

*A Publication Of Marvin Church • February 2026*



# MarvinLife

Inside:  
The Season of Lent begins  
Organ Update

marvin.church

It is hard to believe that we are already through the first month of January and talking about beginning the season of Lent! It has been a great start to 2026 with worship attendance and Mid-Week participation. Thank you, Marvin family for your interest in spiritual growth and for making our church a vibrant faith community. Thank you also for finishing 2025 with great generosity. We couldn't do all the exceptional worship, programming, missional work, and multi-generational disciple making without your participation and leadership. Together, we are the church, "growing and building itself up in love, as each part does its work" (Ephesians 4:16).

I can be hard on myself. I have high expectations for my ministry, have a perfectionistic tendency, and have a personality that is burdened by unfinished tasks. I often overlook what has been accomplished because I am focused on what still needs to be done. Sometimes, I am not fully living in the present because of my preoccupations and my overactive conscience.

I am grateful for my wife Gina and the support and patience that she offers me. She has been by my side for over thirty-five years of full-time ministry. She has shared me with the church and has been a constant companion and best friend. Her support of our family life and marriage means the world to me, and this August we will be celebrating forty years of marriage.

I am most grateful to God, who called me into ministry at the age of nineteen. He has been faithful, merciful, loving, and empowering through all my years of service. It is only by his grace that I have been able to serve him faithfully and find myself shepherding such a wonderful congregation as Marvin.

Ephesians 2:4 states, "But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in our transgressions." Though not at first noticeable because of the important phrase "because of his great love for us," this is one of the many "But God" passages of the Bible.

Though I have my persistent growing edges, or as the Apostle Paul might say, my "thorn in the flesh" that keeps me humble and aware of my need for a Savior, God is rich in mercy and can make me alive as I live in his grace. How grateful I am that God is not poor in mercy. Nowhere else in the Bible is God described as rich in anything. The only thing that he is described as rich in is mercy. God's mercy is bigger than I have often realized, maybe because I have been under the

false assumption that I didn't need mercy as much as others who had more dramatic conversion stories from very difficult life circumstances.

Thanks be to God that because of his great love for us, he doesn't just patiently put up with us or wait for us to get our act together before we can come to him. God pursues us. God's mercy is not slow and cautious like ours, it is free flowing. It is flood-like. In fact, when new stone tablets of the 10 Commandments had to be re-created because of the people's sin with the making of a golden calf, God passed in front of Moses proclaiming, "The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, is slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion, and sin." The people had sinned, but God...

From the loving Father, the world received a merciful Savior who was "gentle and humble in heart" (Matthew 11:29). "He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all- how will he not also, graciously give us all things" (Romans 8:32). God's mercy runs towards us. God is not tightfisted with mercy but openhanded, not poor in mercy, but rich in mercy.

I've started asking for more mercy in my life. Whatever the circumstances, I simply ask, "Lord bring your mercy to this situation." Whether it is in the morning or when facing a challenge during the day, I ask for God's help. I ask for God's mercy. And I envision that God is pleased that I am turning to him for help.

"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:22-23). May God's mercy fill your heart and bless you all your days. But don't forget to ask and envision the Lord's smile as you do.

In Christ,

*Doug*



Dr. Doug Baker



# The SEASON of LENT

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Season of Lent. The imposition of ashes is first recorded in the Book of Job (42:6) and are an outward and visible symbol of repentance, an expression of our desire to follow Christ. There are a number of ways that we as a church plan to enter into this season together.

## 24 Hour Fast

Marvin Church, your pastors invite you to participate in a 24-hour fast in preparation for Ash Wednesday worship and the season of Lent. The fast begins after dinner on Tuesday, Feb. 17 and continues through Ash Wednesday Worship in the Sanctuary at 6 p.m., where we will break our fast as a congregation with the sacrament of Holy Communion.

## Ash Wednesday Opportunities

### 12:05 p.m. – Midweek Meditation

Come worship in the Sanctuary and receive the imposition of ashes.

### 6-7 p.m. – Ash Wednesday Worship

This is the service of Holy Communion and imposition of ashes in the sign of the cross on the forehead. This service also marks the end to the 24-hour fast.

## Throughout Lent

Lent is a season of 40 days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday (before Easter). It is a season of reflection and preparation: we reflect on our need for a Savior and we prepare to celebrate the victory of Christ, raised from the dead on Easter Sunday.

## Weekly Fast

During the season of Lent many people give something up as an expression of their dependence upon Christ. Additionally, some people take something on. Consider fasting from one meal a week. Rather than eating lunch on Wednesday, come to Midweek Communion and receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion. See [marvin.church](http://marvin.church) for resources on fasting or contact Marc Donaldson at [mdonaldson@marvin.church](mailto:mdonaldson@marvin.church). Marvin Church, as the season of Lent begins please know that we are on the journey together.

## Organ Update: The Pipes!

In early January, Billy Hibbs and Kara and Jonathan Story, traveled to Saint-Hyacinthe, Quebec to visit the Letourneau Organ Company headquarters and to assess progress on Marvin's new organ. During the visit, they were able to see the keyboards, the organ bench, and the completed Echo Division, among other things. They were excited to report back to the congregation on January 11 that we are now at 92% completion of production of the pipes, and at 80% completion of voicing of the pipes!

With Letourneau having recently installed the organ in New Orleans that was just ahead of ours, all the employees are now dedicated to our project, Letourneau Opus 139. The President, Andrew Forest, is optimistic about the April 13 delivery date. Our team was able to hear several of the voices on our new instrument, including a clarinet and a trumpet, and were delighted with the sound. The entire trip was not only informative, but also incredibly encouraging.



Artist's rendering.  
New cross not pictured.



## Stewardship Update

With the congregation's faithful response to the End-of-Year Giving Challenge, we are excited to announce that Marvin's 2025 operating budget goal was met. Thank you, Marvin Church! Your steadfast commitment and devout generosity are felt by so many. We look forward to seeing you on campus in 2026 and watching God move on His church.

We have received pledge cards totaling 75% of the 2026 budget, and we sincerely thank everyone who has responded.

If you have not yet submitted your 2026 commitment, it's not too late to do so.



## Spring is in the Air and The Daffodils are Blooming

*Join Us For Our Next Adventure*

During February and March each year, East Texas is treated to millions of blooming daffodils and other flowers at Mrs. Lee's Daffodil Garden.

Gladewater resident Helen Lee was so passionate about nature and flowers that she planted four miles of daffodils on her property back in the 1950s.

Come join the Ventures Group on Tuesday morning, March 3, as we make the short drive over to the Gardens near Gladewater. Afterwards, we will enjoy lunch at Skippers Pier Coastal Cajun Kitchen and then have some free time to explore the many antique shops in this quaint community.

You buy your lunch and we will cover the van ride. Hope to see you at the Garden.

Contact Kenley Moore ([kmoore@marvin.church](mailto:kmoore@marvin.church)) for more information or to sign up.



## Santa for Missions

Missions would like to recognize the long-standing service of Ron and Mary Gammell. They just completed their 23rd year of Santa for Missions. Each Christmas season they have lovingly donated their time, energy and all proceeds from Santa visits to various children's services in Tyler. St. Paul Children's Services, Bethesda Pediatrics, and Tyler Day Nursery have all benefited from their giving. As a thank you, we will be offering a donation to the new Bethesda Clinic with the naming of a pediatric dental treatment room in their honor. Thank you, Mary and Ron, for providing smiles, laughter and funding to programs that help children in our local community. We love you!



## Ways to Serve:

Contact Kenley (kmoore@marvin.church) in the Missions office for more information on the following ways to serve.

### Sweets for the Soul:

Wintertime often means an increase in hospitalization and subsequently hospice care. You can help lift the spirits of families of patients by providing homemade sweets for the family hospitality room at the Hospice of East Texas. This takes place on the second Monday of the month.

### Homeless Ministry:

Did you know we provide sack lunches every Tuesday to the Gateway of Hope Day Center for our local homeless community? Would you like to get involved with packing or delivering? Sponsor a month?

### Bonner Elementary:

Springtime means STARR testing for our public school students. Help tutor students at Bonner Elementary as they prepare for their STARR tests.

### Meals on Wheels:

We are considering a Marvin church delivery team for Meals on Wheels. Right now, we are just seeing if we have enough interest to commit to a regular route. If you would be interested in delivering once a week or once every two weeks let us know!

## Save the Date

### Great Day of Service

Saturday March 21

a Marvin Lenten tradition

### Mission Week 2026

June 13-18

### Marvin hosts UMARMY

June 21-27

250 youth and adults will serve all around Tyler. This event will be led by the youth staff from the Woodlands Methodist Church, our friends in the Trinity Conference. More details soon!



## 2026 Mission Trip Opportunities

### Come with us to Leander, Texas

#### Texas Hill Country Mission Trip

Sunday, March 8-Thursday, March 12

(leave Sunday after church and come back Thursday afternoon)

Leander is only 3.5 hours away. We will help the families of Leander continue to rebuild after the floods that came through. We will be doing some light yard work, debris clean up, raking and trash pick up, pass out supplies that have been donated to families in need, make some in home (Camper) visits to get to know individuals, hear their stories, host a meal(s) at the community center for the locals, help paint a workshop, spread some gravel, and even build a chicken coop! Cost is \$250 per person. Only seven spots left!

### Northern Japan

Wednesday, May 27-Friday, June 5

Help us put on a VBS for tweens and teens with the Adair family in Japan. No Japanese required! Just a willingness to love on American children navigating the realities of being a missionary kid in a foreign country.

### Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania

Sunday, June 21- 30

Help us put on a VBS for the children of Tanzania during their summer break with Alfred Njau and the Amazing Grace Church. We will dance, sing, eat new foods, color, teach bible stories, dance some more, stay in ocean side cabins, and share the joy of the Lord with our brothers and sisters in Tanzania. Help us in helping Alfred and his church reignite their faith in light of the past court cases that still continue on. The Cost for this trip is \$2,500 per person.

### South Texas

Sept. 5-8

Join us as we travel to South Texas to partner with one of our missionary couples, Sonya and Gabriel Leal, in serving the local church, local food banks, and the local ministries they partner with to bring hope and relief to those living on the border. Cost for this trip will be \$250 per person.

Contact Adam Kovach (akovach@marvin.church) if you are interested in any of the above listed mission trip opportunities, have questions, or would like more information.

## Fresh 5k/15k Race on Saturday, March 7

We're trying something new for community outreach! We're looking for Marvin walkers, joggers, and runners who are interested in participating in the Fresh 5k or 15k race put on by Brookshire Grocery Company on March 7! We're looking to form a Marvin team of as many people as possible, of all ages and paces, to flood the course with our presence so that everyone that is out there knows that Marvin loves, cares for, and runs Tyler. Last year there were over 5,000 participants and we are excited to be one of the first church sponsors. If interested, contact Adam (akovach@marvin.church) for more details or questions. There might even be custom Marvin T-shirts!

Please use "TEAMMARVIN" when registering to ensure you're signing up as part of the Marvin Team.



### Memorials

As Of Jan. 6, 2026

#### CHANCEL CHOIR

##### In Memory Of Hal Bertram

Julia & Wade Abrams  
Mick Alleman  
Kathy & Wayne Babin  
Meredith Miller Bentley  
Susan & Michael Bosworth  
Monica Bratteli  
Sarah & Bill Bryan  
Ruth & Roe Buckley  
Jean Burroughs  
Judy & Bruce Carter  
Mary Ann & Tom Dougherty  
Celia & David Elkins  
Julie & Drew Greene  
Beth & Andy Guinn  
Maggie & Perry Hall  
Jan & Brian Hancock  
Tisa & Billy Hibbs  
Cecilie & Ronnie Holman  
Michele & Rick Jett  
Alyssa & Riter Kerr  
Lori & Scott Knight  
Kay & Paul Latta  
Lane Lauderdale

Ann & Roy Lilly  
Leeann & Les Loggins  
Wanda Lynch  
Patty Machin  
Lynn & Jerry Martin  
Chaley & Jim McCain  
Debbie & Paul Oberthier  
Mona & Ted Odom  
Debbie & Robert Peveto  
Mary & Roy Price  
Lou Anne Rainy  
Cynthia & Whit Riter  
Stephenie & Randy Roberts  
Becky & Jim Robertson  
Carey Roper  
Ginger & Mark Saunders  
Gaye & Ron Schoenbrun  
Libby & Scot Shoup  
Kaley & Trey Sloan  
Lori & Eric Smith  
Elizabeth Ann Richards Stone  
Timothy Taylor  
Cheryl Threlkeld  
Tyler Junior Garden Club  
Ann & Carl Wester  
Cindi Yancy-Hebert

Memorials continue on page 9



**Habits of the Heart: February**  
individual size bags of goldfish crackers, animal crackers or pretzels. Benefiting Mentoring Alliance after school programs.



**Serve Night Monday, Feb. 16, 6 p.m.**  
Assemble dental kits for Bethesda dental clinic.



**Sweets for the Soul, Feb. 9**  
Make baked goodies for Hospice of East Texas. Info: contact Kenley at kmoore@marvin.church.



Keynote Speaker  
Allison Allen

### Breathe Women's Conference

Ladies you don't want to miss 2026 Breathe Women's Conference at Marvin Methodist Church on Feb. 6-7.

This year's keynote speaker is Allison Allen. She has many roles in life – the former Broadway dancer is a wife, mother, speaker, and Bible teacher that is passionate about sharing Jesus with women everywhere.

Come expecting to have an encounter with Jesus. There will be rich worship through song and fellowship throughout the weekend.

Registration is \$50 and can be secured online at [marvin.church](http://marvin.church).



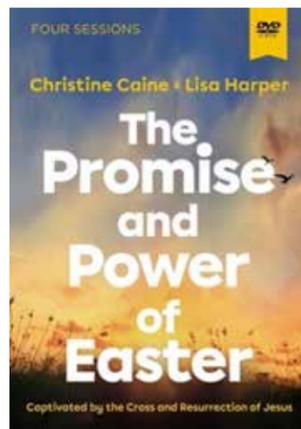
### Susanna Wesley Circle

Monday, Feb. 16th, at 10 a.m. in the Garden Room. Tamikia Bell will be speaking on prayer. All women are welcome, and we encourage you to bring a friend.

### Amazing Grace Night Circle

We will gather on Tuesday, Feb. 17 at 6 p.m., at Mentoring Alliance (1909 S. Broadway Ave., Tyler). Matt Edwards, Executive Director of Greater Tyler, will share information as we tour their campus. All women are welcome, and we encourage you to bring a friend.

For Women's Ministry info, contact Brandy Stevens at 903.405.4762 or [bstevens@marvin.church](mailto:bstevens@marvin.church).



### Bible Study

10 a.m., Tuesdays, Feb. 10 - March 10.

Easter isn't just a date on the calendar; it's the most significant event in human history. It's the celebration of Jesus' resurrection from the dead, and His victory over everything that holds us back in our earthly lives. It's the day we focus on the promise and power of Jesus and draw closer to Him.

Join us in a transformative study that goes beyond tradition. Together we will walk through four weeks of the Lenten season taking in the details of Jesus' life, the agony of His death, and the overwhelming joy of His resurrection.

Relive His steps with a heart full of hope. See it all with eyes of faith. You'll be ready to celebrate Easter in more ways than you ever have and be inspired to share the joy only Jesus could make possible.

 Stay up to date: Text "womens" to 90382. 

### STAFF HIGHLIGHT



When God calls you to do something, even when you are not actively seeking and searching, you answer the call. This is exactly what Holly Freeman, Stewardship Consultant at Marvin, experienced four months ago when she answered God's calling on her life.

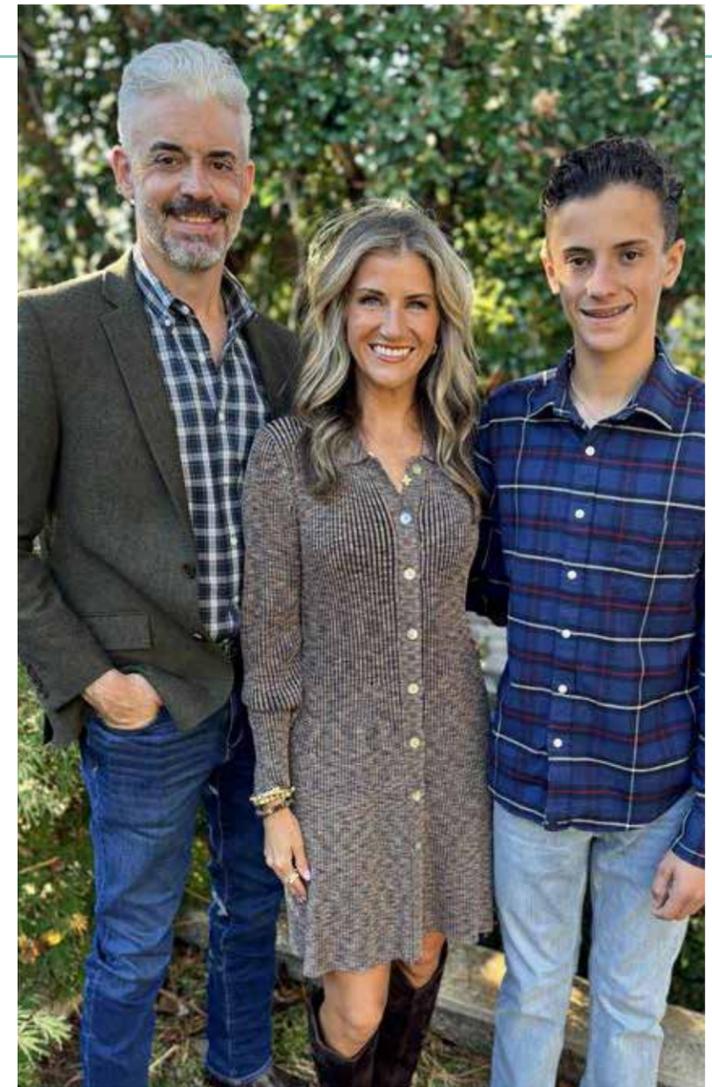
Before beginning her role at Marvin, Holly served as the Membership Director at Willow Brook Country Club. After 11 years, she chose to step away from that role to be a stay-at-home mom. In the four years that followed, she was blessed with the opportunity to volunteer with several local organizations, which led to chairing multiple large-scale fundraising events.

Throughout the last four months, Holly has been active in all areas of stewardship and giving at Marvin. Her goal is to help ensure Marvin's ministry continues for the next 176+ years.

Holly and her husband, David, are both originally from Tyler and have been married for 17 years. Their son, Wyatt, is 14 and an eighth grader at Hubbard Middle School.

Outside of work, you will find Holly on the tennis court or playing mahjong with friends. She also owns a small business that assists women in editing their wardrobes, helping them feel more confident in what they wear.

She is excited about further serving Christ in her new role.



Memorials continued from page 7

**In Honor Of Laurie Breedlove**  
Peo Tyler  
**In Memory Of Kenneth Threlkeld**  
Lori & Scott Knight

**ETERNAL FLAME**  
**In Honor Of Georganne & Danny Allen**  
**In Honor Of Bill Brandt**  
**In Honor Of Myra & Jim Brown**  
**In Honor Of Marty Bruce**  
**In Honor Of Mary Beth & Jim Dawes**  
**In Honor Of Susan & Jim Gerhard**  
**In Honor Of Jo Carol & Randy Hunnicutt**  
**In Honor Of The Marvin Pastors**

**In Honor Of Pat Watson**  
**In Honor Of Richard York**  
Deanna Olson  
**In Memory Of Bob Bandy**  
Kim Lewis  
**In Memory Of Hal Bertram**  
Jacqueline Goates  
Cindy & Randy Kidwell  
Ginny Mattox  
Sally & Stephen Molinari  
Deanna Olson  
Anne Schoenbrun  
Margaret & Tom Stewart  
Marketta & George Tettler  
Deanna Olson

**In Memory Of Casey Brownlow**  
Anne Schoenbrun  
**In Memory Of Rebecca Flinkinger**  
Marilyn & John Hardy  
**In Memory Of Lynn Heines**  
Deanna Olson  
Anne Schoenbrun  
**In Memory Of Dick Knarr**  
Deanna Olson  
**In Memory Of Iris & Marvin Mayer**  
Bill Bacon  
**In Memory Of Kevin Rook**  
Marilyn & John Hardy  
**In Memory Of Charles Smith**  
Beverly & Ed Langley

**In Memory Of Jeanetta Stewart**  
Jan & Jim Knowles  
**In Honor Of Granddaughters Karly White And Brooklyn White**  
Karen Crawford

**MISSIONS**  
**In Memory Of Kip Camp**  
Bill, Marion & Will Nye  
**In Memory Of William D. Vines**  
The Sharkey Family

**MUSIC**  
**In Memory Of Valerie Hardy**  
Kay & George Rook

### Financial update through December

	Dec. budget	Dec. actual	YTD budget	YTD actual
Gifts received/other income	\$ 1,316,000	\$ 912,324	\$ 5,067,000	\$ 4,846,636
Expenditures	\$ 387,586	\$ 405,942	\$ 5,067,000	\$ 4,775,100
Excess/(shortage)	\$ 928,414	\$ 506,382	\$ ---	\$ 71,536

### Attendance

Dec. 7 .....	1,479
Dec. 14.....	1,052
Dec. 21.....	1,115
Dec. 24.....	1,991
Dec. 28.....	538



**SUNDAY SCHOOL**

Sunday School runs each Sunday morning from 9:45-10:45 a.m. on the third floor with classes for Middle School and High School. Free donuts and kolaches provided!

**UNITE**

Unite, our largest student gathering, happens on Sunday nights from 5-7 p.m. for middle school and 6:30-8:30 p.m. for high school with free dinner included for everyone. This semester we are studying the book of Timothy!



**COVENANT GROUPS**

Covenant Groups have been growing massively the past six months and are a time of relationship building and Bible study. Join us on Wednesday from 6-7 p.m.!



**UPCOMING EVENTS**

The Student Ministry has some BIG events coming up, so mark your calendars! Both events have registration forms on the Marvin website.

- March 29 – Student Passover Meal**
- April 18 – Student Mystery Trip**



**We are back in the swing of things with Marvin Kids!**

*This semester is packed with fun for the whole family!*

**On Feb. 13, we are hosting one of our most loved events—Kids Night Out!** This favorite night for kids and parents is the perfect chance for your little ones to have a blast while you enjoy a few hours to yourselves. Whether that means dinner out, quiet time with a cup of coffee, or even a nap, we've got you covered! KNO is open to all kids birth through 5th grade. We will feed them, teach them about Jesus, have tons of fun, and send them home excited for more. Space is limited, so be sure to register on the website today!

**Join us for our Spring Pop-Up at Fresh on Saturday, Feb. 28 from 5-7 p.m.** Bring the whole family, grab dinner inside, and meet us on the patio near the little playground for a relaxed evening of fun and fellowship. We can't wait to see you there!

**Be sure to save the date for VBS this summer—July 13-16 from 8:30 a.m.–noon!** Registration for volunteers and Marvin Kids opens March 15, so keep an eye out. We are already pumped for another amazing VBS!

Do not forget to grab a Marvin Kids Spring Calendar or check the website for all upcoming events. These are wonderful opportunities to engage, connect, and celebrate our shared faith. We are excited to see all that God has in store!





**MARVIN**  
Methodist Church

300 W. Erwin Street | Tyler, TX 75702

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**PAID**  
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Tyler, TX

Welcome to Marvin



Ed and Lynn Cummings



Jennifer and Doug Shultz



Paul and Elizabeth Sharkey



Bryce and Ellen Westbrook

## Town Hall Meeting Feb. 15

The Finance Committee and Finance Department will be hosting the quarterly townhall meeting to review financial information with our members. Items to be discussed will be financial information regarding revenue and expenses.

The townhall meeting will be held on Sunday, Feb. 15 during the Sunday School hour and at noon (immediately following the conclusion of the 11 a.m. services). All townhall meetings will take place in Marvin's Library.

