



## Holy Covenant UMC Newsletter

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### A Year in the Bible



**Haven't started reading yet? Got behind? No problem!**

**Join us in Numbers!**

Chronological Readings:

Mar 1 Numbers 6:1-27

Numbers 10:1-36

Mar 2 Numbers 11:1-13:33

Mar 3 Numbers 14:1-15:41

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March 1, 2019

#### HEADlines for Holy Covenant

By Keith L. Head, Intentional Interim Minister

***We are welcoming and open to all people; black or white or brown, you are welcome here; rich or poor, young or old, you are welcome here, gay or straight, citizen or sojourner, you are welcome here!***



That is the "headline" for this Pastor's Column of the March, 2019 issue of the Holy Covenant UMC Newsletter.

Those words are at the end of every HCUMC newsletter, but for this issue, the statement is also at the beginning, because those words are only the BEGINNING of the next pages in the story of this congregation!

Last week the General Conference of the global United Methodist Church (UMC) met in a special session for three days in St. Louis, Missouri, specifically to address denominational issues related to sexuality. I had hoped that the One Church Plan would pass allowing local churches and annual conferences (regional organization of local churches) to decide on such issues within their own context (which is different for churches in places such as America and Africa and Russia). Then, on Tuesday, as your HCUMC staff and I watched the livestream together, we experienced anguishing disappointment as the 864 delegates representing 12 million United Methodists from all around the world voted *by 54 votes* to uphold the existing church prohibitions on same-sex marriage and ordaining LGBTQ clergy.

What does this mean for over 300 United Methodists at Holy Covenant in Carrollton, Texas? In case you missed this week's weekly email, here's the response of our Bishop Michael McKee to us in the North Texas Annual Conference:

Mar 4 Numbers 16:1-18:32  
 Mar 5 Numbers 19:1-21:35  
 Mar 6 Numbers 22:1-24:25  
 Mar 7 Numbers 25:1-26:65  
 Mar 8 Numbers 27:1-29:40  
 Mar 9 Numbers 30:1-31:54  
 Mar 10 Numbers 32:1-33:56  
 Mar 11 Numbers 34:1-36:13  
 Mar 12 Deuteronomy 1:1-3:20  
 Mar 13 Deuteronomy 3:21-5:33  
 Mar 14 Deuteronomy 6:1-9:29  
 Mar 15 Deuteronomy 10:1-12:32  
 Mar 16 Deuteronomy 13:1-16:17  
 Mar 17 Deuteronomy 16:18-21:9  
 Mar 18 Deuteronomy 21:10-25:19  
 Mar 19 Deuteronomy 26:1-29:1  
 Mar 20 Deuteronomy 29:2-31:29  
 Mar 21 Deuteronomy 31:30-32:52  
 Psalm 90  
 Mar 22 Deuteronomy 33:1-34:12  
 Joshua 1:1-2:24  
 Mar 23 Joshua 3:1-6:27  
 Mar 24 Joshua 7:1  
 1 Chronicles 2:7  
 Joshua 7:2-9:27  
 Mar 25 Joshua 10:1-12:6  
 Mar 26 Joshua 12:7-15:19  
 Mar 27 Joshua 15:20-17:18  
 Mar 28 Joshua 18:1-19:48  
 Mar 29 Joshua 19:49-21:45  
 1 Chronicles 6:54-81  
 Mar 30 Joshua 22:1-24:33  
 Mar 31 Judges 1:1-3:30

*On Tuesday, the special-called General Conference in St. Louis came to a close. The One Church Plan, developed by the Commission on a Way Forward and supported by an overwhelming majority of the bishops and myself, did not pass. Instead, an amended version of the Traditional Plan passed by a vote of 438 to 384. This contentious vote and the tenor of the General Conference overall clearly confirmed that the global United Methodist Church is not of one mind about the best way to move forward with regard to human sexuality and ministry with and by LGBTQ persons.*

*The days in St. Louis were painful in many ways, particularly for members of the LGBTQ community and their allies. To the LGBTQ persons in our churches and communities, I want to say that no legislation will change my conviction that you are beloved children of God and that you can count on the churches of North Texas to continue to be welcoming and safe spaces for you.*

*Throughout the General Conference, I was heartened by the fact that nearly half of the delegates and the vast majority of my colleagues, as well as hundreds of observers in the stands, still support unity, being in loving and respectful connection with others - even those with whom we disagree - and offering a grace-filled witness to the whole world. This understanding of who the church is called to be is what I have witnessed in North Texas. I intend to continue to lead our conference in this Spirit, and I have an unwavering hope that God will continue to do great things in North Texas.*

*It is important to say that the full implications of the Traditional Plan and other petitions passed at General Conference this week remain to be seen. It will take some time for the dust to settle. What it all will mean for the North Texas Conference is a story still to be written. My deepest hope is that this is a story that we - progressives, evangelicals and centrists - will write together.*

*Together, all of us who are a part of the North Texas Conference can write our story's next chapter - a chapter about a fruitful ministry of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.*

So, Bishop McKee tells us that what this situation means for us is that we are in "a story still to be written."

When I met yesterday with Pastor Carol Sparks to prepare for a smooth return from her sabbatical on Ash Wednesday, March 6, she wanted me to relate to you that Holy Covenant UMC will never waver from our welcoming statement and will continue to grow ministries for and with LGBTQ persons and families!

As usual, we will be affirming our commitment as a diverse

## Children's Formation



### Attention Parents of Current 3rd, 4th, & 5th Graders:

Your child can go to summer church camp at Camp Bridgeport this year. Holy Covenant will be attending C2 (the second children's camp of the summer) June 24th-28th. Registration begins Jan 9th at 9am. Camp slots can go fast depending on what camps the bigger churches decide to attend and can be full within a few days. Pastor Bill will attend C2, but it would be great to have more adults there that our children know, so please consider volunteering. It would be nice for our girls to have a female adult in their cabin. To sign up go to the Camp Bridgeport website [Bridgeport Camp](#) and enroll. You can reserve your spot with a \$50 deposit and pay before camp.

## Youth Formation



### Mid Winter

This year Holy Covenant youth will be going on a

congregation welcoming all people this next Sunday, the Last Sunday after the Epiphany, when we remember the story of the Transfiguration of Jesus on a mountaintop and what that means for the ongoing story of the Christian faith in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. We are writing that story today and together at Holy Covenant, especially this Sunday as we all gather around the Lord's Table for Holy Communion!

This will also be my last Sunday with you as your Intentional Interim Minister. I have sought to maintain the already solid foundation of ministries and missions through HCUMC! I have been impressed with the enthusiasm and resourcefulness of your leaders and staff in doing more than maintaining, but intentionally preparing for the days ahead. I have a sense that the upcoming season of Lent will be a special time of spiritual growth with the renewed guidance of Pastor Carol!

I'll say a little more this Sunday about the above and the appreciation that I have for the loving support you all have given me over these last six weeks. Since first learning about the ministries of HCUMC some 30 years ago, I have always thought it would be a great congregation to serve and now I know that's true!

May my last HEADlines with you be this affirmation to the ongoing "story" of this congregation whose Mission is "to change the world by making disciples of Jesus Christ." A truly inclusive church community does more than welcome all people - with God's love and grace in Jesus Christ, it unapologetically affirms the equal dignity and sacred worth of each person, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, language, economic class or any other types of diversity! See you Sunday...



## Ash Wednesday



mid-winter retreat to Turner Falls, OK. We will leave on Friday night, March 29th. We will return Sunday afternoon on March 31st. Cost is \$75. We will be staying at the Deer Creek Lodge, youth will need to take bedding. The theme of our retreat will be whole-hearted living. Sign up online at [Mid-Winter](#).



### High School Camp

There is a high school camp for those in 9,10,11,12th grades July 1-5. Pastor Bill will not be attending but youth can still sign up to go if they wish. For those with the servant's heart, you may consider applying to work Children's SEEK Camp June 4-8th. Let Pastor Bill know if you are interested and he will get you more information.



### Mission Trip

All our middle and high-schoolers are encouraged to attend mission trip June 16th- 22nd to NE Oklahoma. We will stay in a lake cabin at the UM Boy's Ranch in Gore, OK. We will be volunteering at the ranch. Pastor Bill hopes to have a middle school and a high school crew and hopes to

## Ash Wednesday March 6 Worship at 7:00 pm in the sanctuary

Pastor Carol returns from sabbatical to lead us into the season of Lent!

### *Busy: Reconnecting with an Unhurried God*

#### Lent Series

Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. Lent comes from the Anglo Saxon word lencten, which means "spring." The forty days represents the time Jesus spent in the wilderness, enduring the temptation of Satan and preparing to begin his ministry.



Our Lent worship series "Busy: Reconnecting with an Unhurried God" encourages us to think less about "giving up" and more about "making room". The series will invite us into practices of making room, clearing out, slowing down, and prioritizing for the sake of holistic lives.

#### Preparing for Daily Lenten Practices

##### The Prayer Chair: Fasting from Hurry

Just as we are doing in worship, you are invited to designate a chair in your home that will be your "Prayer Chair" for Lent. Find a time during the day when you can go to the chair for at least 10 minutes, perhaps light a candle, and then spend time with the prayer meditation/devotion that will be provided for you.

##### The God Box: Fasting from Worry

The God Box is a way of handing over the things that we worry (perhaps even obsess) about that are beyond our control. You can make a God Box out of a small box, perhaps shoebox size, and decorate it however you choose and place the Serenity Prayer on the lid (you could cut out the one below). Whenever worries pop up, you are invited to write your worries on bits of paper and put them in your God Box as a sign that you are letting go of that which you cannot control in to the care of God. Replace the time spent worrying in your head with speaking the Serenity Prayer by H. Reinhold Niebhur, 20th c. theologian.

arrange for the high school crew to do some work with the Cookson Center, part of the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference. The cost is \$150. We will float the Illinois River one day. It is flat water, but fun. Sign up at [Youth Mission Trip](#).



**Attention Parents of Current 6th, 7th & 8th Graders:**

Your youth will be going to JH2 (the second junior high camp of the summer) July 15-19th. Pastor Bill will attend JH2, but it would be great to have more adults there that our youth know so please consider volunteering. It would be nice for our girls to have a female adult in their cabin. To sign up go to the Camp Bridgeport website [Bridgeport Camp](#) and enroll. You can reserve your spot with a \$50 deposit and pay before camp.

**Music Notes**



**Easter Music**

If you would like to be a part of the choir for

**Food Pantry Needs**



**Communion Sunday, March 3**

You are invited to bring canned meats, soups and canned fruit during communion. There will be bins available at the platform for your donations.

**Parents' Night Out**

**Friday, March 8  
6 to 9 pm  
in the Covenant Center**

Ages Infant - 5th Grade.  
Reservations are required by Wednesday,

March 6! Reserve a place for your child at [hcumc.org](http://hcumc.org). You may drop off and pick up children anytime during the designated hours. Cost is \$10 per child; \$25 max per family.



**L.I.F.T. (Ladies In Fellowship Together)**



**Thursday, March 14  
6:30 pm**

We will have our monthly LIFT (Ladies in Fellowship Together) meeting on Thursday, March 14, at 6:30 pm at the home of Marilyn Paa. Go to [L.I.F.T.](#) for

more information. Bring a snack or covered dish to share. We will enjoy food, fellowship and a short devotional. If you do not have time to prepare a dish, please join us anyway - we want you with us! Come join us for this time of fellowship!

**Secure Document Shredding**

**Saturday, April 6  
10 am to 2 pm**

Sponsored by Holy Covenant's Green Team. Open to the public. Protect your identity while supporting Holy Covenant. Watch your documents being shredded on site with the utmost

security. \$5 per copy paper sized box. Invite your friends and family to bring their sensitive documents to be shredded. Shredding will be done by Secure On Site Shredding Inc. Visit [www.secureonsiteshredding.com](http://www.secureonsiteshredding.com) for more information about the company.



Easter, we are practicing Easter music from 8-8:30 pm Wednesdays beginning on March 13. Easter this year is on April 21st. Contact Leanne Seabright or just join us on Wednesdays!

### ECDP Update



Before ECDP embarks on Spring Break, we are learning about and **becoming** community helpers. Following Valentine's Day and President's Day, our preschoolers are continuing to grow in their kindness and patriotism. After learning about professions that serve our community, our students are participating in a service project to give aid to the homeless in our community. ECDP is packing Blessing Bags. Each class is bringing a different item for the bags, and we are packing 200 bags so that each student can take 2 Blessing Bags to their family vehicle to be ready to bless a person they may see on the street who is asking for assistance. The goal of this project is to help our students show compassion for those in need and to share their blessings. Check out our

### From Our Lay Leader



#### By Aaron Hunsaker

Happy March 2019 HCUMC!

I am writing some of this as many of you are sitting in Sunday School or are getting yourself and maybe even your families ready for the 10:30 church service. Currently my wife and oldest daughter are away on a Girl Scout

weekend trip and I have had my four-year-old daughter all to myself all weekend. I didn't plan on skipping church today but somehow, between IHOP and HCUMC, I made the decision to soak up a little more one-on-one time with my four-year-old. I turned south on Pacifica and never even made it to Josey.

Friday night we had leftover pizza and we watched the movie Second Hand Lions. Saturday morning started with soccer and then a trip to the "library", as Lillian calls it. In the afternoon, I had a laundry helper who is excellent at turning outside-in clothes into inside-out clothes. She is also very good at folding towels. Saturday culminated with a daddy-daughter dance.



I'm not sure if we will ever have a weekend to ourselves where my little Lilly will be four years old which is why this weekend has been one that I know I will never forget.

HCUMC parents, soak up these times and make everlasting memories every chance you get. Live each moment to its fullest. Be dedicated and fully engaged in each moment. Time is flying by.

*"Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it." Proverbs 22:6*

Blessing Bags displayed on the ECDP Office windows.

We are still accepting preschool registrations. If you hear people asking about preschools, you can tell them about the awesome preschool your church runs! Learning is just one of the fun things we do at ECDP!

### Sunday Morning Schedule

**9:00 am Sunday School for all ages**

**10:30 am Unity Worship**

### Staff

**Rev. Carol Sparks**  
[csparks@hcumc.org](mailto:csparks@hcumc.org)  
Senior Pastor

**Rev. Keith L. Head**  
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ECDP Director

## Ad Council Update



### By Scott Boren

Happy March. As of this writing we are already 10 weeks into the calendar year. 19% of the 2019 is already "in the books".

We here at Holy Covenant continue on a journey, and anyone reading this correspondence is welcome to come along or assist in our work. Simply put, I would offer these focuses for our move forward.

We enter into every interaction with humility, seeking to understand where the other party, the other individual or group, is at and through discipleship we meet one another where are brothers and sisters need us to be.

Relationships are critical, again with humility and grace we enter into any partnership or interaction with our face pointed toward His work, and attempting to meter our humanity.

The work of our Holy Covenant Team is to enter into conversations, work and challenges with candor. Loaded with grace and compassion we can continue to speak with candor and genuine feedback while working together towards the ultimate goal.

As your Ad Council chairperson, I intend to lead from the front in servant leadership; meeting my brothers and sisters where they are at individually, and collectively. Holy Covenant is a uniquely refreshing entity and will continue to be life altering and standard changing. Given all of the compassionate discussions going on within the United Methodist global community, Holy Covenant continues to be a standard bearer for genuine care of/for others. If you are up to the challenge, come along with us on this journey that is God's will of treating one another with grace, leaning into the difficulties of our humanness and life and being change agents in continuing to create an environment to build disciples for Jesus Christ.

Matthew 25:40 The King will reply "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me"

*"Catch on fire with enthusiasm, and people will come for miles to watch you burn"* John Wesley

## Spiritual Journeymen Recap

A big shout out is due to **Sage Carter** who was the top vote getter at the Chili/Soup Cook-off, held on Saturday February 2. Also, thanks to the other 15 chefs who helped provide a

**Christine Perry**[cperry@hcumc.org](mailto:cperry@hcumc.org)

Financial Administrator

**Elise Webb Odell**[ewebb@hcumc.org](mailto:ewebb@hcumc.org)

Administrative Assistant

**In Our Thoughts and Prayers**

The McAnally family; Pat Underhill; Helma Gentry; Pastor Carol and family; Jim McKee; Carol Lasley; the Fox family; Austin Oaks; Jane Kelley; Donna McAnally; Mary Harrison; Brenda Anderson; Jojo Sain; Barbara Burns; Jan Reynolds; Kayla Soto-Nava; Linesha Maicera; Judy Cho; and Semyon & Ilana Narosov.

**Our Loved Ones in the Military**

Levi Bayard, Hunter Blue, Kate Blue, KeNi Gaines, Zach Glass, Jake Oliver, Antonio Ramirez, Ashton Rudolf and Diana Rudolf.

feast very appropriate for a winter evening. The chili/soup was topped off with some delectable desserts provided by the Daughters of Shalom. Overall, the event raised over \$850 for the our Pastor's People In Need fund plus \$150 for the Daughters of Shalom. It was a great night of fellowship and food.

On Sunday morning February 3, we served 325 people at the Austin Street Center and delivered 70 sweaters that were donated by Holy Covenant congregants. Sixteen folks traveled to ASC to help serve the food. Thank you to these early morning risers and to those who donated the food/sweaters helping to make this trip a success.



**meeting Christ in our local community  
to serve our children and youth**



We are welcoming and open to all people;  
black or white or brown, you are welcome here;  
rich or poor, young or old, you are welcome here,  
gay or straight, citizen or sojourner, you are welcome here.

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