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# THE FLAME

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## Kids' M&Ms Field Trip



**Wednesday, March 11th Kids' M&Ms will take a field trip to tour the new facilities of the Ponca City Animal Shelter. They will be taking treats and food for the animals (cats & dogs.) If you would like to donate treats or make a monetary donation, please have them to the church no later than 3:00 PM Wednesday, March 11th.**



**Daylight savings time (or as I call it that extra hour of sleep I really need-ed) will begin on Sunday, March 8th. Remember to set your clocks forward an hour before you go to bed on Saturday.**

**I just know we will all be on time!  
 If you are early, we have coffee.**



**Spring Break will be observed  
 March 16-20,  
 All Sunday & Wednesday  
 evening activities will be  
 canceled that week.**

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Doc Slater provides a Sunday morning children's moment.



Team 3 was created to evaluate all aspects of our church's life and ministry. One issue that was raised and addressed is our main church sign. After a couple of months discussion, Team 3 approved and presented a new LED Sign design to the Trustees on February 11<sup>th</sup>. The Trustees voted to share this with the congregation and approved us to begin looking for funding for the project. Part of the expense could be addressed with Memorial gifts, but we will need funds outside that source. The sign materials and cost will be about \$18,000. The sign is 7'2" at its pinnacle and 9'10" wide at its base. The LED message center will be fully programmable and offer multiple message opportunities. The sign will come with a full 5-year warranty. If approved and purchased it will be placed at the site of the current sign.



## HOW IS IT WITH YOUR SOUL?



Pastor Don Griffin

Back in the days of John and Charles Wesley and the class meetings, members would be challenged with the question: "Brother (or Sister) how is it with your soul?" Perhaps that question comes across as quaint or archaic in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. In a world that stresses physical health, emotion and mental well-being, is there still room for questions about a person's spiritual well-being? Is spirituality just a manifestation of a person's mental and emotional make-up, or is it something more and quite distinctive in and of itself? At the beginning of the Lent season, I believe this is a question worth examining.

At this point, I guess I need to share with you that I'm using the term "soul" and the term "spirit" to be synonymous. I know many will argue with me on this point being the soul (nephesh in Hebrew) is a living human being. Living beings by nature are finite and the "spirit" is often defined as eternal or immortal. You can spend a lifetime studying different philosophies and theologies and how they view the "soul" or the "spirit", but for my purpose

in this article I am using them to mean basically the nonphysical and emotional make-up of humans. To me, the spirit of each person transcends our physical world and seeks that which is greater than itself and unseen: God. It is the spirit in us that is created in the image of God and how we connect with the divine and with others seeking the divine.

The question, "How is it with your soul?" is seeking the person to assess their spiritual well-being in their relationship with God and with God's creation. Jesus proclaimed that the entirety of prophets and laws in the Jewish faith was summed up with the command to simply love God and love others as we love ourselves. How is it with your soul would question how we are doing with that simple command. How is your relationship with God going? Are you feeling connected to guidance of the Holy spirit in your daily life? Do you know Jesus better today than you did last month or even a year ago as you've sought to learn more about him and make his ethos (guiding teachings) a part of your everyday life? Do you respect and love all of God's creation and seek to walk upon this earth with reverence for it and your place among it? Do you honor yourself as a distinctive child of God, fully loved and accepted by the divine, regardless of your faults? Do you love others in the same way, that they are a distinctive child of God full loved and accepted regardless of their faults? How is it with your soul?

Lent calls us to a time of self-denial and reflection as we prepare for a remembrance of Jesus' pas-

sion, death and resurrection. It is a forty-day period of examining the well being of our spiritual life. I am convinced that a big problem in the world of "Christianity" is people who understand doctrine, dogma and have what they consider an honorable agenda, but who are sick in their souls. People who may love religion but fail in loving God, loving themselves as God's children and loving others in the same way. You can be physically well and spiritually on death's door. I'm convinced that much of the hatred in our culture is a symptom of people who are very sick in their souls, even to the point of death.

Your souls, your spirits, are of vital importance. Make time to spend with God. Seek God in worship. Seek God in meditation. Seek God in prayer and reflection. Seek God in yourself. See God in others. This is the key to being well in your soul. I pray this time of Lent will bring you to a sublime place you have never imagined or previously obtained in your spiritual life.

Loving and serving Jesus,

Pastor Don



For behold, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land.

~Song of Solomon 2:11-12



2020						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
1 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship Children's Church Communion Food Sack Sunday 5:00 TYT	2 5:15 Carillon Bells 6:30 Bill Elliott's Bible Study	3 8:45 Intercessory Prayer 5:30 Care Team	4 3:30 Kids' M&Ms 4:45 Confirmation Class 5:30 P&P 6:00 YMM 7:00 Chancel Choir	5 10:00 Ladies' Bible Study UMW 1:30 Deborah 7:00 Miriam	6	7
8 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship 5:00 TYT <b>Daylight Savings Time Begins</b>	9 5:15 Carillon Bells 6:30 Bill Elliott's Bible Study	10 8:45 Intercessory Prayer 11:00 Team 3 meeting with Rev. Belase 6:00 Trustees	11 3:30 Kids' M&Ms 4:45 Confirmation Class 5:30 P&P 6:00 YMM 7:00 Chancel Choir	12 10:00 Ladies' Bible Study	13	14
15 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship	16 10:00 Youth Service Project 5:30 Friendship Feast 6:30 Bill Elliott's Bible Study	17 8:45 Intercessory Prayer 12:30 Youth Service Project	18 10:00 Youth Service Project Spring Break No Evening Activities	19	20 10:00 Youth Mystery Trip <b>First Day of Spring</b>	21
<b>SPRING BREAK</b>						
22 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship 5:00 TYT	23 4:30 PM Patches 5:15 Carillon Bells 6:30 Bill Elliott's Bible Study	24 8:45 Intercessory Prayer	25 3:30 Kids' M&Ms 4:45 Confirmation Class 5:30 P&P 6:00 YMM 7:00 Chancel Choir	26	27	28
29 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship 11:00 UMW Board Meeting 5:00 TYT	30 5:15 Carillon Bells 6:30 Bill Elliott's Bible Study	31 8:45 Intercessory Prayer				

Ask the LORD for rain in the spring, for he makes the storm clouds. And he will send showers of rain so every field becomes a lush pasture. Zachariah 10:1



**PRAYER CORNER**

While fasting with the body, brothers and sisters, let us also fast in spirit. Let us loose every bond of iniquity; let us undo the knots of every contact made by violence; let us tear up all unjust agreements; let us give bread to the hungry and welcome to our house the poor who have no roof to cover them, that we may receive mercy from Christ our God.



**NOVELS AT NIGHT**

We have read some very interesting books so far and this month is no exception. This month we will read and review *Haben: The Deafblind Woman Who Conquered Harvard Law* by Haben Girma.

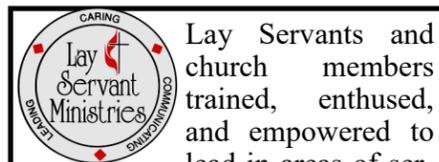
Haben defines disability as an opportunity for innovation. She learned non-visual techniques for everything from dancing salsa to handling an electric saw. She developed a text-to-braille communication system that created an exciting new way to connect with people. Haben pioneered her way through obstacles, graduated from Harvard Law, and now uses her talents to advocate for people with disabilities.

Haben takes readers through a thrilling game of blind hide-and-seek in Louisiana, a treacherous climb up an iceberg in Alaska, and a magical moment with President Obama at The White House.

Warm, funny, thoughtful, and uplifting, this captivating memoir is a testament to one woman's determination to find the keys to connection.

Haben grew up spending summers with her family in the enchanting Eritrean city of Asmara. There, she discovered courage as she faced off against a bull she couldn't see, and found in herself an abiding strength as she absorbed her parents' harrowing experiences during Eritrea's thirty-year war with Ethiopia. Their refugee story inspired her to embark on a quest for knowledge, traveling the world in search of the secret to belonging. She explored numerous fascinating places, including Mali, where she helped build a school under the scorching Saharan sun. Her many adventures over the years range from the hair-raising to the hilarious.

"Stop assuming we're incompetent," Girma told *Know Your Value*. "We are talented; we work hard. It's just ableism, the assumption that people with disabilities are inferior, that gets in our way."



Lay Servants and church members trained, enthused, and empowered to lead in areas of service, outreach, caring in the local church. All Lay Servant Ministries training events are open to any interested lay person or clergy for continuing education or lifelong learning opportunities (teens to adults.) Training is available April 25 in Perry, and September 19 in Enid. More information & applications are available in the office. Cost \$45 includes materials & snacks.

**MARCH BIRTHDAYS:**

Steve Fields	03/02	Francis Rhodd	03/14	Erika Martin	03/21
Ryan Goodman	03/03	Colten Seidel	03/15	Knox Campbell	03/22
Wyatt Hollingsworth	03/03	Drew Markle	03/16	Krista Harbeson	03/24
Samantha Dooley	03/04	Daniel Bergfield	03/17	Marcia Caudle	03/28
Betsy Pendleton	03/07	Madison Bookout	03/17	Chrisa Markle	03/30
Jill Jackson	03/09	Cathie Gilliland	03/17		
Amanda Biery	03/10	Marilyn Sanders	03/17		
Larry Lenhart	03/12	Craig Poet	03/18		
Don Whitfill	03/13	Larry Davidson	03/19		
Kelly Campbell	03/14	Dorothy Dewan	03/20		
Laura Evans	03/14				



The children in 2nd–5th grade who participate in Kids' M&Ms (Wesley Choir) will be singing for worship this Sunday, March 1st. Please meet in the Sanctuary at 9:00 am to rehearse.



**My vision for Youth Minister/Director**

I believe in higher education in the church. We live in a very competitive world with every day presenting more of a need for young people to find God and continue their education and relationship growth. I hope to be a role model for young people to see the importance and relevance of having a strong relationship with Christ. I take the roles of leader and educator very seriously and hope to make a difference wherever possible. Helping young people grow and develop is an important part of my life. My Early Childhood Development degree gave me a better understanding as to how to teach children with diverse backgrounds and learning styles. Also, my Agricultural Leadership degree has given me the ability to bring practical issues and leadership skills to my career life while utilizing fun activ-

ities to inspire student interest and learning. I believe a lot can be learned from hands-on activities whereby students are actively engaged in a wide variety of experiences. Learning is always more enjoyable when how you learn is fun and realistic. I hope to bring these experiences to the youth at our church. Finally, and probably most important to why I want to be a Youth Minister/Director, is my enthusiasm to do this work. I find church and education highly motivating and I believe those around me see how important this is to me. Teaching young students gives me the best of all of my worlds and I think brings the best out of me. I look forward to the challenge and to making a positive difference in the lives of many children and their families in the future.

Heather Kubik



Hey Youth, this month we are focusing on Spring Break! We will still be doing YSS at 9 am every Sunday morning and TYT every Sunday night at 5 pm. Below you will find information on Spring Break service projects March 16th -20th!

- Monday- 10 - 2 (Lunch at 12)
- Tuesday- 12:30 - about 3:00
- Wednesday- 10 - 2 (Lunch at 12)
- Friday- Mystery Trip (10 am – ??)

Please have your youth at the church by 10 am on Monday and Wednesday and then by 12:30 on Tuesday. Kids will need \$10-\$15 for lunch on Monday and Wednesday. Tuesday lunch will not be provided, so please eat before coming. Friday they will **NOT** need any money. I will let parents know about what time we will be back Friday.

\*Your youth need to come to at least 2 out of 3 of the service projects to go on the mystery trip on Friday.

Lindsey





### TEAM 3 REPORT

#### A GOOD SOLDIER

*Thou therefor endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 2 Timothy 2:3 KJV*

Team 3 did meet this month. We are very pleased about lots of good things happening in our Church and our community. There is more news coming but we are not quite ready to report the “next wave” yet. For changes to occur, appropriate planning, permissions and commitments have to happen. Be patient please.

Since the report is short I am enclosing a copy of one of my devotions this week. It can't be a surprise that this showed up this week. Please pay close attention to the last couple of sentences. If you are unsure what, if any gifts you have, I am sure you have some, we will certainly be happy to help you discover them.

*Because of God's grace, Paul wanted Timothy to understand that the Christian can and should endure much hardship as a good soldier of Jesus. Consider the hardship a soldier of your country endures for your sake.*

*He leaves family and friends behind. He leaves career advancement behind. He leaves his personal dreams behind. In their place, he endures hunger, sleep deprivation, and constant threats and danger. Why would someone put himself through something like that?*

*Partially because he loves his country – the country that granted him his freedom to have a family, to pursue a career and to chase his dreams. Partially because he knows that if he doesn't go, someone else might not and his nation's borders might be insecure. And partially because he wants to keep his family, friends, and community safe. In all three instances, he's motivated by love and a sense of duty.*

*This the life that every Christian person is called to – except that your calling is to advance and preach the Gospel of Christ so the next generation can know His grace. You sacrificed and endured hardship because He sacrificed and endured for you. If you haven't been living the life of a soldier of Christ, reenlist in His army and pick up your spiritual weapons.*

~Barbour Books /Daily Wisdom for Men /2018 devotion collection

Doc Slater (for Team 3)



Rev. Derrek Belase will meet with our Team 3 at our next called meeting on March 10<sup>th</sup> at 11 a.m. Derrek is the past Director of Discipleship and current Director of Connectional Ministry for our Annual Conference. I have worked with Derrek on several occasions and find him to be a tremendous resource for the local church. I was thrilled he was able to work us into his very busy schedule. Derrek is also a clergy delegate to General Conference in May. This meeting is open to any who wish to attend.

Pastor Don



As “President Pat” of the Music Committee, I would like to extend a grateful

### Thank you

to all who helped to make the “Meet-the-Composer” weekend such a wonderful and moving experience. Trying to individually name everyone is a little daunting and forgetting someone would be unforgivable. Know that your contribution to the weekend was exactly the needed element and appreciated by all, either performing or attending.  
~Dee Kutz

#### Deepest Sympathy

To the Chris Humble family on the loss of his mother.

To the Andy Tubbs family on the loss of his mother.

#### FRIENDSHIP FEAST

We are looking for one good, willing and able person to help serve on a team with Bill and Barbara Bridwell. This is for one 3rd Monday evening once every 3rd month and takes about an hour of work. The 1st time will be Monday, March 16th. Talk to Bill or Wayne Moore.

THANKS!



#### UMW NEWS

The United Methodist Circle of Care's mission is to provide Christian healing, hope and help to children and families in need. Our UMW has chosen to donate to this Mission and Ministries Program. Circle of Care no longer receives apportionments but receives donations from churches and others to provide these much-needed services. Circle of Care has three major parts to the program.

#### FOSTER CARE SERVICES

There are about 7,444 children in Oklahoma's foster care system. On any given day there are 150 children in need of a foster home, which has yet to be found. When a foster home is not available, these children stay in county shelters. In response to the lawsuit that was brought against DHS, the use of county shelters is being phased out. This has created an urgent need for more foster homes in Oklahoma. Circle of Care works to recruit, train, and provide ongoing support to foster parents. We have a contract through DHS to provide these services anywhere in the state. There are 182 children placed in Circle of Care homes. Circle of Care is currently the second largest foster care agency in Oklahoma.

Consider sponsoring a child. Financial sponsors help provide food, clothing and necessities to children, youth and families across the state. Sponsors also support birthdays, holidays and other celebrations.

#### PREPARATION FOR ADULT LIVING

The PAL program provides a safe place to live and support services to youth aged 18 and older who need support to complete their high school and/or college education. Kids come to this program from a variety of circumstances, including:

- Aging out of foster care
- Referral from a United Methodist Church
- Referral from a behavior modification facility
- Referral from a state agency

The common link between the students in this program is the lack of family support needed to complete their education and pursue a life of independence. While participating in the program each person is able to live in their own apartment with food, transportation, and emotional support as they complete training, get a degree or earn their GED and find employment. Preparation for Adult Living campuses are currently located at the Boys' Ranch in Gore, at the Children's Home Campus in Tahlequah and at the Frances Willard Home in Tulsa.

#### PEARL'S HOPE

In late September 2008, Pearl's Hope Transitional Housing opened at the Frances E. Willard Ministry Center in Tulsa. Opel Thorpe had a vision, a hope really, that a shelter for homeless women and their children could become a reality in Tulsa. It was a need she saw, a need that she shared with Dr. Kathy Cook, then the Executive Director of United Methodist Circle of Care.

While visiting a shelter that cared for homeless women but could not accommodate their children, Ms. Thorpe said to Dr. Cook, “My hope is that someday I will be able to provide for a place like this, but one that would be able to keep the women and their children together.”

With the help of David Battles, Executive Vice-President of the Oklahoma United Methodist Foundation, Ms. Thorpe kept that hope alive and upon her death, her estate was placed with the Foundation to provide for just such a program. Circle of Care worked closely with Battles and the Foundation to ensure that Ms. Thorpe's dream would finally become a reality. And it did! In late September 2008, Pearl's Hope Transitional Housing opened at the Frances E. Willard Ministry Center in Tulsa.

Because too many shelters cannot accommodate large families or boys over the age of 13, many families are forced to place their children with friends or relatives while mothers work to get back on their feet. Fortunately, the spacious living environment of the cottages at the Frances E. Willard Ministry Center allows Circle of Care to accept families of most any size and children (boys and girls) up to age 18. Pearl's Hope provides housing and an array of support services for single mothers and their children. Most importantly, Circle of Care assists in keeping families together.

