



[bearcreekumc.org](http://bearcreekumc.org)

August 4th  
2016

---

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

---

## Altarnative Thoughts

By Dr. Jonathan Bynum.

James tells us, "The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective" (James 5:16).

John Wesley said, "God does nothing but in answer to prayer."

Martyn Lloyd-Jones put this way, "Prayer is beyond any question the highest activity of the human soul. Man is at his greatest and highest when upon his knees he comes face to face with God."



*walk*

Clearly, those who are close to God recognize that prayer is formidable, forceful, potent.

We are focusing on prayer because we desperately need prayer. We desperately need prayer because we desperately need God. Do you think I am overstating the case by using the word "desperately"? In response, let me ask you, when do we pray most fervently? When we are desperate; when we recognize our lack the strength and have nowhere else to turn.

Why is it so difficult to pray the rest of the time?

First, I think we underestimate how much work prayer is. Somehow we got it in our heads that prayer is easy, that it takes little effort-so we doze off in our prayers. Prayer takes effort, engaging our whole being: heart, mind, body. Laziness is contrary to prayer. Prayer is active, requiring us to stay alert, clear-minded, and persistent. After all, we are talking to our Father, God!

The second reason our prayer life grows anemic is that we underestimate the work of the Holy Spirit in our prayers. We pray in the Spirit (Ephesians 6:18) and the Spirit prays from within us (Romans 8:26-27). In other words, when we pray, we pray God-empowered prayers! Our prayers carry a lot of weight.

The third cause of lackadaisical prayers is that we underestimate the danger of not praying. Beyond the foolishness of our impulsive choices, we have an enemy who is scheming (Ephesians 6:10-18), on the prowl to devour us (1 Peter 5:8). When you realize you are in the lion's den you quickly get motivated to call out for help. And our God knows how to shut the mouths of lions (Daniel 6).

A final demotivator for prayer is that we overestimate our ability to handle life. We are convinced that we can achieve anything if we believe enough. I am reminded of the satirical poster that says, "Shoot for the Moon: Even if you miss, you'll land among the stars. Of course, then your eyeballs will boil and your lungs explode from decompression. But that's what you get for being a showoff." Let's face it, we aren't nearly as strong or nearly as in control as we like to pretend. The only one who is bigger than the challenges of life is the Giver of Life.

Prayer is a big deal, a big privilege, a big opportunity. What would happen if we all got serious about prayer? Let's find out. Can you think of a better way to fill your time than to fill it with eternity? In his book, *Prayer for Beginners*, Peter Kreeft offers, "I guarantee you that after you die you will not say 'I spent too much time praying; I wish I had watched more TV instead.'"

## *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*

Small Group Study. Training begins August 23.

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.



*walk*

**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.

---

## *UMM BBQ Ministry*

Labor Day BBQ. First ever UMM Hamburger Night.

This Sunday, August 7 the UMM BBQ Ministry begins taking orders for our Labor Day BBQ (happening on Labor Day weekend). Stop by our table in the courtyard and place your order...and maybe get a free sample! BBQ orders will be available for pickup on Sunday, September 4.



*work/walk*

Also, this Monday, August 8, starting at 6:30 p.m., is the first-ever \$2 Hamburger Night sponsored by Bear Creek United Methodist Men. It's a chance for all men of the church to gather and convey your interests so that we can plan future events around those areas of interest. Only \$2 for a hamburger, chips, and a drink! Call Gary Heath at 832-474-4010 to R.S.V.P.

---

## *Electronic Contribution Statements*

Sign up to receive your statement electronically.

The Bear Creek Finance Department will now be sending financial statements electronically to contributing families. In order to receive your financial statement, be sure the church has your preferred email address in our database. For those donors who do not have an email address, the system will automatically prepare the statement for land mailing and we will mail



*work*

the financial statement to a home address.

If you are reading this on your device, you can assume we have the correct email address. If you prefer your statement be sent to another email address, please contact the church office to update it.

---

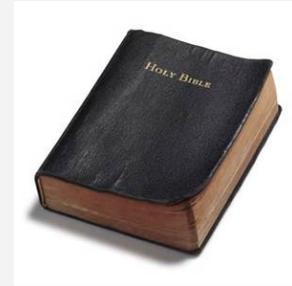
## *Women's Bible Study*

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*

---

## *Backpacks are Due this Sunday!*

Backpacks for students - how you can help!

This Sunday, August 7, members of the Angel Tree Committee will be in the Narthex collecting backpacks. 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](#).

---

## *Peanut Butter, Jelly & Tuna*

Sunday, August 7. Please bring your donations.

Please remember to bring your donations this 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.

## *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

 Like us on Facebook