

July 28th
2016

worship... walk... work...

Altarnative Thoughts

By Dr. Jonathan Bynum.

The longer I am in ministry the more convinced I am that for the church to thrive there are no easy answers, but there is a simple way. By that I mean, no programs, initiatives, or strategies offer salvation because it is hard to be the church. We are a bunch of sinners who are being slowly transformed by Christ in a world that encourages sin, kills Christ, and hungers for instant gratification. Nevertheless, the way of salvation is simple: communion with God.

As Thomas Aquinas prayed, "Grant me, O Lord my God, a mind to know you, a heart to seek you, wisdom to find you, conduct pleasing to you, faithful perseverance in waiting for you, and a hope of finally embracing you. Amen." That comes about through the common means of grace: worship and the sacraments, prayer, scripture, fellowship, service, and giving.

This Sunday we will begin a new sermon series called simply, How to Pray. Again, simple but not easy. Most people pray...some; most intend to pray more. Most wonder if they are doing it right, wishing they prayed better. And everybody, at some point in their lives, wonders if their prayers make any real difference.

I love Corrie ten Boom's question: "Is prayer your steering wheel or your spare tire?"

Over the next several weeks we are going to use the Lord's Prayer as our model, exploring the dimensions of Jesus' rich prayer life that stirred his disciples (who prayed multiple times each day) to ask him, "Lord, teach us to pray."



walk

It is my prayer that we, as a church, will be brought to our knees, renewing our commitment to the Lord with a desire to draw closer to him through a fresh emphasis on listening to God speak to us through his Word and us speaking to God through prayer. So can I ask you to be in prayer for this season of the church? As the great missionary, Hudson Taylor said, "Do not have your concert first, and then tune your instrument afterwards. Begin the day with the Word of God and prayer, and get first of all into harmony with Him."

Emotionally Healthy Spirituality

Small Group Study. Training begins August 23.



walk

Peter Scazzero, author of *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*, compares people to icebergs: most of who they are lies deep beneath the surface. Rarely are we willing to explore those depths and almost never do we want anyone else to see them. People like to say they are "spiritual," but they really have no idea what they mean. By failing to address emotional and relational maturity, we can never reach spiritual maturity.

What is the greatest commandment? Jesus said, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" (*Matthew 22:37-39*) Love is giving your whole self to God and others. Jesus is the model for how His followers should live and minister. He never pushed his emotional life off to the side. He was a human being who dealt with the spiritual, emotional, physical, and social realities. Through it all, Jesus was a whole person, freely expressing his emotions

Beginning September 11, we will begin a sermon series and small group study of [Emotionally Healthy Spirituality](#). In a few weeks we will have sign-ups for a small group (10 to 14 people) near you that will meet each week for 8 weeks. Workbooks, daily devotionals, and books will be available for purchase so you can get serious about moving toward spiritual maturity. This is a great study to invite unchurched and dechurched friends to join you.

Host homes for small groups - Our goal is to gather in 10 small groups throughout the area to explore Emotionally Healthy Spirituality. That means we need individuals and families who are willing to open up their homes for a few hours each week for 8 weeks. Ideally, the small group will include 8 to 10 Bear Creek UMC participants and 2 to 4 neighbors who don't have a church family. We are looking for homes in the vicinity of [Bear Creek](#), [Deerfield](#), [Windsong](#), [Hearthstone](#), [Copperfield](#), [Copper Lakes](#), [Cypress](#) and where you live.

Benefits of being a host home:

- You get to pick the time and the place
- You will never be late to your small group
- You don't have to lead the group - unless you want to
- You can use it as an excuse to clean your house
- You will bless your neighbors by asking them to join you
- Your house will be filled with prayer, laughter and the Holy Spirit
- You will grow closer to God and your church family

If you want to enjoy the opportunity to host a small group, please call the church office at 281.463.2330. We look forward to hearing from you!

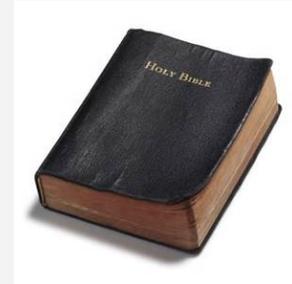
Group leaders for small groups - We need leaders for each one of our small groups. The qualifications are: a willingness to be trained, a dedication to preparation, the technical ability to press PLAY for the DVD, and a commitment to guide the conversation of the small group. You don't have to be an expert at all because you will be growing right alongside your group members.

Training is scheduled for Tuesday, August 23 at 7:00 p.m. in Family Life Center 102. All your materials will be provided. Please call the church office, 281-463-2330, for your chance to be a servant leader.

Women's Bible Study

Sundays. FLC - Room 102. 5:00 to 6:30 p.m.

God's heart is moved by your cries for help, your shouts for joy, your unspoken worries. We know Him to be a God of unparalleled power and authority, but Mark's account of Jesus paints Him as a deeply personal and intimate God too. In *The Gospel of Mark: The Jesus We're Aching For*, follow Jesus through His days of early ministry all the way to the cross. It's there we discover what it means to be the recipients of His excessive compassion and the very reason for His all-consuming passion."



walk

Join the Sunday Night Women's Bible Study for this 6-week study by Lisa Harper in Room 102 of the Family Life Center. Classes are 5:00 - 6:30 p.m. August 7, 14, 21, 28 and September 11 & 18. If you would like further information, please call Marilyn Wetzel (832) 606-7942.

Backpack Blessing & Promotion Sunday

Sunday, August 21. All Services.

Sunday, August 21 we are asking kids to bring their backpacks to worship. During the children's time at all worship services, and during prayer time at Faith Matters, they will be invited to come forward and receive a special blessing for the coming school year.



work

Chancel Choir Resumes

Wednesday, August 3. Choir Room @ 7 p.m.

Chancel Choir rehearsals will resume Wednesday, August 3 at 7 p.m. in the choir room located next to the Fellowship Hall. We will resume singing on Sunday mornings on August 14. This is a good time to check out the choir if you've been wanting to join! No long-term commitment required! Contact [Sean Saunders](#) or any choir member for more information.



work

The Angels are Here!

Backpacks for students - how you can help!

This Sunday, July 31, members of the Angel Tree Committee will be in the Narthex passing out angels with the children's backpack requests. The committee will then fill the backpacks with the necessary school supplies. The backpacks will be passed out at our Backpack Party on Sunday, August 14.



work

We currently have about 65 children that we will serve. If you would like to help defer the cost of this program, please make your check out to **BCUMC** and write *Angel Tree* in the memo line.

As always your continued support of this outreach ministry is greatly appreciated. If you would like to become a member of the Angel Tree Committee and help with this very rewarding outreach of our church, please contact [Betsy Ayers](#).

Youth Events

Final events of the summer.

- Friday, July 29 – **Dinner and a Movie** - a Classic Movie and themed dinner in our BC Youth Cafe & Lounge. What could be better? From 6 to 10 p.m. Enter through the outside staircase. Call/text 903.241.3436 if you need to use the elevator.
- Sunday, July 31 – **Hosting District Youth** for games & dinner. From 4 to 7 p.m. Come a few minutes early to welcome our guests and stay a few minutes afterward to help clean up. Cost is \$3 per youth.



walk

Peanut Butter, Jelly & Tuna

Sunday, August 7. Please bring your donations.

Please remember to bring your donations on Sunday, August 7 for the *Houston Northwest Community Center* Food Pantry. Look for the donation baskets around campus. There will also be volunteers in the Narthex of the Sanctuary on the first Sunday of each month accepting your donations. Thank you!



work

Online and Text Giving

Electronic giving. From your smartphone.

We now offer online and text giving on our website. Both options are facilitated through Shelby Systems, Inc., our church administration software, which is highly secure. You will find links and instructions on the [giving](#) page of our website.

Thank you for your faithful contributions that allow us to continue the various ministries of Bear Creek United Methodist Church!



worship

Energizers

August 19. Fellowship Hall. 10:30 a.m.

Energizers, a group of active adults age 50-plus, enjoy gatherings that include day-long excursions. We meet on the third Friday of every month at 10:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Please bring a brown bag lunch. Only drinks are provided.



walk

Fellowship Friday, an Energizers outreach ministry, provides a loving, welcoming and fun environment for family members with mild to moderate memory loss who do not require skilled care. This program, a partnership between Interfaith CarePartners and BCUMC, is designed to give caregivers some much needed time away. **Our next meeting is August 12 from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.** The theme for August is "Flying Kites" and the entertainment is Matt Wallace.

Pray P. A. S. T. O. R.

Standing in the Need of Prayer.

As the people of God, we are people of prayer. This year we are making an effort to equip you for prayer. **Beginning this Sunday, July 31, we will share in a new sermon series, How to Pray**, based on The Lord's Prayer. For now, we invite you to pray for the strength of our church by praying for our pastors: Franklyn, Will, and Jonathan. Here is one way for you to pray for them:



walk

P - Purity. Pray that our pastors will remain pure in the face of constant pressure in a sin-celebrating culture.

A - Adversity. Pray for our pastors that they will be able to confront adversity with faith, endurance, and wisdom.

S - Strength. Pastors work long hours that can be physically, emotionally, and spiritually exhausting. Pray that they will minister by the power of God.

T - Teaching. Pray for our pastors that their teaching and preaching will be effective, clear, and life-impacting.

O - Organization. Your pastors have a lot to keep up with. Pray for your pastors that they will be able to prioritize correctly.

R - Rest. Your pastors need rest. Pray that your pastors will sleep well each night and that they will take enough time away from work so that they do not get worn out or burn out.

Through your prayers and their leadership God can do a mighty work.

Western Prayer Wall

FLC 101. Leave a Prayer Request.

Been to the Holy Land? If it's too far or you've already been, visit our BCUMC Western Prayer Wall any time during church office hours or on Sunday. Please leave your prayer request in the crevices of the wall. Thank you - the Prayer Ministry Team.



walk

Pray Together

FLC 101. Meets @ 9:15 a.m.

Are you free on Wednesday mornings? Want someone to join with you in prayer? Come for *A Time to Pray Together* as we lift up our concerns and rejoice in our joys.



walk

Blessings, **James Sharp, Communications Director**
281.463.2330 X109

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