



EUFAULA FIRST UMC
BELONG • BELIEVE • BECOME

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February 15, 2026 / EFUMC e-Newsletter

Pastor's Pen

*⁵ “And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites,
for they love to pray standing in the synagogues
and on the street corners to be seen by others.*

*Truly I tell you, they have
received their reward in full.*

*⁶ But when you pray, go into your room,
close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen.
Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”
--Matthew 6:5-6*

Beloved of God,

The Season of Lent is upon us once again. While the world perceives such traditions without understanding, believers know that we are wonderfully and fearfully made. And thus, we enter this 40-day journey with an eye on our internal/eternal/spiritual state of being, longing for completion and perfection with The One in whom we live and move and have our being.

Please join us for our Lenten Worship Series: “*Remove the Scales*” (and invite a friend or neighbor), as we begin the journey on Ash Wednesday, February 18th @ 5:00pm. There are many ways to observe the Season of Lent, practicing daily disciplines or spiritual exercises (see examples below). Or, if you wish to join in a contemplative practice, please sign up for our (6-week) weekly Lenten Meditation Class. For more details, contact me at mmccarty2011@gmail.com or text (580) 695-4775.

The work of God in us is by the Holy Spirit. Apart from God's Spirit we can do nothing. But with Him all things are possible! May God guide you in a season of real spiritual transformation, as David realized when he confessed ...

*“Create in me a pure heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.*

*¹¹ Do not cast me from your presence
or take your Holy Spirit from me.*

*¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation
and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.” --Psalm 51:10-12*

In the Spirit of Gratitude and Love, Pastor Michelle



LENTEN SEASON — Year A (Purple)
LENTEN SERIES: “REMOVE THE SCALES”
February 18 to April 5, 2026

February 18 — Ash Wednesday (Purple) / Imposition of Ashes Service
Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; Ps 51:1-17 (UMH 785); 2 Cor 5:20b-6:10; Matt 6:1-6, 16-21
Sermon Title: *“True Rewards”* - Scripture Text: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

February 22 — 1st Sunday in Lent (Purple)
Gen 2:15-17; 3:1-7; Ps 32 (UMH 766); Rom 5:12-19; Matt 4:1-11
Sermon Title: *“Be Focused!”* - Scripture Text: Matthew 4:1-11

March 1 — 2nd Sunday in Lent (Purple) / Communion (White)
Gen 12:1-4a; Ps 121 (UMH 844); Rom 4:1-5, 13-17; John 3:1-17
Sermon Title: *“A Different Lens”* - Scripture Text: John 3:1-17

March 8 — 3rd Sunday in Lent (Purple) / ***DLS begins***
Exod 17:1-7; Ps 95 (UMH 814); Rom 5:1-11; John 4:5-42
Sermon Title: *“Draw from The Well”* - Scripture Text: John 4:5-42

March 15 — 4th Sunday in Lent (Purple) / UMCOR Sunday
1 Sam 16:1-13; Ps 23 (UMH 754 or 137); Eph 5:8-14; John 9:1-41
Sermon Title: *“Shift Your Mind-Set”* - Scripture Text: John 9:1-41

March 22 — 5th Sunday in Lent (Purple)
Ezek 37:1-14; Ps 130 (UMH 848); Rom 8:6-11; John 11:1-45
Sermon Title: *“If You Believe, You Will See”* - Scripture Text: John 11:1-45

March 29 — Passion/Palm Sunday (Purple)
Liturgy of the Palms: Matt 21:1-11; Ps 118:1-2, 19-29 (UMH 839)
Liturgy of the Passion: Isa 50:4-9a; Ps 31:9-16 (UMH 764); Phil 2:2-11;
Matt 26:14-27:66 or 27:11-54
Sermon Title: *“Who Is This?”* - Scripture Text: Matthew 21:1-11

APRIL 5, 2026 — EASTER Season Series Begins

the path of **LETTING GO**



This path focuses on **release**.

It may be right for you if your life feels crowded, loud, or heavy.

Letting go is not about deprivation for its own sake.

It is about making space — in your schedule, your habits, or your attention — for what matters most.

A guiding question:

What could I release in order to be more present — to God, to others, or to myself?

Try this:

Choose one hour each evening during Lent when your phone is turned off and placed out of reach — inside a drawer, a bag, or another room. Begin at the same time each day if you can.

During that hour, do nothing productive on purpose. Notice what your mind does. Talk with the people around you. Sit quietly. Sing. Take a walk.

If you forget or start late one evening, simply begin again the next day. The practice is the release, not the perfection.

"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens."

- Matthew 11:28

the path of **TAKING ON**



This path focuses on **nourishment**.

It may be right for you if you are longing for structure, grounding, or renewal.

Taking on is not about adding pressure.

It is about choosing a practice that feeds your faith and gives shape to your days.

A guiding question:

What practice might help me notice God more clearly during this season?

Try this:

Set aside five minutes each morning during Lent to read a short prayer or scripture passage before checking email or news.

Sit in the same place each day. Read slowly. Do not try to understand everything.

When the five minutes are finished, close the book and continue with your day.

If you miss a morning, return the next day without making it up.

"One does not live by bread alone."

- Matthew 4:4

the path of **TURNING TOWARD**



This path focuses on **attention**.

It may be right for you if you sense a call to listen more deeply or engage more honestly with the world around you.

Turning toward does not require having answers.

It asks only for willingness — to see, to hear, and to learn.

A guiding question:

Where am I being invited to listen, rather than look away?

Try this:

Choose one issue, community, or experience you know you don't fully understand.

During Lent, commit to listening rather than debating. Read one article a week from a perspective different from your own. Listen to a podcast or personal story without multitasking.

Resist the urge to respond or fix. Simply notice what you learn and what feelings surface.

"Let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak."

- James 1:19

the path of **REORIENTING**



This path focuses on **alignment**.

It may be right for you if your values feel clear, but your daily habits don't always reflect them.

Reorienting is about small, faithful adjustments — not life overhauls.

A guiding question:

What small shift could help my life align more closely with what I value?

Try this:

Choose one meal or snack each day during Lent to eat with full attention. Sit down, take a breath, and begin without rushing.

As you eat, avoid multitasking. Put away your phone and allow the meal to be just a meal. Notice flavors, textures, and the people around you. Notice what it feels like to pause.

This is not about changing what you eat. It is about reorienting an ordinary part of your day toward presence and gratitude. If you forget, simply return at the next meal.

"Where your treasure is, your heart will be also."

- Matthew 6:21

✨ 180 by the 180th – Envelope Wall Giving Challenge! ✨

Help us pay down our church mortgage as we move toward our 180th Anniversary! This fundraiser will run through February 28, 2026.

We've created an Envelope Wall with envelopes numbered 1 to 180.

Each number represents a donation amount.

How It Works

1. Choose an envelope from the wall
2. Give the amount printed on the envelope
3. Return the envelope with your gift inside
4. Watch the wall empty as we move closer to our goal!

Our Goal

Fill all 180 envelopes → Raise \$16,290 → by March 1, 2026

Each round of fundraisers brings us closer to our \$180,000 campaign goal. Thank you for supporting the 180 by the 180th Mortgage Pay-Down Campaign!



Thank you for helping us fill the envelopes! It's not too late. You can make a difference. There are only **2 weeks left** for this fundraiser, **so let's finish strong!** We want to make **sure ALL** the envelopes are gone by **March 1** to hit our first goal and move the **thermometer arrow**. Please share this opportunity with others who would like to help us reach this goal. Thank you for your faithful giving and sharing!

We are planning a chili dinner for our March fundraiser. Stay tuned for more details!

Help Needed

We believe everyone is called to serve God's purpose, with each member of Christ's Body acting as a minister. As Paul writes, the Spirit gives different gifts—wisdom, faith, healing, teaching, encouragement—for the good of all, uniting us as one church. Each gift strengthens our community and fulfills Christ's teachings.

Now is a great time to reflect on your unique gifts and consider how you can support our congregation. Serving with humility—through prayer, presence, talents, service and witness - helps create an inviting and grace-filled environment. By sharing our gifts in unity, we build up the body of Christ and make a meaningful difference in others' lives.

We welcome humble helpers for various needs:

- **church office tasks**
- **Sunday School or youth**
- **worship service roles (hospitality, ushers, tech support)**
- **pastoral care (visitation, communion)**
- **and more.**

If you are interested in discipleship and outreach,

- **such as teaching**
- **small groups**
- **sports**
- **mission projects**

there are many opportunities for you to use your gifts and help our church thrive.

If you feel called or need more information, please contact Pastor Michelle!

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Connie Anderson

Teressa Bell's Son, Luke

Doug Kuykendall's Sister-in-Law, Betty

Patsy's Daughter, Susan

Patsy's Daughter-in-Law, Sherry

Patsy's Neighbors, Jerry & Marsha

Michael Taylor's Grandmother, Delores

Patsy's Granddaughter, Madyson (Air Force)

Patsy Kirk's Daughter-in-Law's Pastor's Grandson, Coope

Maurice Arnold

David Conatser

Ellen Rink

Kerrington Satterfield's Friend, Bryer

Patsy's Friends, Polly & Kevin

Our Church and Community

Gloria Stubbs

Bob Sunday

Bill Smith

Come Join Us

Sunday Morning Fellowship and Coffee at 9:30am every week.

Adult and Children's Sunday School meet at 10am every Sunday.

Worship every Sunday at 11am.

Youth Group will meet every Sunday afternoon at 3:30.

Choir Practice join us for weekly choir practice.

Friendship Kitchen meets Saturdays from 11:30am to 1:00pm. *All are welcome for lunch and fellowship!*

SAS Leadership Team meets the 2nd Sunday of the month following Worship and the Fellowship Meal.

Fellowship Meal gatherings meet 2nd Sunday of the month following church worship.



Even with Jesus right inside
the boat, the storm still came.
And we might wonder why
we would find Him asleep
at a pivotal time like that.

In the middle of the worst part.
When everything went wild.
When the winds and the rains
were winning.
And when death felt certain.

Why, when He could have
easily prevented the storm
from coming, did He choose
rest?

Maybe because we need
to trust that even when
everything is falling apart
around us, He is the peace
in the midst of it all.

Fully capable of rising up,
taking control and speaking
silence into every one of our
worst possible case scenarios.

ullie-kaye



Friendship Kitchen Website Update

Sharing Our Story of Service

We are excited to share that the *Friendship Kitchen* section of our ministry website has been refreshed and updated! This update better reflects the heart, history, and impact of one of our church's most meaningful outreach ministries.

For over a decade, Friendship Kitchen has served as a place of nourishment, fellowship, and compassion in our community — offering a hot meal, a welcoming smile, and a reminder of God's love to everyone who walks through our doors. What began as a simple act of kindness has grown into a vital weekly ministry supported by faithful volunteers, generous donors, and community partners.

The newly updated webpage highlights:

- The story and mission behind Friendship Kitchen
- Our ongoing commitment to serving free meals every Saturday
- The impact this ministry continues to have in the Eufaula community
- Opportunities for others to volunteer, support, and get involved

We invite you to visit the updated page, learn more about this important ministry, and share it through your social media to help spread the word. By sharing, you help extend the reach of Friendship Kitchen and the spirit of hospitality that defines our church.

Together, we continue to serve with open hands, open hearts, and open doors.

Visit the updated page here:

<https://www.eufaulaok-fumc.org/ministries/friendship-kitchen>



But there's also this, it's not too late - God's personal Message!

"Come back to me and really mean it! Come fasting and weeping, sorry for your sins!"

Change your life, not just your clothes. Come back to God, *your* God.

And here's why: God is kind and merciful.

Joel 2: 12-13 – The Message

Eufaula First United Methodist Church







PAD THE PANTRY

PANTRY OPENING SEPTEMBER 20TH

We are excited to announce the opening of our Food Pantry Ministry, where we come together as a community to make a positive impact on the lives of those facing food insecurity.

Please help us stock the shelves!

DROP-OFF LOCATIONS

-  Nichols Market
200 S 2nd St
-  Sonny's Grocery & Market
402 S Main St
-  Farmers State Bank
520 S Main St, Eufaula, OK
-  Bank of Eufaula
102 N Main St
-  Legacy on Main
224 N Main St
-  First United Methodist Church
251 Matthews Lane, Eufaula, OK
Sundays 8am-12pm

ITEMS NEEDED

- Canned or dried beans
- Canned fish or meat
- Peanut butter and jelly
- Rice and pasta
- Soup
- Canned fruits and vegetables
- Pancake mix
- Protein bars
- Fruit juice
- Crackers
- Cereal



Eufaula Food Pantry Ministries

The Food Pantry is open **every Saturday from 11:30 to 1:00** during the same time frame as Friendship Kitchen. Anyone in need of food assistance is welcome. Please spread the word!

Food collection will continue to be an ongoing effort. **Non-perishable food and financial donations** continue to be greatly appreciated!!

Thanks again,

Jim and Gail Shroyer



If you are interested in joining a safe, welcoming support group to guide you through this difficult time, please contact Pastor Michelle to learn more about the Greif Share Support Group.



GriefShare®

Grief Support Group

*Help and encouragement
after the death of a loved one*

A GriefShare support group is a safe, welcoming place where people understand the difficult emotions of grief. At this 13-week group, you'll receive valuable guidance and tips, leading you to relief, comfort, and peace of mind.

Contact Us Today

**Rev. Michelle McCarty,
Pastor**
Cell: (580) 695-4775
email:
mmccarty2011@gmail.com

griefshare.org

A letter from our Bishop:

February 16, 2026

Dear partners in ministry,

The Council of Bishops will host a [leadership gathering](#) in Calgary, Canada, on October 20–24, 2026, bringing together hope, vision, and imagination for the future of The United Methodist Church.

To prepare for this event, the Council is partnering with United Methodist Communications to offer three webinars open to all United Methodists. These sessions explore how our [new vision](#)—*love boldly, serve joyfully, lead courageously*—is grounded in our mission and Wesleyan theology.

- 1. The first webinar, **Love Boldly**, held recently, is now available [online](#) along with a study guide from Discipleship Ministries. Please encourage leaders and disciples in your congregations to engage the material individually or in small groups. You can view the video and access the study guide [here](#).
- 2. The next session, **Serve Joyfully**, will be held on **February 21, 2026, from 9–10:30 AM**. It will explore Wesleyan approaches to mission with attention to mutuality, formation, and decolonial perspectives. You may register [here](#).
- 3. Also, save the date for the third webinar, [Lead Courageously](#), which will be held on March 21, 2026, 9-10:30 AM.
- 4. Lastly, there is still time to share your voice through the [denomination-wide survey](#). Your insights will help shape how the church listens, discerns, and leads in the years ahead.

Thank you for your partnership with this vital work. I look forward to what the Spirit will reveal in this season of listening, learning, and imagination.

Together in Christ’s mission,
Bishop Laura Merrill,
Oklahoma, Oklahoma Indian Missionary and Arkansas Conferences, UMC



Don’t miss Sunday Morning Fellowship and Coffee at 9:30am every week!

Youth Group & Sunday School

Children's Sunday School Class

We invite all children from 1st grade on up to our Sunday School class at 10:00 am. We use the One Room Sunday School curriculum, so we can adapt to all ages. We always have a Bible story, puzzles, crafts, music and prayer time. Contact Pastor Michelle.



Youth Group

The Youth Group meets from 3:30 - 5:00 on Sunday evenings in the Youth room (back of the Fellowship Hall). Come join us and please enter through the kitchen door.



Discovery Sunday School

Come join us in the Discovery Sunday School classroom for the Wesley Adult Sunday School. The class is located on the west side of our building. Our lesson books are a quarterly series. Each week a scripture is part of the lesson, and the teaching is followed by discussion. Come join us at 10am on Sundays! - Dorothy Merrick, Wesley Class Leader

UWF

It is always a blessing to gather with other women who share our mission outlooks. We invite all women of the community to join us - you don't have to be a United Methodist to be in United Women in Faith! Here's a schedule of our 2026 meetings.

January 8-1:00pm

February 12-12:00 pm

March 12-1:00 pm

April 9-12:00 pm

May 14-1:00

June 11-12:00 pm

July 9-1:00 pm

August 13-12:00pm

September 10-1:00pm

October 8-12:00pm

November 12-1:00pm

December 10-12:00 pm

The meetings at 12:00 are lunch meetings.

UMM – Men’s Group Launch

This new men’s group is being formed to create a welcoming space for fellowship, faith-centered conversation, and meaningful connection among the men of our church.

As we prepare to get started, we want this group to be shaped by the men who will be part of it. **Your input is important to us, we’d love to hear your preferences on meeting times and schedules**, including:

First week of the month

Second week of the month

Third week of the month

Morning or evening meetings

Your feedback will help us finalize meeting dates and times in a way that works best for the group.

Please email your preferences to michaelhtaylor@me.com as soon as possible.

We’re looking forward to building a strong and meaningful men’s ministry rooted in faith, fellowship, encouragement, and service—and we truly hope you’ll consider being part of this new chapter.

UMC Vision: “The United Methodist Church forms disciples of Jesus Christ who, empowered by the Holy Spirit, love boldly, serve joyfully and lead courageously in local communities and worldwide connections.”

UMC Mission: “The mission of the United Methodist Church is to “make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”



OklahomaConference
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH