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First UMC – Iraan



First UMC - McCamey



Everyday Disciples

The e-newsletter of the United Methodists in Iraan & McCamey

February 2012

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From the Pastor

What a busy time February has become on our cultural, civic and church calendars! We begin with February 2nd which is known by several names, like Groundhog Day – will Punxsutawney Phil see his shadow? Super Bowl XLVI takes place on the 5th in Indianapolis and with it the commercials which many love (or hate!). On February 14 we are reminded by florists, greeting card and candy makers to give our dear ones flowers, cards and chocolates as we celebrate St. Valentine's Day. On February 20th, we honor all those who have served this nation as our president (even those we didn't vote for). We also have a bonus this month as 2012 is a leap year which means February has 29 days!

As people of faith, February is significant as the journey that is the Season of Lent awaits us, beginning on the 22nd, **Ash Wednesday** and ending with the glory of **Easter** morning, April 8th. The 22nd, as stated before, is Ash Wednesday, and this year you are invited to the First UMC in McCamey for a service of healing and wholeness. We will not distribute ashes but will instead offer prayers of healing and offer an anointing with oil and the laying of hands on those who desire this ancient custom of the church. This year, during Lent, my sermons will focus, of course, with the gospel lesson for the day, but each sermon will end with a special time of silent reflection and listening.

Between Sundays, I encourage everyone to find ways to keep room, time, and to be still, listening for God's Word to come into your heart. We know from our Gospel readings that Jesus often removed himself to a quiet place to pray alone. Jesus is our teacher and we would do well to follow His example.

On Christmas Eve we held candles and sang "*Silent Night*." In many of our hymns we are reminded to *be still*. In the UMC Hymnal, hymns such as #534 "*Be Still, My Soul*," #348 "*Softly and Tenderly*," #395 "*Take Time to be Holy*," and in The Faith We Sing #2142 "*Blessed Quietness*," among others, call upon us, in the midst of our busy lives, to listen for God. Many more offer us the opportunity to pause and reflect on our journey of faith, on those with whom we have traveled along life's path, and on our communal beliefs.

The point of the events on our cultural, civic, and religious calendars is to help us to mark and remember that we are part of something bigger than ourselves. When you come to the end of the month and before turning the page to a new month, take the time to thank God for all the blessings, mercies, and graces you have received. When you have done that, then turn the page and start anew.

Every blessing,

Pastor Charles

"As members of this congregation, will you faithfully participate in its ministries by your "prayers, your presence, your gifts, your service and your witness?" The United Methodist Book of Worship, p. 93

PRAYERS

Joys: +Visits with family and friends. +Church visitors. +Birth of Atlanta Bolen +Liz and Paul Brown are expecting their first child! +The moisture we got last month!!! +Success at the 4-H stock shows and Sandhills Rodeo calf scramble. +Sara Hill had two students make all-state in band. +Bluebonnets and songbirds +Birthdays & anniversaries.

Concerns: +We continue to need moisture. +Families of Larry Ashinhurst, Jeannie West Beck, Joseph Hernandez, Patrick Kohutek, Betty McClure, Edith Roberts, Opal Stark, Tammy Williford and Manuel Zarate, Sr.

Healing prayers: Nadine Andrews, Aaron Braden, Tommy Zale King Bullard, Dottie Brewer, Mac Carpenter, Eddy Carpenter, Sean Chavez, Jeanene Christian, Sandy Coe, Billy Craig, Cleo Darby, Jonnie Dempsey, Mary Faust, Samantha Fitzgerald, Louisa Garcia, Terri Gill, Greg Haggard, Billie Harris, Jane Harrison, Kameron Hansen, Steve Hansen, Maxine Hyden, Elmer Jones, Kash Kelso, DeWayne Lindsey, Aurora Lopez, Julie Lynch, Lois Ann McKenzie, Shane McKenzie, Maylee Mahone, Pat Miller, Kathy Pearce, Jerry Phillips, Freda Pippin, Jack Perry, Helen Remy, Edith Reynolds, Naomi Simmons, Cory Smart, Doug Smith, Emma Smith, Eva Smith, Melody Smith, Sue Sorrels, Alfred Lee Teal, Colton Ward, Henry White, Simone Woodall, and Elma Wolfe.

Continued Prayers: +Our church. +Our schools. +Our country and our leaders. +Our military (Ryan Wiley, Derek Wiley, Steven Hanson, Kameron Hanson) and their families. +The unemployed. +The homeless. +Victims of natural disasters. +Countries fighting for freedom.

Please be in prayer for the Rev. Lee Warden and the First UMC of Barksdale and the First UMC of Rocksprings.

PRESENCE

Average Weekly Worship Attendance

Iraan: 14 McCamey: 30

Average Weekly Faith Formation Attendance

Iraan: N/A McCamey: N/A

GIFTS

There are Seven Apportioned Funds approved by General Conference. This month, let's look at the **World Service Fund:**

The **World Service Fund** is the heart of our denomination-wide ministry, underwriting Christian mission and ministry around the world. This fund strengthens our evangelism efforts, stimulates church growth, expands Bible studies and enriches spiritual commitment. By giving to the World Service Fund we help God's children everywhere shape the lives of tomorrow's leaders and proclaim our Christian faith.

The **World Service Fund** truly demonstrates the Mission of the United Methodist Church by:

- Supporting specific local church work with children, youth, students, persons who are mentally and physically challenged, adults and older persons;
- Providing leadership and coordination for denominational ministry with youth;
- Continuing nearly 200 years of commitment to quality college and graduate education;
- Certifying United Methodist professional Christian educators, communicators and musicians;
- Assuring United Methodists speak and work to help encourage a more ethical, just and human world;
- Continuing a proud tradition of cooperation and dialogue with other faith traditions through interdenominational and ecumenical work;
- Giving our denomination a presence in the mass media and making new communications technologies accessible to the church.



**First
United
Methodist
Church**

NURTURE – OUTREACH – WITNESS

**The Ministries of the
United Methodist Churches
in Iraan and McCamey**

NURTURE MINISTRIES

Worship in February

Sundays in January	February	SCRIPTURE LESSON	SERMON
<i>Fifth Sunday after Epiphany</i>	5	Mark 1:29-39	<i>“Why Jesus prayed”</i>
<i>Sixth Sunday after Epiphany</i>	12	Mark 1:40-45	<i>“Such a simple thing”</i>
<i>Transfiguration Sunday</i>	19	Mark 9:2-9	<i>“Smoke & mirrors or fire & smoke?”</i>
<i>Ash Wednesday Healing Service</i>	22	James 5:14-16a	
<i>First Sunday in Lent</i>	26	Mark 1:9-15	<i>“What happens in the desert...”</i>

The season of Lent begins on **Ash Wednesday**, February 22, marking the forty days (not counting Sundays) that lead us to Easter. This year, you are invited to the First UMC in McCamey for a special service to help prepare us for the coming journey with Christ. Healing services have been a part of the life of the Church since the days of our Lord and continue to be a vital part of the life of the Christian community. Please join us for a service of healing on **Ash Wednesday**, February 22 at 7:00 p.m. This service will offer anointing and prayers for all who seek God’s peace in their life whether it be for physical, spiritual or other needs.

FELLOWSHIP

The **FUMC – Iraan**
February breakfast potluck
will be on the 26th, starting
at 8:30 a.m.

McCamey UMC on the Town

“No muss – no fuss – no program!”

Our monthly gathering in January took place at Elena’s where eight of us gathered for some good food and great fellowship.

This month’s gathering will be on **Friday, February 17th** at Benoit’s (starting at 6:00 p.m.).



UMC Quiz

The Rev. John Wesley was a man who could be very serious about his faith. Here are his questions to guide United Methodists thorough the season of Lent.

- Am I consciously or unconsciously creating the impression that I am a better person than I really am?
- Am I honest in all my acts or words, or do I exaggerate?
- Do I pass on to another what was told to me in confidence?
- Can I be trusted?
- Am I self-conscious, self-pitying, or self-justifying?
- Did the Bible live n me today?
- Am I enjoying prayer?
- When did I last speak to somebody else with the object of trying to win that person for Christ?
- Do I pray about the money I spend?
- Do I disobey God in anything?
- Do I insist upon doing something about which my conscious is uneasy?
- Am I defeated in any part of my life? Am I jealous, impure, critical, irritable, touchy, or distrustful?
- Do I thank God that I am not as other people, especially the Pharisees who despised the publican?
- Is there anybody who I fear, dislike, disown, criticize, hold resentment toward or disregard? If so, what am I doing about it?
- Is Christ real to me?



The January UMW meeting was canceled due to the snow storm that hit the Permian Basin on the 9th.

Next UMW Meeting:
February 13th at the First UMC in McCamey at 7:00 p.m.

UMW Spiritual Enrichment Event

February 19, 2012 at St. Luke UMC in San Angelo. Contact UMW District president, [Dianne Simpson](#), with any questions.

The January UMM meeting took place on Monday, January 2nd.

A wonderful meal was provided by Roy Kephart and Randy Brown (with significant help from Alice Kephart!). Pastor Charles led the discussion from Bad Boys of the Bible on Lot (Genesis 19).

The February meeting will be on the 6th at 6:00 p.m. at the church. We'll be looking at the first part of the story of Jacob found in Genesis 27:1-40.

Please join us!



UMM 2012 Spring Activity

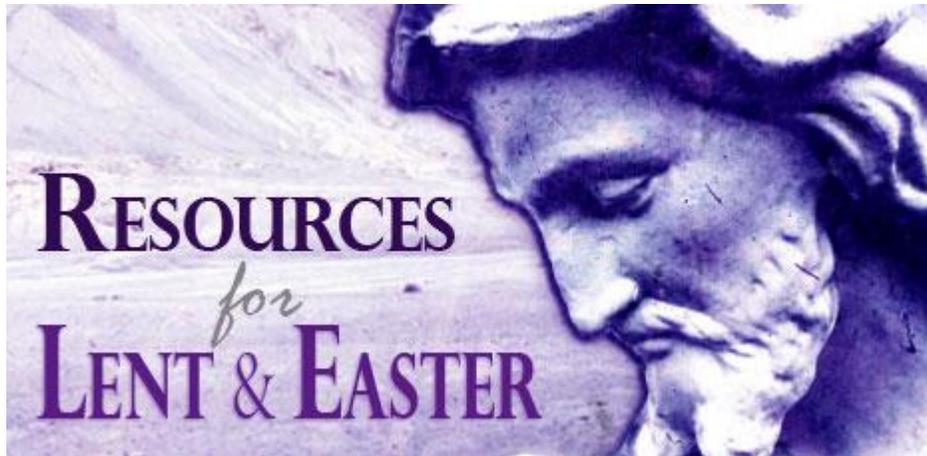
"God's Grace in Men's Lives"
February 25-27 at the Mt. Wesley Conference Center in Kerrville.

Download application and mail with your deposit.

Registration deadline is February 15.

See this link for the [Speakers, Schedule, Application and Program](#).





Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. Lent comes from the Anglo Saxon word *lencten*, which means "spring." The forty days represents the time Jesus spent in the wilderness, enduring the temptation of the Satan.

Lent is a time of repentance, fasting and preparation for the coming of Easter. It is a time of self-examination and reflection. In the early church, Lent was a time to prepare new converts for baptism. Today, Christians focus on their relationship with God, often choosing to give up something or to volunteer and give of themselves for others. Sundays in Lent are not counted in the forty days because each Sunday represents a "mini-Easter" and the reverent spirit of Lent is tempered with joyful anticipation of the Resurrection.

Top Ten List: THINGS YOU CAN TRY FOR THE LENTEN SEASON

- 10. Try an electronic fast.** Give up TV, texting, tweeting, e-mail, Facebook and all things electronic for one day every week (or everyday of Lent!). Use the time to read & pray.
- 9. Start a prayer rhythm.** Say a prayer every time you brush your teeth, hear an ambulance, or check your e-mail. Before you text, e-mail or call someone, pray for them.
- 8. Read one chapter in the Bible each day.** (Matthew is a good book to start with. Psalms, too.)
- 7. Forgive someone who doesn't deserve it (maybe even yourself).**
- 6. Give up soft drinks, fast food, tea or coffee.** Give the money you save to help folks in Haiti or others in crisis.
- 5. Create a daily quiet time.** Spend 30, 15, or even 5 minutes a day in silence and prayer.
- 4. Cultivate a life of gratitude.** Write someone a thank you letter each week and be aware of how many people have helped you along the way.
- 3. Be kind to someone each day.**
- 2. Pray for others you see** as you walk to and from classes or drive to and from work.
- 1. Volunteer one hour or more each week** with a local shelter, tutoring program, nursing home, prison ministry or a [Habitat for Humanity](#) project.

On the Journey with Jesus A new FREE devotional resources is being offered by the Illinois Great Rivers (IGR) Annual Conference. You may subscribe to the daily devotional by visiting the [IGRC E-Newsletter subscription page](#). Visitors will be prompted to enter their email address. If they are subscribed to other mailing lists, they will receive an email to update their preferences. Make sure that "*On the Journey with Jesus 2011 Lenten Devotional*" is checked in order to receive it.

Persons who want to read the Daily Devotional online, may do so by visiting: www.igrc.org/lentendevotional. The day's devotional will always be at the top. A link will also be provided on a new Facebook group, "*On the Journey with Jesus Lenten Devotional*" to the devotional and members of the group will be automatically notified when the new devotional is posted. We hope you will put your feet on Jesus' road this Lent, and join us on the journey. --from the IGR Annual Conference

For more Lenten resources, please visit this link.

OUTREACH MINISTRIES

GoodSearch & **GoodShop**

Here's an easy way to raise money for [Methodist Children's Home](#)! Just start using Yahoo! powered [GoodSearch.com](#) as your search engine and they'll donate about a penny to the Home every time you do a search! Those pennies add up quickly - one organization raised over \$56,000 this year through their supporters' participation.

In addition, do all of your shopping through their online shopping mall, [GoodShop.com](#), where you can shop at more than 2,400 top online retailers and a percentage of your purchases will go to Methodist Children's Home, if you choose. You pay the same price as you normally would, but a donation goes to MCH!

You can also enroll in the [GoodDining](#) program. Eat at over 10,000 participating restaurants nationwide and you can earn up to 6% of every dollar spent on the meal as a donation for the Home. Click on the GoodSearch link above to get started raising money for the Home today!



Fifty were on hand in January – thanks to Sam Stone for sharing a devotional with everyone. The pizza was provided in honor of Debbie & Henry White in recognition of their support of **Badgers for Christ**.

The next lunch will be on February 15th at Noon.



RETHINK CHURCH CHANGE THE WORLD

RETHINK CHURCH is not a call to find a new theology, or to move away from our commitment to scripture, or to distance ourselves from our Wesleyan tradition.

It is a call to refocus our Church, to ask the question, "What has God called The United Methodist Church to be in the 21st century?" To see church in a way that is more aligned to scripture, and to be faithful to the tradition of John Wesley who believed the world was his parish. Visit this [link](#) to learn more.

The communion rail offering at the First UMC in McCamey this month goes in support of the Methodist Mission Home in San Antonio.

Please visit the [home's website](#) to learn more about how your gift is "*Giving all God's children a Faith, a Home, a Future.*"

EXCEL (a youth ministry supported by the McCamey Ministerial Alliance) will gather this month on the 15th at 7:00 p.m. The location will be announced.

Witness Ministries

December 30, 2011

First United Methodist Church of Iraan
First United Methodist Church of McCamey
Attn: Dr. Charles J. Alkula

Dear Pastor Alkula and church members:

United Methodist Communications is pleased to award First United Methodist Church of Iraan and First United Methodist Church of McCamey a renewal certification as an official **Welcoming**

Congregation for 2011. Because The United Methodist Church places a high value on radical hospitality as a vital ministry, we know you will want to celebrate this important achievement in your congregation by continuing to embrace newcomers and provide opportunities for discipleship through your welcoming lifestyle.

Enclosed is a new seal to add to your plaque. In addition, we have renewed your designation as a certified Welcoming Congregation on the denomination's Find-A-Church.org website, and your church's profile displays this certification.

We encourage you to visit Find-A-Church.org to update your church information with pictures, worship times, ministry listing and a word of welcome!

We hope you will continue to participate in annual renewal of the welcoming certification program so every member of your congregation can embrace welcoming as a lifestyle, and your church can maintain a dynamic welcoming ministry for all people. Details concerning the annual renewal process will be sent to you.

To help you strengthen and maintain a dynamic welcoming ministry in your congregation and to help you extend your welcome into the community and the world, we invite you to visit umcom.org/rethinkchurch and review the information and resources available. If you have not already done so, please share a church email address with us so you can receive email updates about Welcoming Certification and welcoming ministry training and resources.

On behalf of United Methodist Communications, we thank you for ensuring newcomers know the people of The United Methodist Church have ***open hearts, open minds and open doors.***

Sincerely,

Anthony M. Gooding
Coordinator, Welcoming Certification Program
United Methodist Communications



There are thirty-six congregations in the San Angelo District – fifteen of these (including Iraan and McCamey) have earned the Welcoming Congregation designation!

CALENDAR

First UMC – Iraan

Each Sunday –

Fellowship Time @ 9:00 a.m.
Worship @ 9:30 a.m.
Church School @ 10:30 a.m.
Convalescent Center @ 2:00 p.m.

Each Tuesday –

Ladies Bible Study, 10 a.m. @ the First Baptist Church in Iraan or at 4 p.m. @ the Iraan High School Library.

Each Thursday –

Coffee & donuts @ McCamey Convalescent Center, 9:45 a.m.

Other Events

Ad Board – February 8th @ 6:00 p.m.

Transfiguration Sunday – February 19th

Ash Wednesday Healing Service – February 22nd, 7:00 p.m. at FUMC – McCamey

Potluck Breakfast – February 26th @ 8:30 a.m.

First UMC – McCamey

Each Sunday –

Fellowship Time @ 9:30 a.m.
Church School @ 9:45 a.m.
Worship @ 11:00 a.m.
Convalescent Center @ 2:00 p.m.

Each Wednesday – Choir @ 7:00 p.m.

Each Thursday –

Coffee & donuts @ McCamey Convalescent Center, 9:45 a.m.

Other Events

UMM – February 6th @ 6:00 p.m.

UMW – February 13th @ 7:00 p.m.

Ministerial Alliance –

February 14th, 12:30 p.m. @ Benoit's

Badgers for Christ – Feb. 15th @ Noon

Excel – February 15th @ 6:00 p.m.

UMC Night Out– February 17th, 6:00 p.m. @ Benoit's

Transfiguration Sunday – February 19th

Ad Board – February 19th @ 6:00 p.m.

Ash Wednesday Healing Service – February 22nd at 7:00 p.m.

THANK YOU NOTES

Iraan

+Thanks to everyone for lending their culinary talents for the **monthly breakfast potluck!**

+Thanks to **Wanda Carpenter** for filling the pulpit during Pastor Charles' absence on January 15th.

+Thanks to **James Jordan** for helping with the year-end statistical report sent to the Conference last month.

+Thanks to **Kirke McKenzie** for putting away all of the outdoor Christmas decorations.

McCamey

+Thanks to **Donny Wiley** for filling the pulpit during Pastor Charles' absence on January 15th.

+Thanks to **Andy & Ruthie Andrews** and **Donny Wiley** for leading the efforts at the January Badgers for Christ lunch.

+Thanks to **Sam Stone** for being our speaker at the January Badgers for Christ lunch.

+Thanks to **Phil & Grace Moody** for supporting the January Badgers for Christ by providing the meal in honor of Debbie & Henry White.

+Thanks to Randy Brown for putting away the outdoor Christmas decorations.

+Thanks to **Mary Witcher** and **Bill Lester** for helping with the year-end statistical report sent to the Conference last month.

+Thanks to **Tandy Adams, Alice Kephart,** and **Jean Myrick** for helping with the McCamey Convalescent Center ministry efforts.

+Thanks to everyone who has been supporting the **community food pantry.**

+Thanks to everyone who responded with clothing items for **Billy Craig.** The generosity of the congregation was very much appreciated by the staff of the Crane Convalescent Center.

+Thanks to **Dennis Greer** (owner of the McCamey News) who donated McCamey Badgers