

The Voice

A PUBLICATION OF THE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF DECATUR TX

February 2021



Prayer Stations — pg 4

Learn all the details about this church wide, prayer centered event.

Lent Series — pg 5

This Lent season we'll focus on the spiritual practice of decluttering.

Pecan Street — pg 9

A reflective piece on the spiritual work going on at Pecan Street Mission.

IMPORTANT DATES THIS MONTH

Preschool Board Meeting

Monday, February 1 @5:00pm, Virtual via Zoom

Anti-Racism Book Study Begins

Monday, February 1 @5:30pm, MAC Patio

Decatur Cares Mobile Food Pantry

Saturday, February 8 @7:00am, Church Parking Lot

Kidz Worship Resumes

Sunday, February 7 @10:50am worship

Decatur Methodist Family Prayer Stations

Sunday, February 7 @4:00-5:30

Church Council Meeting

Tuesday, February 16 @6:00pm, Virtual via Zoom

Ash Wednesday Service

Wednesday, February 17 @6:00pm, Sanctuary

Staff Meeting

Thursday, February 18 @12:00pm, Fellowship Hall

The Voice Folders

Thursday, February 25 @8:30am, Room 209

WEEKLY EVENTS

Traditional Worship Service

Sundays @8:30am and 10:50am, Sanctuary

Student Ministry MAC Nights

Sundays @5:00pm, Fire Hall (MAC)

Wednesday Bible Study

Wednesdays @10:00am, Virtual via Zoom

Chancel Bell Rehearsal

Wednesdays @5:30pm Sanctuary

**Find the online church calendar at
DecaturMethodist.org/Calendar**

**Want to see your groups and events
on the church calendar?
Send your meeting information and request to
info@decaturchurch.org**

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

2- Diane Howell

6- Elizabeth Culpepper, Riley Fothergill

8- Alea Pena, Dwight Reeves

10- Kyndal Klose, Norma Wood

11- Sidney Carter, Luke Sandford

13- Ann Pina

16- Frank Schitoskey

17- Charlie Long, Sharon Smith

20- Clay Montgomery, Tim Trow

21- Tina Brazeal, Wayne Miller, Marcus Pena

22- Braylinn Miller, Michael Range

24- Greg Johnson

25- Cate Young

26- Julie Quiring

27- Michael Bond, Matthew Laremore

28- Michael Zemmin

PRAYER REQUESTS

Tim Woodruff

Don Stephens

Family of Doris Sumner

Colton Bailey, Judy Lambert's grandson

**Email your prayer requests to
Prayer@DecaturMethodist.org**

STAFF DEVOTIONAL

FROM ASSOCIATE PASTOR, RICKY HARRISON

This has been a tough and challenging year – a year of many tears. We are in the 12th month since our country and community first entered this unique COVID lifestyle. In the United States alone we've lost over 400,000 fellow citizens to this virus that has upended life as we once knew it. Even in our Wise County community we've mourned the loss of public figures and beloved relatives. Many have been living in the constant anxiety of job insecurity, tossed about from "furloughed" to "laid off" to "unemployed and searching for work." Food insecurity in our community has continued to rise, as organizations like Decatur ISD, Decatur Cares, and Wise Area Relief Mission have worked tirelessly to continue putting food into the hands of our neighbors. Mental health concerns have risen to the surface as the ever-present dance in-and-out of quarantine has increased the stress of anxiety, depression, loneliness, and isolation. Those we live with have at times received less than our best when the stress of living, working, educating, socializing, and relaxing have boiled over.

This has been a tough year – a year of tears. Tears of grief. Tears of stress. Tears of anxiety. Tears of loneliness. Tears of frustration. Perhaps on more than one occasion you've found yourself attempting to put a name to tears that simply have no name at all. In the midst of it all, we often ask – "Where is God?"

One of my favorite lines in Scripture comes from Psalm 56:8

*"You have kept count of my tossings;
Put my tears in your bottle.
Are they not in your record?"*

I love this intimate portrait of a God who not only sits by our side in those times when the only prayers we can manage leak out as droplets from our eyes, but catches those prayers in a vial and keeps count of every single drop. This past year, I have been reminded time and time again of the way God shows up through the presence of tears.

We are entering into Lent – a dark, somber, sorrowful, and often tear-filled liturgical season. I think this year, perhaps more so than ever before, our world deeply needs this somber season – the muted purple of the vestments, the melancholic minor keys of "What Wondrous Love is This?" and "Were You There," the dark shadows of a rugged cross draped all in black. We need this liturgical season of tears because our world has been living in a year of tears. A year of grief, frustration, anger, anxiety, helplessness, loneliness, and death. We need now more than ever the reminder that God is not absent in the darkness, in the melancholic minor keys – rather, it is precisely in the "tears of anguish" that drop from the eyes of the suffering servant Jesus where God shows up. God catches our tears in a vial, keeping count of every holy one.

This Lent, I pray you experience the liberating, cleanings, and holy power of tears. Know that when the only prayers you can form fall as droplets from your eyes, God is right there, collecting and keeping count of every single one.

In Christ,
Ricky Harrison



Decatur Methodist Family Prayer Stations

On **Sunday, February 7, anytime between 4:00 and 5:30pm**, families of all types are invited to take a prayer walk and participate at each of seven prayer stations.

The prayer theme is “*Out With the Old, and In With the New.*” Each station will be sponsored by a different group from within the church.

The walk will be a come and go activity spread out through the campus. Large spaces within both the main building and the MAC will be utilized, but most stations will be outdoors. To demonstrate our love and concern for our church family, you are encouraged to wear masks and keep an appropriate distance.

Prayer is the greatest gift you can give. Come give your gift of prayer during this church wide event!

Station 1: Out With the Old

Presented by Character Builders and Men’s Sunday School Class

Station 2: In With the New

Presented by Children’s Ministry

Station 3: Pray for Our Community

Presented by Pecan Street Mission

Station 4: Prayer Beads

Presented by Mike Range

Station 5: Pray for Our Leaders

Presented by the Worship Altar Team

Station 6: Leave the Light On

Presented by Student Ministry

Station 7: Pray for Our World

Presented by Traditonal Worship Choir

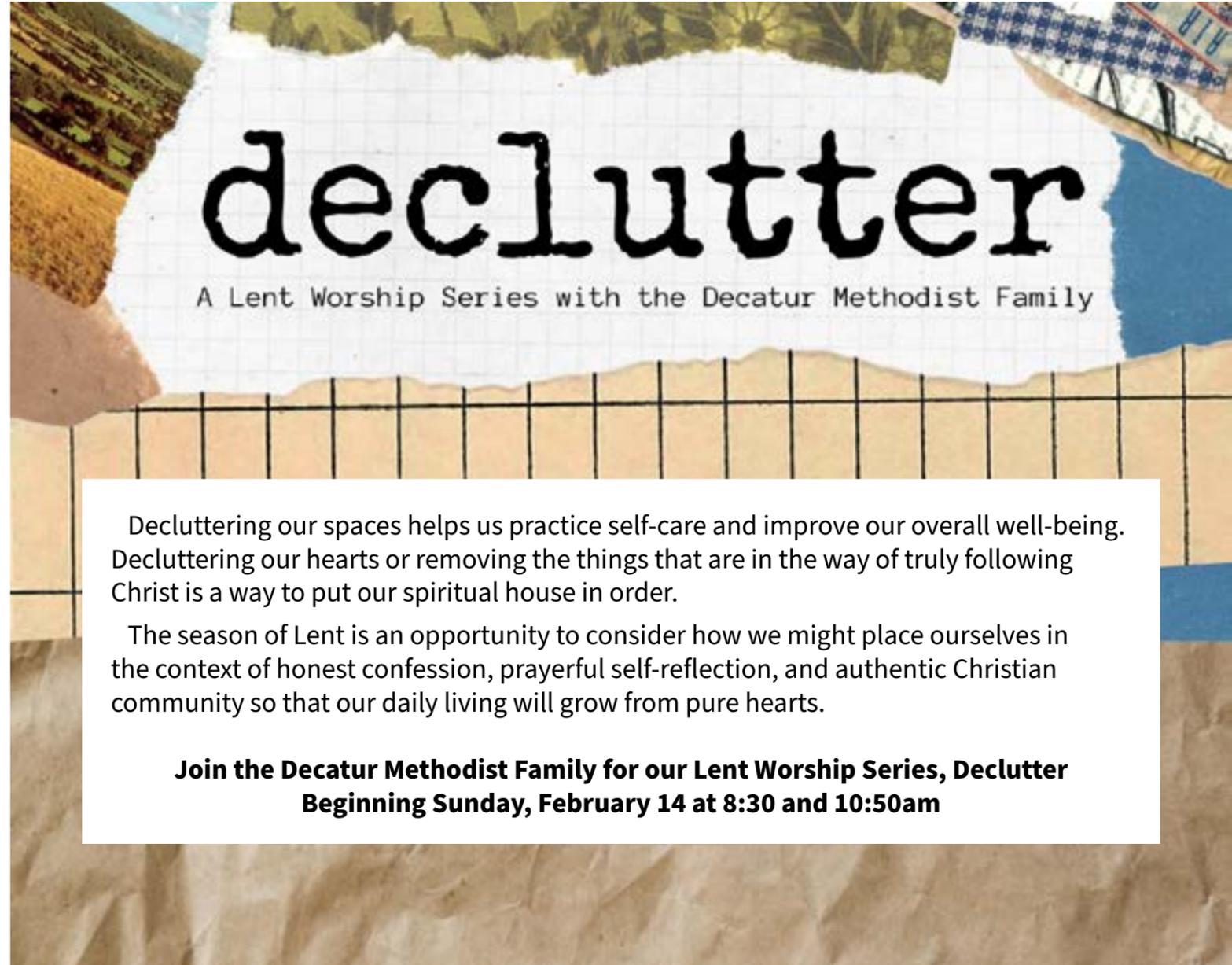


Financial Peace University

Financial Peace University is a nine week, biblically based course to help teach families a proven plan to pay off debt, save for emergencies, and build wealth.

A new session of Financial Peace University will begin on **Wednesday, February 17**, and meet weekly from 6:30-8:30pm. This class is virtual and will meet via Zoom. Class will be lead by Will and Lisa Bosshard.

Register at fpu.com/1123669.



Decluttering our spaces helps us practice self-care and improve our overall well-being. Decluttering our hearts or removing the things that are in the way of truly following Christ is a way to put our spiritual house in order.

The season of Lent is an opportunity to consider how we might place ourselves in the context of honest confession, prayerful self-reflection, and authentic Christian community so that our daily living will grow from pure hearts.

Join the Decatur Methodist Family for our Lent Worship Series, Declutter Beginning Sunday, February 14 at 8:30 and 10:50am



Ash Wednesday- February 17

Service at 6:00pm in the Sacntuary and live streamed on [Facebook.com/FUMCDecaturTX](https://www.facebook.com/FUMCDecaturTX).

Watch for more information about how to recieve ashes on our Facebook page and within our weekly email as we approach the holiday.

Staff Feature: Peggy Cundiff

Sunday Morning A/V and Teacher at the FUMC Preschool

Question: What encourages you in you work? What or who drives your passion?

Answer: "When I come in on Saturday, the peace and solitude that I find in the A/V room and in preparing the floral arrangements for the next day's services knowing that God is present even if the people are not keeps me coming back. I began working in the church A/V ministry at First United Methodist Houston – Westchase Campus 20 years ago. I was blessed to be able to step into the A/V program here. We continue to grow and improve. I look forward to the future of our department."

Favorite Bible Verses and why?

"My favorite Bible verse is John 3:16 because of God's great gift to us."

What book is currently on your nightstand?

"My Bible and my phone occupy my nightstand."

If you could throw a fantasy dinner party, who would you invite and what would you ask them?

"I would invite Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr. I would ask her, 'How did it feel to be the woman behind such a great man?'"

Tell us about your family.

"We are a family grounded in faith. You see two of my siblings – Kathy at the organ and Johnnie in the AV room – most Sundays. Our brother, Terry, has a medical disability and I help Johnnie take care of him driving him to his doctor's appointments."

If you had 24 uninterrupted hours to spend, what would you do? Who would you spend it with?

"I would spend it by myself! You would find me on a riverbank just enjoying nature."



Peggy pictured here with her preschool students and upper right in the A/V room on a Sunday morning

What is one question you would ask at the Pearly Gates?

"I would be too much in awe to ask a question. I am a listener. I would be listening to the angel choir!"

What is something most people don't know about you?

"In my family I am the only one in my family that is in my right brain because I am totally left oriented!"

Look out for our Staff Feature each month to get to know your Church Staff a little bit better!



DECATUR STUDENTS

6th-12th grade students



Winter Retreat with Wise County Youth

February 12-13

Friday- Meet for worship and group, dinner
Saturday Morning- Mission work and lunch
Saturday Afternoon- small group and dinner

Find us on social media to learn more about what's going on in Student Ministry

 @FUMCDecaturStudents

 @DecaturMethodistStudents



If you have been a Ministry Safe certified volunteer for FUMC, watch for an email from Ministry Safe with a link to be re-certified.

Ministry Safe certifications are good for two years. If you have any questions or would like to become a Ministry Safe certified volunteer, contact the church office. (940)627-3362 or administrator@decaturmethodist.org

DECATUR KIDS

Pre-K- 5th grade children

Children's Year of Prayer Project

Our Children's February Prayer theme is *A Heart for Prayer*. During Kidz Worship, the children will decorate construction paper hearts. They'll then write the names of our church families on the back of each heart.

During worship on February 14, the hearts will be on trays at the entries. We'll ask every family to take a heart home and pray for the specific family written on that heart throughout the month of February. Those worshipping online can come to the church office during the week of February 15 to pick up a heart to pray for.

Acolyte Training

Acolyte Training for 3rd-6th grade students will be **January 31 at 3:00pm** in the Sanctuary. Acolytes will then be commissioned during the 10:50am Worship Service on **February 7** and will begin serving in worship **Sunday, February 14**.

To Learn more about how to get involved with Children's Ministry, please email children@decaturmetho dist.org



Kidz Worship

We welcome the return of Kidz Worship on **Sunday, February 7, during the 10:50am worship service**. Any child, ages pre-k- 5th grade, may leave the sanctuary with Mrs. Diane after the children's moment in worship for Bible stories, games and craft activities. They will return back to the sanctuary for communion or the last hymn.

A rotation of volunteers in assistant roles will be needed. If you are interested in lending a hand with our younger members, please contact Diane at children@decaturmetho dist.org.



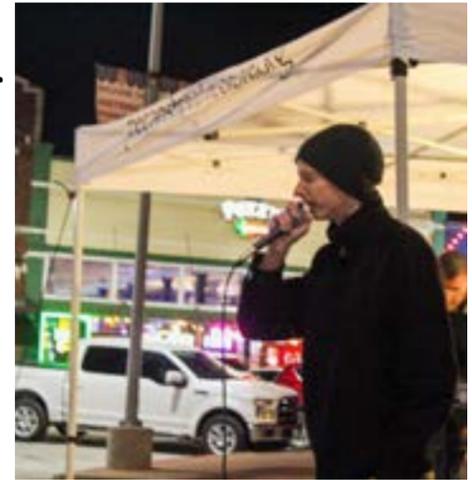
Pecan Street Mission Finding The Root of The "Why"

Over the past few months, the Pecan Street Mission community has been hard at work. A team of people have been passionately discerning the unique mission of Pecan Street, what core values will shape how to achieve that mission, and who they are called to reach. Sally Rodgers has been a pivotal member of this team and is sharing her perspective on the mission of Pecan Street.

"When my sons and I moved to Decatur from Austin a little over two years ago we were leaving a wonderful Methodist church community that reflected our values as a family: kindness, inclusivity, acceptance, generosity, non-judgment, unconditional love for one's neighbor. We hoped that would find that same sort of church when we moved here. We checked out several houses of worship in the area before making our way to First UMC Decatur, the church in which I grew up. Immediately I heard the buzz about the service at the Activity Center and the work that Ricky Harrison and his team were doing. I visited several times and instantly felt there was something special happening on Pecan Street.

This past fall, Ricky visited me to talk to me about re-envisioning Pecan Street Mission. We talked about what had worked, what hadn't worked, and what could be different with a relaunch of PSM. We both agreed that before anything could be decided, his relaunch team would need to start with "why." Specifically, why relaunch PSM when Decatur and Wise County had so many other churches. For me, the answer was simple: Because there were people who were searching for a church that made them feel included. I knew there were lots of people out there who were looking because I had been among them when I moved to Decatur.

The work happening on Sunday mornings at the MAC is a total affirmation that the Holy Spirit is alive and well here in Decatur. Each week, a dedicated group of believers joins in prayer, devotion, and discussion to envision a church where every individual will feel welcome and included in the life of the church. I am proud to be part of this team and can't wait to see where God leads us."

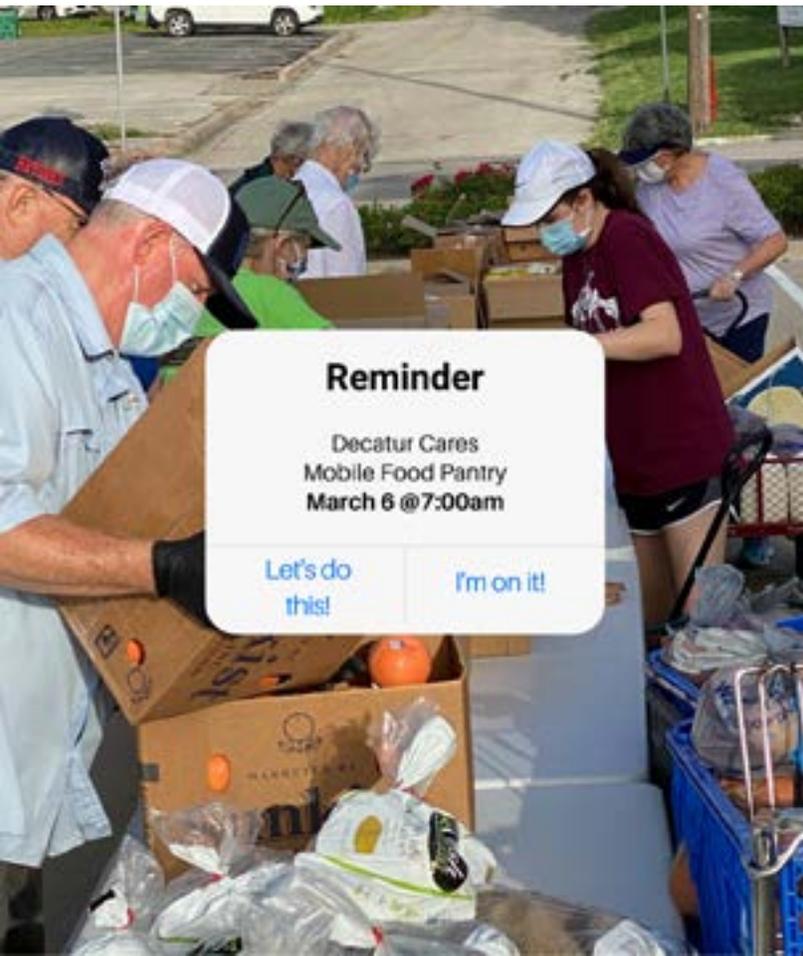


The photos featured were taken during the Pecan Street Mission's Downtown Community Candlelight Worship at the Decatur Town Square on Wednesday, December 23.



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104 S. Miller Street
P.O. Box 302
Decatur, TX 76234-0302

Presorted Standard Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 166
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Reminder
Decatur Cares
Mobile Food Pantry
March 6 @7:00am
Let's do this! I'm on it!

We want to feature your group or ministry!

**Submit information and photos to
info@decaturmethodist.org
by February 15 to be in next
month's issue of The Voice.**



**Thursday, February 25
8:30am - Character Builders Classroom**