

# FIRST METHODIST CHURCH

## Newsletter

Vol. 1 Issue 1 · Mar. 2025



## The Season of Lent

Folks,

The weather is warming, the days are longer, and the season of Lent is upon us! It's a beautiful time of reflection where we prepare our hearts for the good news of Easter Sunday by reminding ourselves of our continual need for God's saving grace and provision. During these six weeks, our sermon series will follow the Israelites as they journey through the wilderness toward the promised land. They were constantly confronted with their own faults and failures and shown that they could never make it to their destination apart from daily reliance upon God. During all of the March madness that competes for your attention, I hope you'll be purposeful in finding time to look for how God is showing up to sustain you day after day.

Grace and Peace,  
Greg Morgan



Worship  
& Learn  
with Us

Adult Sunday School

9:45 A.M.

Children's Sunday School

9:45 A.M.

in classrooms

Sunday Worship Services:

10:45 A.M.

in the sanctuary

\*Child care is available  
during the classrooms  
during Sunday Service\*

# Getting to Know Pastor Greg

Dive into Pastor Greg's treasure trove of answers to our deep (and not-so-deep) questions!



**Q** What are some of your favorite aspects of ministry?

There are two aspects of ministry that I treasure above everything else. The first is getting the opportunity to be part of y'all's lives. From cheering on your kiddos at soccer games to doing homebound visits for your parents to going out to dinner with you and your spouse, I love every minute of it! The second is getting to preach the Word of God every week!

**Q** Do you have any hobbies or activities you enjoy in your free time?

I have a few hobbies that I've really gotten into over the last year or two. I've started learning acoustic guitar, and absolutely love it! I practice almost every day, but I'm not all that good yet (although I can play Wonderwall!). I also have gotten into hiking! Well, I want to. And I've played a couple of rounds of golf and really enjoyed myself, so I hope to do more of that as well!

**Q** How do you like to connect with the congregation outside of Sunday services?

My favorite way to connect with congregation members outside of Sunday worship is to do stuff together, whether that be going to a local football or basketball game, going to try a new restaurant, or even exploring some hidden feature of Texarkana.

**Q** What is your favorite meal or comfort food?

My favorite meal is definitely pizza! If we want to get into specifics, my favorite topping is pepperoni (prosciutto if I'm feeling fancy), and my three favorite styles are New York, Detroit, and Tavern.

**Q** What Bible verse or scripture has particularly shaped your faith and ministry?

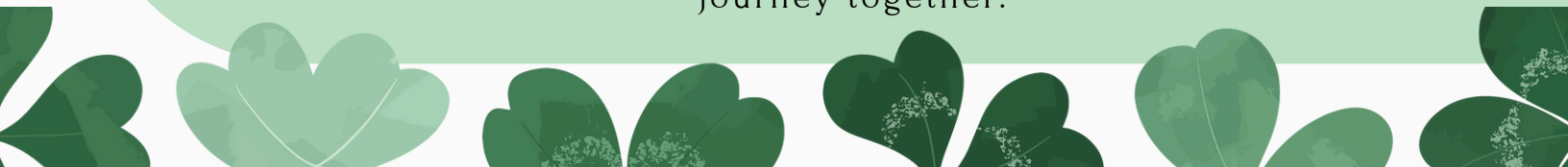
Galatians 1:10 has been especially formative for me as a pastor. It helps me remember that my job is not to appease people or make everyone happy but rather to serve God faithfully.

**Q** Do you have a favorite holiday or season of the year?

My favorite holiday/season is definitely Christmas! Whether it be from the smell of fresh baked sugar cookies, carols ringing through the speakers in retail stores, beautiful lights lighting up the night sky, or focus on giving rather than receiving, there is such an abundance of joy that fills the air!

**Q** How can our congregation support you in your ministry?

The biggest thing the congregation can do to support me in my ministry is to be patient and have grace. I may occasionally appear wise beyond my years, but at the end of the day I am still just 30 years old. I'm still very young and I still have a lot to learn. I'll make mistakes. I'll forget things. I'll say the wrong thing. I'll make decisions that people don't agree with. I won't always have the answers. My prayer is that y'all as the church will patiently walk alongside me so that we can grow in this journey together.





# Mary's Closet

## How it Came to Be

In 2011, First Methodist Church was struggling. Attendance was down, and membership had dwindled to only about 15 congregants. While these congregants were faithful in their work to keep the church going, they faced a major issue: district leaders said First Church lacked a mission, therefore a purpose, and even insinuated that without these elements, the church's future would be called into question.

Long time congregant Mary O'Farrell could not bear to see the demise of her church, so she answered the call and started Mary's Closet. What started as a one woman mission in 2011 has spread to a downtown staple that has blessed thousands of people in need in our community. Not long after opening, other women joined Mary, and the program grew. Remembering the mission's beginning, O'Farrell recounts, "The closet really took off around 2015, and on Sunday, January 1, 2017, Pastor Mike Akin officially dedicated the closet, and the sign was placed on the outside of the building."





## How it Works

Mary's Closet collects and organizes donated clothing and household items to people in need. The closet operates like a store, and impoverished community members can come shop without spending any money and without losing any dignity. "We serve anybody, needy and disenfranchised, we don't turn anybody or anything away," O'Farrell says.

The closet operates on Tuesdays. Volunteers take in donations, organize them in the downstairs intake room, and arrange them in the upstairs store room. If furniture items are donated, or if a large amount of items are donated, volunteers can come pick them up in the closet's van, with the help of workers from the Restoration of Hope project.

Community members are able to shop between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Due to its proximity to Randy Sams Outreach Shelter and Salvation Army Food Distribution Center, Mary's Closet is able to easily provide much needed aid to those in need in the downtown area. Volunteers say that assisting the shoppers with their selections is one of the more rewarding parts of the job.

## How You Can Get Involved

There are several ways that First Church members can further the mission of Mary's Closet. Collecting donated items from your own home, or friends and neighbors is one way. Volunteering at the closet on Tuesdays is another. Mrs. O'Farrell encourages all members to participate, even if they are not able to commit to weekly volunteering: "We would love to have anyone. A volunteer can do as little or as much as they want to."





# Youth in Action



Francie Hayes and her friends gathered items for Mary's Closet as a Sadie Project at school.

Mary's Closet is always in need of men's clothing. If you have any items you would like to donate bring them on a Tuesday or call Mary O'Farrell





# Growing in Our Faith

## ADULT BIBLE STUDY

with Pastor Greg

*The Book of  
Genesis*

starting  
MARCH 20TH

## *Kairos* **PRISON MINISTRY**

A ministry that aims to  
address the spiritual  
needs of incarcerated  
people and their  
families.

Contact Paul Quinn at  
[redcat4@earthlink.net](mailto:redcat4@earthlink.net)  
for more information.

## **PRAYER MINISTRY**

Are you interested in  
joining others to pray  
over our weekly  
prayer requests?

Contact Sharon Ward  
at 903-244-5006 for  
more information.

## *Hymn Circle*

Connect with others  
and learn about the  
history and biblical  
basis of each Sunday's  
upcoming hymns.

Contact Tonja Hays  
at 870-703-5746



# In Memorium



Carol will always be remembered by the members of First Methodist Church as a kind soul who loved to help others. She began volunteering with Mary's Closet on her days off before she retired, and continued this work for many years. She also led the youth Sunday School class.

Her giving nature and her calm spirit will continue to inspire us.

## Obituary

Carol Anne Hart, age 67, passed away peacefully on February 9, 2025, after a courageous battle with cancer. Carol was born in British Columbia, Canada, to her parents, John and Joan Parris on May 21, 1957.

She was a lab tech at Wadley Regional Medical Center for 40 years. She was a Christian by faith and attended First United Methodist Church. She enjoyed helping her church by volunteering with Mary's Closet. She was a very calm, happy woman who loved to teach others to 'Do No Harm.' She was preceded in death by her parents.

She is survived by her husband, Steve Hart; her children and stepchildren, Tracy Henderson, Cynthia Hart, and partner, Kurt Perry, Jennifer Teer, and husband, Drew; her grandchildren, Beleigh Henderson, Bretton Rodforn, Ethan Perry, Hudson Perry, and Conner Perry; and one great-grandchild, Pasley Spruell.







# Pastor Greg's Welcome Celebration





# Run The Line





# Celebrations



## MARCH BIRTHDAYS

1 Brian Steed  
Susan Warmack  
Karen Williams  
3 Ed Eichler  
5 Mark Hlavinka  
8 Luke Mueller  
9 Holly Dickeson  
11 Courtney Waldrep  
Will Hlavinka  
17 Katie Carter

18 Beverly Tye  
19 Katie Dewolfe  
Caecilie Spyres  
20 Cody Morgan  
Erica Cain  
21 Debbie Fowler  
25 Reese White  
27 Judy Smith  
28 Zach Dunbar



Do you have a celebration to share? A birthday, anniversary, baptism, wedding, or birth? Email [hollydickeson1@gmail.com](mailto:hollydickeson1@gmail.com)