



# February/March TOWER TOPICS

## Tell Me Something Good

Grounding Ourselves in the Good News this Lent

Lent was originally a season for new converts to learn and prepare for their baptism on Easter. During that time, they would study what was central to Christianity. As we crafted this series, we studied what was central to Jesus' life and ministry: radical welcome, love for neighbor, care for the vulnerable, nourishment for the hungry, nonviolence in the face of injustice. At the heart of Jesus' teachings, we find liberation, love, mercy, and grace—all of which are meant to be very good news for us all.

Jesus' ministry can be described as “radical” which comes from the Latin word “radicalis,” meaning “root” or “ground.” Therefore, the good news should bring us back to our roots. Emulating Jesus and embodying his teachings should ground us in who God created us to be. Can we be “good news” people in a world too often burdened by bad news?

This Lent, let us remember that the good news really is *good news*. It is joyful—like fine wine saved for celebration. It grows like a mustard seed and smells like perfume poured from an alabaster jar. It tastes like bread passed endlessly through a hungry crowd. It sounds like laughter and feels like mercy. The good news is alive in the world.

We hope this series will provide fertile ground for conversation and worship, rooting our hearts and lives in the expansive goodness of God. This Lent, let the teachings of Jesus lead us forward. May the good news inspire us to take action in a world desperate to hear, see, and taste what is good.

- Pastor Scott



the good news is...

so good, it catches  
us by surprise

## Ash Wednesday

We will be celebrating Ash Wednesday with two opportunities to receive the imposition of ashes. (These are ashes applied to the forehead of Christ followers to remind ourselves that ultimately, we all live and die by the grace of God.)

**On the morning of Ash Wednesday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, Pastor Scott will be at the entrance to the Westside Parking Lot of First UMC for anyone who would like to drive through and receive their ashes. He will be there from 7:00 am to 8:00 am, as long as the weather is not snowy/icy.**

**At 6:00 pm that evening, we will gather for an Ash Wednesday Worship Service.** The theme of the service is "Tell me something good – all are invited" and is part of the larger Lenten series that you can read about elsewhere in this newsletter. (See the article "Tell me something good: Grounding Ourselves in the Good News this Lent".)

## March 1 - The Joy of Return

During February, we will be living through a beautiful experiment. We will see what happens when the 'Heart of the Church' is unleashed directly into our community. We will hear stories of redirected tithes feeding families, supporting local shelters, and surprising neighbors with grace.

But a Jubilee is a season, not a permanent state. On **March 1**, we will gather for a special service of '**Return and Celebration.**' On that Sunday, we will bring the offering plates back into the sanctuary. We will celebrate the 'Return' We will celebrate our return not just to our regular habit of giving to the church, but a return to our shared life together. We will share the data of where our hearts led us in February, and we will recommit ourselves to sustaining this congregation so that we may continue to be a base of operations "love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously" in Huntington.

Prepare your hearts for a celebration of what we did apart, and a joyful return to what we do together."

## Holy Thursday Service

We will be having a special **worship service on Thursday of Holy week – April 2, 2026** – to remember Jesus' last night with his disciples before the Crucifixion and Resurrection. The service will take place in our **sanctuary at 7:00 pm** that evening and will include Communion.

## Zeffy

### Donate to First UMC

First Church has partnered with a digital peer to peer network called Zeffy! It's a convenient option to make donations in the absence of a check or cash. We chose Zeffy because it has partnered with many other United Methodist churches and reputable charities. It also does not cost your or First Church anything, so 100% comes to First Church. You don't need to download an app. Just use the QR code and it will take you to the website! Go ahead, give it a try!



## Greeters

Thank you December and January greeters! Rick Brown, Hannah Foster, The Gerlach Family, Sandy Marshall, George Snyder, The Thomas Family, and Jennie Yoost. If you would like to serve as a greeter for Sunday morning worship, please call Ann Snyder, (937) 581-4788

-Ann Snyder

## Jewel City Self-Defense

Jewel City Self Defense is a free Women's and LGBTQ+ self-defense class offered to the community by local queer folks with martial arts training and real-world experiences. We teach not only grappling and striking, we also discuss legality, situational awareness, de-escalation tactics, local trends in hate crime, and how these intersect with various marginalized groups. For more information, email [JewelCitySelfDefense@proton.me](mailto:JewelCitySelfDefense@proton.me)

Class takes place at **7:30pm on Sunday** evenings in the multipurpose room. Please wear gym clothes and minors **MUST** be accompanied by a guardian.

## Holiday Missions

Many, many thanks to all of you who found ways to help others during the holiday season. You gave coats, gloves, hats, and food to refill the shelves at Cridlin. You brought blankets for Ebenezer's bassinet. You provided Christmas for over 20 Ebenezer Angels and Christmas cookies for all of them! You provided hot chocolate and socks and so much more for Allie's doorbell ministry. I am sure that I have no idea how much more this congregation has done. Keep up the great work and help us find new ways to help in February.

### RISE

Rise Against Hunger has notified me that our food bags have been sent to Burundi in the Rift Valley of Africa, a small country which suffers from an alarming degree of hunger.

-Jane Morse

## Cridlin Pantry

Cridlin Pantry needs our help! For the month of **February**, they need **96 boxes of saltines** and for **March**, **96 boxes of cereal**. Let's help feed our community!

## Dorcas Circle

Dorcas Circle will meet on **Tuesday, February 10 at 1:00pm**. Jennifer Chapman, from Lily's Place, will be our speaker. Join us!

- Cynthia Beal

## NA Meetings

Narcotics Anonymous meetings take place every **Friday night from 6:30-9:00 pm** in the Fellowship Hall.

## AA Meetings

Alcoholics Anonymous meetings take place every **Tuesday night at 7:30pm** in the Multipurpose Room.

## Doorbell Ministry

**THANK YOU** to the congregation and specifically, Amy Dillon, for bringing so many coats to service on November 30! These coats 'flew off the shelves' to people who were ecstatic to be able to have a warm coat and a hot cup of cocoa to survive the chilly days and evenings. A big thanks also to John & Brenda Tanner and Ron & Linda Hay for donating coats, Rick & Peggy Brown for donating essentials (like chapstick, lotion & snacks), and to Kelly Kinsey for donating snacks for our care bags! These gifts have been a great source of support and hope for our unhoused neighbors who come to our doors seeking assistance. So, a big **THANK YOU** goes out to all of you! Thank you so much for your support!

Here are how many people your donations have helped these past couple of months:

**December:** We helped 40 people/families eat, get to work, clean themselves, and keep warm. We gave away a whopping 39 care bags, 22 coats & sweaters, 37 cups of hot cocoa/coffee, 22 \$5 fast food gift cards, 75 \$1 bus tickets, 5 \$10 fuel gift cards, and loads of gloves, socks, and scarves!

**January:** As of writing this, we have helped 30 people/families this month. We have given away 21 care bags, 29 cups of hot cocoa/coffee, 16 \$1 bus tickets, 5 \$5 fast food gift cards, 2 \$10 fuel gift cards, and loads of socks, gloves, and hats!

I am still collecting donations for our new "doorbell ministry" to support those in need. If interested in donating, here is a link & QR code to our care bag Amazon wishlist!

Each care bag currently contains a pair of socks, a couple snacks, eco deodorant wipes and soap, bandaids, and first aid ointment, chapstick, hot hands, an emory board nail file, a comb, a toothbrush and toothpaste.

We are also seeking warm coats to hand out! If you have any questions, please email me at [firstumc@firstunitedmethodist.com](mailto:firstumc@firstunitedmethodist.com)

Thank you so much for your continued support!  
<https://a.co/cieUUGe>

-Allie Bright



## Youth Dates

### February 8 - Confirmation Begins @ 12pm

(Confirmation is a time where students dive deeper into what faith is and what it means to be a United Methodist. During this time, they decide if they want to become a full member of FUMC on Easter Sunday.)

### February 8 - Super Bowl Tailgate from 1:30-3:30pm

(I know many of you have plans for the Super Bowl, so I decided to change the time of Youth and make it FUN! Wear your favorite team's gear and we will have games and a lesson.)

### February 22 - Youth Sunday

(The youth will be in charge of the Sunday morning 10:45am service. Brunch after. No youth that evening)

### February 22 - Ice Skating

(We will go to Charleston to ice skate. Families are also invited to join.)

### February 27 - Winter Retreat

(Asbury Woods, 2nd grade - 12th grade)

### March 1 - No Youth

March 29 - No Youth (Spring Break)

April 5 - No Youth (Easter)

## Bulletin Art

A big thanks to all the kids who have shared their artwork with us! We have LOVED using your art as the cover of our bulletins each week! If you have art that you would like to have featured on our bulletin, please give your drawing to Katrina Lee or Schauna Chambers, or email it to Allie Bright at [firstumc@firstunitedmethodist.com](mailto:firstumc@firstunitedmethodist.com)

We want to see and share artwork from those of ALL ages!



## Children's Ministry Dates

February 18 - Ash Wednesday (no KFC)

February 22 - Kids Choir Sings in Service

February 27 through March 1 - Asbury Woods Winter Retreat

(2nd grade - 12th grade)

March 22 - Annual Easter Egg Hunt

(more information TBA)

March 30 through April 3 - Cabell County Spring Break



Youth Christmas Party



Children's Christmas Party - Decorating Pastor Scott as a Christmas Tree!

# CHOIR SCHEDULE

Our choirs had a BIG December of singing. We hope you enjoyed their efforts. The children (with the help of some very important adults) performed a musical, *Room for Christmas* on December 10; and in addition to lots of music throughout Advent the Sanctuary Choir presented an entire service of music on December 21<sup>st</sup>, complete with brass & percussion.

Now that we've had a nice holiday break, these singers are back at it, busily preparing for another semester of outstanding worship music. Check out our schedule below.

Wesley Kids Choir will be singing for church on Sundays: Feb 22, Mar 15 & Easter April 5<sup>th</sup>. They are also working on a Spring musical that will take place on Sunday evening, May 3<sup>rd</sup> in the form of a dinner and a show. Stay tuned for more details about this, but mark your calendars NOW so you'll be sure to enjoy this special event! If you know any children who might enjoy participating in our children's choir program please invite them. We have a terrific group of kids & we never fail to have a terrific time.

For those who are too tall for Wesley Choir, the Sanctuary Choir is actively recruiting new voices to join their merry music-making, so step right up and give choir a try! This group sings every Sunday for worship services and will conclude the singing year with a special program on May 17<sup>th</sup>. We'd love to welcome YOU if you're a singer! This group is very faithful and committed to creating memorable & meaningful worship experiences through music. Even if your schedule doesn't permit an every-week commitment, it's still possible to join this choir because anthems are scheduled for the entire semester, meaning it's easy to get plugged in for the dates you're available. So if you enjoy singing, please consider participating.

-Debbie Bradley

## Faithful Resistance

A Public Witness for Immigrant Justice

Date - February 25, 2026

In Person - Washington, DC (Capitol Hill UMC & US Capitol)

Online - Live Stream

The day will begin with worship, followed by a prayerful march to the U.S. Capitol. Members of Congress will join in lifting a faithful call for immigrant justice.

United Methodists are invited to join in person, online, or plan one in their local community on the same day.

**Debbie Bradley is wondering if anyone would like to either go with her or help plan/lead one locally**

For more information: [www.faithfulresistance.org](http://www.faithfulresistance.org)

## Wednesday Evening Bible Study

Our Wednesday night bible study is continuing with biblical videos and discussions on Wednesdays at 6:00pm in the church library (at the back of the Sanctuary). All are welcome to join, and for as many or as few evenings as you wish. We often watch Pete Enns, Richard Rohr, The Bible for Normal People, Bart Ehrman, and Adam Hamilton. Contact Grace Gooding if you have any questions.

gtg25701@gmail.com

-Grace Gooding

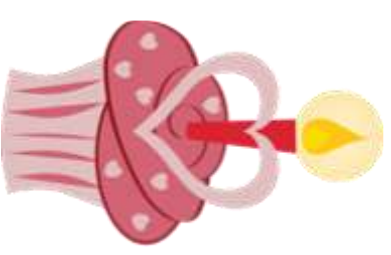
## The Vine

Young Adults meet on **Wednesdays from 6-7pm**. The Vine is a place where we come together to grow and connect back to the true vine that is Jesus Christ. We have great conversations and it has proven to be a safe space to question, discuss, and grow together. For more information, please contact Schauna Chambers at (304) 634-9684



# February

Sun    Mon    Tue    Wed    Thu    Fri    Sat



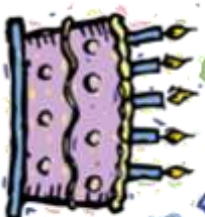
1 Communion 5-7pm Youth 7:30-9pm Self-Defense	2	3 7:30pm AA Meeting	4 11am Bible Study Cancelled	5	6 6:30-9:00 pm NA Meeting	7
8 12:00pm Confirmation 1:30-3:30pm Youth Tailgate	9	10 1:00pm Dorcas Circle 7:30pm AA Meeting	11 6:00 pm Trustees Meeting	12	13 6:30-9:00pm NA Meeting	14
15 7:30-9pm Self-Defense	16	17 7:30pm AA Meeting	18 7:00-8:00am Drive Thru Ashes 6:00pm Ash Wed. Service	19	20 6:30-9:00pm NA Meeting	21
22 Kids sing in service Youth Sunday Youth Ice Skating	23	24 7:30pm AA Meeting	25	26	27 Asbury Woods Winter Retreat Begins	28 Asbury Woods Winter Retreat

**Dinner Menu:**  
 Feb. 4 - Vegetable Soup & Chicken Nuggets for the kids  
 Feb. 11 - Spaghetti  
 Feb. 18 - Breakfast for Dinner  
 Feb. 25 - Pork Barbeque, Potato Casserole, Corn

- 02/01 Yeon Choi
- 02/02 Leslie Adkins
- 02/04 Jean Fredrick
- 02/04 Paxton Brown
- 02/07 Jim Cummings
- 02/07 Jax O'Roark
- 02/08 Heather Metz
- 02/09 Karen Shanholtzer
- 02/12 Forrest Wamsley
- 02/13 Ashley Davis
- 02/14 Alex Nelson
- 02/17 Scott Henry
- 02/18 Justin Legg
- 02/18 Harriett Evans
- 02/20 Willa May Weekley
- 02/20 Bill Archer
- 02/20 Vangie Bradley
- 02/20 Rick Brown
- 02/21 Drew Cummings
- 02/21 Matthew Allen
- 02/22 Eric Cummings
- 02/23 Jeanette Bailey
- 02/23 Fenton Cummings
- 02/24 Evie DeMuth
- 02/24 Jordan Fulford
- 02/24 Watson Stefanides
- 02/26 Linden Chiles
- 02/26 Ron Hay
- 02/27 Drew Adkins
- 02/27 Troy Jones

# MARCH

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat



## Birthdays

1 12pm Fellowship Meal No Youth	2	3 7:30pm AA Meeting	4	5	6 6:30-9:00pm NA Meeting	7
8 5-7pm Youth 7:30-9pm Self-Defense	9	10 1pm Dorcas Circle 7:30pm AA Meeting	11 6pm Trustees Meeting	12	13 6:30-9:00pm NA Meeting	14
15 <i>Kids sing in service</i> 5-7pm Youth 7:30-9pm Self-Defense	16	17 7:30pm AA Meeting	18 6pm Finance Meeting	19	20 <i>Tower Topics</i> <i>Articles Due</i> 6:30-9:00pm NA Meeting	21
22 Easter Egg Hunt 7:30-9pm Self-Defense	23	24 7:30pm AA Meeting	25	26	27 6:30-9:00pm NA Meeting	28
29 7:30-9pm Self-Defense	30	31 7:30pm AA Meeting	<p><b>Dinner Menu:</b>            March 4 - Ranch Chicken, Mac &amp; Cheese, Steamed Broccoli            March 11 - Soup (tbd)            March 18 - Breakfast for Dinner            March 25 - Hamburgers &amp; Hot Dogs, French Fries</p>			

03/02	Edna Brooks
03/04	Charles Neighborgall III
03/05	Carter Bacon
03/07	Linda Hay
03/09	Belle Thomas
	Parks Ward III
03/10	Bert Fulks
03/13	Scout Arthur
03/14	Sophie Bright
	Cordie Jo Canterbury
03/15	Daniel Maue
03/16	Winnifred Chiles
	Shelby Nelson
03/17	Ken Wolfe
03/20	Caroline Chiles
	Suzanne Forsythe
	Katie Fulks
03/22	Pat Daugherty
	Karla Viglianco
03/23	Michelle Adkins
03/24	Lynn Cummings
	Susan Nickels
03/26	Diana Archer
	Ian Bowman-Vidal
	Jonathan Perry
03/27	Alec Cyrus
03/28	Norah Gerlach
03/29	Nancy Crum
	Rebecca Hamilton
	Vern Reichenbecher
03/31	Julie Henry

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Pastor: Scott Sears  
Music Director: Debbie Bradley  
Director of Youth & Young Adult  
Ministry: Schauna Chambers  
**Director of Children's Ministries:**  
Katrina Lee  
Finance Secretary: Amy Ward  
Church Hostess: Susan Nickels  
Office Manager: Allie Bright

**Sunday Worship Opportunities**

Small Groups 9:30 a.m.  
Morning Worship 10:45 a.m.



## Next Tower Topics Deadline: March 20

### In Our Thoughts and Prayers

#### In Our Thoughts and Prayers

*Eternal God! Grant us gratitude enough to look backward and be thankful; courage enough to look forward and be hopeful; faith enough to look upward and be humble; kindness enough to look outward and be helpful. Together let us pray...For those grieving, sick, or homebound,*

Randall Adkins, Dawn Aikin, Greg Archambault, Mike Archambault, Kathy Bartram, Tabitha Berry, Jeff Blankenship, Jack & Sally Bogers, Chase Childers, Chris Chiles, Debbie Conley, Mark Cornell, Mel Cummings, Jackie Eplion, Janet Foss, Brody Fulks, Bob Ganzer, Mike Goodall, Donna Griffith, Olivia Haken, Jim Hamilton, Sonny Hammer, Al & Lynn Hurt, Brian Justice, Andy King, Emma Mace, Clarence Martin, Jane McColgan, Stephen McGill, Beth McVey, Bob Palmer, Nancy Palmer, Family of Jack Patrick, Christie Payne, Jenny Reichenbecher Ellis, Janet Rowe, Marlene Sheets, Harlan Smith, Dan Smith, Ed & Alice Stone, Fred Tallman, Brenda Tanner, Jean White, Carolyn Waggoner, Gene Weekly, Joe Welch, Steve Williams, Carole Wilson