

THE FLAME

Volume 52, Issue 3

May 2022

Second Annual Picnic in the Park

(More pictures on inside)



Cathie Gilliland taught her last Children's Moment. Cathie presented her all time favorite story to the children and young adults, who returned for one last story.





Pastor
Don Griffin

Many are concerned about the new Global Methodist Church that is going to launch on May 1st. This is a product of the Wesley Covenant Association, a group of clergy and laity who describe themselves as “spirit filled” and “orthodox.” This group has decided that since General Conference has been postponed until 2024, they are moving forward with starting their new denomination. Over the next few years, you will hear much about the United Methodist vs. the Global Methodist church. A called Annual Conference session in October 2022 will begin to officially address this for the Oklahoma Conference. As I write this article, I am aware of only one church in Oklahoma that has begun the process to disaffiliate, and it is uncertain at this time if they will go with the GMC or be independent.

Since the beginning of the Jesus movement around 33 c.e., there have been groups of people splintering off because they felt those “in power” were not Biblical enough. This was even before the New Testament as we know

it was compiled. The faith consisted of people sharing their stories about Jesus and witnessing to how he had transformed their lives. The early faith was within the context of Judaism and understanding Jesus as the long-promised Messiah. As the Jesus movement became more distinct from Judaism, the structure of what we call the church began to take form. All along the way, there have been groups of people splintering off from others because they felt their understanding of what it means to be the church is better.

How does this new denomination affect us at First Church Ponca City? It does not really affect anything right now. It will be 2024 or beyond before we are asked to make any decisions about the direction of our congregation. Most lay people serving in the United Methodist Church are oblivious to the discord that is found in many pastors and church leaders. Though some will point to one issue as the precipitating event that has led us to this moment, the reasons are much deeper and ultimately come down to control and power. In the coming months, I expect that we will have public meetings within our church to discuss these issues and how they may affect us over the next few years. My advice to you now is not to be anxious about it.

Ponca City First United Methodist has much before us right now to fulfill our calling as God’s people. We must be in discernment about how we can better connect with the people of our community, in particular those who belong to the younger generations. Three years ago, on my first Sunday as your pastor, I looked out over the congregation and was immediately struck by the fact 70% of individ-

uals attending were 75 or older. I knew then that we needed to start focusing on the age groups that were missing. Covid has only sped this process of decline for all churches, and you can certainly see it in our sanctuary. While some of my colleagues want to argue about issues that might divide us, I am concerned about growing the church I love. If things do not change, where do you think our congregation will be in ten years? Twenty years?

We live in a new post-Covid and post-Christian world. People no longer feel it necessary to be part of a church. Many have even begun calling themselves “spiritual, but not religious.” This is the world we live in, like it or not. Our city was hit hard twenty years ago when Conoco/Phillips took so many high paying jobs away. They are not coming back. How can our congregation connect with this new world in which we live? That is our challenge. Do not get caught up in the distractions of politics, be they church or secular. Let us focus on our commitment to Christ, our commitment to each other and begin to bring God’s kingdom to our Ponca City and Kay County community.

Pastor Don





Kids' M&Ms last day together was spent at Ambucs Park at the lake. They loved their time outdoors! They were joined by the congregation for a fellowship meal of hotdogs and side dishes.



Carillon Bells have been on a hiatus while I continued with my treatments. It is my desire at this point to rehearse a couple of months and ring for worship during June. Anyone interested needs to let me know. Rehearsal time can be negotiated.

Chancel Choir

It has been a blessing to have Marta Sullivan fill in during my absence. I can't thank her enough

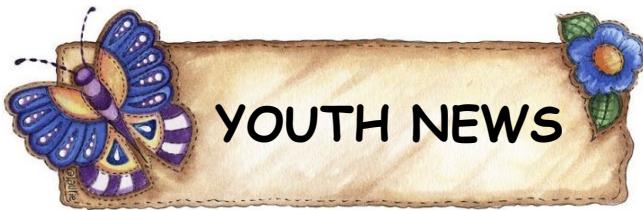
for being available! We will continue rehearsing during May and June on anthems that are familiar (not necessarily easy.) We will be celebrating Mother's Day, Ascension, Pentecost and Trinity Sundays during this time. Rehearsals are at 7:00 pm on Wednesdays and all are welcome.

Update: It is so good to be back in worship with all of

Special thanks to Laurie Seidel, Desta Parks, Julianna Pease, and Pam Elliott who were all faithful in their assistance and participation every Wednesday. We could not do it without you!

By Joycelynn Davidson

you! I am still without any immunities... My first immunization shots will not begin until August. I have a PT scan the end of May to see how effective the T-cell transplant was. As of now, I still need to be careful of any and all infectious disease so I will continue to keep my distance and wear a mask. Your prayers, cards and calls have been awesome and I thank God for you.



Hey Youth and Parents,

This month will be slightly busy. Before I get into what's happening this month I want to remind everyone if you have NOT filled out the emergency contact, medical release, or the code of conduct please get with me for the forms to fill out. I need them done ASAP.

This month we will kick off Sunday morning Sunday school starting on May 1st. We will be talking about different men and women of the Bible.

We will also be starting a once a month fundraiser breakfast on Sunday mornings. This fundraiser will be on the 3rd Sunday of each month. The first one will be May 15th at 8:30 AM.

We will end our WOW Bible study on May 18th. Then we will kick off summer as we start TYT on Sunday June 5th a 5:00 PM. Summer events will start in June.

I will send out more information when it gets closer. Like I said its a busy month! Can't wait to see everyone there!

Blessings,

Lindsey McGee



Youth prepared and served
Wednesday Evening P&P.



Palm Sunday

Holy Week Begins





Members and friends gather to say goodbye to Cathie Gilliland.



Cathie will be wearing a new hat soon. She and Lonnie are looking forward to the birth of their first grandchild, Jenna.





Memories to last a lifetime.



Someone new will come, but Cathie will never be replaced.



Picnic at the Park



A bit
windy,
but oh so
much fun!





Vacation Bible School

Rocky Railway
Jesus' Power Pulls Us
Through
July 18th—21st

Gineta Swanson has volunteered to lead VBS this year. Your help is needed. Please let Gineta know if you are available to teach or assist in other ways.



Relationships

Modern times are fast and busy,
 Zipping past to make us dizzy,
 Jamming thoughts along the way
 To a crowded close of day
 Where God waits for us to pray.

God sends fair and sunny weather.
 People laugh and play together.
 Holding hands they plan and stroll
 Blindly past the lasting goal:
 Heaven's life within the soul.



LET'S PLAY A GAME

Can you guess who this member is?

- ◆ Can spin wool into yarn on a spinning wheel.
- ◆ Swam a total of 17,000 laps in a YMCA pool.
- ◆ Is 1/4 Italian.
- ◆ Worn braces at age 40.
- ◆ Was once on the Catholic Church membership role.

Have fun guessing. The answer will be in next months *Flame*.

Bill's Bible Study will resume class on Monday, May 9th at 6:30 PM in the Fellowship Hall. If you have been thinking about becoming a part of a Bible study group, this would be an excellent time to join.



NEW TRADITION

Andy Tubbs did an excellent job building the cross used during Holy Week this year. On Good Friday, members of the congregation were asked to put a sin or concern they wanted to give to God on a piece of paper which they put on the cross before leaving the service. On Easter morning the cross was empty and members filled it with flowers in celebration of the risen Christ.

Thrills and fancies draw and taunt us
 To mistakes that later haunt us—
 Passion, lust, intense desire,
 Fame and fortune to acquire
 Only fan and fuel the fire.

God sends rain and stormy weather.
 People cannot stay together,
 As they blame and bash and bite
 In the struggle of their night.
 Nothing seems to stop the fight.

Broken ties, unspoken error,
 Darkened dreams of future terror
 Send the soul to search for peace
 And a hope for sin's release,
 Hurt to heal and hate to cease.

God sends sun and rain together
 To create the rainbow weather
 Where relationships are healed,
 And the key to them revealed:
 God is King, and we must yield.

— David L. Hatton, 3/14/1992



UMW has a new name to keep up with the changes in the times and in the church. UMW Is now United Women of Faith and we are! We invite any woman who

- ◆ finds meaning in her church and is drawn to its fellowship,
- ◆ who wants to combine fellowship with study, worship, and outreach opportunities,
- ◆ who feels she has gifts that are to be shared with others,
- ◆ who seeks a supportive community to affirm her own sense of purpose and commitment to God...

to join us as we serve.

In April we passed out 100 sack lunches to the students at East Middle School and some to students from other schools who ride the bus to East. The children were so appreciative that we have decided on May 6th to increase that 75 sack lunches. We invite you to come help us assemble the sacks and pass them out. We will meet in the fellowship hall at 1:00 PM on the 6th to make the lunches.

On June 7th at 9:00 am in the pavilion we are going to start work on our outside nativity scene. We invite anyone in the



church to come help us. Bring your saws, your sanders, your KNOWLEDGE and join us in creativity and fellowship. Do we know what we're doing? That's why we need your expertise and HELP!

Watch out for the flamingos on May 8th as we show our support for the Child Development Center. The Child Development Center was started many years ago by the Church Women United to help working mothers find affordable day care for their children so they could work to support their families. If you are playing in the benefit golf tournament for the Child Development Center please watch out for our sponsorship of that also.

Women of Faith will meet Monday, May 9th at 12:00 PM. Bring a sack lunch, drink and lawn chair. We invite you to join us any time!



Think About It!

Do you have an idea for an issue of the Flame? Something you remember about the church, or interesting in your life, a story about your childhood or how you came to accept Christ as your savior...Please share with us! You can send it in an email, or call and I will interview you over the phone.



Thank You, Thank You!

What a fun night! I so enjoyed my retirement party! Thank you to all who put it together, and to all who came! I loved having my young kids and my old kids together! Thank you for the cards, letters and gifts; they are overwhelming! As my son David used to say, "my mom plays with kids and uses her kindergarten skills to make a living!" I love paper, markers, paint, glue, storybooks and games! I have been blessed to have a career where I can use the things I love to tell the Greatest Story and be surrounded by children, who are always thirsty for living water! May you always see God in the most unsuspecting objects!

To those of you who gifted to the love offering – THANK YOU, the money will be spent going to Oregon to meet our new granddaughter! To those of you who gave cards and wrote such appreciated words – THANK YOU! Your words are treasured. To those of you whom have supported me over these many years – THANK YOU! You have strengthened me, taught me and helped me to grow.

THANK YOU!

Cathie





| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THUR | FRI | SAT |
|--|--|--|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|-----|
| 1 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship 11:30 Nurture Committee/Pot Luck 6:00 Difficult Words | 2 9:00 Staff Gathering | 3 9:00 Intercessory Prayer | 4 4:00 WOW 7:00 Chancel Choir | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship 6:00 Difficult Words | 9 9:00 Staff Gathering 12:00 Women of Faith 5:30 SPRC 6:30 Bill's Bible Study | 10 9:00 Intercessory Prayer 6:00 Board of Trustees | 11 4:00 WOW 7:00 Chancel Choir | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship 6:00 Difficult Words | 16 9:00 Staff Gathering 6:30 Bill's Bible Study | 17 9:00 Intercessory Prayer | 18 4:00 WOW 7:00 Chancel Choir | 19 | 20 Last Day of School | 21 |
| 22 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship 5:00 TYT 6:00 Difficult Words | 23 9:00 Staff Gathering 5:30 Friendship Feast 6:30 Bill's Bible Study | 24 9:00 Intercessory Prayer | 25 7:00 Chancel Choir | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship No Evening Activities | 31 Memorial Day Office Closed  | | | <p>May flowers are opening And leaves unfolding free; There are bees in every blossom And birds on every tree.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">~Emily Bronte</p> | | |
| MAY BIRTHDAYS: | | | | | | |

| | | | |
|---------------------|-------|------------------|-------|
| Troy Sledge | 05/01 | Spencer Young | 05/15 |
| Kay Whitlock | 05/04 | Grace Collins | 05/16 |
| Charlene Carmichael | 05/06 | Don Nuzum | 05/16 |
| Lindsey McGee | 05/06 | Khaliah Rhodd | 05/16 |
| Suzi Lenhart | 05/07 | Nancy Murphy | 05/17 |
| Tamara Behara | 05/09 | Pam Elliott | 05/20 |
| Claire Scott | 05/11 | Marlys Cervantes | 05/21 |
| Haylee Kyler | 05/12 | Linda Long | 05/24 |
| Dale Petty | 05/12 | Connie Scott | 05/26 |

Happy Birthday!



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Mother's Day Out

Mother's Day Out staff and children were busy in the month of April. We provided care for 26 children within 17 different families, held an Easter egg hunt in classrooms and the Welcome Center, took the toddlers on strolls down Grand Ave, visited the Ponca City Library for story time, and enjoyed the Oklahoma wind in the church playground. Thank you FUMC for allowing our Mother's Day Out program to continue to bless families in Ponca City.

-J. Meador



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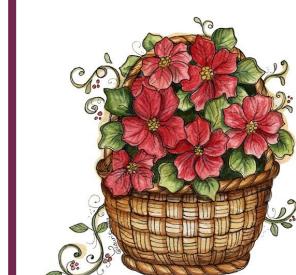
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Haiku for May

God bless our mothers
 They are always in our hearts
 Spreading LOVE around.

~Wayne Moore

May2022

Daily Prayers



for our YOUTH

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

1

The LORD is my light and my salvation-- whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life-- of whom shall I be afraid? ~ Psalm 27:1

Eternal Lord,
May (name) declare - You, Lord are my light and my salvation; You are the stronghold of my life. Amen!

2

Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone. ~ Romans 12:18

Jehovah God,
Please preserve (name)'s family ties.
Protect his family from irreparable discord. May he learn to live peacefully with all people. Amen!

3

Each of you has been blessed with one of God's many wonderful gifts to be used in the service of others. So use your gift well. ~ 1 Peter 4:10

Sovereign Father,
Please reveal (name)'s innate gifts and talents. Teach her how to develop, nurture, and use them well for Your glory. Amen!

4

"If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him." ~ James 1:5

Everlasting Lord,
Please help (name) remember that however complex his studies, if he asks, You will grant him wisdom and help him grasp, understand, retain, and apply the information. Amen!

5

Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. ~ Philippians 2:4

Father God
Please give (name) a heart that is sensitive to the needs of others. Help her overcome any self-centered tendencies. Amen!

6

A joyful heart is good medicine, but a broke spirit dries up the bones. ~ Proverbs 17:22

Abba Father,
May (name) cultivate a cheerful heart, so he is a joy to those he interacts with. Amen!

7

But with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. ~ 1 Corinthians 10:13

Gracious Lord,
When (name) faces temptations, prompt her to pause, seek You and find the way of escape that You always provide. Amen!

8

He who walks with the wise will become wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed. ~ Proverbs 13:20

Savior God,
May (name) be one to seek wise friends and not be a companion of fools. Amen!

9

Make sure you don't take things for granted and go slack in working for the common good; ~ Hebrews 13:16

Almighty Father,
May (name) not take life's joys for granted. May she recognize Your hand at work and continually celebrate and praise Your name. Amen!

10

But each of you has your own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that. ~ 1 Corinthians 7:7

Precious Lord,
May (name) not envy other people's gifts. Please make his gifts apparent and direct him on how to develop and cultivate them to glorify You. Amen!

11

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. ~ Philippians 4:13

Loving God,
When (name) faces difficulties in her studies or at work, remind her that she can do all things through Christ who strengthens her. Amen!

12

See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. ~ 1 John 3:1

Holy Father,
Whenever (name) feels unloved, please remind him that You know him and love him, simply because he is Your child, and You are his Father. Amen!

13

Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus. ~ 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Dear Lord,
Please help (name) develop an attitude of gratitude. May she recognize she always has reasons to thank You and not take her blessings for granted. Amen!

14

And what does the LORD require of you?
To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.
~ Micah 6:8

May (name) act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with You. Amen!

15

And when He comes, He will convict the world in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: ~ John 16:8

Everlasting Father,
Please convict (name) regarding sin, righteousness, and judgment. May she feel a sense of disquiet when she is not aligned with Your will. Amen!

16

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. ~ Ephesians 2:10

Loving Lord,
Please open (name)'s eyes to see the good works You intend him to accomplish. Stir his to use his gifts and talents for Your divine purpose and glory. Amen!

19

Before I formed you ... before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations. ~ Jeremiah 1:5

Blessed Lord,
Whenever (name) feels inadequate or insignificant, please remind her how special she is to You. You created, redeemed, and set her apart to make a difference in the world. Amen!

17

Don't do as the wicked do, and don't follow the path of evildoers. ~ Proverbs 4:14

Sovereign God,
Please shield (name) from the influence of the wicked. May she remain vigilant and not follow the path of evildoers.
Amen!

18

For God is not a God of confusion but of peace. ~ 1 Corinthians 14:33

Gracious Father,
Whenever (name) is confused about what to do, may he intentionally seek Your wisdom, knowing that You are the God of insight, understanding, and peace
Amen!

20

As for these four youths, God gave them learning and skill in all literature and wisdom.

~ Daniel 1:17

Everlasting God,
Please give (name) learning and skill in all literature. Give him supernatural wisdom and understanding in all his endeavors.
Amen!

21

I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works

~ Psalm 139:14

Jehovah Father,
May (name) know unequivocally that You designed every part of her mind and body. She is therefore lovingly and wonderfully made. Amen!

22

For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength. ~ Philippians 4:13

Savior Lord,
Please grant (name) an optimistic attitude, one of joy, unbridled hope, inspiration, and enthusiasm. May he never forget he can do all things in Christ who strengthens him. Amen!

23

Now return to the LORD your God, For He is gracious and compassionate, Slow to anger, abounding in lovingkindness. ~ Joel 2:13

Eternal God,
Whenever (name) goes astray, please remind her no sin is unforgivable and it is never too late for her to return as You are slow to anger and always ready to welcome her back home. Amen!

24

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. ~ Matthew 5:9

Loving Father,
May (name) be a peace-lover and a peacemaker who resolves misunderstandings and arguments according to Your word. Amen!

25

... those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance.

~ Hebrews 9:15

Sovereign Lord,
please deepen (name)'s faith so she is convinced that the eternal inheritance of Your promises applies to her. Amen!

26

Do not love the world nor the things in the world. ~ 1 John 2:15

Mighty God,
may (name)'s heart be tuned to You and only You. May he not love the world or the things of this world.
Amen!

27

Take hold of my instructions; don't let them go Guard them, for they are the key to life.

~ Proverbs 4:13

King of Kings,
Please instill in (name) a hunger for spiritual knowledge. May he firmly take hold of Your instructions and guard them, knowing they are the keys to a righteous life. Amen!

28

The LORD is good, a strong refuge when trouble comes.. ~ Nahum 1:7

Awesome Father,
When scared, frightened, or afraid for any reason, may (name) remember to call upon You because You Lord are good. You are his refuge in times of trouble. Amen!

29

Conduct yourselves with such honor ... they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us. ~ 1 Peter 2:12

Almighty Lord,
May (name) be inclined to conduct herself with honor, so others see her good deeds which glorify You, and they are drawn to You. Amen!

30

When you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.

~ Proverbs 3:24

Adonai,
please bless (name) with peaceful, refreshing, and sweet rest when he sleeps, free of nightmares or fear. Amen!

31

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.
~ Ephesians 6:1

My God, my Lord, please remove all willful rebellion from (name)'s heart.
May she be obedient, one who respects and obeys her parents and is law-abiding. Amen!