May this Lenten journey deepen our faith, stretch our hearts, and draw us ever closer to the boundless love of Christ.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Marilyn

Music Notes

On Sunday, March 2, we will welcome Mr. Todd Evans, cellist, to accompany our Chancel Choir's anthem at the 11:00 service, and to play during communion. Then, on Sunday, March 9, the Rhythm Ringers will play for the 11:00 service. We are grateful to these musicians for their commitment of time and talent to our church.

There will be no Handbell Choir or Chancel Choir rehearsal on Wednesday, March 19, due to Spring Break. Rehearsals will resume the following Wednesday, March 26th, as we prepare for Easter, April 20th.

Be sure to mark your calendars for the return of the "Family Choir" for Confirmation Sunday, April 27th. This group numbered 40+ singers of all ages on Christmas Eve, and was a huge success. As before, you may sit in the congregation until time to sing. It will necessitate a little bit of rehearsal before that morning - so please stay tuned to the weekly Music Notes for more information. What a wonderful way to celebrate our Confirmands as they confirm their faith in Christ, and become confirmed members of our church.

-Rev. Jane

Coming Events

Potato Lunch 2025

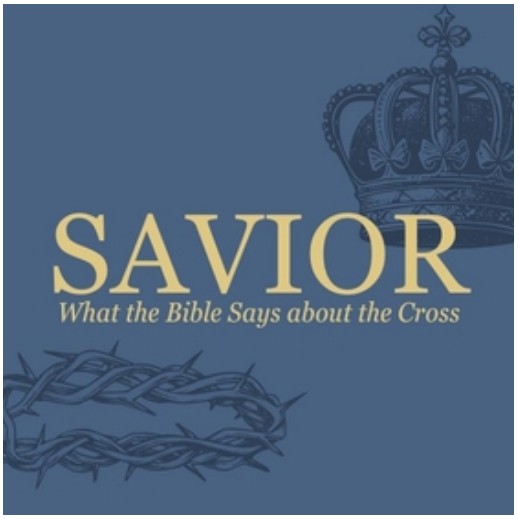
Potato Lunch is happening on Tuesday, March 4! Don't forget to help out if you can or stop by for a good lunch!

Church Council Meeting

The Church Council will meet on Sunday, March 2, at 4 pm in the Lighthouse.

Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, March 5
Drive Thru Ashes: 7 am-9 am
(In the office parking lot)
Worship in the Sanctuary: 6 pm



Lenten Bible Study

No Bible Study March 4/March 5
Lent Bible Study kicks off March 10
Tuesdays at 10 am, Wednesdays at 6 pm
Books are $15
Books will be available in worship or in the office!

5th Sunday Breakfast

Sunday, March 30
hosted by United Methodist Men
All proceeds will go to fund the seed money for a new ministry to college-aged students!

Children's Ministries

W.O.W. & God Squad

Mar. 5 - Even When Others Don't

Acts 16:16-34

Mar. 12 - With Our Whole Life

Romans 12:1-11

Mar. 19 - <u>NO</u> <u>WOW or God Squad</u>

Spring Break

Mar. 26 - Rainbow in a Bottle

Genesis 6:9-22

<u>Children's Sunday School</u>
(preschool - 6th grades)

Located in Education Building's 2nd floor.

<u>Mar. 2, 2025</u> - "Friends Invite" (Matthew 4 :18-22)

<u>Mar. 9, 2025</u> - "Strangers & Neighbors" (Luke 10:25-37)

<u>Mar. 16, 2025</u> - "Faith & Works" (Luke 10:38-42)

<u>Mar. 23, 2025</u> - " Rest & Growth" (Luke 13: 6-9)

<u>Mar. 30, 2025</u> - 5th Sunday Breakfast. No Sunday School!

Easter Egg Needs

Please bring plastic Easter eggs to the office for the church Easter Egg hunt! They are due to the office by April 11!
The church Easter Egg hunt will be on Sunday, April 20th following 11:00 worship.

TreeHouse Needs

We need donations of new/gently used 3rd & 4th grade level chapter books for the TreeHouse book fair! Please bring your donations by the church office.

Youth Ministries

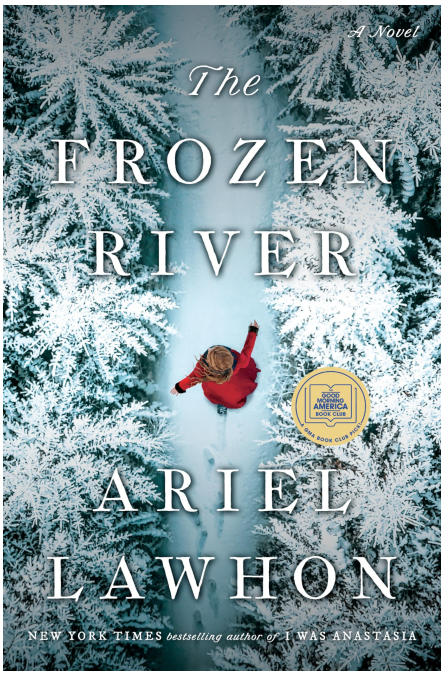
Youth Fellowship

Our UMC Youth meet twice a week!
Sundays, 5:30 pm @ FUMC Lighthouse
Wednesdays, 5:30 pm @ Oakdale UMC
No Youth 3/16 or 3/19 due to Spring Break.

Adult Ministries

PALSingle Women's Group

PALS meets for lunch on the first Friday of every month.
Join us on Friday, March 7, at Purple Goat
Meet at 11:00
Love to see you there!



Faith Lit Book Club

We are reading "The Frozen River" by Ariel Lawhon.
We will meet on Thursday, March 27th at 6:00 pm.
Meetings are held at 962 W. Vanderbilt.

Food Pantry Needs

Mac & Cheese microwaveable bowls/cups
Canned Tuna
Thank you for your help!

Please bring donated items inside to the office instead of leaving them beside the food pantry, please.

Follow Us on Social Media!

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