

The Chimes

of East Lake United Methodist Church

March 2023
Volume 64
Issue 3

In the neighborhood for good!



"Nothing that is worth doing can be achieved in our lifetime; therefore we must be saved by hope.
"Nothing which is true or beautiful or good makes complete sense in any immediate context of history; therefore we must be saved by faith.
"Nothing we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone; therefore, we must be saved by love.
"No virtuous act is quite as virtuous from the standpoint of our friend or foe as it is from our standpoint. Therefore, we must be saved by the final form of love which is forgiveness."

- Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Irony of American History*

I came upon this favorite quote again recently. I think it is a good one to carry with us on this Lenten journey. It is an idea with which I struggle. I love to see progress. I long for results. I'm an "in and out box" kind of person in a vocation where that never, ever happens. The journey, the process is what it is all about. We are watering seeds of trees in whose shade we will never sit. All that we do is part of a bigger picture, and we do not do anything unto ourselves. It is all about putting our hand in Jesus's and walking alongside him as best we can.

This season, I encourage you to intentionally practice the inside-out faith to which we've been called. How can we be in prayer more? And how can that prayer take shape in the world? Rather than simply telling someone we will pray for them (and faithfully doing so), could we visit them, sit with them, stand up for them through whatever they are going through? When we fast from those things that get in the way of our relationship with God .— food, social media, etc.— how can that take shape in the world? Can we fast from things that are harmful to the community, to the environment, as well? And when we give our tithes and our offerings, let us work to make sure that those gifts are used to support the things that matter to God .— increasing love of our neighbor, creating more just opportunities for all, and building a bigger table where all can find a welcome place.

On this challenging journey, may we choose to take the first step, again and again. May our souls find the rhythm of going deep within ourselves to find that quiet center and back out to join in joyful community. It is hard and frustrating to give up control, to give ourselves to God and for others, not knowing how to at times and not knowing how things will turn out. Let us trust in the God who made us and in whom we live and move and have our being, that all our efforts, all our steps, will be used for God's glory and for the reconciliation of the world.

Peace,

Sally

... from Leslie

Hi, friends!

As many of you have heard, there is a lot of great energy moving into March. For one, Lucy Lipp is leading a Lenten Sunday School class, and we are excited for people to get involved and grow there. We are also looking forward to building more opportunities for small groups, so we launched the Love for Learning Fund to help offset material costs (primarily books and discussion guides for the groups to use). We have already had a positive response to the new fund, and if this is something you are excited about too, feel free to specify the Love of Learning fund on your next donation (PayPal note, check memo, written on cash envelope, etc.)!

There was also a great response to our Outreach Workshop on February 19th—so much so that we are playing it back again! Stay tuned for more dates coming up soon where we'll offer the workshop to people who weren't able to join us before. Even if you're just somewhat curious what it's all about, come join the fun!

Hope to see you soon!

Leslie

Lenten Study: Lamenting Injustice

Wednesdays during March
11:30am-12:30pm
In the Diner
Led by Rev. Henry Gibson



During this series, we will take steps to educate ourselves and make connections around various injustices in our community. We will begin with a pastoral conversation and litany around injustice generally. There will also be days dedicated to food insecurity, LGBTQ+ rights, and voting rights, with guest speakers from groups working for justice in these areas.

While we will not have time to address every injustice facing our community, this series will serve as the starting point for more engagement in building a more just world. Our last session will be a time to discuss further gatherings and actions. Please join us for this time as we grieve the presence of injustice and look toward the future with hope for justice.

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**THIS is the
PERFECT TIME
to do NEW THINGS
to reach NEW PEOPLE
for Jesus Christ!
How is the Holy Spirit
leading YOU to do this?**

March Birthdays

			1	2	3 *Mattie Lou Harrison	4
5 *Lee Hawk	6	7	8	9	10	11 *Bob Chapman
12 *Jean Daily	13	14	15	16	17	18 *Billy Copeland *Martha Worrell
19	20 *Barbara Boyd	21	22	23 *Pamela Padgett *Kay Sharp	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

SUPER SENIORS

Hello, senior friends!

As promised last month, in March we will celebrate St. Patrick's Day a little bit early, on Tuesday, March 14, by having a party! We'll play games, maybe even a round or two of St. Paddy's Day Bingo, and who knows what else?! Whatever we do, we'll have fun being together, as we always do. Bring a friend if you can, and spread the joy!

Oh, and be sure to wear a bit of green—otherwise you'll have to wear a green mustache!

See you at 10 a.m. on March 14, in the office conference room!



BOOMERS!

Hey there, Boomers!

Just a word of appreciation to those who supported the Bell Tower Players by coming to see *Dearly Departed* on Boomers Night (or any of the other times you came). We really appreciated your laughter!

This month, we will resume our regular activities by going to a Mexican restaurant on St. Patrick's Day! Anything close to Irish will probably be pretty crowded, so we'll have to go there on Cinco de Mayo! Anyway, this time we'll go to Munoz Mexican Grill in Trussville for a foray to somewhere new for most of us.

We'll meet there on Friday night, March 17, at 6 p.m. Even though we're not going to an Irish restaurant, wear your green! (What's the deal about pinching if you don't?)

Hope to see you there (and bring a friend or one of our members who don't come regularly).

A Lament and Prayer for Lent

by Rev. Henry Gibson

Lament is heavy on my heart as I prepare for Lent this year.

Reminding myself:

Today we feast, tomorrow we fast.

When tomorrow comes, will my belly crave for your justice, oh, God?

When tomorrow comes, will my hunger be satiated by anything less?

Or, will I be tempted by the sweetness of complacency?

Will I succumb to the ease of the way things are?

Will I forsake your promise of what could be?

Will I allow my mortal perspective to be satisfied with justice delayed for the sake of comfort now?

May I cover myself with ashes among the cloud of saints and priesthood of fellow believers, but speak for justice as a witness to your grace supplied when and where we need it most.

May I be filled by your everlasting water and my vessel overflow.

May I follow the flows of your love and tune my heart to sing thy praise.

May I be made new and manifest the fullness of who you made me to be.

Replace complacency with latency, a promise of what is to come rather than an acceptance of how things are.

From my lament draw forth living praise and renew me for your kin-dom's sake. Amen!

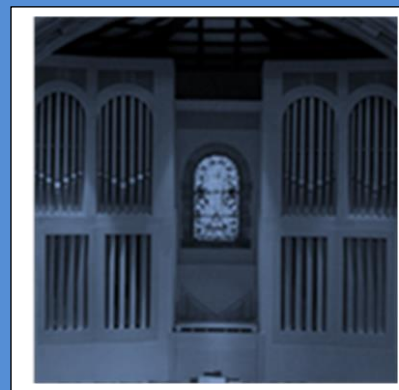
Music Notes 'midst Organ-izing

Elizabeth Barrett said to Robert Browning, "How do I love thee, let me count the ways." East Lake church, why do I love you? We are a people who choose to remain and minister, to be in the neighborhood for good. We seek to make everyone welcome, no matter their ethnicity, beliefs, whom they love, or what they've done, are doing, or might do tomorrow.

Choir members get here as early as 8:00 some Sunday mornings to rehearse; we have extra Saturday morning rehearsals for the Sunday afternoon functions. Then there are those of you who donate your time, often also digging deeply into your pockets to take care of our buildings. Many serve on committees, spending hours a month to expedite ministries. You work the Market with me on Saturdays over half the year. Others staff the Co-op. Bell Tower Players give an infinite amount of ability, time, and resources. Sally and the others on the staff go way past their job descriptions.

It's easy to say the words, "I Love You," but you, the people of ELUMC, put actions to your words over and over again. Most of you know I've worked for five denominations, yet I've never seen a people, you, more willing to grow, to do things a new way, to take a chance. And on a more personal basis, oh how you love your staff. You, East Lake people, exemplify the real kind of God-like love.

I know that it's March, and the Hallmark Month of Love is now past, but what can I say? I love you folks year around! And furthermore, with our now being on a Lenten journey with our Lord, which finally led to a cross, we of course can celebrate that ultimate kind of Love!



Barry

“Keep on praying for the saints . . .”

Ephesians 6:18

Please pray for the members of our church family who need our prayers:

Alma & Jack Boggan

Gary Sandridge

Those whose lives are being torn by war, storms of snow and rain, extreme temperatures, and other disasters

*We extend our heartfelt sympathies to the family and friends of **Juanita Shackelford**, a friend of and participant in our crochet group, who passed away on February 16, after suffering a stroke several weeks ago. Please keep this family in your prayers.*



Togetherness @ Happy Hour
First Tuesday of each month @ 6pm
Next Gathering: March 7th @ 6pm
@ The Lumbar in Pepper Place

This is a time specifically geared toward those working in the hospitality/service industry for whom weekend faith gatherings are often in conflict with work schedules. This time is meant for anyone seeking to dive more deeply into their faith and those who are completely unsure about the whole "faith" thing all together. The goal of the group is simple: Converse with and support one another as we wrestle with our faith.

Feeding Our Friends Fund

The Thompson Fund, now known as the Feeding Our Friends Fund, supports snack bags, hot lunches, and payment for odd jobs for our homeless and struggling community members. We are grateful for the seed money we received years ago and those who have recently contributed.

Donations can be made by check to East Lake UMC, designated Feeding Our Friends, or by PayPal on the church website. Donations of food items are still encouraged and greatly appreciated.

Spring Day Trips, one more time!

Well, due to poor planning on my part, our first planned day trip fell apart when Miss Mary's Boarding House in Lynchburg was completely booked up through March! Who knew?

But now we have a reservation, so we can plan accordingly. However, we have another opportunity before that. Here's our schedule:

March 24 – We'll go to the Peace and Justice Museum. Entrance fee is only \$5.00. We'll eat lunch there in Montgomery.

April 18 – Lynchburg, Tennessee, and Miss Mary's Boarding House for lunch. The cost is \$50, including lunch and gas for the van. We have 8 folks already on the list, but I made reservations for 10, so we can add two people if you decide you want to go with us. It will be fun! (Those who signed up: Don't forget I need \$20 from each of you to pay our deposit for Miss Mary's.)

May 21 – Looks like we also missed the rock and roll show at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, but May brings another great one. The title is *Clyde's*, and the ASF website says this about it:

“Creating the perfect sandwich is the shared quest of the formerly incarcerated kitchen staff of *Clyde's*, a truck stop cafe. Even as the shop's mischievous owner tries to keep them under her thumb, the staffers are given purpose and permission to dream — finding that ‘sometimes a hero is more than a sandwich.’ From two-time Pulitzer Prize winner Lynn Nottage, this Tony-nominated hit from Broadway is full of laughs and insights into what it means to find your purpose. *Clyde's* is produced in partnership with the Equal Justice Initiative and Arkansas Repertory Theatre.”

Tickets are a bit more expensive than they once were. The best seats are \$64, but there are also seats for \$54, \$40, and \$25. Let me know which you want—they're going fast! I need a commitment of \$20 for this, too, by **March 8** so all the tickets don't get away. There will also be a charge for the van, and lunch in Montgomery.

Lectionary Readings for March

I keep your word close, in my heart, so that I won't sin against you.
Psalm 119:11 (CEB)

Sunday, March 5 – Second Sunday in Lent

Genesis 12:1-4a
Psalm 121

Romans 4:1-5, 13-17
John 3:1-17

Sunday, March 12 – Third Sunday in Lent

Exodus 17:1-7
Psalm 95

Romans 5:1-11
John 4:5-42

Sunday, March 19 – Fourth Sunday in Lent

1 Samuel 16:1-13
Psalm 23

Ephesians 5:8-14
John 9:1-41

Sunday, March 26 – Fifth Sunday in Lent

Ezekiel 37:1-14
Psalm 130

Romans 8:6-11
John 11:1-45

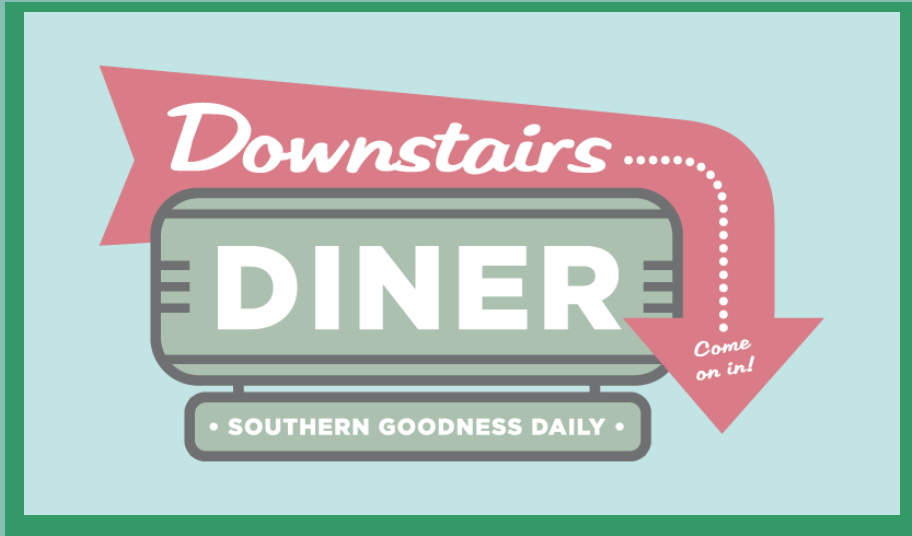
From your Lay Leader . . .

This issue of *The Chimes* is now finished, except for my article. So I sit in silence with a number of things on my mind, one being that I'll leave the office at four and turn around to be back for tonight's performance of *Dearly Departed* by 6:30. These plays are quite time-consuming, but wonderfully enjoyable—to work with a group of folks for a period of weeks, toward a common goal of presenting a “work of art,” as Mitchell used to say, or at least a performance worth the audience's time. I'm so appreciative of those who have come to see it or will come to one of this weekend's shows.

This made me think, however, of all the people—both church members and not—who miss out on so much when they don't participate in the offerings of ELUMC. I'm not just talking about plays and such. Take the Ash Wednesday services. We had respectable groups both at noon and at six p.m., but there were so many people who weren't at either. This is such an important time of the Christian year. I understand there are often legitimate reasons, but isn't it sometimes just lethargy? the lack of desire to make the effort? the attitude of “I go on Sundays; isn't that enough?”

Ever since the pandemic wreaked havoc on our society in so many ways, attendance at worship services has decreased pretty drastically. Believe me, it would have been easy to get in the habit of staying home and sleeping late on Sunday mornings, especially if I hadn't had job responsibilities. But what are we missing when we're not here? When we're not spending that hour a week focusing on God? Really, only the Holy Spirit knows. Let's all catch what is nowadays called FOMO—fear of missing out—and join our brothers and sisters at the church whenever we can—every time. Love to all,

Jane P.



Menus for March 2023

Tuesday, March 7	Baked chicken, Italian vegetables, rice, rolls
Wednesday, March 8	Beef patty, w/gravy, mashed potatoes, green beans
Thursday, March 9	Fried or baked fish, coleslaw, baked beans, roll
Tuesday, March 14	Taco salad w/kernel corn & tortilla chips
Wednesday, March 15	Macaroni & cheese, cabbage, butter beans, cornbread
Thursday, March 16	Chicken salad, sliced tomatoes, crackers, chips
Tuesday, March 21	Spaghetti w/meat sauce, tossed salad, garlic bread
Wednesday, March 22	Baked chicken w/ dressing, macaroni & cheese, ' collard greens
Thursday, March 23	Big baker potatoes w/chicken or pork
Tuesday, March 28	Chicken tetrazzini, tossed salad, roll
Wednesday, March 29	Meatloaf, mashed potatoes, cabbage, cornbread
Thursday, March 30	Hamburger w/bun, French fries, baked beans

Food
for
Thought



SPREAD LOVE
AS THICK AS
YOU WOULD
NUTELLA .x

March 2023

Wednesday, March 1

Adult Bible Study – 11 a.m. (by phone)
 Bible Study: Justice Issues – 11:30 (Diner)
 Downstairs Diner – open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
 Luke study – 6 p.m. (1st floor meeting room)

Thursday, March 2

Downstairs Diner – open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
 Thrift store - open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Sunday, March 5

Traditional worship – 9 a.m. (Sanctuary)
 Sunday School – 10 a.m. (various classrooms)
 Adam Hamilton Luke Study – 10 a.m. (1st
 Floor Meeting Room)
 Alternative worship – 11 a.m. (Chapel)

Tuesday, March 7

Downstairs Diner – open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
 Thrift store - open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
 Crochet group – 12 noon (Diner)

Wednesday, March 8

Adult Bible Study – 11 a.m. (by phone)
 Bible Study: Justice Issues – 11:30 (Diner)
 Downstairs Diner – open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
 Luke study – 6 p.m. (1st floor meeting room)

Thursday, March 9

Downstairs Diner – open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
 Thrift store - open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Sunday, March 12 – Daylight Savings Time Begins

Traditional worship – 9 a.m. (Sanctuary)
 Sunday School – 10 a.m. (various classrooms)
 Adam Hamilton Luke Study – 10 a.m. (1st
 Floor Meeting Room)
 Alternative worship – 11 a.m. (Chapel)
 Leadership Team meeting – 2 p.m.

Tuesday, March 14

Seniors St. Patricks Day party – 10 a.m. (Office
 Conference Room)
 Downstairs Diner – open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
 Thrift store - open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
 Crochet group – 12 noon (Diner)

Wednesday, March 15

Adult Bible Study – 11 a.m. (by phone)

Wednesday, March 15 (continued)

Bible Study: Justice Issues – 11:30 (Diner)
 Downstairs Diner – open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
 Luke study – 6 p.m. (1st floor meeting room)

Friday, March 17

Boomers to Muñoz Mexican Grill – 6 p.m.

Sunday, March 19

Traditional worship – 9 a.m. (Sanctuary)
 Sunday School – 10 a.m. (various classrooms)
 Adam Hamilton Luke Study – 10 a.m. (1st
 Floor Meeting Room)
 Alternative worship – 11 a.m. (Chapel)

Tuesday, March 21

Downstairs Diner – open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
 Thrift store - open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
 Crochet group – 12 noon (Diner)

Wednesday, March 22

Adult Bible Study – 11 a.m. (by phone)
 Bible Study: Justice Issues – 11:30 (Diner)
 Downstairs Diner – open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
 Luke study – 6 p.m. (1st floor meeting room)

Thursday, March 23

Downstairs Diner – open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
 Thrift store - open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Friday, March 24

Day trip to Legacy Museum in Montgomery –
 Time TBA

Sunday, March 26

Adult Bible Study – 11 a.m. (by phone)
 Bible Study: Justice Issues – 11:30 (Diner)
 Downstairs Diner – open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
 Luke study – 6 p.m. (1st floor meeting room)

Tuesday, March 28

Downstairs Diner – open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
 Thrift store - open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
 Crochet group – 12 noon (Diner)

Wednesday, March 29

Adult Bible Study – 11 a.m. (by phone)
 Bible Study: Justice Issues – 11:30 (Diner)
 Downstairs Diner – open 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
 Luke study – 6 p.m. (1st floor meeting room)