



First United Methodist Church
Laredo, Texas

Gateway

Rev Alvaro Guzman

Editor: Sue Webber



FROM THE PASTOR



It has been just over a month we have been ministering at First United Methodist Church. May I say, even though our personal contact with all the church members has been limited due to the Covid 19 circumstances and social distancing, the Lord has blessed us in an incredibly special way. I am looking forward to serving you face to face when all of this is over. I would like to express my appreciation to all the church leadership and the personnel who make sure all things are running smoothly and keep the church moving forward. Your faithfulness to the Lord makes this possible.

I have been able to contact some church members by phone and visit with them. I appreciate all their words of encouragement they have conveyed to me. We seek for God's direction in our lives as we minister in the church.

The Bible states in Isaiah 26.3, "Thou dost keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusts in thee." What an awesome verse to reflect on during this time. Let us not dwell and risk being caught on fears and all the negative things that surround us in the world. When our faith is threatened to falter, God's promises that work out for the good of those who have His Peace is the direct result of trusting in him. It's then when an inner calmness comes and brings balance to our lives. Even in the most trying circumstances, we can have the assurance of his peace and joy. May we always seek his will in our lives.

Pastor, Alvaro Guzman

PRAYER WARRIORS

Our mission is obvious – to pray for those in need. We lift up all members of the congregation and community. We are here to serve others through prayer.

People needing special prayer: James Winsett, Nina Garcia, Rose Guajardo, Valdemar Saldana, , Joe Gilbert, Jimmie Whitfield, Leonard Barbus Jr., Kyra Field, Donald Maxstadt, Miriam Bruce, Antony Gonzales, Oscar Montemayor, Kiana Rendon, Pete Gonzales, for our military, for our nation, for all who have lost jobs due to these uncertain and difficult times, for Pastor Guzman & Family.

*If you're alone, let us be your shadow. If you want to cry, we all have two shoulders. If you need a hug...our arms are open. If you need a little cheer, we can all smile a little more. The point is when you need....**FUMC is here.***



***** USED BOOK SALE

Due to the recent spike in positive COVID cases in Laredo, the Book Sale will remain closed. As soon as the safety and wellbeing of patrons and staff can be insured it will be open for business!

Look for announcements of the reopening on the FUMC Facebook page, the Sunday bulletin, the electronic sign, and of course word-of-mouth.

GOD AMID PANDEMIC

Last spring, life changed as we became familiar with terms such as social distancing, flattening the curve and self-quarantining. We could hardly believe the closed schools, businesses and especially churches — just as Holy Week and Easter drew near! The coronavirus ran rampant in the world. Where was God?

But as the spread continued, many civic leaders stepped up, calmly informing us of the facts, of actions being taken to mitigate the crisis and of how we could help. Healthcare professionals risked their lives and endured separation from families; teachers drew on astounding stores of creativity to teach online; pastors delivered sermons and lessons to empty sanctuaries as members listened and prayed while living in lockdown. Surely God was present — through them!

Then I remembered how God assures us through Isaiah, “Fear not! When you pass through the waters, the fires, yes, even the pandemics of this world, I will be with you” (43:1-2, paraphrased). And Jesus echoes, “I am with you always” (Matthew 28:20).

—Sandy Hyland



PATIENT ATTENTION, VALUABLE DISCOVERIES

For many people, the coronavirus pandemic has been a test of patience — or worse. Medically vulnerable people face an anxious time of hypervigilance. Furloughed workers wait on hold or in lines for assistance. Special events have been canceled or rescheduled.

Those not impacted directly deal with assorted frustrations and inconveniences. Many people are learning the benefit of slowing down, being present (even virtually) to others and practicing patient attention.

Interestingly, scientist Isaac Newton did some of his best work when the plague forced Cambridge University to close. At home, the inquisitive student invented calculus and developed groundbreaking theories of gravity and optics. Later Newton called 1666 his *annus mirabilis* (“year of wonders”) and reportedly said, “If I have made any valuable discoveries, it [owes] more to patient attention than to any other talent.”

What have you discovered during the Covid-19 crisis? What appreciations have you developed for aspects of life you may have previously taken for granted? What has social distancing taught you about the value of neighbors, church, community volunteering?

During the pandemic, what have you learned about persistence and God’s presence? What empa-

AUGUST MEETINGS

- 2 Worship Service w/Communion, 11 am
Servicios en Espanol, 5 pm
- 9 Worship Service w/Communion, 11 am
Servicios en Espanol, 5 pm
- 16 Worship Service w/Communion, 11 am
Servicios en Espanol, 5 pm
- 23 Worship Service w/Communion, 11 am
Servicios en Espanol, 5 pm
- 30 Worship Service w/Communion, 11 am
Servicios en Espanol, 5 pm

CHANCEL CHOIR AND MEMORIAL BELLS

The Choir and Memorial Bells will be on hiatus for the summer.

FUMC Vision Session

The Vision Session is discontinued until further notice

FUMC Administrative Council

The August Administrative Council meeting is set for the 16th in the Sanctuary following the church service. It will be face-to-face as well as on ZOOM. The log in information will be sent a few days before the meeting. For questions please text Norma Moore at (956) 285-2778 or email at jmoore15@stx.rr.com.

Blessings to all, Norma

AUGUST Birthdays

- 1 Lydia Zavala
- 6 Irene Soliz
- 8 Joy Edwards
- 15 Alejandra Rodriguez
- 18 Clementina Cuellar
- 20 Victoria Cardenas
- 22 Blanca Wells
- 23 Jackie Spring
- 24 Charles Whitfield
- 28 Jaime Flores

AUGUST Anniversaries

- 23 Carroll & Evelyn Summers




... fear not,
for I am with you;
be not dismayed,
for I am your God;
I will strengthen you,
I will help you,
I will uphold you
with my righteous right hand.

Isaiah 41:10

MAY 27

MONDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY

Plans are underway to try a combination face-to-face and online Bible Study on the north side. It will be a challenge but if individuals are interested in either/or we are willing to try. If you are interested in joining, please text Norma Moore at (956) 285-2778.



BIBLE STUDY

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CRISIS PANTRY



We need the following items for the Pantry as most items have been distributed.

Pasta - (Spaghetti), Can Tomatoes - Pop off tops if possible,
Beans - cans and bags - Pop off tops if possible,
Potted Meat,
Peanut Butter,
Jelly's,
Tuna
Canned Chicken - Pop off tops if possible,
Canned Vegetables - Pop off tops if possible,
Canned Soups - Pop off tops if possible,
Ram-men Soups,
Oatmeal Packets,
Boxes of cereal

For more information, please contact the office at 956-722-1674



The desert
shall rejoice
and
blossom;
like the crocus
it shall
blossom
abundantly.

Isaiah 35:1-2