

# THE FLAME

Volume 51, Issue 8

August 2021

**Look at the birds.**

**They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns,  
for your heavenly Father feeds them.**



**And aren't you far more valuable to him than they are?**

**Matthew 6:26 (NLT)**



**For our children, schools, teachers,  
administrators and other workers  
Saturday, August 28th  
7:00 - 9:00 AM  
Walk begins at the  
Performing Arts Center  
and proceeds south and around  
War Memorial Park**



**All Church Round Up  
Sunday August 29th, 6:00 PM  
Hot dogs, hamburgers, and  
drinks provided.  
Please bring covered dishes  
(sides and desserts),  
lawn chairs and friends  
Send up prayers that the pavilion will be  
ready for use. Be prepared to participate  
in the First United Methodist Olympic  
Games. Tricycle races anyone?**



## From the Pastor's Desk



Pastor  
Don Griffin

A few weeks ago, I shared the story of the demise of John the Baptist. The forerunner of the Christ, the one who baptized Jesus and laid the groundwork for his world changing ministry was executed for daring to speak out about Herod's immoral relationship with his brother's wife (Mark 6: 14 – 29). Though John the Baptist and Jesus are cousins, it is not clear how much contact they had prior to Jesus arriving at the Jordan for John to Baptize him. It is known that many of John's disciples left following him to follow Jesus after his appearance on the scene. I think we could gain from considering John and Jesus and what their relationship teaches us about God's kingdom.

It is thought by many Biblical scholars that John belonged to a group of people known as the Essenes. This group of Jewish people existed from 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE to 1<sup>st</sup> century CE, which includes the time of Jesus. They separated themselves from the world because of their perception that it was evil. Essenes were found throughout the Roman empire and

there were thousands who belonged to this movement. They were strict observers of Jewish law and focused on ceremonial washing (Baptism) as the key element of life and symbol of change.

You are familiar with the Dead Sea Scrolls, the ancient manuscripts that were discovered between 1947 and 1956 in eleven caves near Khirbet Qumran, on the northwestern shores of the Dead Sea. From the ruins of the Essene settlement at Qumran, you can easily see the caves where the scrolls were found. Though we do not know for sure, John may very well have connection to this group. He certainly shared a strict observance of Judaism and like the Essenes was identified as "a voice crying out in the wilderness."

Unlike John, Jesus did not withdraw himself from the culture of the first century Israel. John had a very restrictive diet and refrained from wine unlike Jesus was often known to enjoy the diet and drink of the day. Jesus who was known to move freely amongst all social classes and seemed especially drawn to those who most of society had turned their backs on. John preached a hard message calling for repentance. Jesus' message certainly called for change but was more focused on love. They were certainly different but both found rejection by the prominent Jewish sect of the day, the Pharisees, and eventually found themselves on the wrong side of ruling power of Rome.

***"For John didn't spend his time eating and drinking, and you say, 'He's possessed by a demon.' The Son of Man, on the other***

***hand, feasts and drinks, and you say, 'he's a glutton and a drunkard, and a friend of tax collectors and other sinners!'" Matthew 11: 18 - 19***

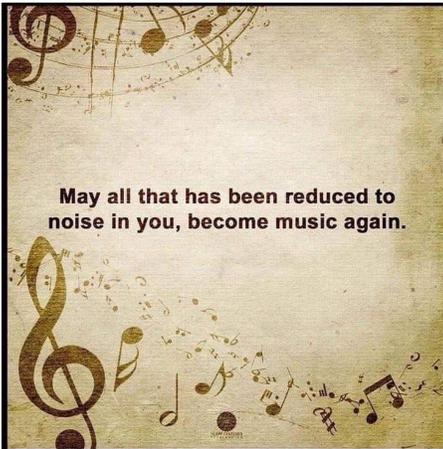
Jesus and John had different styles of messaging for God, and both were found to be lacking by those who were threatened by their message. The Pharisees saw what they wanted to see in John and in Jesus. They found fault in the person and did not focus so much on the message that they were presenting. If they did focus on the message at all, it was to pick it apart and find reason to further condemn them. What can we learn from John and Jesus and their interaction with the religious leaders? Are we ever guilty of not hearing God's message because we are so busy trying to find fault in the messenger?

I believe that each one of us has a calling and a purpose to serve in God's kingdom. I know I have learned from the youngest participant in a children's message, the long serving person and newest repentant sinner who has found Jesus. I believe this new day we find ourselves in is not devoid of God's message of hope, but are we willing to hear it and respond? Perhaps if we spend less time focused on the human faultiness of each other and instead listen to the words that God may be speaking through them we could find this new direction for God's kingdom. I pray we are not guilty as the Pharisees were back in the time of John and Jesus, judging the messenger and not hearing the message.

In Jesus' Love,  
Pastor Don

# Music Notes

by Joycelynn Davidson



## Coming up...

**August 15**—Chancel Choir  
in the loft

**August 18**—7:00 pm  
1st fall rehearsal for  
Chancel Choir

**September 1**—3:30 pm  
Kid's M&Ms / First fall  
Prayer & Praise at 5:30

**September 14**—2:00 pm  
1st fall rehearsal for  
Carillon Bells

**October 17**—Children's  
Sabbath—Kids sing

**December 12**—Chancel  
Choir Christmas Cantata

## Chancel Choir

It seems like we just began our break, but time marches on. We will have a busy fall of preparing for worship and the Christmas season so bring a friend and come get your song on. We would really like to welcome some new faces to the choir loft.

*All are welcome.  
No auditions.*

We are a group of people who love to sing praise to God. With mixed ability and experience, we aim to positively impact the worship experience each Sunday.

*Come and join us.  
We meet every  
Wednesday at 7:00 PM  
beginning August 18.*

## Carillon Bells

Do you have a ringing in your ears? Do you need a physical therapy session weekly? Have you always wanted to laugh and cut up in class? Then Carillon Bells might be just for you. Yes, there are notes on the page and yes it helps if you know how many beats they get. Reading music is a plus but not totally necessary. If you are interested, contact me or any of the ringers. We'll get you set up to ring starting in September.



*We have had fun with a  
handbell ensemble this  
summer. They will debut  
their skills on August 15  
during worship.*

## Kid's M&Ms

Starting date is September 1st, so keep Wednesdays 3:30—5:30 open when scheduling your fall activities. We always have a great time playing, singing, ringing, crafting & learning.



Plan to come worship with us on October 17th. That Sunday is Children's Sabbath and we love to have the children participate in worship with scripture, song, and serving as acolytes & ushers. Many of you are members of other churches but please make an exception on this day.



Hey youth and youth parents, the months seem to keep speeding up! I can't believe that school starts this month. With the youth starting school, we will continue our girl talk Bible study on Sundays at 4pm, and our boy talk Bible study on Wednesdays at 4pm. I am going to be on vacation from Sunday August 15th through Sunday Au-

gust 22nd, therefore we will NOT have any events that week.

St. Yootz day is coming up on August 28th. If you or your youth plan on going, please let me know ASAP so that I can plan on how many I will have. The cost is \$25 per person, but if you can not afford that please let me know and we will work something out.

Can't wait to see everyone this month!

Blessings to you!  
Lindsey McGee



**Support Your Youth Group!**



**Don't Tell Me**

Don't tell me I won't fail  
For it might not be true.  
Just tell me you'll still love me  
Even if I do.

~Kalli Dakos

August 1	Girl Talk	4:00 PM
August 4	Boy Talk	4:00 PM
August 8	Girl Talk	4:00 PM
August 11	Boy Talk	4:00 PM
August 18	First Day of School	
August 25	Boy Talk	4:00 PM
August 28	St. Yootz Day	10:30 AM



# Adventure Days Come to an End!



The Summer Adventure days came to an end with a trip to Stillwater Trampoline Park. There were lots of activities for the kids, and they all had a great time.



The words "I'm bored" were never heard!



Foam pit anyone?



Just how high can you jump?





What do you bet all of these kids slept really well that night?



### Mothers' Day Out Needs Toys

We have a wonderful mission within our church known as Mother's Day Out. They meet 3 days a week from 10-3, serving children from 6 weeks to pre-kindergarten.

However, they are in need of **"GENTLY USED TOYS"**. At last look.....we are pretty sure the toys on hand have been here at least 14 years.

So if you are a parent, grandparent, or individual who has some toys laying around, OR if you feel the call to donate new toys, MDO could sure use them and appreciate all that is given! **(Please NO STUFFED ANIMALS, OR**



### Saturday in the Park with Jesus

It is time to catch the excitement. Construction of the pavilion has opened the door for outreach in a whole new way. Starting in September we are hoping to plan several events for Saturday evenings where we invite the public to partake of food (provided by food trucks) and entertainment provided by the church.

If you have an idea of what entertainment you would like to see, please let us know.

We hope to have your support, your presence, and your prayers as we start this new adventure.

T'was the night before school,  
when all through the town,  
the parents were cheering  
- a robust sound!!

By nine, kids were washed  
& tucked into bed where  
memories of homework  
filled them with dread!

New pencils, new folders,  
new notebooks too!  
New teachers, new friends -  
their anxiety grew!

The PARENTS giggled  
when they learned of this fright  
and shouted "GO TO BED!!!!"  
IT'S A SCHOOL NIGHT!!!

Annette Melner





### Exodus House

The Exodus House is a key part of Criminal Justice and Mercy Ministries. Its mission is to offer opportunities for ex-offenders to have a healthy, nurturing, and accountable environment where they may begin their life again. Individuals are accepted into our program while still incarcerated through an application process. We have individualized treatment plans and upon completion of our 6 month program they can take all furniture and household goods to their new residence. While living at Exodus House, residents are responsible for paying their utilities. Rent is not charged but monies are collected each month and deposited into a savings account and returned to them upon leaving or graduating. Exodus Houses currently have a 1.7% recidivism rate over the past 4 years.



### Oklahoma City – Exodus House

In 2019, Exodus House Oklahoma City served 24 residents of which 14 were male and 10 were female. We had 14 weekend visiting children and 6 children living onsite full time. Out of this group, there were 11 graduations and completions along with 8 extensions. The ethnicity breakdown of the 24 is four American Indians, three Black Americans, fifteen Caucasians and two Hispanic.

### FISH

(Fellowship, Inspiration, Sharing and Helping)

Want to go fishing with us? We would love to have you!!! Friday, August 27<sup>th</sup> we are going to share our dishes with the people at the Exodus House in Oklahoma City. Exodus House is part of CJAMM which is a connectional ministry of our Oklahoma Conference. It is always good to know what ministries we are a part of so we can better be the hands and feet of Christ. We will leave the church at 10:00 am. On our way to the Exodus House we will stop in Edmond at Inspirations Tea Room

([www.inspirationstearoom.com/home](http://www.inspirationstearoom.com/home)) to share a meal (dutch treat, of course) and fellowship. Following a leisurely and enjoyable lunch (and a cup of tea – maybe a little browsing in the tea room shops) we will go to the Exodus House (2:00 pm) to deliver the dishes and visit with Robin Wertz the site director. We should be back to the church by 4:30. The cost is \$5 a person to cover the cost of gasoline. Please make reservations with Becky Hightower ([bjhigh5@gmail.com](mailto:bjhigh5@gmail.com) or 580-716-1625) by Sunday, August 22 so we can make any needed reservations. All are welcome!

### Children’s Sermon

A pastor was giving the children’s message during church. For this part of the service he would gather all the children around him and give a brief lesson before dismissing them for children’s church.

On this particular Sunday, he was using squirrels for an object lesson on industry and preparation. He started out by saying, “I’m going to describe something, and I want you to raise your hand when you know what it is.” The children nodded eagerly.

“This thing lives in trees [pause] and eats nuts [pause] ...” No hands went up. “And it is gray [pause]... and has a long bushy tail [pause]...The children were looking at each other, but still no hands raised. “And it jumps from branch to branch [pause]... and chatters and flips its tail when it’s excited [pause]...”

Finally one little boy tentatively raised his hand. The pastor breathed a sigh of relief and called on him. “Well,” said the boy, “I know the answer must be Jesus...but it sure sounds like a squirrel to me!”

~A. J. Hinshaw





**2021**

**SUN**

**MON**

**TUES**

**WED**

**THUR**

**FRI**

**SAT**

1 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship Communion Food Sack Sunday 11:15 UMW Officers' Meeting 4:00 Girl Talk	2	3 9:00 Intercessory Prayer 10:00 Handbell Ensemble 2:00 Grace Collins Memorial	4 4:00 Boy Talk	5	6	7
8 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship 4:00 Girl Talk	9 6:30 Bill's Bible Study	10 9:00 Intercessory Prayer 10:00 Handbell Ensemble 6:00 Board of Trustees	11 4:00 Boy Talk	12	13	14
15 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship	16 6:30 Bill's Bible Study	17 9:00 Intercessory Prayer 10:00 Handbell Ensemble	18 <b>First Day of School</b> 7:00 Chancel Choir Rehearsal 5:00 UMW Unit Meeting	19	20	21
22 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship	23 9:00 PM Patches 6:00 Friendship Feast 6:30 Bill's Bible Study	24 9:00 Intercessory Prayer 10:00 Handbell Ensemble	25 4:00 WOW 7:00 Chancel Choir Rehearsal	26	27	28 7:00 Prayer Walk
29 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship 6:00 All Church Round-up	30 6:30 Bill's Bible Study	31 9:00 Intercessory Prayer 10:00 Handbell Ensemble				

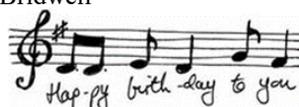
**AUGUST BIRTHDAYS**

Peter Hightower  
Blaine Markle  
Matt Biery  
Steffi Cowan  
Ann Bandy  
Nicholas Biery

08/04  
08/06  
08/08  
08/11  
08/12  
08/14

Pat Gray  
Marge Parker  
Bill Bridwell

08/20  
08/23  
08/27



First United Methodist Church  
 P.O. Box 71  
 Ponca City, OK 74602  
 (580) 762-1681  
 Fax: 580-762-1839  
 fumcpc41@gmail.com  
 www.fumcpc.org  
 Like us on Facebook:  
 PoncaCityFirstUnitedMethodistChurch  
 Follow us on Instagram: fumc\_pc



## CHECK IT OUT!

Our Trustees have been hard at work making numerous repairs and improvements around the church. Progress seems slow on the pavilions, but that is a normal part of the building process. The new doors on the north side of the building look great. The repair of the roof over the education wing, new exterior lighting, and other improvements are all in the planning stage. When you see one of the Trustees, be sure to thank them for being good stewards in taking care of our property.



### ARE YOU A DOODLER?

Do you find yourself absentmindedly filling in the holes of letters on a printed page? We have a hole that needs to be filled. Hope to see you in church soon. You are missed!



### Haiku for August

Classrooms call anew;  
 Let us all obey God's Rule  
 In Church, Home and School  
 Wayne Moore



It has been a blessing receiving the prayers, cards, phone calls, visits, and food from this church family. Thank you so much. Everything was greatly appreciated.

Love,  
 Marvis Soucek.

## OUR STAFF

### SENIOR PASTOR

Pastor Don Griffin  
[smugrad93@gmail.com](mailto:smugrad93@gmail.com)

### MUSIC DIRECTOR

Joycelynn Davidson  
[fumcmusic315@gmail.com](mailto:fumcmusic315@gmail.com)

### CHILDREN'S DIRECTOR

Cathie Gilliland  
[fumc.kids@outlook.com](mailto:fumc.kids@outlook.com)

### YOUTH DIRECTOR

Lindsey McGee  
[pcfumcyouth2020@gmail.com](mailto:pcfumcyouth2020@gmail.com)

### MDO & NURSERY DIRECTOR

Jordan Meador  
[mothersdayoutfumc@outlook.com](mailto:mothersdayoutfumc@outlook.com)

### ORGANIST

Debra (Debbie) Rue  
[Cougarue@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Cougarue@sbcglobal.net)

### BUSINESS MANAGER

Sheila Foxworthy  
[sheila.foxworthy@gmail.com](mailto:sheila.foxworthy@gmail.com)

### CHURCH SECRETARY

Dianne Clark  
[fumcpc41@gmail.com](mailto:fumcpc41@gmail.com)

### CUSTODIAL

Larry Davidson  
[ldlarrydavidson@yahoo.com](mailto:ldlarrydavidson@yahoo.com)

# August 2021 Daily Prayers



## for our YOUTH

- Our Sons/Daughters, Grandsons/Granddaughters  
& all the ones we love.

1

But Jesus said, "No, go home to your family, and tell them everything the Lord has done for you and how merciful he has been." ~Mark 5:19

Savior God, I pray XXX will have the confidence to tell his friends about everything You Lord have done for him and how merciful You have been.

2

I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified. ~1 Corinthians 9:27

Almighty Father, may XXX live a disciplined life according to Your Word so after telling others of You, she is not disqualified.

3

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness gentleness and self-control. ~Galatians 5:22-23

Precious Lord, please fill XXX with the fruit of the Spirit - love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

4

He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. ~Mark 4:39

Loving God, may XXX experience Your peace in all aspects of her life, trusting You will calm the storms and turmoil she may experience.

5

"If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ ...he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing." ~1 Timothy 6:3-4

Holy Father, may XXX not be puffed up with conceit, disagreeing with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ. May he recognize his ignorance and seek godly wisdom.

6

"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. ~Luke 16:10

Blessed Father, may XXX be trustworthy and faithful in the little things in life even when no one is around to see so she is prepared to be trusted with much more.

7

For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it. ~Luke 10:23-24

Almighty God, may XXX have eyes that see You and ears that hear You. May his thoughts, words and actions, be pleasing to You.

8

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ~1 John 4:7

Everlasting Father, please bless XXX with the conviction to love the members of her community, simply because it is Your command to do so.

9

You see me when I travel and when I rest at home. You know everything I do. ~Psalm 139:3

Loving Lord, I pray You fill my child with Your joy as he/she goes about his/her daily tasks today

10

Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise. ~Hebrews 10:23

Sovereign God, please deepen XXX's faith. May he hold fast to the knowledge You are ever-faithful; Your promises never fail.

11

So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. ~Romans 8:1

Gracious Father, I pray XXX will have the faith to walk according to Your Spirit and not her flesh as there is no condemnation for those who belong to You.

12

Nehemiah said, "Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength." ~Nehemiah 8:10

Blessed Lord, I pray XXX will always know You as his strength

13

I cry out to God Most High, to God, who vindicates me. ~Psalm 57:2

Everlasting God, despite the obstacles, please stir XXX to turn to You for the confidence and courage to fulfil all You planned for her to accomplish today.

14

"And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" ~Luke 10:25

Omnipresent Father, may XXX desire to inherit eternal life. May he actively strive to walk in step with You.

15

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. ~John 14:27

Savior Lord, please give XXX the gift of peace of mind and heart, so she is not troubled or afraid.

**16**

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. ~Isaiah 41:10

Eternal God, may XXX have the courage to face down his fears and slay them, trusting You are always with him.

**17**

Finishing is better than starting. Patience is better than pride. ~Ecclesiastes 7:8

Loving Father, please teach XXX to relinquish her pride and be patient in all situations, for patience is better than pride.

**18**

"But godliness with contentment is great gain." ~1 Timothy 6:6

Sovereign Lord, may XXX chose a lifestyle of godliness with contentment.

**19**

"Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, ..." ~1 Timothy 5:1-2

Mighty God, please infuse XXX with respect and love for others. May he be kind and cordial, treating others with care as he would family.

**20**

"Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man...?' ... And Jesus said to him, 'You go, and do likewise.'" ~Luke 10:36-37

King of Kings, may XXX be like the good Samaritan. May she show mercy and compassion to the weak and the hurt.

**21**

See that no one pays back evil for evil, but always try to do good to each other and to all people. ~1 Thessalonians 5:15

Awesome Father, please stir XXX's hear to refrain from paying back wrong for wrong. May he be kindhearted, always striving to do what is good.

**22**

... Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ... yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God' ~Daniel 3:28

Almighty Lord, I pray that XXX will have the confidence to set aside the commands of man that negates Your commandments. May she not worship or serve any god except You.

**23**

"He brought me out into a broad place; he rescued me because he delighted in me." ~Psalm 18:19

Adonai, I thank You for delighting in XXX and keeping him safe.

**24**

Do not remember the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to your love remember me, for you, LORD, are good. ~Psalm 25:7

My God, my Lord, for the sake of Your goodness, please forgive XXX's rebellious sins. Remember her in the light of Your unfailing love.

**25**

"Ah, Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you. ~Jeremiah 32:17

Lord of Peace, please give XXX the unshakeable confidence that You prevail in all situations; nothing is too difficult for You.

**26**

He answered and said, "But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods" ~Daniel 3:25

Majesty, may XXX's life be a testimony of Your love, grace, mercy and faithfulness. May the world see her walking unharmed even in the midst of battle.

**27**

"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer." ~Psalm 19:14

Blessed Father, may the words and meditation of XXX's heart always be acceptable in Your sight.

**28**

And he is not served by human hands ... Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. ~Acts 17:25

Holy One, please deepen XXX's knowledge and understanding of You. May he know You as the Creator who gives life and breath to everything, and satisfies every need.

**29**

Listen to the words of the wise; apply your heart to my instruction. ~Proverbs 22:17

Merciful Father, may XXX hear Your Words, and apply her heart to Your instruction.

**30**

A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. ~Proverbs 15:1

Almighty King, please keep XXX cognizant that in all situations, even when his anger is justified, a gentle answer is better; it diffuses wrath and is pleasing to You.

**31**

You shall love... your neighbor as yourself." ~Luke 10:27

Omniscient God, please keep XXX aware of the hurt and needy around her. Prompt her to respond to them, loving them as she loves herself.