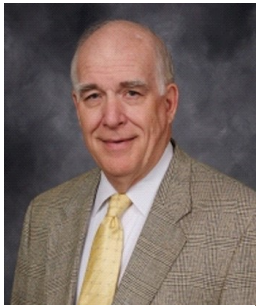




May 25, 2020

## FORESTBURG UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Since we are “staying at home” due to the Coronavirus, and are not sure when we will gather again in the sanctuary as a worshipping congregation, the Administrative Council felt that it would be essential once we were past Easter, to have a Weekly Update. Our Weekly Update will have a "Ben's Pen", an "Order of Worship" for the weekly Sunday worship. Our online worship service can be found each week on our website ([www.forestburgumc.com](http://www.forestburgumc.com)) or on our Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/ForestburgUMC/](http://www.facebook.com/ForestburgUMC/)). The update will also include announcements, prayer concerns (if you have a prayer concern, please call or text Pastor Ben at 214-403-5574 or leave a message at the church), and other items of interest for the congregation. If you need assistance in viewing the online worship, please feel free to contact Theresa Gentry prior to Sunday morning. Pastor Ben usually has the worship posted by Saturday evenings.



**Pastor Ben Shinn**

### From Ben's Pen

Prayer is important in our spiritual journey and in a world that is having to deal with a raging coronavirus pandemic. In Ken Gire's book, *Between Heaven and Earth*, he asks the question, “Who prays.” He then goes on to answer his own question, “In a word everybody. Or almost everybody. People who pray come from all walks of life. From the very young to the very old. From teenagers to parents of teenagers. From monks to married couples. From Jews to Christians. From Catholics to Protestants. Popes to prostitutes. American Indians to agnostics. Yes, agnostics. Even atheists. Surveys indicate that nearly one in five of them prays daily. Hedging their bets, maybe. Or perhaps they are drawn to prayer by a tidal pull on the ragged shores of their soul, a pull so irresistible it overcomes even the seawalls of their own unbelief.

The more appropriate question, maybe, is not who prays...but who doesn't? Since the dawn of time people have prayed for all kinds of reasons and to all kinds of deities. They have prayed to Amon Ra, the Egyptian sun God, and to the pantheon of petty and capricious gods of the Greeks and Romans. Some have prayed to the earth; others to the sky. Some have prayed to Baal, the Canaanite deity; others to Yahweh, the God of the Old Testament. Some have prayed to Allah; others to Jesus. Some have prayed to a “higher power”; others to patron saints. Some to angels; others to Mary, mother of God.

And though the object of their prayers differs, sometimes dramatically, the subject of their prayers doesn't. Not substantially, anyway. Regardless of their faith, or lack of it, all people seem to realize the tenuousness of their humanity and their dependence on someone or something greater than themselves. Who of us, however faithful or faithless, doesn't pray in a moment when the lump on the breast turns out to be malignant? Or in another moment when an officer calls to report an accident in which a loved one has been critically injured? Who doesn't pray at the birth of a child? Or the death of a parent? Or at the wedding of a daughter? Who of us doesn't pray when a radio bulletin tells a nation its president has been shot or when a television broadcast tells a community that one of its children has been kidnapped? Who of us doesn't pray when the young men and women of our country are sent into battle? Or when a baby has a temperature of 106?”

One of our deepest questions is whether prayer makes a difference. Many years ago in a small, poverty stricken house in London, there lived a hard working woman. Her back was bent from years of standing day after day over a washtub, this being her only source of income. As she worked, she constantly prayed for her son who was later to run away to sea while only a teenager. She believed that God answers prayer and with this faith she never gave up hope that her son would one day give his life in service to God. After she died, her son, by then a slave trader, became the “sailor preacher” of London. John Newton brought thousands of people to Christ. His hymn “Amazing Grace,” which has been sung by people all over the

Continued on page 2.

### Points of Interest

Ben's Pen, FUMC Welcomes New Pastor, Plan for Reopening—June 14,  
Weekly Giving, Prayers/Praises, Order of Worship for Sunday—May 24, Birthdays/Anniversaries.

world, is today as meaningful as when he sat down and wrote the words --- words which were his testimony of the grace and forgiveness of God.

John Newton's words reached a skeptical man of great learning named Thomas Scott, who had said that he did not need a Savior. Later Scott's writings led many people to be followers of Jesus Christ, including William Cowper. Cowper's poetry and prose in turn touched many people lives, one being William Wilburforce, the British statesman who went on to work so vigorously for the abolition of slavery. The chain of influence goes on as people read and are inspired by the words of these men. Little did John Newton's mother dream that the prayers for her son would be used by God to go on and on touching so many lives.

So, yes your prayers do make a difference. Pray for those you love. Pray for Forestburg. Pray for our country and planet. Pray for peace on earth, and for health and healing in the homes of humankind. Pray for those who are working to reign in the coronavirus. You never know what difference your prayers will make!

### **Forestburg UMC Welcomes Reverend Greg Parr!**

The SPR Committee met with Reverend Todd Harris, our D.S., and Reverend Greg Parr Monday evening via Zoom. The announcement was made that Reverend Parr will be our new pastor at Forestburg UMC. We are extremely excited to welcome him, his wife, Melody, and their family to our congregational family at Forestburg. They will reside in our parsonage and will be very active in every aspect of our church and community life. Reverend Parr is a Local Licensed Pastor. He will be serving in a Full-Time capacity. He is excited to be coming to Forestburg, stating that this opportunity to minister to us is "a dream come true for him." The following is his biographical information.

"Reverend Greg Parr felt the call to ministry in 2004 when he began hosting a Sunday night worship service in his hometown church of Nocona, Texas. At that time he attended classes and became a lay speaker for the church and even taught courses for the District. He was then encouraged to begin the journey towards full-time ministry by starting the candidacy process for local licensed ministers in 2011. In December of 2011, he began serving Vashti UMC as the youth leader. He completed licensing school in May of 2013, and has served as Senior Pastor to both Bellevue and Vashti United Methodist Churches since July of 2013.

Greg is a native of Nocona, Texas. He holds degrees from Cooke County College and DeVry University. He is currently working in the Course of Study through Perkins and attends classes at the North Texas Conference Center in Plano, Texas.

Greg serves with passion for the people of his congregations and desires relationships with them. He strives to support, love and guide those that are entrusted to his care.

Greg was baptized at the age of 13 at the Nocona FUMC by Merwin Turner, who had a very influential role in his life. He and Melody were married in 1994 and they have raised four daughters – Katie, Rachel, Genna and Josie. Rachel and Genna are both currently pursuing Religion degrees through Methodist Universities."

**Please welcome Reverend Parr and family to Forestburg United Methodist Church!**

Information submitted by Liz Johnson, SPRC Chairperson



From left to right:

Oldest daughter, Katie; #3 daughter, Genna; wife, Melody and youngest daughter, Josie, who is 7; #2 daughter, Rachel; and Reverend Parr.

## **Our First Sunday to Worship in the Sanctuary—June 14!**

But for this to happen, as suggested by, Bishop McKee, Rev. Cammy Gaston, Director for the Center for Leadership Development, and our District Superintendent, Rev. Todd Harris, guidelines are to be in place to ensure that every precautionary step will be taken to keep our church members here at Forestburg UMC healthy and safe.

The following guidelines have been approved and adopted for Forestburg UMC. Please read carefully.

### A Plan for the Reopening of Forestburg United Methodist Church

We know that the virus that causes COVID-19 can be spread to others by infected persons who have few or no symptoms. Even if an infected person is only mildly ill, the people they spread it to may become seriously ill or even die, especially if that person is 65 or older with pre-existing health conditions that place them at higher risk. Because of the hidden nature of this threat we will follow the following guidelines as we reopen Forestburg United Methodist Church.

1. We will encourage our at risk congregation (those 65 years or older, especially those with chronic lung disease, moderate to severe asthma, chronic heart disease, severe obesity, diabetes, chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis, liver disease, or weakened immune system) to stay at home.
2. We will seat persons in every other pew and use painters tape to designate six feet of spacing between attendees. Two or more members of the same household can sit adjacent to each other with six feet of separation on either side. We may need to set up chairs in the fellowship hall.
3. We will encourage every worshipper to wear a mask and will have masks available. The pastor will wear a mask.
4. We will not sing and will read the words of the hymns from the overhead monitors.
5. There will be hand sanitizing stations at the entrance to the sanctuary.
6. Instead of bulletins we will have the order announced by the pastor and utilize our overhead monitors.
7. Offering plates will be placed at either end of the chancel rail and will not be passed. The congregation will be invited to walk up and place their gifts in the collection plates observing social distancing.
8. Initially, we will not have communion.
9. We will not serve food and coffee or have indoor fellowship.
10. Those who volunteer to clean the building shall wear a mask and rubber gloves which are to be disposed of following cleaning. Prior to leaving the building we will wipe all door knobs, and the bathroom and kitchen counter tops.
11. We will not encourage shaking hands or hugging each other. We will observe social distancing.
12. At this time there will be no Sunday School.
13. We will not have special musicians and soloists during the month of June.
14. If someone who has attended a weekly service is diagnosed with the coronavirus the next week following worship, the church will self-quarantine for 14 days.
15. At this time there will be no children's programming or activities.
16. Weddings and funerals will observe social distancing.
17. We will continue to have members of the Administrative Council call assigned church members each week.
18. We will enter the building from the North and South side sanctuary doors and exit through the kitchen on the North side and the South side exit door by the nursery and restrooms.
19. We will meet every other Sunday through June starting June 14. We learned that the COVID-19 virus lives on objects for 9 days. Having volunteers clean the building, it was felt that the safest schedule to worship was to meet every 14 days or every other week which would eliminate the threat of a lingering COVID-19 virus.

Ben Shinn, Pastor  
Theresa Gentry, Lay Leader  
Liz Johnson, SPR Chair  
Carolyn Wood, Trustees, Chair  
Mike Carter, Trustee

## Weekly Giving

Date	General Fund	Designated Funds
Week of May 3	\$1,852.00	—
Week of May 10	\$1,446.00	\$600.00 (\$500 was from the North Texas Conference purchase of equipment to help support our online programs/worship)
Week of May 17	\$3,300.00	\$450.00

With our not worshipping together on Sunday mornings, we still have operations and bills to pay at the church. We encourage you to:

- ◆ Mail your gifts to the church.
  - ◆ Our mailing address is: P. O. Box 374, 76239.
- ◆ Or drop them off at the church on Wednesday afternoons.
  - ◆ Theresa continues to be at the church between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m.
    - ◆ She will go out to your car and get the checks, if someone does not want to go into the church building.

## Prayers/Praises

### **For those in need of prayer:**

Family of Mike Auld, son was killed in an accident on his way home from college this past week. The family is friends with Carolyn Wood and Margaret O'Brien.

### **For those in need of continued prayer:**

Myrt Denham, Helen Ellzey and Family, Harriett Nauert, Bobbie Jo Wiley, Wassie and Rosemary Reynolds, James Wooldridge, Trent Tipton, Treaver Freeman, Chance Fox, Jim Bob Roberts and family, Our Church and Church Family, Mary and Glenn Whatley, Gloria Gregg and Family, Clara Tipton and Family, Stella Crowsey and Family, Rex Larkey, Carol and Wilbourn Smith, Bill Scott, Veronica Greanad, Lisa Trussell, Peggy Cain, SPRC and District Superintendent Todd Harris and placing new pastor process, Larry Bailey, Keen Johnson and all our service men and women, Our World, government officials/ decision makers, and the those concerned with Coronavirus, Kathy Guier and Family, Rand and Omar and Family, Carolyn Hawk, Family of Joyce Pruett (Jana Tipton's step-mother), Family and Friends of Travis Landers, Abby Hyde, Family and Friends of David Brewer, Business' and patrons of business' reopening

### **Places we've seen God at work:**

#### **Announcement of new Pastor for Forestburg UMC, Reverend Greg Parr and family.**

Healings, Family, Friends, Children, Grandchildren and Great Grandchildren, Veterans, Answered Prayers, Grandparents, Graduating Seniors

Please take a moment to review the prayer list and if you feel there are any changes needed (corrections, additions, or deletions) please let Pastor Shinn, Theresa or Liz know. Thank you.

## Order of Worship for May 24, 2020

Announcements

Call to Worship

Hymn                      All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name

All hail the power of Jesus' name! Let angels prostrate fall,  
Bring forth the royal diadem, and crown him Lord of all.  
Bring forth the royal diadem and crown him Lord of all.

Let every kindred, every tribe on this terrestrial ball,  
To him all majesty ascribe, and crown him Lord of all.  
To him all majesty ascribe, and crown him Lord of all.

O that with yonder sacred throng we at his feet may fall!  
We'll join the everlasting song, and crown him Lord of all.  
We'll join the everlasting song, and crown him Lord of all.

Affirmation of Faith

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.  
and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord;  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried;  
the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven,  
and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;  
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the  
Kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Scripture                      Luke 24: 50-53

Special Music                Mary Shinn

Sermon                        Ascended, Not Absconded

Closing Hymn                A Charge to Keep I Have

A charge to keep I have, a God to glorify,  
A never dying soul to save, and fit it for the sky.

To serve the present age, my calling to fulfill;  
O may it all my powers engage to do my Master's will.

Benediction



**FORESTBURG UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

16846 FM 455  
P. O. Box 374  
Forestburg, TX 76239

## *Happy Birthday*

May 3

Doris Coates

Carroll Dill

May 8

Jennifer Jones

May 14

George Miksovsky

May 15

Chris Doane

May 16

Lily Martinez

Natalie White

May 18

Betty Dunn

May 25

Brittany Martinez

May 27

John Brim

## *Happy Anniversary*

May 3

Savanah & Garrett Johnson

May 17

Jewell & Carroll Dill

