



SUMC Grace Points

February 2019

WORSHIP:

- Thanks to everyone who helped with the Hanging and Removal of the Greens. We appreciate your efforts to enhance the Christmas season by decorating the church. We especially thank the Wilson TLC group, Joey Jerome and the Boy Scouts for their extra efforts.
- Mark your calendars for Ash Wednesday service on March 6th at 7:00 p.m.
- We would like to thank Toby Loy for his work in our music department over the past 2 years. We wish him well in his new career.
- We would like to welcome Dusty Wallace as our new band leader beginning February 1st.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES:

- Cherub practice has moved to Sunday mornings during Crossroads Sunday school. The kids will practice in the classrooms with their teachers after a short lesson. All children in preschool-kindergarten are invited to join us.
- Joyful Noise will practice from 10:30-11:00 a.m. each Sunday.
- CABIN FEVER MUSIC JAM, is Sunday, January 27th, 2019 from 5 - 7 p.m. This is our newest community event featuring a casual, laid back, indoor concert featuring our band CONTACT, soup and sandwiches, and fun for kids of all ages. Come and enjoy a FREE night out of the house on us!
- VBS planning has begun. Anyone interested in helping with VBS this year is welcome to attend the planning meetings beginning in February on the first and third Sundays right after Crossroads Sunday School.

YOUTH MINISTRIES:

- Our youth worship band "Lights" is continuing to live stream SUM Teens worship on Thursday evenings and they will be singing at our first Cabin Fever Winter Jam event.
- This upcoming year we plan to rework our Sunday school classes for middle school and high school to be more accommodating to the youth's schedules.
- We have started planning for Youth Sunday on February 24th, led by SUM teens with music from JOY, Lights and Joyful Noise!
- We have started planning our Spring retreat lock-in with more details coming soon!

ADULT MINISTRIES:

- Crossroads Book Club led by Diana Butts will meet again February 9th.
- Many bible studies started back up the last few weeks of January. There is still time to get involved with any of them.
- There is an apologetics class led by Harold Downing being offered at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings for youth and their parents.
- TLC leaders met January 14th to discuss plans for 2019. We continue to meet every other month.
- The Zoe Tree has been up in the welcome area since the first week of January. This opportunity to give is a great chance to offer a child the gift of learning how they can go into business and provide ongoing support for themselves and families. There are still children who need a sponsor.

PASTOR'S PAGE



If you ask the average person, "What's your favorite month?" Except for the romantically inclined, February would probably not be their first choice. In northern states, winter is still very much with us, and for many of us we are growing weary of it. Spring will tease us a bit now and then, but the weather soon reminds us it is still winter. The hope and potential of Spring seems a long way off.

There are many times in life that are like February when it doesn't seem like there is much to celebrate. Come on let's think about this, what can we celebrate in February? Well, don't forget Valentine's Day (2/14). Then there's Abraham Lincoln's Birthday (2/12) and George Washington's Birthday (2/22), or if you don't want to overdo the celebrating there's President's Day (2/18). Don't forget Ground Hog Day (2/2) and Superbowl Sunday (2/3).

If you are still finding it hard to be in the mood, to celebrate check out [Holiday Insights.com](http://holidayinsights.com). There is a list of 70 holidays that you can celebrate in February. A few of my favorites: No Politics Day (2/1), Eat Ice Cream for Breakfast Day (2/2), Don't Cry over Spilled Milk Day (2/11), Clean out Your Computer Day (2/11), International Dog Biscuit Appreciation Day (2/23), No Brainer Day (2/27), and National Tooth Fairy Day (2/28). See, there are all sorts of things to celebrate. (<http://holidayinsights.com/moreholidays/february.htm>)

All kidding aside, no one has more to celebrate than Christians. In Philippians 4:4-7 the Apostle Paul exhorts us to, "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:4-7, NIV)

In Philippians 4, Paul exhorts us to "Rejoice in the Lord always." He then advocates being gentle, aware of God, confident, thankful and prayerful. It's kind of interesting, Paul calls us to rejoice in the Lord always regardless of our circumstance and that seems to then create dispositional tendencies that are very appealing. When we are able to rejoice in the Lord always, it produces disposition toward behavior that honors God.

This may be especially good advice for United Methodists as we contemplate a Special General Conference at the end of February to address our denomination's organizational structure and its response to issues surrounding human sexuality. For about 40 years there has been an impasse, and now delegates are planning to meet on the last weekend of February to try and agree on a way forward. Please be praying for their work. (If you desire more information see our conference website link: <http://www.eocumc.com/gc/index.html>)

For many Methodists there doesn't seem to be much to celebrate because it feels like February, but nothing could be further from the truth. Our bishop keeps saying "The mission is alive." (See the video of our bishop speaking at: <http://www.eocumc.com/gc/index.html>.) We still need to rejoice in the Lord, because God continues to do so many great things through the churches of our denomination.

So, as we face the reality that General Conference cannot make decisions that will be welcome and acceptable to everyone, let us remember we have lots of things to celebrate. Let us rejoice in the Lord always, and be gentle, thankful to God, prayerful, and at peace. And, let us continue to trust God and serve the Lord in the place we have been planted.

Blessings,
Pastor Mike