

First United Methodist Church  
Center, Texas

Love God, Love People, Serve The World

### Finding Our Way Home

I can't help but share with you a portion of a book from one of my favorite Christian authors, Frederick Buechner. It is an excerpt from his book, The Book of Bebb. Here is what he wrote:

*HE SAID, "THE KINGDOM of Heaven is like a great feast. That's the way of it. The Kingdom of Heaven is a love feast where nobody's a stranger. Like right here. There's strangers everywhere else you can think of. There's strangers was born twin brothers out of the same womb. There's strangers was raised together in the same town and worked side by side all their life through. There's strangers got married and been climbing in and out of the same fourposter thirty-five, forty years, and they're strangers still. And Jesus, it's like most of the time he is a stranger too. But here in this place there's no strangers, and Jesus, he isn't a stranger either. The Kingdom of Heaven's like this.*

*"He said, "We all got secrets. I got them same as everybody else — things we feel bad about and wish hadn't ever happened. Hurtful things. Long ago things. We're all scared and lonesome, but most of the time we keep it hid. It's like every one of us has lost his way so bad we don't even know which way is home any more only we're ashamed to ask. You know what would happen if we would own up we're lost and ask? Why, what would happen is we'd find out home is each other. We'd find out home is Jesus that loves us lost or found or any whichway."*

In small East Texas towns it seems that everyone knows everyone else. Sometimes it seems like the way it works is that everyone knows everyone else's dirt. Sometimes it seems like no matter how long you live in a town, you never become a part of it and are only known by being connected to someone who has lived there forever. In some sense you always retain that 'outsider' status.

But at the same time, sometimes when the chips are down you find out that you are not such a stranger at all. Perhaps when there is a death in the family. You startle alert from the fog of disbelief to look at a whole community that appears to help, comfort and provide practical sustenance. Telephone calls are made, someone magically appears to meet relatives arriving at the airports, food is supplied and there are more friends around than you could imagine. These crowds of comforters even collect funds to help with expenses. It is at those times when we experience the Kingdom of Heaven. I like to think of those community members as functioning as the Body of Christ. They are taking Christ's body as they use all their resources to reach out and comfort and to provide for someone who thought they were a stranger.

Amazingly each of us has the opportunity to find that our real home is in each other. Sometimes we have to open the door of hospitality and admit we are lost and need to find home. I am grateful for finding a new temporary home here at Center FUMC for the short time I was your interim minister. Our shared journeys of faith are precious and connect us in unexpected ways. Thank you for sharing your part of the Kingdom of God.

Thankfully,  
Pastor Carla



**March 6, 2019**

**6:00 pm**

**In the Sanctuary**

All levels of our church are participating in this service of worship introducing the season of Lent.

## 2019 FINANCE UPDATE

2019 Budget  
\$406,936.00  
Needed weekly  
\$7,825.69  
Received week (9) 3/4/2019  
\$8,535.00  
Needed YTD (9) 3/4/2019  
\$70,431.21  
Received YTD (9) 3/4/2019  
\$64,412.34  
Difference  
**-\$6,018.87**

## March 3<sup>rd</sup> Attendance

Sunday School	36
8:30 am Worship Service	56
11:00 am Worship Service	61
Total in Worship	117



**“But don’t forget this, dear friends, that a day or a thousand years from now is like tomorrow to the Lord. He isn’t really being slow about his promised return, even though it sometimes seems that way. But he is waiting, for the good reason that he is not willing that any should perish, and he is giving more time for sinners to repent. (2 Peter 3:8-9 Living Bible)**

He is coming again! God controls the time clock, and no matter how long it seems to us, He still has a plan and purpose for each of us. Does that mean we shut ourselves indoors and wait each time someone announces a date or time? I don’t think so. What I believe is that He wants us to live full lives, filled with the joy of the Spirit, and spread the Gospel to those we meet with every opportunity we have put before us. It could be at the store standing in the check out line. It could be by inviting those difficult neighbors to church, or taking food to those in need and finding a moment to share God’s love with them. Take heart! Jesus is coming, and He wants to gather all of us to His heart to share His heavenly home with us. Father God, let us not become weary of our day to day living, nor let us worry about the things of which we have no control. Your timing is perfect, Father God. Help us to take and live each day the way you would want us to live! In Jesus name, Amen.



Don't forget to change your clocks forward 1 hour before bed time Saturday, March 9, 2019.

# GIVEPLUS<sup>+</sup>

Powered By Vanco Payment Solutions

First United Methodist Church is proud to partner with Vanco Payment Solutions to make your giving experience simple and secure. This service is offered through the GivePlus+ on your mobile device or visit the Giving link on our church website at <http://fumccentertx.org/> to create your profile to Give online. If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact Kelli Snider at the church office (936) 598-2707. Thank you again for your support and generosity!

## **HAPPENINGS THIS SUNDAY, MARCH 10, 2019**

**8:30 am** Worship Service

**9:30 am** Pairs & Spares

**10:00 am** Sunday School

**11:00 am** Worship Service

**\*This is Rev. Carla Reed's last Sunday with us!**

## Memorials

**Ann Hawkins**

Billie Sue Payne

**Martin Jones**

Charles & Bess Dillen

**Betty Lunsford Russ**

Billie Sue Payne



First United Methodist Church  
211 Porter Street  
Center, Texas 75935  
(936) 598-2707  
(936) 598-2708 Fax  
[fumccenter@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fumccenter@sbcglobal.net)  
[www.fumccentertx.org](http://www.fumccentertx.org)

