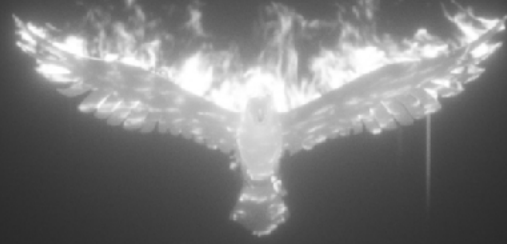


11th of February 2024

Transfiguration Sunday

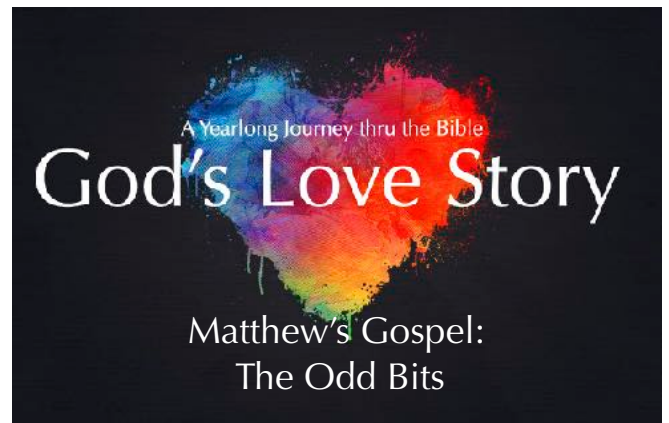


A Joyful Community of Faith, loving God by serving all people including the least, the last, and the lost.

Pathways

News from Eureka Springs United Methodist Church

Today is “Transfiguration Sunday,” and the more I thought about it, the more I wanted to preach on the meaning behind this special observance. The story is found in Matthew’s Gospel, and it did fit with my original theme for the day, “The Odd Bits of Matthew”. It has never been one of my favorite scriptures: Peter, James, and John go up the mountain to be with Jesus, and there upon the mountain, Jesus is transformed. He literally glows like a nightlight. It is a wonderful spiritual experience, so much so, that the three of them decide they’ll just build some huts and spend the rest of their days there. Jesus orders them down from the mountain, and as typical for Matthew, what happens once we leave that is important. So, I will switch things up and use this space for what was going to be my sermon, “The Parable of the Talents”. This passage has been so, shall we say, “mis-preached” that even the word “talent” has now become the word for a skill — “Don’t waste your talents!” In fact, talent was a denomination of money, a large amount at that. The master gives his three slaves a certain amount of talents (money), and they go off and invest it. The first two are as successful at investing as most of our politicians are — they double it! Honest investing does not see a doubling of the investment; we are thrilled with 10 - 20% returns, so something doesn’t pass the ‘smell test’ here. The last slave, knowing what a corrupt and mean master he has, simply buries his talent and refuses to play the corruption game, even accusing the master to his face that he enriches himself at the expense of others. Now, we have always been told this is a parable about not wasting your ‘talents’, and that the wicked slave was the one who buried his talent in the ground. Actually, the slave who buries his talent is the hero. Think about it: no one doubles their investment unless thru deceit and dishonesty. In Jesus’ day, the rich landowners were pushing the poor off the land so they could build massive estates and villas. This is why the gospels are filled with sick, lame, and dying people — they are impoverished and starving. They would have seen the master and his two slaves as absolutely corrupt and oppressive. “Here, have back what is yours,” the slave declares as he returns the single talent (a talent was worth 6,000 denars, and a daily wage was one denar). How did the other two make such exorbitant amounts of money? We are not talking about a capitalist system here, that would take another 1800 years to emerge. We are not told how they did it, but every single person who listened to Jesus, and later the readers of Matthew’s gospel, would have been very suspicious. The slave who returned the money? He’s the hero because he refuses to participate in a corrupt economy that enriches itself at the expense of the poor. We are all involved in investing, in business, in finance, in a lot of things. This story is calling us to open our eyes to oppression and injustice and refuse to invest in it. Our calling is to resist evil in all its forms, and if politics, business, or how we conduct our daily lives is in any way involved in injustice, we should walk away from it.



The Gathering

Order of Worship

Janet Arnett, Lay Speaker
Melodye Purdy, Video Production
Jubilee Ringers conducted by Beverly Beard
John Holtzman, Choir/Patricia Taylor, Pianist

Join us in-person or via our Livestream that is broadcast thru our Facebook Page, our website, or our YouTube Channel!

9:55 ~ Announcements

Sunday, February 11th, 2024

We Gather to Worship

Greeting

Opening Song:

"Oh How He Loves You and Me" page 2108

Communal Prayer
The Lord's Prayer

Songs of Praise & Worship

"I Stand Amazed in the Presence" page 371 UMC Hymnal

"Holy Ground" page 2273 Faith We Sing

We Listen To God's Love

A Reading from Matthew's Gospel, 17:1-13
Thanks be to God for the Gift of the Scriptures
Thanks be to God!



"Love Grows Here"

The Chancel Choir

A Video Reflection

The Message:

"Matthew's Gospel: The Odd Bits"

Rev Blake Lasater

We Receive God's Grace

Remembering Our Baptism

Holy Communion

(All our welcome to eat and drink at the table of Christ. The 'Wine' is just grape juice, but the Spirit of God is found in the breaking of the bread and sharing of the cup)

Sending Song

"Spirit Song" page 347

Benediction

(The words of Blessing that send us forth into the world to be the hands and feet of Christ to a broken world)

Caregiver Support Group

Caregiver Support Group meets each month on the **second Tuesday at 1:00 pm** in the church library. Join other Caregivers to gain information, share ideas, problem solve, and support each other. Facilitated by Brandi Schneider, LMSW. Questions? Call Peggy Way 479.253.1583 Masks are optional.

Widow(er)s Support Group

Our support group for Widow(er)s meets at the church library at **Noon** on the **first and third Wednesdays** of each month. Join us as we gather to share experiences and support each other on this journey. All are welcome. If you know a widow(er), let them know about our group.

Parkinson's Disease Support Group

A support group for people with Parkinson's and their Caregivers meets the **first Wednesday** of each month in the church library at **10 am**. This is open to anyone in the community!



United
Women
in Faith

What do you know about NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness)? Who are the people who use our Shower Ministry and what are their stories? All women are invited to our **LUNCH & LEARN on Saturday, February 17, 10:00 am** in the Fellowship Hall. We'll enjoy a meal and hear from ESHS students who are members of NAMI. Lark, ESUMC Administrative Assistant, will talk about the shower & homeless ministries at ESUMC and special guest, Gator, will share & sing his testimony. **We need a headcount by Feb. 15**, so sign up in the church fellowship area or call/text 501.339.3458 and leave a message Don't Miss This!

Al-Anon Family Meetings

Al-Anon meets in the Youth Room down the hall from the church offices on **Mondays (mixed), Tuesdays (women), and Thursdays (mixed)**. All meetings **start at 10 am** and go for an hour. All are welcome to attend. Want more information? Contact Ellen at 479.244.7017 or Vonn at 214.605.0615,

Save the Dates! Important Happenings in the Life of ESUMC

UWF Lunch & Learn Saturday, February 17, 10 am All are welcome.
Leadership Team Meeting, Tuesday, February 27 at 4 pm, church library.
Church Spring Cleaning Saturday, March 23 9 am - 12 pm. We need you!
8th Annual Arkansas State Chili Championship Saturday, April 20 Holiday Island
Al-Anon Meetings here on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays, 10-11 am in church youth room. All are welcome to attend.
Yoga 9 am Mondays & Tuesdays. Fellowship Hall. All are welcome.

Church Committees Opportunities to get Involved Make a Difference Meet New Friends

We are seeking volunteers to vision, plan and develop **quarterly outreach events for the LGBTQ Community**. These 'front porch' events allow us to reach out beyond our four walls to people otherwise not connected to church; these events also foster community for people that may not have any community.

Outreach Committee to serve as a missions team to better organize our outreach ministries as we seek to serve the least, the last, and the lost. This committee will help develop new missions, evaluate our current missions, and help us stay vital and organized as we serve our community.

Shower/Laundry &

Homeless Ministry

Our church showers are open to men and women so they can freshen up, do some laundry, and be ready for a job interview, or just a chance to be clean. Showers are available Monday thru Thursday from 9 AM till 1:30 PM.

We also accept clean cold weather clothing donations, gloves, boots, shoes, charcoal, can openers, lotion, chapstick, peanut butter, and canned meats. Donations accepted at the church office.

Bible Debrief with
Pastor Blake

Bible Debrief continues on the this Wednesday in the **church library at 6 pm**. We are covering the gospels, particularly Mark's Gospel.

Mobile Food Pantry

The Mobile Food Pantry serves Carroll County residents in need of food staples on the **second and fourth Wednesdays of every month**. Cars start lining up as early as 8:45 a.m. We provide food staples until the food runs out, often within the first hour. Friends and neighbors can pick up for friends or neighbors who do not have transportation. If you need food and have no transportation or someone to bring food, call the church office Monday or Tuesday mornings to make arrangements for delivery. 479.253.8987

Health Safety Measures

Cold & Flu season is upon us, as well as an uptick in COVID cases. Please take measures to keep yourself and others safe, including wearing a mask, sitting at a distance, or staying home if you are coughing or have other symptoms. Thank you.

Inclement Weather,
Office Hours & Church
Services

If Eureka Springs schools are closed due to inclement weather, the church office is also closed. Please use caution and judgment coming to church services with frigid weather and sometimes hazardous road conditions. You can participate via live streaming on the church website at www.lovespokenhere.org.

Cover Photo

Photos are from the minister's personal collection (to avoid copyright hassle).

February

2024

January						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
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28	29	30	31			

March						
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
Matthew's Gospel: Sermon on the Mount	Yoga 9-10 am Al-Anon/Mixed 10 am Youth Rm	Yoga 9-10 am Al-Anon/Women 10 am Youth Rm UW Faith 12:30 Youth Room Ozarks Chorale Rehearsal 6-9 pm Scouts 6 pm		Al-Anon/Mixed 10 am Youth Rm		
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Matthew's Gospel: the Odd Bits	Yoga 9-10 am Al-Anon/Mixed 10 am Youth Rm	Yoga 9-10 am Al-Anon/Women 10 am Youth Rm Ozarks Chorale Rehearsal 6-9 pm Scouts 6 pm	Parkinson's Group 10 am Library Bible DeBrief 6 pm Library Scouts 6 pm	Al-Anon/Mixed 10 am Youth Rm		
11	12		14	15	16	17
Matthew's Gospel: the Unique Bits	Yoga 9-10 am Al-Anon/Mixed 10 am Youth Rm	Yoga 9-10 am Al-Anon/Women 10 am Youth Rm Caregivers Support 10 am Ozarks Chorale Rehearsal 6-9 pm Scouts 6 pm	Mobile Food Pantry 9 am Eureka! Quilters 11-2 pm FHall Ash Wednesday Service at 6 PM	Al-Anon/Mixed 10 am Youth Rm		United Women in Faith Lunch & Learn Fellowship Hall 10 am
18	19		21	22	23	24
Luke's Gospel: Sacrificial Love	PRESIDENT'S DAY OFFICE CLOSED Yoga 9-10 am Al-Anon/Mixed 10 am Youth Rm	Yoga 9-10 am Al-Anon/Women 10 am Youth Rm Ozarks Chorale Rehearsal 6-9 pm Scouts 6 pm	Bible DeBrief 6 pm Library Scouts 6 pm	Al-Anon/Mixed 10 am Youth Rm		
25	26	27	28	29	1	2
Luke's Gospel: Forgiveness Theology on Tap Got-A-Hold Brewery ES 4-5:30 pm	Yoga 9-10 am Al-Anon/Mixed 10 am Youth Rm	Yoga 9-10 am Al-Anon/Women 10 am Youth Rm Leadership Team 4 pm Library Ozarks Chorale Rehearsal 6-9 pm Scouts 6 pm	Mobile Food Pantry 9 am Bible DeBrief 6 pm Library Scouts 6 pm	Al-Anon/Mixed 10 am Youth Rm		