



Faith *news*

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
OF FUMC-HENRIETTA
MARCH 2017



Hospitality to the Stranger

by Dr. Keva Green

Earlier this week I was doing my Life Journal Bible Study and trying to listen for God. I was struck by one of the passages that I read that morning. It was the last chapter in Acts – Chapter 28. It is right after the ship, which the Apostle Paul was on, had wrecked in the storm. All of those aboard were close enough to land to be able to make it to the island called Malta. The second verse says: *The islanders showed us unusual kindness. They built a fire and welcomed us all because it was raining and cold.* I was struck by that verse thinking about here these strangers show up on their island, they probably do not speak the same language, and the islanders could have attacked them or ignored them, but instead they showed “unusual kindness.” They welcomed these strangers and met their immediate needs.

Paul was helping to gather firewood and a poisonous snake bit him and hung from his hand. He shook it off into the fire. The islanders saw this happen and jumped to conclusions that maybe Paul was a murderer and was being punished. They expected him to swell up and die, but after waiting a long time and seeing nothing, they changed their minds.

One of the chief officials of the island opened his home to these strangers and while they were there they found out that his father was sick. So Paul prayed over him and laid hands on him and he was healed. After that, they brought all of the sick on the island to Paul and they were all cured. And when these strangers got ready to leave, the islanders honored them in many ways and provided supplies for them.

In the end, it is a beautiful story of people being kind to each other and everyone benefitted. And it all began with those on the island showing

Cont'd on pg 2

Church Events

- February 28: Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner 5-7 p.m.
- March 1: Ash Wednesday Service, 6 p.m.
- March 2: Preschool Dad's Night, 6-7 p.m.
- March 7: UMW River Rock Painting Fundraiser, 6p.m.
- March 13-17: Spring Break, Preschool Closed
- March 14: UMW Meeting, 9:30 a.m.
- March 16: Fun Bunch, meet at church at 6 p.m. or meet at Knic Knak Kafe, take Hwy 82 to Ringold and the destination is on the right just as you arrive in town.
- March 26: Northwest District Laity Day, Gainesville FUMC, 3-5 p.m.

hospitality instead of being afraid that those arriving might hurt them or mess up their society. They did jump to a wrong conclusion when they first saw Paul bitten by the snake, but they gave it time to see what would happen rather than taking action against them. (I thought about how we often jump to conclusions about people we don't know.) When it was all over you can see how the two different groups – the islanders and the strangers – were supportive and caring for each other, and all of their lives were blessed.

Maybe it is a reminder to all of us to make sure that we are welcoming the stranger and going out of our way to be hospitable. Besides, you never know when we might be the stranger in need of assistance and hopefully there will be a kind soul to welcome us and show unusual kindness. God put us all in this world together for a reason and it is a much better place when we can love and support each other.



CREATE IN ME
A CLEAN HEART,
O GOD,
AND RENEW A RIGHT SPIRIT
WITHIN ME.
PSALM 51:10

Letter of Thanks

Just wanted to say thanks to all involved for the "You are loved" dinner! It was very thoughtful & helps ease Valentine's Day when your Valentine is gone. I know the preparations took time out of schedules! Thanks for thinking of me and the others as well!

Also, on a unrelated but equally important note, I just wanted to say Thanks from the bottom of my heart to my church family in general. Most of you have known of my struggles to get VA benefits from Bill's service. I finally did receive a monthly VA check and

insurance! Thanks for all the prayers, all the encouragement, and all the support I have received from all of you! I will always be eternally grateful & consider my church family a shining example of God's love in my life!

Again, thanks to each of you!

With Love,
Pam Schenk

Ash Wednesday

Special Service

Wednesday March 1

6 p.m.

Ash Wednesday Service

We will be having an Ash Wednesday Service on March 1 at 6:00 p.m. This is a very moving service that begins the Lenten Season. It is a time to remember our own mortality and to confess our sins before God so that ultimately we might remember that we are saved by Jesus Christ. We hope you will join us for a meaningful service as we begin this extraordinary time of the year that leads up to Easter.

Ash Wednesday



*Remember that you are dust,
and to dust you shall return.*

E C C L E S I A S T E S 3 : 2 0

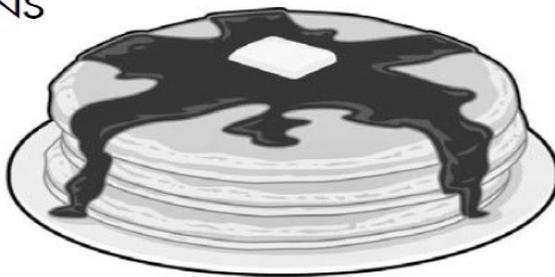
THIRD ANNUAL

PANCAKE DINNER!

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2017

DONATIONS
ACCEPTED

Proceeds
to benefit
Children's
& Youth
programs



5 PM - 7 PM

Come & Go!

**PANCAKES & SAUSAGE,
DRINKS & COFFEE**

(Low-carb/sugar free option available)

First United Methodist Church

HENRIETTA

• Established 1879 •

301 S. Bridge St. | Henrietta, TX | 940-538-4254





JAM

by Ryan Elms

Jesus And Me is back in session on Wednesday evenings at 6pm! We started back with our first night generating ideas on what the children thought Jesus and Me stood for or meant to them. We then turned that into a plan for what the group will be doing on Wednesday's. JAM started with lessons covering parables (fig tree, mustard seed and lost sheep), the kids also showed significant interest in service projects and helping others. We completed our first service project this past week and I know that the children are eager to do more, share more and learn more!



Jam Service Project

by Ryan Elms

JAM's first service project was a care calendar meal for Betty Jacobson who had knee surgery. If you have never been in the presence of a number of 2nd, 3rd and 4th graders cooking you are missing out! Friday the 24th the group cooked meatloaf with carrots and potatoes for Betty. Some playground time was had for all while waiting for meatloaf to be cooked. The meal was delivered with great love and lots of energy! We also brought Betty a prayer clothe, hand made by Gandy, to make sure that she knew she was loved by the church and we were praying for her speedy recover! The spirit of these great kids is such a joy to be in the company of and a joy to help guide their energy in the service of their fellow Christians.



What is Lent?

by Dr. Keva Green

So what is Lent? Simply put, it is a *time of spiritual preparation*. Lent begins with Ash Wednesday and goes until the day before Easter. The word lent comes from the Anglo-Saxon word *lencten*, which means 'spring' and also relates to the number 40. Lent is the 40 days of preparation for Easter.

Forty is a significant number throughout the Bible. In the great flood it rained 40 days and 40 nights. Moses spent 40 days and 40 nights on Mt. Sinai receiving the Ten Commandments and led his people through the wilderness for 40 years. The prophet Jonah foretold that an unrepentant city of Nineveh would be destroyed in 40 days and the prophet Elijah journeyed for 40 days to Mt. Horeb where God spoke to him in a still small voice. And in the New Testament, Christ spent 40 days in the wilderness for prayer and fasting and following his resurrection he spent 40 days with his disciples prior to his ascension. So Lent was determined to be 40 days of spiritual preparation. But actually if you count the days between Ash Wednesday and Easter there are 47 days because Sundays are feast days set apart for worship, so they are not included in the numbering of the days of Lent.

In order to really experience Easter you have to go through Lent. Lent is intended to be a time of reflection and repentance so that later when Easter arrives then it is a time of resurrection and rejoicing.

How to use this time of Lent

So what are you supposed to be doing during this time of Lent that makes it so important? It is to be a holy and sacred time, a time set apart to examine your own life and to draw closer to God.

During Lent, Christians are encouraged to focus their energy on three primary disciplines: prayer, fasting and almsgiving (or sharing our gifts with the poor). The extra time spent in prayer during Lent can lead us closer to God and we are encouraged to focus our prayers on the places in our lives and in our world that need improvement.

Most often when people think of Lent they think about giving up something. (For years I have given up chocolate during Lent and so I find it incredibly cruel that the Girl Scouts always deliver their cookies around this time of year.) But the fasting isn't about denying ourselves as a sort of punishment, and it isn't even about food. We can fast from television, food, video games, computers, and other simple everyday indulgences so that we can instead hunger for God. Often the reason people will give up something is so that when they desire it that they remember to spend time with God. And for some individuals instead of giving up something during Lent, they pick-up something during that time which will draw them closer to God, such as an extra time doing devotions or meditation or studying the Bible.

And then the third part which we are encouraged to do, besides prayer and fasting, is almsgiving or giving to those in need. Maybe we skip one meal each week and give the money that we would have spent to the Mission or those in need. Hopefully, during this time we become more aware of how we have been blessed and realize how important it is to give in order to care for others.

Why Lent?

But it is important to understand that we do not do any of these spiritual disciplines, such as prayer or fasting or giving, just so we can say that we did them as if they were something that we could just check-off of our list. Instead, the intention is to transform us.

It is intended to be a time of introspection where we look at ourselves and say, "What am I doing with my life?" Am I living it the way Christ would want me to live? Who am I? Who have I become? Am I living my life according to God's Word? And if we see those areas that need to be changed, that we take action. Scriptures warns us not to be "like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like (James 1:23-24)." Instead we need to grow as Christians as we see those areas where we are lacking.

Lent is a time to realize where we have sinned and in doing so realize how hopeless our lives would be without Christ dying so that our sins are forgiven. In that, we recognize how desperate we are for God and his saving mercies.

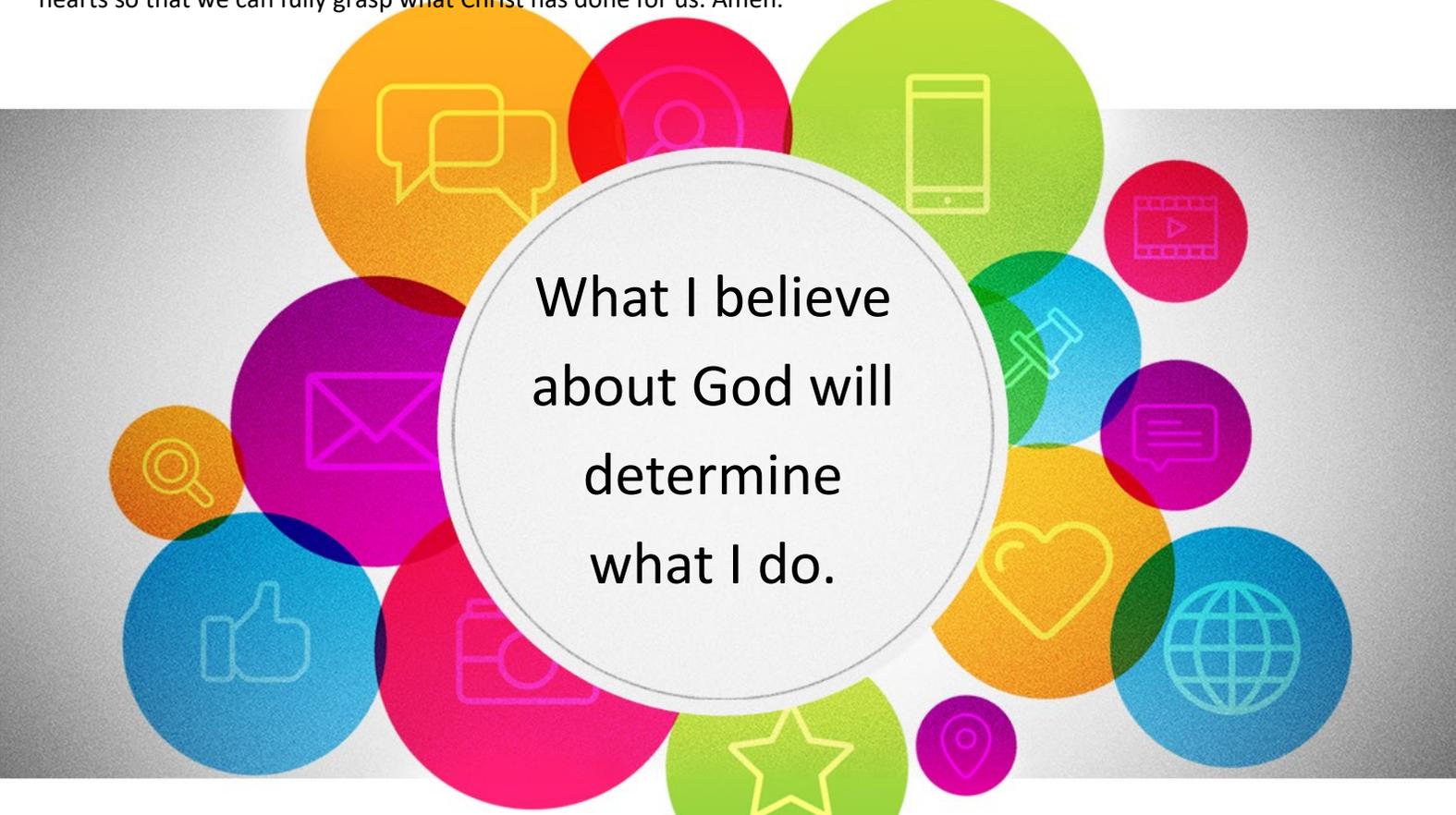
Lent is also a time to realize who God really is and that it is about Him not us. Over and over in the Bible there is the phrase "I am the Lord" as God reminds us who he is. I was reading in Leviticus the other day and was amazed at how many times that phrase was used. God would give a commandment or a decree and then would follow it by saying "I am the Lord." In one chapter that sentence was said 15 times. It was as if he was reminding us "pay

attention to who is giving you this instruction, take it seriously – because I am the Lord.”

It made me think – maybe we need to hear that reminder in our own lives. We say we know who God is and that he is the Lord of our lives. But then we go on and do whatever we want to do. Maybe as we go through our day we need to hear God’s voice over and over saying “I am the Lord!” So that instead of constantly seeing things from our point of view and doing whatever pleases us that we would remember to really live our lives for God.

Lent is a time to recognize our sinful nature and to realize that we cannot live a Christian life without God. We have to realize our own failures and hopelessness during Lent so that we can really grasp what Christ’s sacrifice on the cross really means for us. His death was payment for our sins. And his resurrection is victory over sin and death.

Easter has more meaning because we realize how much we need Christ. If we never took time to look at our lives and our sinful nature and our desperate condition, then we would not comprehend the incredible gift we are given by Christ’s death and resurrection. You have to know where you came from in order to really comprehend where you are and what a blessing it is to have Christ in your life. So I pray that for each of us that we may use this time of Lent as a chance to truly prepare our hearts so that we can fully grasp what Christ has done for us. Amen.



What I believe
about God will
determine
what I do.

Hearing God’s Voice

by Dr. Keva Green

I know for some of you that you have heard God’s whisper in your life. Maybe you heard his voice as a warning to protect you from impending danger (Charlie Trichka can tell you an incredible story about that). Or maybe the time you heard God whispering to you was when you were desperate for a word of comfort and encouragement. Also, there are those of us who can testify of God’s guidance and hearing his voice about what we need to do (Ask Nancy Lyde about God guiding her). How glorious it is that we have a God who is very much involved in our lives and speaks to us at times...when we are willing to listen.

During Lent we will be doing a **Bible Study on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 p.m.** that will give us more insight into this topic. We will be using Bill Hybel’s book **The Power of Whisper: Hearing God, Having the Guts to Respond**. Each week we will be watching a video and then taking time to discuss. It should be a great opportunity to learn how to better listen to God and I think it will be inspiring to you to hear others’ testimonies of when they have heard a whisper from God. Hope you will join us. The Bible Study will begin on **March 8**.

Youth Update by Katie Eubank

The youth will be selling tee shirts as a fundraiser for the Costa Rica Mission Trip and Youth Summer camp. Shirts are \$10 each and can be purchased outside the sanctuary on Sundays. If you are unable to get one then please contact me and we'll try to get you one as soon as possible.

We would like to thank everyone that came out to support the youth at the fundraiser lunch last Sunday. We wouldn't be able to go on these life changing trips without your help.



Jesus is our "Rock"

by Doris Payne

For fun, fellowship, friendships, food and fund raising, Henrietta United Methodist Women are having another quarterly fun night for community and church members. The evening will consist of pizza, a short devotional and **RIVER ROCK PAINTING**. Mark your calendars for Tuesday, March 7, beginning at 6 p.m. in FUMC Fellowship Hall. Wear your paint shirt. Food and art supplies including river rocks will be furnished and the cost is \$10.00 per person or \$20.00 for families of 2 or more. If you have paint brushes, mark and bring them. Bottled water will be provided. Call the church office at (940) 538-4254 to reserve your pizza and supplies. **Deadline to reserve your spot is Friday, March 4 at 1 p.m.**

Mrs. Tommy Linda Eldred of Nocona, a talented rock artist, is our guest instructor. She will also display some examples of her painted rocks. Do a Google or Pinterest search before you attend for thousands of ideas. Call Doris Payne at 782-2250 for more information.

Our VISION:

**Is to serve as the heart, hands,
and feet of Christ by...**

- * **strengthening our personal relationship with Christ daily**
- * **growing internally within our church family, and**
- * **connecting externally throughout our community and our world.**



A special welcome to Lyles Turner Fitts, son of Jaclyn Fitts, who was baptized on February 26, 2017. What a blessing for our church to be a part of this holy moment. Lyles also has an older brother, Kerr. Lyles and Kerr are the grandsons of Jeff and Sharon Fitts.



Dear Father of Life

by Eddie Angell

Dear Father of Life, creator of all that's great,
Please guide me to live, let your will be my fate.
You are so loving and strong, yet I am so weak,
Fill me with the words you wish me to speak.
I feel scared and alone, though I know you are near,
Please give me strength and cure all these fears.
Thank you for every day, this life is a gift,
I praise you in Jesus, both arms I will lift.
I fall short of your glory, yet you bless me with grace,
You sacrificed your Son to save the human race.
I want to spread your word, I want to shine your light,
I want to live for you and teach others what is right.
If I wholeheartedly seek, then I should surely find,
That's a promise that you made that never leaves my mind.
How do I get to know you, closer than a friend?
Fill me up completely, every second till the end.
Let me be your tool, let your word fill my heart,
Please help me Jesus or my world will fall apart.
Help me understand your plan, show me what to do,
I dedicate my life and soul to getting close to you.

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February Memorials

- In memory of Bill Newton from Billy & Connie Johnson
- In memory of Joseph & Mary Louise Sauer from Billy & Connie Johnson
- In memory of Jim & Cheryl Klein from Heath & Kerri Brown, Wil and Lilly
- In memory of Patty Scheer from Heath & Kerri Brown, Wil and Lilly

Scout Sunday



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Our MISSION:

is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for
the transformation of the world
from the heart of Clay County.