

# First United Methodist Church Commerce

Volume 10, Issue 3

March 2012

## Lent 2012: "A Hunger For God"

The Lenten season is a time for reflecting on Jesus' call for us to be disciples and make disciples. Make your Lenten practice more meaningful this year by participating in our Lenten opportunities as fully as possible. Prayerfully consider preparing yourself for the journey to the Cross:



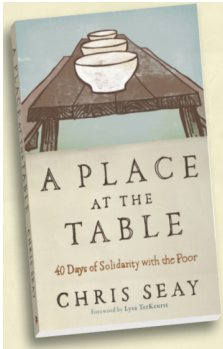
### Through special worship services

**Maunder Thursday worship** with communion, Thursday, April 5, at 6:30pm in the Sanctuary  
**Good Friday service** of Tenebrae, Friday, April 6, at 6:30pm in the Sanctuary  
**Worship each Sunday** featuring sermons on "A Hunger For God" and special seasonal music

### Through study & small groups

We invite you to use *A Place at the Table*, by Chris Seay, for your Lenten devotional. The author challenges us to enter into solidarity with our fellow children of God who are hungry through fasting and daily meditations. Copies of the book are available in the church office for \$12 each, or you may download the Kindle version from Amazon.com for \$9.

Join a small group during the weeks of Lent to delve deeper into *A Place at the Table* through discussion and the accompanying DVD. These small groups will offer support and encouragement to those participating in a Lenten fast.



Here are small group details:

When	Where	Small Group Leader
Sundays at 9:45 am	Parlor	Ladonna Patterson
Sundays at 4:00 pm	Parlor	Pastor Valarie & Pastor Marc
Wednesdays at Noon	Home of Jane Langford	Jane Langford & Sisters Too

### Through spiritual disciplines and prayer

Consider fasting as a Lenten spiritual discipline, patterning your fast after the diets of those in parts of the world for which you have concern. For instance, one may fast in solidarity with the poor of Latin America, limiting your diet six days per week to rice, beans, tortillas, and vegetables. Other patterns for fasting are possible such as limiting technology, incorporating a daily prayer walk, or shopping within a budget of a family on food stamps. The important thing is joining one's practice to one's concern and prayer for others.



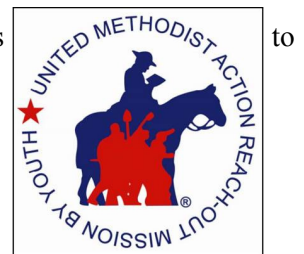
### Through generous giving

You may find that you save money during your Lenten fast. What if you turned your savings into a blessing by giving to our Lenten offering? We will dedicate the special Lenten offering and all dollar bills dropped in the offering plate during Lent to Proyecto Abrigo and youth mission trips. Plans are underway for middle school students to participate in C2K – Connect to the Kingdom and for high school students to join the U.M. ARMY this summer.



*The Holy Spirit has a unique way of speaking to us when stop long enough to truly listen.*

— From *A Place at the Table*



### Inside this issue:

Pastor's Page	pg. 2	Drop A Dollar at Work	pg. 3
Youth Choir, Yard Sale, UMW	pg. 4	News from the Wesleyan	pg. 4
Daily Scriptures & Announcements	pg. 5	Prayer List	pg. 6

Dear FUMC Friends:

Ahhh, France in the spring time. Cool nights, sunny days, the countryside beginning to break into bloom, strong and rich fresh-brewed coffee in the mornings with a fresh baguette and Normandy butter. . .NOT!

France during Lent is cold and drizzly, with a few brave Forsythia bushes breaking into yellow buds. I learned this hard lesson when I visited the community of Taize in the early spring of 1998. Taize is a small village about an hour west of Geneva that has hosted and claimed one of the most remarkable Christian modern-monastic and worship movements of the last 100 years.



Founded out of the turmoil of World War II, seven Protestant seminarians joined together in service to war refugees. To fuel and sustain their work, they gathered three times a day to worship, pray, sing, and take the sacraments. From this group of seven men grew a movement that has gone global, creating a brotherhood that draws its avowed members from Protestant, Orthodox, and Catholic traditions. The brothers in turn attract over 5,000 under-30 adults *each week* during the summer and Holy Week, with smaller numbers coming during other times of the year.

The pilgrims come to pray, worship, and sing three times a day. They sing in Latin, Slavonic, Spanish, French, German, Portuguese, English, you name it. The worship music is based in the ancient traditions of the church – *kyries, glorias, agnus deis*. The pilgrims come to study the bible together in language groups, to share simple monastic meals, and to work in the community. And sometimes, pilgrims come without knowing why they come.

The week I was there, about 130 pilgrims were present – many from the countries that had been behind the communist Iron Curtain. Less than twenty of us were from English-speaking countries. We gathered for worship first thing in the morning, sharing a simple breakfast afterward. (Instant coffee? In France??) We then gathered for bible study, worshipped together at mid-day, joined for a simple lunch, then work (for the under-30's) or free time (for us older types). After supper, we ended the day with worship and prayer, followed by silence until we rose for morning worship the next day.

It was pretty easy to tell who was familiar with the whole “church-thing,” and who wasn’t. A couple of days after we arrived – just about the time the jet-lag was easing – a group of teenage and twenty-something pilgrims arrived. Not only were they fidgety in worship, they were almost defiant in their presence. They snickered, whispered, shuffled around between bench-seats, and seemed clueless about what was going on with no desire to become un-clueless. I hoped no one noticed me rolling my eyes – after all, they were disturbing the fifteen minutes of silence! I stole a look at the Taize brothers in the middle of our worshipping group – they seemed to take no notice.

As the week went on, the fidgeting quieted, and the teenagers began to scatter themselves around the worship space, parking themselves in front of one of the many icons available for meditation and prayer, or sitting near the cluster of brothers. They began to get it, even though they were from the former East Germany and had no experience of the Church.

On Friday night, worship centered on veneration of the Cross – a mini-Good Friday. The large cross was laid down, surrounded with candles, and worshippers gathered around it, singing and praying. One young woman from Leipzig – in the former East Germany – came to sit next to me. She and I had struck up a friendship during the week. She heard I was in seminary, and wanted to talk to me about “this God-stuff,” as she called it. “God, God, God – what is all this talk about God, God, God?” she asked. But that Friday night, as we sat around the cross – worshipping the One who died for the sake of the world -- she laid her head on my shoulder as she sang the ancient words of the Church, and tears rolled down her face. *God, God, God, indeed.*

May your Lent be filled with *God, God, God*.

*Valarie*

## Upcoming Worship

### March 4

Mark 8:31-38  
“Misplaced Hunger”

### March 11

1 Corinthians 1:18-25  
“True Smarts”

### March 18

Ephesians 2:1-10  
“Dying for  
Something Good”

### March 25

Luke 14:15-24  
“Excuses, Excuses”

8:45am ~ Chapel

9:45am ~ Chapel

10:50am ~ Sanctuary

## Committee Chairs

### Leadership Team Chair

Jim Patton  
(903) 886-2206

### Lay Leader:

Gene Lockhart  
(903) 886-3498

### Personnel Chair:

Chester Robinson  
(903) 886-8220

### Property Chair:

Donna Tavener  
(903) 886-7891

### Stewardship Team Chair:

Mike Roberts  
(903) 886-2142

### Foundation Chair:

Dan Shepherd  
(903) 886-6883

### C-G-S Team Co-Chairs:

Ladonna Patterson  
(903) 886-4630

Teresa Heatherly  
(903) 886-7070

Angela Roberts  
(903) 886-2142

The First United Methodist Newsletter is the official publication of FUMC Commerce. The newsletter is published at the beginning of the month. Inputs may be submitted to the Church office to Bonnie Smith, Communications Specialist, at [communications@fumcccommerce.org](mailto:communications@fumcccommerce.org), or call the office at 903-886-3220. Questions may be addressed to the Church office.

**\*\*The next deadline is Monday, March 19 by 9:00am\*\***

## Your Drop-a-Dollar at Work!

Did you know that through your generosity, you are helping send twin girls to school in Juarez, Mexico? Diana and Andrea Flores are daughters of one of the cooks at Proyecto Abrigo and now in the 3rd grade. It costs \$30 a month to sponsor both students for school attendance, and our church has done so for four years. The sponsorship is organized through the Wesley Community Development Fund (WCDF). Below is an informative letter from Linda Twiggs of WCDF who recently visited Juarez and spent time with Reverend Jose Luis Portillo. We hope you continue to support Proyecto Abrigo with your Lenten gift and prayers.



February 5, 2012

Dear Sponsors: *for Diana and Andrea Flores,*



It was again a great blessing to visit the community of Tierra Nuevo, Mexico last week. I am always delighted to see the students and talk with them about their school work. Worship on Sunday with our brothers and sisters in Christ is always a very special part of my visit and I was happy to see a large attendance and especially lots of children. Everyone sends their love.

I am sorry to report that several incidents of violence have occurred near the church recently and most of the students report incidents very near their homes or schools. As you might expect, the signs of stress begins to show in some lower grades and decrease in extracurricular activities.

The medical clinic was closed for a few weeks in December and January but has reopened with a new physician, a retired doctor who lives in the community. The dental clinic has remained open with a very good business. Faithful longtime volunteers, Abigail and Gaby, along with Alfredo complete the clinic staff. Contributions for utilities and medications are always welcome.

Pastor Jose Luis Portillo has identified two families to receive new homes when funds become available. It is still unsafe for teams to visit Proyecto Abrigo, however, workers will be employed to do construction if money can be raised for these projects.

The students remain very interested in their studies and all send their thanks to you for your support. I will be sending packets very soon containing their report cards and letters they have written to you.

WCDF Board also thanks you for your faithful support of these students. Please continue to pray for success of these students and for the safety of the whole community.

In His Service,

*Linda Twiggs*



UMW will meet **Tuesday, March 20th** at 10:00am.

The Program will be on Prayer & Self Denial by Helen Rowe  
Our March project is: Bingo prizes for the Nursing Home.

**All women are invited to join us!**



### Children's Easter Egg Hunt

Sunday, April 1  
2:00-4:00pm.

Bring your Easter basket and get ready for the hunt!



Youth Choir will begin Thursday, March 1st.  
We will meet from 6:30 to 7:15 pm in the choir room.



**YARD SALE**  
Saturday, March 31  
Brookshire's parking lot  
benefitting the  
**Commerce Alliance of Ministries**

which helps feed Commerce families

We need you to donate items. You can drop off items at the church office or can schedule your items to be picked up Feb. 6 – Mar. 19 by calling the church office. If you want to volunteer to help in other ways, please call Julie Gentle at 903-468-2679.

### UMW

Our Socks and Undies collection drive continues. We need:

- Sizes 4T—8
- White
- For boys and girls
- Socks and undies



## NEWS FROM THE WESLEYAN

*Your source for Wesleyan Campus Ministry Updates*



**For Your Insides Lunches:** Wednesdays & Thursdays, starting January 18 & 19! Food & friends every week, twice a week throughout the semester!

**Regenerate:** Wednesdays, starting January 25, 8:00-9:30 pm! Singing, playing, dancing, drawing, praying, shouting, studying, creating... Be ready for anything on Wednesday nights at Regenerate!

**Möbius Open Mic Coffee House:** Thursdays, starting January 26, 9:30-11:00 pm! A hangout spot for students, faculty, and staff of TAMU Commerce. Regular & Specialty Drinks, Live Bands & Performers, PLUS weekly Open Mic. Bring your musical, poetic, dance, & comedic skills to the house, or just come to relax and enjoy the show at Möbius!

**Spring Mission Weekend:** Friday-Monday, March 9-12! A serious adventure to see God at work in unexpected places. Serving those in need in urban settings and learning from those serving and worshipping alongside people in poverty!





\$837 was raised for the Commerce Alliance of Ministry to support local food assistance programs at the Souper Bowl of Caring on February 5. Thanks to all who participated in the pre-game huddle over soup and fellowship!

**Reading the Bible Daily**



As you seek to grow closer to God through daily prayer and Bible study, you may have your own favorite daily readings. If not, you will find Scriptures for each day listed below. We hope you'll read daily and ask yourself: "How will I be different today because of what I just read?"

Some other questions you might ask are: "What does this text say about who God is?" "What does this text say about who I am/who we are as human beings?" "What does this text say about our relationship with God?" You may want to reflect on paper with a journal or note pad. We hope this will become a part of your daily prayer time.

**Daily Scripture Readings:**

Thursday, Mar 1	Psalm 22:23-26
Friday, Mar 2	Mark 8:34-38
Saturday, Mar 3	Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16
Sunday, Mar 4	Psalm 22:27-31
Monday, Mar 5	Exodus 20:1-11
Tuesday, Mar 6	Exodus 20:12-17
Wednesday, Mar 7	1 Corinthians 1:18-25
Thursday, Mar 8	Psalm 19:1-10
Friday, Mar 9	Psalm 19:11-14
Saturday, Mar 10	John 2:13-17
Sunday, Mar 11	John 2:18-22
Monday, Mar 12	Numbers 21:4-5
Tuesday, Mar 13	Numbers 21:6-9
Wednesday, Mar 14	Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22
Thursday, Mar 15	John 3:14-21
Friday, Mar 16	Ephesians 2:1-7
Saturday, Mar 17	Ephesians 2:8-10
Sunday, Mar 18	John 3:16
Monday, Mar 19	Jeremiah 31:31-34
Tuesday, Mar 20	Psalm 51:1-5
Wednesday, Mar 21	Psalm 51:1-12
Thursday, Mar 22	Hebrews 5:5-10
Friday, Mar 23	John 12:20-26
Saturday, Mar 24	John 12:27-33
Sunday, Mar 25	Jeremiah 31:31-34
Monday, Mar 26	Mark 11:8-11
Tuesday, Mar 27	Psalm 118:1-2
Wednesday, Mar 28	Psalm 118:19-25
Thursday, Mar 29	Mark 11:11, 15-18
Friday, Mar 30	Psalm 118:15-18, 26-29
Saturday, Mar 31	Mark 11:1-11

Our office hours during the week of spring break (Mar. 12-16) will be shortened. The office will be open Monday – Thursday from 9-12 and will be closed Friday.



If for any reason you need to get in touch with the office after these hours, please call and leave a message. We will return your call as soon as possible.

Have a fun and safe break!

**Attendance**

	<u>Feb. 5</u>	<u>Feb. 12</u>	<u>Feb. 19</u>	<u>Feb. 26</u>
Early	25	22	29	24
9:45	12	9	14	12
Late	113	133	137	132
SS	77	73	70	70



**Financial Update: General Operating Fund**

	<u>General Operating Fund</u>	
<u>as of February 29, 2012</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>	
Income:	\$ 26,767	\$59,569
Expenses:	\$ 34,708	\$65,884
	-\$ 7,941	-\$ 6,315





# Prayer Lists

### Newly Added

Congratulations to Sam Walker and the university basketball team for advancing to the Lone Star Conference Tournament!

### Continued Prayers for Church Family

- George McFarland
- Jack Gray
- Gene Casselberry
- Clay Yeager
- Sally Grove
- Julie Wadlow
- Otha Spencer
- Jan Vowell
- Gary Kibler
- Robert Seay

### Continued Prayers Family & Friends

- Ray Sandifer (Janet Latham's father)
- Bobbie Williams (Bonnie Springs' sister)
- Cindy Kelso (Amanda Brown's sister)
- Riley Saulters
- Jan Chapman (District Office)
- Louella McIntyre
- Sondra Feduccia
- Kay Webber
- Judy Greenwood
- George O'Kelley
- Nell Hughes (Zelda Fisher's niece)
- William Durand (Eileen Faulkenberry's father)
- Becca Smith (Mike Smith's mother)
- Laura Cole and Gail Cole (Helen Cole's daughters-in-law & Judy Anderson's sisters-in-law)

*If you have someone you would like to add or remove from the prayer list, please let the church office know (903-886-3220).*



### Remembering those serving in our military.

- Tyler Craig(Afghanistan)-Brad and Vickie Boynton's son-in-law
- Matt Skelton-Mack and Mariann Andrews' nephew
- Jason Timmons-seriously injured  
2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division
- Chief Robert Starkey-Wanda Beane's brother and Tom Starkey's son
- Chief Terry Starkey-Wanda Beane's brother and Tom Starkey's son
- Christopher Kendrick-Navy (Helen Rowe's friend)
- Jim Hunsicker (Afghanistan)-Carolyn Miller's brother
- Travis Miller-Lena Faulkner's great-grandson
- Alex Dech (Afghanistan)-Pastor Ron Dech's son
- Captain Daniel Robnett-Clyde and Wanda Robnett's grandson
- Nathan Grove
- Sgt. Stephen Smith & Denise Smith
- Col. Peter Bailey
- Lt. Col. Richard Bailey
- Lt. Col. Keith Williams
- Keith L. Boone-former Associate Pastor
- Terry Starkey-Wanda Beane's brother and Tom Starkey's son
- Lt. Dan Barton
- Kris Yoder-John & Rebecca Sneed's son-in-law
- Staff Sgt. Geoff Abbe & Sgt. Eric Abbe-Ladonna & Chris Patterson's cousins
- Garrett Johnson



Phone: 903-886-3220  
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[office@fumccommerce.org](mailto:office@fumccommerce.org)

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THE  
 NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**  
 Articles for the next newsletter are due  
**Monday, March 19 by 9:00am**

Place Label Here

First United Methodist Church  
 1709 Highway 50  
 Commerce, TX 75428  
 Senior Pastor - Rev. Valarie Englert