



2023

# MARCH

## NEWSLETTER

### THE LATEST FROM THE CHURCH:

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### SERMON SERIES

#### *Jesus: More*

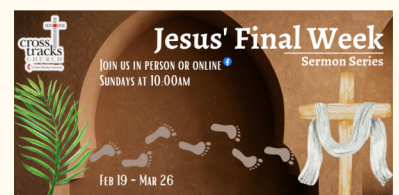
- Jan 8 Jesus: more than we're ready for
- Jan 15 Jesus: more than we expect
- Jan 22 Jesus: more perfect journey
- Jan 29 Jesus: more simple, but not easy
- Feb 5 Jesus: more expectations
- Feb 12 Jesus: more pushing



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#### *Jesus' Final Week Series*

- Feb 19 Preparing for Lent
- Feb 22 Ash Wednesday
- Feb 26 The Intense Prequel
- Mar 5 His Final Lesson
- Mar 12 Intimacy and Betrayal
- Mar 19 Not What Anyone Expected
- Mar 26 The Calm After the Storm



 A United Methodist Community

### NEW OFFICE HOURS

9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.



## A NOTE FROM PASTOR MICHELE

### FRACTALS, FAMILY, AND FEMURS

I was recently blessed by an amazing vacation that included snorkeling and a lot of relaxing. During some quiet time, I was contemplating the beauty of the ocean floor and God's amazing design for this world. And I was reminded of fractals. I'm not a math person, but I love fractals. Fractals are a curve or geometric figure, in which each part has the same statistical character as the whole. You can see a great example in the fern. Each blade has the same design as the frond, and each little pinna has the same design as the blade. Fractals are found throughout nature and I'm overjoyed every time I find one!

The people/family of God is a loose interpretation of a fractal. Every person is part of this family because God is The Father - that family is the fern. Nations, ethnicities, religions, governments, sects, etc. are the different fronds. Some of those "frond families" have lost their way from God, while others are more in tune with God's design and example - it's a dysfunctional family that is very healthy in some ways, but destructive in others. The "blades" might be denominations, and so on.

This continues to smaller and smaller sections of the fern until you get to the local church (which is made up of families). Cross Tracks Church follows the pattern of being a family made up of people who share the same blood and yet are very different. We are united in our love for this family and our efforts to grow in grace and in faith. God's design for this family is beautiful.

Which brings us to the femur. (Actually, the entire body, but I wanted to stick with the alliteration.) God gives us a great number of images of how we are called to work together; I'm fairly confident this is because no one metaphor can describe the complexity of God's plan for how God's people are to function in unity with one another. The Body of Christ is one of my favorite images because this is one of the clearest pictures of our dependence on one another.

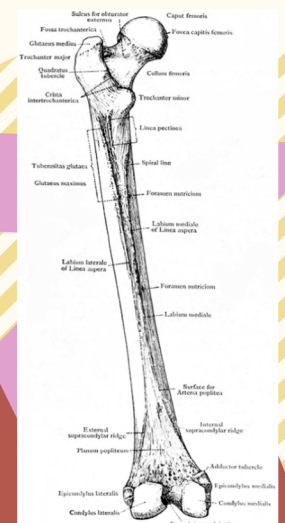
Each one of us is a body part that contributes to the health and wholeness of this church. I helped my mom study for a nursing exam when I was in high school and I was SHOCKED by how much there was to memorize about the femur! The thigh bone shouldn't have 28 identifiable parts! But it is definitely a great example of the

importance of each individual in our church and a glimpse into the importance of each individual's complete health.

You are a valuable piece of our fractal, our family, and our Body. We are blessed to include many beautiful and holy individuals. May we live in the full unity of our design!

Grateful for our Family,

*Pastor Michele*





# LINUS CONNECTION

Cross Tracks Linus ladies have been having a blast. Quilts and blankets have been our passion for a long time and we have started a new mission project. We are now also making travel pillows to gift to the children at the new Dell Children's Hospital opening soon in Cedar Park. We have committed to making 25 pillows a month and Sonshine Friends Preschool will be donating new children's books to add in the pocket of each pillow. We will be delivering the pillows and books to the children at Dell monthly with L4Cares.

We will be praying over all the completed pillows, quilts and blankets as a congregation on May 7. Our gatherings twice a month are averaging 10 to 12 stitchers and we would love to have you join us too!

Wrapping little ones in love,  
Linus Connection Central Texas



# CHURCH NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

MAR 2023

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## TRUSTEES

Your Trustees for the 2023 calendar year are as follows: Jim Turner (Chair), Anthony Buck, Eddie Kincaid, Jim Browning, Pam Turner, and Russ Stallings.

In case you missed it, the Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts are now using the Myrtle House for their activities. They are enjoying that space that they can call their own!

The Trustees are working on the following:

1. New Oven(s) for the Kitchen in the Worship Center
2. Rekeying the Campus in March (delayed from February due to the locksmith out with illness)
3. Annual Fire Inspection
4. Elevator Maintenance Contract / Inspection
5. HVAC Maintenance Contract (executed)
6. Shopping for Fire Suppression Hood for Kitchen
7. ... Lots more!

If you see something (on campus that needs attention), say something (to any member of the Trustees)!

## CHAPEL RENOVATION

We have just completed 2 "behind the scenes" projects that will reduce the electric utility bills and increase the electrical safety of the Chapel. 1) New HVAC units that are modern heat-pumps (rather than electric resistance elements), and 2) New Electrical Service panel and high voltage wiring.

What's next? The West Wing wall to the office has been removed, the carpet pulled up, and termite damage exposed. We are planning on removing the entire floor to evaluate the Pier and Beam floor supports, repairing as needed, then decking with plywood (due to budget constraints). That should complete what I call the 'safety / operating' items on our restoration list.

We will be working on the plans to remove the suspended ceiling, repairing (or replacing) the original pressed zinc tiles, reworking the HVAC ducting, and provide for new lighting as the next major phase. This will also include new base boards, repointing the plaster, and painting. My personal goal is to complete this by the end of 2023.



## Staff, Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) Update

We're excited to welcome our new Church Office Administrator - Maria "MJ" Sotela who began on February 20th. MJ is from Costa Rica and brings a wealth of experience and energy to this key role for our Church.

MJ replaces Donna Huff who was our Church Office Administrator for the past year. During that time, Donna did a fantastic job and went above and beyond to ensure the Church runs smoothly each and every day. She was recently offered an exciting full-time opportunity in her career field, and we wish her the very best.

We are very blessed by both MJ and Donna!

Church Office hours are Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m.

### Finance Committee

Current 2023 contributions are \$27,250 vs. a budget of \$36,000 through February 23rd. This is a 25% contribution shortfall.

#### FINANCE

Operating capital stands at \$39,982, which represents 1.3 months of anticipated expenditures for 2023.

As of mid-month, most budget items are within estimates, with the following exceptions:

- Electricity is 25% over budget
- Water and sewer are 75% over budget

We also have unplanned maintenance due to roof leaks and tree issues as a result of the storm.

Our facility loan has not adjusted for the increase in interest rates, nor has The Methodist Foundation resumed principal charges. When this occurs, our debt service will increase \$4,000 to \$5,000 a month.

Please prayerfully consider your financial support of the church so that we may avoid cash flow issues as the expenses as a result of the current environment increase.

#### REMINDER

Do you know a couple that is getting married? Please remember that the prayer garden and multiuse center are immediately available for weddings and receptions. Also, subject to construction, the chapel can be made available for limited use.

Tell your betrothed friends and family that Cross Tracks would love to host their special event.



# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



Teresa - ChristianEducation.CTC@gmail.com

## Armored Sports Camp

### CHRISTIAN SPORTS CAMPS FOR KIDS

Through our interactive sports camps, Armored Sports offers daily Bible lessons and memory verses within a fun, safe, and positive environment.

A multi-sport camp consisting of fun games like Dodgeball, Kickball, Capture the Flag, and other games revolving around classic sports like Basketball, Flag Football, and Soccer.



**Save the Dates!**

JUNE 12-15  
9:00AM-1:00PM  
AGES 5-12

[www.armored-sports.com/camps/crosstracks](http://www.armored-sports.com/camps/crosstracks)

Camp Prices Before June 1st- \$125  
After June 1st- \$135

## CHILDREN'S CLASSES

Children ages 4 years old through 5th grade are continuing in their study of a 3-year Cokesbury curriculum called "Grow, Proclaim Serve". In this curriculum children will explore families in the Bible, learn how today's faith families care for children as they grow, build loving relationships, and find out what it means to be part of God's family!



## YOUTH CLASS

The Youth Sunday School students are studying the scriptures as well as preparing for Youth Led Worship on Sunday, April 16th. You won't want to miss this powerful worship experience!

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2023

### HERO HOTLINE: CALLED TOGETHER TO SERVE GOD!

JULY 16TH-21ST

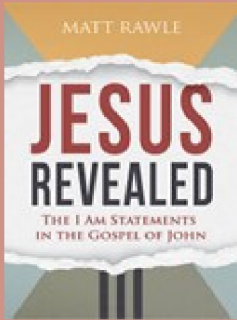


In the depths of a colorful underground cave, is the beating heart of the hero community, the Hero Hotline Headquarters where everyone's gifts are valued, and every hero has a role to play. Each day at the Hero Hotline Headquarters, superheroes of all ages and abilities answer the call and join the Professor and veteran hero, Super Meer the Meerkat, to provide expert assistance and solutions to Hero Teams everywhere.



# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

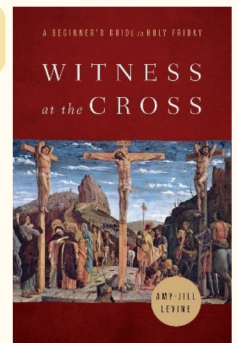
## F.R.O.G. CLASS



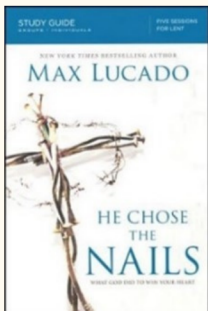
is just beginning the Study Jesus Revealed: The I Am Statements in the Gospel of John. Author Matt Rawle explores the "I Am" statements in John as works of art that resonate throughout the Gospel and all of Scripture. He shows how these words point beyond themselves to the deep mystery of Jesus Christ. Join Matt on this journey and experience the profound truth at the heart of the "I Am" statements: that Jesus is light and life, and he calls us to himself and offers us the hope of resurrection.

## L.I.F.E. CLASS

will begin their Lenten Study "Witness at the Cross: A Beginner's Guide to Holy Friday" By Prof. Amy-Jill Levine on Sunday, February 26th. Experience Holy Friday from the perspective of those who watched Jesus die: Mary his mother; the Beloved Disciple from the Gospel of John; Mary Magdalene and the other women from Galilee; the two men, usually identified as thieves, crucified with Jesus; the centurion and the soldiers; Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. Jews and Romans, friends, and strangers, the powerful and the powerless, the hopeful and the despairing.



## SOUP SUPPER AND LENTEN STUDY



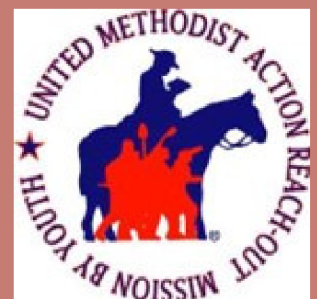
Join us Wednesday nights during Lent (March 1st – April 5th) at 6 PM for Fellowship over a bowl of soup followed by an hour-long study of "He Chose the NAILS" by Max Lucado at 6:30 PM. Every gift from God reveals his love, but no gift reveals his love more than the gifts of the cross. Study Guides will be provided (donations accepted to cover cost).

## UM ARMY -- JUNE 18-24, 2023 -- FREDERICKSBURG, TX

UM ARMY is an opportunity for youth and adults to experience Christian growth through mission, worship, and fellowship.

For youth having completed 6th –12th grade May 2023, and adults.

There will be fundraisers to assist in covering the cost.



# OUTREACH INFO

## What is Outreach?

Outreach's main mission is to make connections between the church and the community that builds relationships that make disciples. In less formal terms, the Outreach team has a broad mission that includes events that bring people into our church, engaging in city-wide events to be more visible in our community, and offering support to individuals and specific demographics.

## Some of our ideas:

In the past we've hosted Medicare and Chocolate Workshops, Christmas in July, Pioneer Days, and free meals during Snowmageddon 2021.

Looking forward, we hope to offer AA meetings, parenting classes, Parent's Night Out, Movies on the Green, and other ministries to our community. We also expect to participate in Whimsy and Wonder, the LH Christmas Festival, and more.

Under consideration: sponsoring a little league sports team in a big way. We wouldn't simply pay money and put our name on the shirt, but get to know the players and their families, attend the games and cheer for everyone, invite them to game night hot dog dinners, and host the end of year party.

## How you can plug in:

- Pray for our ministries and our connections
- Let us know if any of this excites you and where you might want to step in and be a part
- Share any ideas you might have
- Join our team
- Contact Pastor Michele



## 175th Birthday Celebration!

Williamson County is celebrating its 175th birthday on March 10th and 11th. Cross Tracks Church will be recognized during the opening ceremony as one of the two oldest churches in the county. Pastor Michele will be giving the benediction at the close of the ceremony.

Please join us on March 10th at 2:00 on the east side of the WilCo courthouse.



SPORTS CAMPS COMING TO  
**CROSS TRACKS CHURCH**  
In Liberty Hill



**BOYS & GIRLS**  
Ages 5-12

**ARMORED  
SPORTS**

**SPORTS CAMP**

A multi-sport camp consisting of fun games like Dodgeball, Kickball, Capture the Flag, and other games revolving around classic sports like Basketball, Flag Football, and Soccer.

JUNE 12-15  
9:00AM-1:00PM

**Camp Prices**  
Before June 1st- \$125  
After June 1st- \$135

Armored Sports is a Christian summer sports camp for kids. At our camps, we utilize sports to create an atmosphere where young children will fortify themselves with the armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-20). We accomplish this by instilling Christ-centered confidence, character, and commitment.

**JOIN US FOR OUR FIRST EVER CAMP AT  
CROSS TRACKS CHURCH!**



**REGISTER NOW at**

[www.armored-sports.com/camps/crosstracks](http://www.armored-sports.com/camps/crosstracks)

**NAMED BEST FESTIVAL IN TEXAS FOR  
POPULATIONS UNDER 50,000**

**RECURRING EVENTS**

Cub Scouts

Boy Scouts

Hwa Sun Martial Arts

*Whimsy & Wonder*  
LHITX  
**MAY 20**  
6-10pm  
*Downtown Main Street*  
*Street Dance...8-10PM*

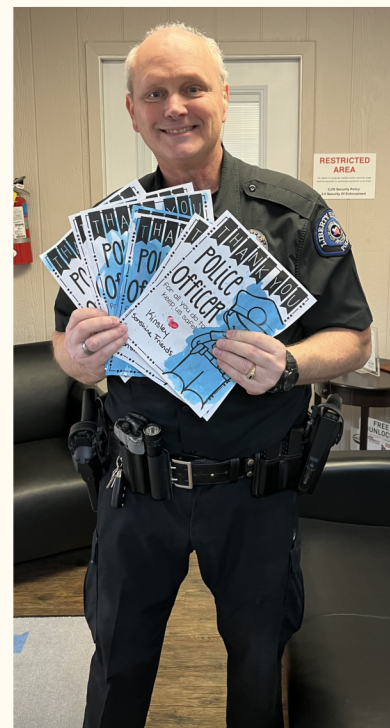
- SEVEN LIVE BANDS
- LIVE ART DEMONSTRATIONS
- UNIQUE SHOPPING
- WINE TASTINGS
- STREET PERFORMERS
- CHILDREN'S IMAGINATION GARDEN

**Seeking paid artists, unique artisan vendors, and musicians!**

# SONSHINE FRIENDS

In February, Sonshine Friends learned about different helpers in our community. We were blessed by a visit from Officer Joiner from the Liberty Hill Police Department who taught us how to be safe in our community. We observed helpers who went above and beyond to expand our turf and install a new landscape. We are so thankful for all of their hard work and absolutely love playing on our new playscape. We were able to observe trees being trimmed and learned about what an arborist is and what they do. We are super excited and looking forward to a visit from the Liberty Hill Fire Department at the end of February to learn about fire safety. And of course we love weekly Chapel time with Pastor Michele learning about being a child of God, hearing stories from the Bible, and worshiping through singing songs! Sonshine Friends has been very blessed to have many community helpers in our midst making our school experience the best ever!

Thank you for continuing to support our school with your prayers!





# APPRECIATION

## CONGREGATIONAL CARE COMMITTEE

Thought it was time to send out a great big THANK YOU to those who are helping to keep our first year back up and running the Sunday morning coffee bar a success. Ella Williams, Juli McBrayer, Sandra Wentworth, Donna Huff and Jim Browning for all their help keeping the coffee bar operating. We have also been fortunate enough to have members of the congregation bringing donations and keeping our morning coffee bar stocked with new goodies all the time. No one should forget what a wonderful surprise Christmas morning was, Manuel Soto and his wife Glenda brought the delicious breakfast burritos with homemade hot sauce and Angie Nicholson sweetened the deal with homemade cinnamon rolls. That was such a treat! We also want to thank Bert and Louise Marcom, Bobby and Sandra Sweezy for their constant help with keeping fun new items on hand for all. Wendy and Margaret both have made us homemade banana bread. We have been so blessed!

This past year was all about trying to get the Sunday morning coffee bar up and running and we feel like that has been successfully set up. Hopefully this next year we can begin meeting and planning to expand our care in other ways.

We are all blessed to have such a wonderful congregational family that work diligently to help one another. If anyone is interested in having more information on how to become a part of our Congregational Care Committee, please feel free to contact Cristy Browning.



# THINGS WE DO

*Connect with us*

## *Administration*

**Trustees** - mow the grass, care and maintenance of buildings and everything in them, prepare for future growth. Talk to Frank Funk

**Finance** - manage the budget, make financial decisions for ministry and future growth. Talk to Spencer Kendall.

## *Internal Ministries*

**Children's Team** - coordinate ministries (find leadership for Sunday School, VBS, etc.), build and support connections with the preschool, create a spirit-filled space for our children, dream big dreams for our future. Talk to Pam Turner or Courtney Pyle

**Youth Team** - support youth Sunday School, Sunday evening Youth, mission trips, retreats, and more. Talk to Ann & Michael Hartsfield

**Christian Ed** - plan, implement, and support opportunities for adults to grow in wisdom and in faith. They are also invested in creating multi-generational opportunities.

Talk to Teresa Kingsbury

**Congregational Care** - coordinate the Coffee bar on Sunday mornings, provide support and care of our family of faith (provide meals for hospital stays, births, etc., reach out to members who might need extra care). Talk to Cristy Browning

**Grandies** - Our older and wiser members gather each week to send cards, fellowship, and prepare their mission projects. Talk to Ella Williams.

**Worship** - Plan and prepare for all aspects of worship (order of worship, music, children's connection, special services, visual components, etc.). Talk to Angie Nicholson.

## *External Ministries*

**Outreach Team** - Creating opportunities to serve, connect with, and invite the community of Liberty Hill. Talk to Anthony Buck

**Missions Team** - Meeting the physical needs (ramps, home rehab, flood remediation, etc.) of our community and beyond. Talk to Mike McCown.