



February 2, 2021 **THE ACORN**

Newsletter for First United Methodist Church Red Oak, Texas

*"A new commandment I give you: Love one another.
As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know
that you are my disciples." John 13:34-35*

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I thank you, most sincerely, for sticking with us in a very challenging 2020! All of us are **COVID-19 WEARY** with **10 MONTHS** of isolation from family and friends, the disruption of our lives with grief, pain, and for many, the loss of income or employment. We offer in-person worship every Sunday at **11:00 AM**. If you don't feel comfortable gathering on Sunday morning, I hope you will take advantage of our online worship service posted on our Facebook page by **4:00 PM**. **THANK YOU** for your extravagant generosity to our church in 2020!

We begin the season of Lent in just a few weeks on **ASH WEDNESDAY, February 17**. We will have a safe Ash Wednesday service at 7:00 PM to mark the beginning of this holy season. We will not do the usual Imposition of Ashes, when the Pastor makes a mark of the Cross on your forehead. We have devised another method to give you the Cross of Jesus without getting so close to you. The service will be a meaningful time to begin a holy Lent as we move closer to the Cross of Jesus on Good Friday.

(From the Pastor *continued*)

Why do we celebrate Lent? Historically, Lent began as a period of fasting and preparation for baptism by converts and then became a time of repentance of sin for all Christians. It is a season of 40 days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Easter Sunday. We proclaim the mystery of Jesus Christ's passion, death, and resurrection.

We place Jesus our Lord "front and center" in our lives. We direct our gaze and place laser-like focus on Christ. We say we believe in God, but do we know God? Lent is a time to know God and allow God to speak to us in our lives.

Pastor Mike

There's Still Time! Estimate of Giving Cards for 2021

Thank you to those of you who have completed an Estimate of Giving card for 2021. For those of you who haven't completed one, there is still time. Estimate of Giving cards are in the foyer and printed on page 18 of this newsletter. If you have not already done so, please pray about your pledge and commitment of your gifts to the church for 2021. You may either mail your completed card to the church or bring by the church office. This enables the Finance Committee to continue to be good stewards of your gifts and tithes.

Thank you for your continued and generous support of the church and its ministries during 2020!



As We Open In-Person Worship – Volunteers Needed!!

It is critical as we continue in-person worship services that we have people in place that will assist in keeping everyone safe and comfortable in worship. If you are attending in-person worship, please let us know if you can volunteer to assist in ensuring the morning runs smoothly. Listed below are areas in which we need teams of volunteers on Sunday morning to:

- Stand outside entrance doors to encourage social distancing as people arrive and exit
- Distribute masks (if needed) and take temperatures
- Distribute communion packets
- Stand at entrance doors to sanctuary and assist in locating seating on identified pews
- Assist in dismissing individuals/families at the end of the service

Also, the audio/visual team needs volunteers to be trained to run the screen and the video camera.

Please pray about these opportunities to serve and let the church office know if you would like to serve in any way.



RECEIVING THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION THIS SUNDAY

This Sunday, February 7th, we will celebrate HOLY COMMUNION both at the in-person worship service and remotely.

If you are attending the service in person, you will receive the packaged set of the communion elements at the designated time in the Communion service and will remain in your pew. At the appropriate time, Pastor Mike will invite you to partake of the wafer and the juice.

If you are watching the service online, you have **two options** in receiving Holy Communion. **We have packaged communion elements that you can pick up at the church office;** OR you can use any kind of bread with some form of liquid at home. As you watch the worship service online, you may partake of these elements as Pastor Mike consecrates the Bread and the Cup and then invites you to take communion.

Ash Wednesday Worship Service



This year Ash Wednesday, which begins the Lenten season, is on February 17th. A special Ash Wednesday worship service will be held at 7:00 PM. For safety reasons, the ashes, usually dispensed upon a person's forehead, will be given to each person on a piece of burlap as each person or family is directed to come forward. There is a Lenten calendar on page 14 of this newsletter that may give you something to think about or an action to take as you take your Lenten journey this year.

In Memory of Helen Scott – A Tribute

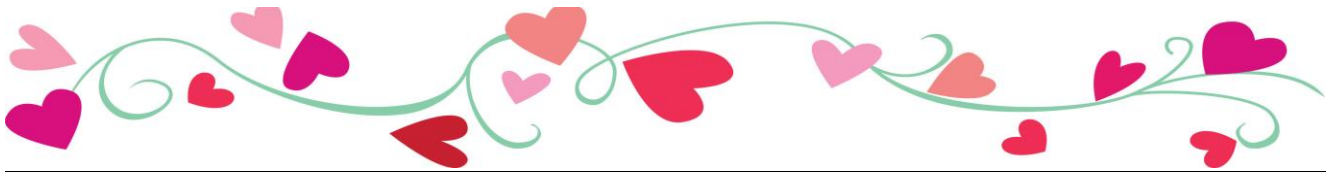
Helen Ruth Scott, a long-time and beloved member of the FUMCRO church family, went to be with her Lord on Wednesday, January 13, 2021. She was 89 years old. Helen has resided in Virginia with her daughter Elizabeth since 2016; Liz describes her as having a “generous, loving, fun and, sometimes feisty, spirit.” A funeral service was held in Virginia and a private burial was held at Red Oak Cemetery.

A gravesite memorial service is planned for **September 24, 2021** to coincide with FUMCRO's annual Lord's Acre on September 25th. The family asks that you save these two dates in September; they would love to visit with each of you while remembering Helen's life and honoring her memory at these two events.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to the First United Methodist Church of Red Oak and designated for the 2021 Lord's Acre.

To view the video of the service held in Virginia and the video tribute, you may visit waynebozefuneralhome.com. You may send condolences to Helen's daughter: Elizabeth Duvall, 41037 Alysheba Drive, Leesburg, VA 20176.

FEBRUARY CALENDAR



Upper Room Devotional Books for January/February are available.

Wednesday, February 3

- Zoom Prayer Group, 6:00/6:15 PM (see p. 13)
- Pastor's Bible Study, 7:00 PM on Zoom and Facebook Live

Saturday, February 6

- Sunshine Class, 9:00 AM, Fellowship Hall (see p. 9)

Sunday, February 7

Holy Communion

- Zoom Enrichment Class, 9:15/9:30 AM (see pp. 8-9)
- In-person Worship Service & Children's Church, 11:00 AM
- Online Worship Service, posted by 4:00 PM (www.fumcro.org)
- Youth Fellowship, 6:00 PM (Dinner – Dana & Gracie Ellard)

Wednesday, February 10

- Zoom Prayer Group, 6:00/6:15 PM (see p. 13)
- Pastor's Bible Study, 7:00 PM on Zoom and Facebook Live

Saturday, February 13

- Sunshine Class, 9:00 AM, Fellowship Hall (see p. 9)

Sunday, February 14

Happy LOVE Day!

- Zoom Enrichment Class, 9:15/9:30 AM (see pp. 8-9)
- In-person Worship Service & Children's Church, 11:00 AM
- Online Worship Service posted by 4:00 PM (www.fumcro.org)
- NO Youth Fellowship

Wednesday, February 17

**Ash Wednesday –
Beginning of Lent**

- Ash Wednesday Service, 7:00 PM (see p. 3)
- No Prayer Group or Bible Study

Saturday, February 20

- Sunshine Class, 9:00 AM, Fellowship Hall (see p. 9)
- UMW Circle of Hope and Healing (Prayer Shawl) Zoom Meeting, 10:30 AM (see p. 9)

Sunday, February 21

- Zoom Enrichment Class, 9:15/9:30 AM (see pp. 8-9)
- In-person Worship Service and Children's Church, 11:00 AM
- Online Worship Service posted by 4:00 PM (www.fumcro.org)
- Youth Fellowship, 6:00 PM (Dinner – Doyle/Smock)

Wednesday, February 24

- Zoom Prayer Group, 6:00/6:15 PM (see p. 13)
- Pastor's Bible Study, 7:00 PM on Zoom and Facebook Live

Saturday, February 27

- Sunshine Class, 9:00 AM, Fellowship Hall (see p. 9)

Sunday, February 28

- Zoom Enrichment Class, 9:15/9:30 AM (see pp. 8-9)
- In-person Worship Service & Children's Church, 11:00 AM
- Online Worship Service posted by 4:00 PM (www.fumcro.org)
- Youth Fellowship, 6:00 PM (Dinner – Kelso/Keene)



Notes from Larry McCord



HOPE

For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man sees, why does he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Romans 8:24-25

During Advent 2019, our choir presented a cantata by Joel Raney titled Hope.



This cantata was from a set Mr. Raney composed that each align with one of the candles we light during Advent: Peace, Joy and Hope. At the time, I chose this work as I usually do, studying the score, listening to the music and determining whether this was a good fit for our choir.

Fast forward a year, Advent 2020, no Christmas cantata, and our church had only recently begun worshiping together again. As I meditated on these things while driving to work one day, I was reminded... "Hope"! We had no idea when we rehearsed that work and presented the musical message to the congregation that we would soon be facing a year unlike any most of us have ever seen. With the many difficulties we faced as a church, nation and world in 2020, certainly hope was a message we needed to hear.

We couldn't imagine what lay ahead...but God knew. As the psalmist reminds us in Psalm 139, "Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me." God knows what we have experienced, will experience and are experiencing right now; and He prepares us in ways we can't begin to understand. God knew that 2020 would be a very rough year for all and that we needed to hear a message of hope. Whether we understood at the time or not, God was working in our hearts to remind us, no matter how dark the days we faced, "Emmanuel," "God with us" was the anchor of our hope.

We have certainly learned the meaning of Paul's exhortation to the Romans during the past year. The end was not in sight and many questions still remain to be answered. We have lost many long-time members of our church, some due to COVID and some for other reasons. Some have had no work and have wondered how bills would be paid and their families fed. We have had to adjust to very different ways of worshiping. The one constant through all of this change has been our Heavenly Father's presence in our lives. Our hope in God has indeed been the saving grace throughout 2020 and will continue to be so in the year ahead.

Kids, Come and Experience Children's Church!

Children's Church is a church worship service just for children held at the same time as the adult in-person service at 11:00 AM each Sunday. We have missed seeing many of the children in the worship service, and since there is no Sunday School for them yet, this is an excellent idea to bring all the children back to church to learn more about God and Jesus and worship in a safe environment. So, what does the new Children's Church look like?



- Children will have temperature checks and hand sanitizing at check in (just like the adults) and proceed to the Fellowship Hall (which has been thoroughly sanitized during the week).
- All children will have their own craft box that will be used weekly and left at the church.
- Masks and/or face shields will be worn at all times; distancing will also be observed. (Shields have been purchased for each child; masks are also available, if needed.)

Children's Worship Service Outline

A "worship service" geared toward children will teach children the aspects of worship and will include the following:

- Songs
- Prayer Time to share joys and concerns
- Lord's Prayer
- Children's Time
- Lessons/Bible Stories/Elements of Worship (Affirmation of Faith, Doxology, Communion, etc.)
- Games and/or Crafts
- Offering (not required and can be a few coins to teach children the concept of stewardship)
- Outside Play (weather permitting)
- Benediction/Sending Forth (The children will be waiting for their family on the bench in the foyer following the adult service.)

Children, ages 3-4 through Grade 5 are invited and encouraged to join us as we worship, sing, pray and learn together! If you have any questions, please call Geneise at 972-754-2182.



Notes from Shannon Wilson, Director of Youth Ministries

We have had a fun filled last few months; we have laughed, prayed, fellowshiped, and had a little Bible study along the way. A few weeks ago we started a weekly devotion, using "The Jesus-Centered Life," 40 devotions for teenagers. The first week the youth were asked to write down or draw how they currently view Jesus. Through the next year, our prayer is that our lives truly become more Jesus-Centered. At the end we will compare our original, decorations /drawings to the new ones we may have found during our journey.

During February all youth will have a creative prayer journal, entitled “The Prayer Map for Teens.” This is going to be a great way to help our youth with their own personal prayer time and to also learn ways to be intentionally prayerful for each other.

We are looking forward to working on a few things this spring: a little flower garden around the church’s new sign, drier weather (maybe a little warmer too) so we can get back outside, outreach opportunities, and a few outings to work on what our summer mission trip with look like. We are always looking for adults to help. How can you help? There are many ways:

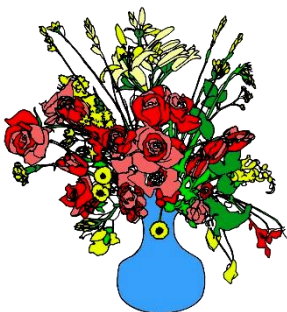
1. Host a Sunday night dinner/stay for games
2. Share a skill or life lesson
3. Be a MENTOR
4. Pray with/for our youth
5. And _____ (you fill in the blank)

Contact Shannon Wilson for more ways to help or to share your ideas. (469)397-6124 or shanwilson4@yahoo.com

Sunday Dinner Schedule: February 7 – Dana & Gracie Ellard
February 14 – **No Youth Meeting**
February 21 – Doyle & Smock
February 28 – Kelso & Keene

A Note about Altar Flowers

We are now having in-person worship. If you have signed up to donate flowers for 2021 and are in worship, you may take your flowers home following the service. If you choose not to attend in-person services yet, you may pick up your flowers the next week from the office.



Altar Flowers **February**

Given by:

Occasion:

7 th	Jane & David Aberg	In celebration of Jessica & Charles Whitfill's birthdays!
14 th	Jane & David Aberg	Given in honor of Pastor Mike!
21 st	Lynda Robinson	In celebration and thanksgiving for family!
28 th	OPEN	

Altar flowers are \$35; please mark your check “flowers.” Thank you.



2021 Flower Calendar

The flower calendar for 2021 is posted in the foyer. The flowers that are donated each Sunday not only help to make our worship center more attractive, but also allow individuals and families to honor or celebrate a special occasion or individual or remember a loved one who has passed away.

Flower arrangements are \$35 and may be taken home following the 11:00 AM worship service or may be picked up the following week from the office. Please make your check to FUMC with the notation "flowers" in the memo line. If you are not attending in-person worship yet, you may call the church office to let Jo know the date(s) you would like and what occasion or in whose honor/memory the flowers are for.

Dates still open on the flower calendar for the next three months:

February 28

March 7 and 21

April 25

...and many more open dates for the rest of the year!

Easter is April 4th this year. Watch for information on purchasing a lily in honor or memory of a loved one in the March newsletter.

Hurry and sign up for your favorite date(s)!!

ENRICHMENT CLASS – Sunday Meetings on ZOOM

The Enrichment Class continues its study of "Jesus in Me" through February 14th.

Join the class for a Lenten Study beginning February 21 as we explore the Passion Play performed in Oberammergau, in Bavaria Germany, once every 10 years since 1634.

In *The Passion Play: Living the Story of Christ's Last Days*, Rob Fuquay follows the biblical story of the Passion and shows how this amazing play has been used as a ritual of praise and later to counter anti-Semitism. The six week study will include video filmed on location in Germany with behind the scene footage of the production.

We meet Sunday morning on Zoom with fellowship beginning at 9:15 am. Class begins at 9:30 am. Books will be available in the workroom February 10.

Come learn with us as we work to recognize our own places in the story and Passion of Jesus.

If you need help setting up your phone, computer or tablet to use Zoom, call Lynne Grandstaff at 214-738-7301. We hope to see you soon!

Lynne Grandstaff is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Enrichment Class Zoom Meeting

Time: This is a recurring meeting: Meet Sundays from 9:45-11 AM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86727739734?pwd=OU1tQ2ZGcXZHSIBIVXpoeFJ6ZHNvUT09>

Meeting ID: 867 2773 9734

Password: 004392

One tap mobile

+13462487799,,86727739734#,,1#,004392# US (Houston)

+12532158782,,86727739734#,,1#,004392# US (Tacoma)

Dial by your location

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 867 2773 9734

Password: 004392

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kc46Sgook0>



Sunshine Class – Meeting In-Person Saturday Mornings

The Sunshine Class, led by Dani Muckleroy and Larry Campbell, meets on **Saturday** morning at **9:00 AM** in the church's Fellowship Hall. The winter Bible study is on the theme of "Hope" and focuses study on units entitled *God with Us*, *The Good News*, and *The Hypocrite and the Holy*. YOU are invited to come, wear your mask

and join this lively group in fellowship and Bible study!



United Methodist Women (UMW) News

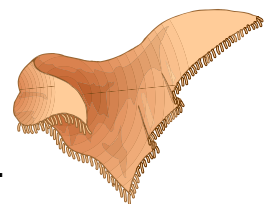
Due to the continuing rise in COVID cases, the UMW Friendship Circle and Circle of

Love will not meet in February; hopefully, we can schedule our UMW meetings beginning in March....stay tuned, stay safe, stay healthy!!



Circle of Hope and Healing (Prayer Shawl)

The Circle of Hope and Healing will meet on Zoom on February 20th from 10:30 AM – Noon. Watch your email for details. If you like to crochet, knit, weave, and pray, please join us in this important ministry.



KEEP THE FLAGS FLYING AT FUMCRO

As a fund raiser, the Masons install the flags on flag days/holidays throughout the year. The proceeds finance their work with children and scholarships. If you like the flags placed in front of the church and want to continue the tradition, you may remember a loved one or honor someone with a \$30 (or more) donation to “flags.” Please put your check in the offering plate with “Flags” marked in the memo line or you may send your donation to FUMC, P. O. Box 25, Red Oak, 75154 or bring it by the church office. The names of the donors and the ones they honor with their donation will be included in the March newsletter. To renew the contract for 2021 we need \$200.



Let's keep the flags flying at FUMCRO!

MISSION OPPORTUNITY



Oatmeal and Spaghetti....AND Some Other Needs

FUMCRO has volunteered to donate **oatmeal and spaghetti** on an ongoing basis to North Ellis County Outreach (NECO). The next time you are at the grocery store or ordering groceries online, please remember to pick up/order extra spaghetti and oatmeal for FUMCRO's donation to NECO. Our support of these donations will enable the Outreach center to continue work and help in our community.

NECO is also currently in need of **kid friendly foods and the following items: soups (heathy choice, low sodium & tomato), toilet paper, pasta sauce, no salt added carrots, no salt added mixed vegetables, pinto beans, boxed cereal, boxed oatmeal variety pack, shampoo, and ladies' deodorant.**

Thank you for your generosity!

FINANCE UPDATE

January 2021 Giving/Offerings

January 3 rd	\$5,160.00
January 10 th	\$3,695.00
January 17 th	\$5,262.00
January 24 th	\$2,892.00
January 31 st	\$3,060.00

In 2021 the Connectional Mission Giving (CMG) amount for FUMCRO is **\$22,708**. It is the goal of the church and the Finance Committee to meet 100% of this amount this year. To meet this goal plus other expenses, the offering each week needs to total \$6,000. Church, we can...and will...do this to the glory of God who blesses us every day!

A very special “**THANK YOU**” to those of you who have continued to support the ministries and operations of the church during this crucial time when we couldn’t meet together in person and “pass the plate” and even now when in person worship may not be an option for some people!

Many of you have signed up to give online, brought your offering check by the church office during the week, or mailed your check to the church.

Your faithful giving and ongoing support is **greatly** appreciated!

We realize that some of you, during this unprecedented time, may be experiencing hardships with loss of income or unexpected expenses. Please, please know that your welfare is important to the church; YOU are a part of our family. Your pledge may be adjusted so that you may give what you can now and then at a later date, as you feel financially able, you may resume your regular giving. We want you to take care of yourself and your family first.

Even as we begin to meet together again, you may continue to bring your offering to the church office (Mon-Thurs, 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM), OR put your check in the mail (FUMC, **P. O. Box 25**, Red Oak, TX 75154) OR use the online giving option available on the church's website. With online giving, contributions can be debited automatically from your checking or savings account. You also have the option of using your debit card; however, the church accrues a fee when a debit card is used.



FUMCRO Members in Need of Prayer

ALL FUMCRO members as all try to stay healthy and safe

Mike Stricker
Art and Carol Haffey
Judy and Joe Cadenhead
Larry Campbell
Leah Harp
Wynona Haney

Zachary Kelso
Jody Smock
Mary Voigtlander and family
(Judy Cadenhead's daughter & grandchildren)
Lionel Hazard (Midlothian Health Care Center)
Rita Dugger

Friends and Family of FUMCRO Members in Need of Prayer

Teachers, Students, Education Leaders, Church Pastors & Leaders, and Government Leaders as they make hard decisions about the opening of schools, churches, and businesses

All those affected by the Covid-19 virus

Ken Gassett (Lila Sackett's brother)
Family of Helen Scott
Karissa Cecil (Jane Aberg's neice)
Joel Cecil (Jane Aberg's brother)
Betty Dempsey (Shannon Smock's mother)
Marceline Aberg (David Aberg's mother)
Etta Britt (friend of Sherry Doty)
Grayson Glass & family (Judy Pelowski's student)
Butch Buckner (Sherry Martin's cousin)
Paige (cousin of Geneise Waltmon)
Jim Dixon (friend of the Cadenheads)
Berger Family (Judy Pelowski's student whose mom and dad are first responders)
Linda Belote (Bill Belote's mother)
Dale Arnold
Mark Serold (Dani Muckleroy's friend)
Ruth Dunaway (Jennie Dunaway's mother)
Dorothy Doty (Dean Doty's mother)
Ladonna Westfall
VanNaiaya Turner
Kathy Schmitt (Sherry Doty's sister)
Judd Easterling
Parents of Nancy Toney

Healthcare & First Responders

Brad and Amy Alexander (Mike & Kathy Alexander's son and daughter-in-law)
Family of James Brown (John Young's uncle)
Fred Vincent (Eva Rudd's brother-in-law)
Brian Reed (Lisa Smith's brother)
Tim Huelsman (Judy Cadenhead's brother)
Jeffrey Wright (Beth Norris' cousin)
Angela Rollins (Lynda Robinson's daughter)
The family of Royce Thornal (neighbor of Judy Pelowski)
Billy Ray Dickey & son, Mike (friends of the Cadenheads)
Eileen Lehmberg (Lila Sackett's sister)
Foster Children
Sherri Parnell (Cindy Belote's sister)
Tony & Joyce (Pryors' friends)
Sue Smock (Jody Smock's mother)
Chris Harrell
Julie & Ronnie Williams
Deborah Waggner (Eva Rudd's friend)
Bill (Durazo's neighbor)
Debbie Doyle (Curtis & Sandra Doyle's daughter)

Missionary: Rukang Chikomb (Congo)



Prayer Group ZOOM Meeting Invitation – Wednesdays, 6:15 PM

The Prayer Group will meet as they have the past several weeks. Lynne will open the meeting at 6:00 PM and will begin the readings at 6:15 PM. Remember to come prepared to lift the names and situations you want to pray for during the service. The Prayer Group reading will be sent by email prior to the meeting.

Lynne Grandstaff is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: FUMCRO Evening Prayer

Time: This is a recurring meeting Meet anytime

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/636967176?pwd=UHlPYk5BWk53R2hwamlrNHhQc0RVUT09>

Meeting ID: 636 967 176

Password: 002041

One tap mobile

+13462487799,,636967176# US (Houston)

+17207072699,,636967176# US (Denver)

Dial by your location

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 720 707 2699 US (Denver)

+1 253 215 8782 US

+1 301 715 8592 US

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 636 967 176

Find your local number: <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/636967176?pwd=UHlPYk5BWk53R2hwamlrNHhQc0RVUT09>

Have a great week!

Stay safe!

See you in person or online on Sunday!

Contact Information

Rev. Mike Alexander,

Senior Pastor

pastor@fumcro.org

Larry McCord, Minister of Music

fumcromusic@gmail.com

Shannon Wilson, Youth Director

fumcro@gmail.com

Jo Wilsford, Office Administrator

firstumcredoak@gmail.com

Judy Cadenhead, Building Manager/Nursery

umcredoakjudy@gmail.com

Phone

972-617-9100

Web

www.fumcro.org

facebook.com/fumcro

facebook.com/fumcroyouth

First United Methodist Church Red Oak

600 Daubitz Dr.

P.O. Box 25 (Mailing Address)

Red Oak, TX 75154

WHERE EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

Sundays

9:30 am Enrichment Class on Zoom

11:00 am In-Person Blended Worship

6:00 pm Worship Service posted on website

6:00 pm Youth Fellowship (In-person)

Wednesdays

6:15 pm Prayer Group via Zoom

7:00 pm Bible Study on Zoom & Facebook Live

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 <h1>LENTEN CALENDAR</h1>			17 February Ash Wednesday It's Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. Read Psalm 51:10-12. Consider what creating a clean heart requires. Ask God to help.	18 February Lent commemorates the 40 days Jesus spent wandering in the wilderness. Go for a solitary wander through your neighborhood, with no destination in mind. Notice everything. Notice yourself.	19 February Make time today for the one you love and for God. Each minute is a brick in your life's bridge, not only over troubled waters and loss, but to a million cherished memories.	20 February If Saturday is your errand day, add this to your list: Go to the grocery store, get ten good food items and drop them off on Sunday in the NECO basket in the church foyer. If you have kids, take them with you.
21 February Sundays are "in" Lent but not "of" Lent. Sundays aren't counted in the 40 days because Sunday is always a "little Easter." Try shouting for joy sometime today because it's a "little Easter."	22 February Lent is a season of repentance. Look at your life. Is there something you are sorry for? Ask God for forgiveness, and after that, move on to reconciliation.	23 February Pray for everyone who brought your food to you today: the growers, harvesters, cooks, marketplace workers, and servers. Thank God for your food.	24 February Think of someone you need to thank and write them an old-fashioned thank-you note, even if it's just to say, "Thank you for being you!"	25 February If you don't already, start saying grace before your meals. You can do it silently or start a new practice in your household.	26 February Give up the television remote. Let someone else control it. You know who you are and if this suggestion is for you!	27 February Clear out the chatter. Really listen to other people today. Don't just wait for your turn to talk. Life might get more interesting.
28 February Remember someone you have loved and lost. Sadness and grief have their place in Lent. The pain of loss is the cost of loving well. Risk it.	1 March Jesus says even tiny faith can move mountains. What are the "mountains" you could move with the faith you already have?	2 March Whatever you have too much of, get rid of some of it today. This might mean a trip to Goodwill or one less trip to the refrigerator or an apology you need to make.	3 March Give up caffeine, sugar, or meat for today. How did your body, mind and soul feel?	4 March Think about what's out of balance for you. Pray for the wisdom to put it right.	5 March A couple of weeks ago, you practiced repentance and asked for forgiveness and reconciliation. How's that going? Spend some time in thoughtful prayer.	6 March In the spirit of Easter, think of three old things you're going to stop worrying about and three new things you're going to look forward to instead.
7 March Sunday is your "little Easter," your day to abandon whatever discipline you have taken up for Lent. Have a donut!	8 March Clear your calendar. If you're over-scheduled, find one thing to cut out so you can have saner days.	9 March Look in the mirror and compliment yourself. Yes, you'll feel silly. Do it anyway.	10 March Make medical appointments you've been putting off. Thank God if you have good health. Pray for those who don't.	11 March This is the 20 th day of Lent, the half-way mark in the 40 days. Instead of waiting for someone to meet you halfway, go all the way to them. Initiate a call or send a note.	12 March Take a risk, confront something controversial that you care about. Following Jesus requires more than just enjoying the blessings of faith.	13 March Write down ten things you are thankful for. And then write down ten things more.
14 March Give up excuses for not going to church. It's Sunday...just go!	15 March Clear out some of life's clutter. Make a plan or take a first step toward quitting a bad habit.	16 March Delight in the weather...whatever it is.	17 March Faith is memory before it is hope. Remember how you've made it through hard times. You can trust that you'll make it through again with God's help.	18 March Wash your car. Thank God you have a car. Find out if there's someone who needs a ride to church on Sunday. Or anywhere else, on any day.	19 March Ask others for help. Clear out guilt and martyrdom.	20 March When you give God priority, everything else falls into place. You'll become hopeful when before you were anxious.
21 March Only God is perfect. You don't have to be. Forgive yourself for mistakes.	22 March See if you can recycle more than you throw away this week. If it's an option where you live, take public transportation to get somewhere this week.	23 March Hand out at least three heartfelt compliments today.	24 March Give up at least one of your prejudices today. Don't have any? Think again.	25 March Give up trying to change other people. Leave that to God. Consider instead changing yourself and how you respond.	26 March Go to bed an hour early tonight. Give up being over-tired and possibly cranky. Your family & co-workers will thank you.	27 March Give up sitting. Get up, stand up, take the stairs, walk around the block, put on music and dance.
28 March Palm Sunday Celebrate! Join the parade! Tell the stories of Jesus.	29 March Give up anxiety. It's no fun. What is fun is peace. Anxiety takes over the place where peace wants to live in our hearts. Give up anxiety.	30 March Getting ready for Easter involves learning to make room for the power of God beyond your capacity to calculate or control.	31 March Give up complicating things. Instead of making mountains out of molehills, be on the lookout for ways to simplify.	1 April Today, have a servant's heart. Take special care of someone you love.	2 April Jesus died on the cross. Think about it. Why did it happen? Ask yourself what you truly believe. Now ask God.	3 April Easter Eve is a time for baptism remembrance. Look into the mirror and say, "I have been baptized. God loves me. I belong to God."
4 April EASTER Live anew. Have hope. Jesus is risen, indeed!						

First United Methodist Church

Red Oak, Texas

2021 PROTOCOLS FOR IN-PERSON WORSHIP

The physical gathering of God's people feeds our souls and strengthens us for the journey of life and faith in a unique way. Gathering together as the body of Christ is an integral part of who we are as the church.

We will continue to monitor the COVID-19 cases in Ellis County on a weekly basis. Should cases increase in our area, we will reassess our intentions and options.

We will prayerfully do our part to adhere to John Wesley's first general rule of "do no harm" as we do our best to safeguard the public health of our members and guests.

The following plan was developed with guidance from Central Texas Conference, Bishop Lowry, and recommendations from the CDC and the Governor's office and with input from other Methodist churches' protocols.

- All decisions on when/how to return to in-person worship have been made jointly by the pastor and lay leadership of the Administrative Council.
- Those members or guests who were recently ill, over 65 years of age, or those with underlying health issues are encouraged to remain at home and watch the service online. Those who are ill should definitely stay home and watch the service online.
- Online worship will continue. It will be posted on the website by 4:00 PM on Sunday afternoon.
- The sanctuary, foyer and restrooms have been thoroughly sanitized.
- All people must wear a mask to enter the building and during the worship service.
- All people, as they enter the church building, will have their temperature taken.
- Find ways to greet others without physically touching (no hugs or handshakes)
- Sanitizer stations are placed at each sanctuary entrance.
- Attendance will be recorded.
- No donuts, food or coffee will be served before or after the service.
- During the services, we will observe strict social distancing policies.
- Pews will be marked to show where you may sit to help with social distancing.
- During the service, you should remain in your pew unless it is necessary to leave.
- Because viruses can survive on paper and hard surfaces for hours, all hymnals, Bibles and papers will be removed from the pews. There will be no bulletins. All liturgy and hymns/songs will be projected on the screen.

- Offering plates will not be passed. There will offering plates/receptacles at the back doors of the sanctuary.
- Worship services will be shortened; masks should be worn throughout the service.
- Since the worship service will be condensed, the use of restrooms should be minimized.
- If you need to cough or sneeze during the service, you should cover your mouths with your elbows.
- Families will be dismissed by rows/family units from the back of the sanctuary at the end of the service.
- Once you have been dismissed following the service, please proceed to your vehicle.

Communion Sunday

- On communion Sundays, communion servers will dispense pre-packaged communion elements in a plastic bag to each family as they remain in their seats before communion.

Children

- Children's Sunday School/nursery will be postponed until further notice.
- Children's Church for ages 3-4 to Grade 5 will be held in the Fellowship Hall at the same time as the in-person adult service. Masks will be worn and social distancing observed.

Youth Fellowship

- The Youth Sunday School class will be postponed until further notice.
- Youth Fellowship will continue to meet in person on Sunday evenings.
- Youth Works! may meet on Wednesday evenings in the future.

Adult Sunday School Classes

- Enrichment Class (continues meeting online)
- Sunshine Class (currently meeting in-person at the church)

Prayer Group and Bible Study

- Prayer Group (continues meeting online)
- Bible Study (continues meeting online)

Other In-person Activities and Meetings

- In-person meetings and activities will be kept to a minimum.
- Committee meetings and other small groups are encouraged to hold meetings via Zoom until a later time.

As the Body of Christ, we are responsible to and for each other. We are all responsible for following the safety practices and for keeping the health of our members and guests as a top priority. “Church,” as we have known it, will be different, but we are still the CHURCH. We have grown stronger, held tighter, and found ways to seek joy in the midst of the awkward things this in-between time requires of us.

The mission of the First United Methodist Church of Red Oak has **not** changed. Our mission remains “to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.” We will continue to love our neighbors and love God as we practice good health and safety habits and begin gathering in person with mutual care and respect in this unprecedented time. Our faith remains grounded in the great love of Jesus Christ, who calls us to care for one another as we worship and fulfill our mission.

2021 Estimate of Giving Form

- If you do not plan to attend in-person worship, you may print this page, complete it and mail it to the church (FUMC, P. O. Box 25, Red Oak, TX 75154) or bring it by the church office during the week.
- If you would like to receive an Estimate of Giving card in the mail, please call the church office (972-617-9100) and one will be mailed to you.



First United Methodist Church

Red Oak, Texas

2021 Estimate of Giving

In gratitude for God's gifts, and to support the work and ministries of the Red Oak First United Methodist Church in the coming year (2021), I/we estimate that during the year, I/we will give the following amount:

\$_____ per week; \$_____ per month; or \$_____ per year

Please print:

Name(s) _____

Street Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Telephone number(s): _____

Email address(es): _____

Signature(s): _____

I understand that this giving estimate can be adjusted at any time by notifying the church office.