

Gulf Breezes

Monthly Newsletter of Gulf Cove United Methodist Church

Helping Everyone

EXPERIENCE EMBRACE ENGAGE

Jesus & Community

From the Pastor

Dear Family,

Even though I'm a fan of technology, it seems like there's no escaping it, even if you wanted to. In our modern, digital world, it's easy to work around the clock: our cell phones are always on and everyone expects their text messages and emails to be answered instantaneously.

You might even crawl into bed with your phone, checking out your Facebook updates or playing a game to "wind down." It's safe to say that for most of us, our work and our technology can consume our days and our nights.

Citizens of the ancient world saw no such conveniences, of course. They entertained themselves in other ways, usually in groups: true face-to-face fellowship at its finest. Even still, they managed to be distracted from the ways of the Lord.

God wants our attention. God wants to be He who consumes your thoughts every day and every night. It might seem impossible; after all, how many of us are living in monastic settings?

The psalmist writes:

But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.

—Psalm 1:2

He who is close to the Lord is the same one who meditates on holy things night and day. How can that translate for us, in our world, with all of our distractions and responsibilities?

As we ready ourselves for Christ's death and resurrection, we should turn ourselves to prayer. Lent is a prime time for investigating God's word, spending time in prayer, and meditating on Scripture.

Ask God to help you carve out more time to spend in His holy presence, and He will. Even though you may not lead a monk-like lifestyle, the more we spend time talking to God and (even more importantly) *listening* to God, the more our thoughts return to Him and His ways.

Through regular prayer and reflection on Scripture, we become more like Him and it becomes possible to spend our days and nights thinking godly things.

This Lenten season, I invite you to join me as we dedicate more time to God through quiet times of prayer, meditation, and reflection.

Blessings in Christ,

Mike

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

Help Wanted in and around Gulf Cove Church What CAN you do?

Handy Helpers-The trustees, Richard Jacoby and Jim Brown, are enlisting a task force to help with small projects around the church. If you are handy and want to help, sign-up in the back of sanctuary or contact Jim at 712-299-2084.

Kids Church-Holly Tozer needs help with Kids Church on Sunday mornings at 9:30. If you can help one Sunday a month (or more), please let Holly know.

Greeters/Ushers -sign-up at the back of the sanctuary or contact Sue Betz at 860-608-3686.

Hospitality -Help when you can- one week or one month. It's up to you! Make beverages first thing, set out goodies before and after 8am service, or clean up at the end of the morning. Sign-up in the back of the sanctuary or call the church office at 941-697-1747. **UPDATE:** Mary Ann and Bill Bart set up first thing, but they need help when they are out of town. If you can fill in, please call the office.

Barn Boys -Mowing and trimming-contact John Furtado at 941-830-0121.

First Impressions -Weeding and pruning - contact Ken Priest at 941-769-0581.

Flower Delivery-If you can help with delivery of unclaimed chancel flowers, let the office know. **UPDATE:** Ben and Nancy Haytock have volunteered, but we could use some alternates.



EHH NEEDS

PANTRY

-As of 1/22/2024, Englewood Helping Hand is in need of the following: BAR SOAP, INSTANT POTATOES, canned tuna, canned chicken, soup (all varieties), canned beans (kidney, black, pinto, refried, etc.), condiments (mayo, ketchup, mustard, pickles, olives, etc.), ramen, shelf stable milk. Donations can be placed in the EHH bin in the Narthex entry. Thank you for helping your neighbors in need.

February 14, 2024

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the lenten season. Don't have time for a formal church service on Ash Wednesday? Then visit Gulf Cove United Methodist Church on **Wednesday, February 14, between 7am and 9am** where you can drive through for **Ashes to Go** and free coffee. Our traditional **Ash Wednesday service is at 5:00 p.m.** Use the QR code to learn more about Ash Wednesday.



2024 CUBA MISSION TRIPS



UPDATE: CUBA DONATIONS -We have two members going to Cuba in March and would like to send 80 pounds of OTC medicines, supplements, and hygiene products with them. Cash also accepted. Donations can be placed in the boxes in the back of the sanctuary.



CHANCEL FLOWERS -If you would like to sponsor flowers for a particular week, in honor or memory of someone, or in thanksgiving of someone or

something, please fill in the sign-up sheet which is in the Narthex. The donor's name(s) and appropriate dedication are printed in our Sunday bulletins. The church will be responsible for ordering the flowers. The suggested donation amount is \$75 for two bouquets, paid directly to Gulf Cove UMC's Flower Fund. If you would like a special order, have any questions, or would like to share the cost with someone else, please contact the office. 941-697-1747

2024 GIVING ENVELOPES -If you give regularly on Sundays and have not received your 2024 giving envelopes, please sign up in the Narthex. You do not need to be a member. The counting team appreciates your using them!

COMMUNION OFFERING ENVELOPES

Each month a different fund is chosen by our church leadership to receive these extra funds. If you wish to give above and beyond your usual tithe for February, the Communion Offering is designated for Englewood Helping Hand.

SECOND SUNDAY ~ SECOND MILE GIVING is another opportunity to go above and beyond your normal giving to support the church. This collection always goes to our reserve fund, so that we may pay our bills when gifts and tithes will not cover our regular monthly expenses.

BOY SCOUT TROOP #776 February Fundraisers



Saturday, February 3, 8:00 – 11:30 am
Location: Gulf Cove UMC

All you can eat pancakes with bacon, eggs and sides and a made to order omelet bar. Beverages included. Tickets for those over 12 are \$15, ages 5 – 12 are \$8, and under 5 eat free.



Saturday, February 24, 4 – 7 pm
Location: Gulf Cove UMC

Meal includes salad, bread, choice of meatballs or sausage, and beverage. Tickets for those over 12 are \$15, ages 5 – 12 are \$8, and under 5 are free.



- Feb 1 Linda Starck
- Feb 2 Gary Miner
- Feb 4 Beverly Fonder
Judy Tomlin
- Feb 6 Bob Ehnert
- Feb 7 Randy Clarke
- Feb 8 Duff Duer II
John Mackenzie
Mary Robinson
- Feb 10 Dallis Walchle II
- Feb 12 Jess Hollenbeck
- Feb 14** Joan Calisti
- Feb 15 Jessie Choate
- Feb 16 Renee McVety
Lois Moore
- Feb 17 River Gray
- Feb 19 Deb Crandall
- Feb 20 Bill Bart
Cindy Freer
- Feb 22 Carol Ankeney
- Feb 23 Joe Marchert
- Feb 24 Sue Pickell
Mike Thonnerieux
- Feb 26 Mary Cantrell
Doug Corns
- Feb 27 Sara Anne Reese
Viv Andrews
- Feb 28 Mark Porter
- Feb 29** Cliff Sies



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| C.T. & Patty Twardzik | 2/4 |
| Scott & Annette Furto | 2/6 |
| Randy & Beth Clarke | 2/7 |
| Joshua & Macie Stenseth | 2/10 |
| Alan & Karin Perrotta | 2/14 |
| Derek & Sherry Hughes | 2/14 |
| Terry & Doris Hixson | 2/14 *50 th |
| Barbara Crosby & John Purdy | 2/14 |
| Sam & Becky Walters | 2/21 |
| Bill & Mary Ann Bart | 2/25 |
| John & Elaine Dorotics | 2/27 |

FEBRUARY SERMON SERIES

- February 4 "You Can Be Happy"
Mark 1:29-34
- February 11 "Swimming With The Sharks"
Mark 9:2-13
- Lent Series....."His to Ours"**
- February 18 "His Triumphal Entry"
Luke 19:28-44
- February 25 "His Cleansing Of The Temple"
Luke 19:45-48