

The Russell Report

Russell Memorial Methodist Church

A Family Rooted in Christ and Reaching Out in Love



Vol. 20, No. 2

February 2024

Keep Your Eye on the Ball

“...let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith...” (Hebrews 12:1-2)

Anyone who has spent time playing baseball has heard these instructive words: “Keep your eye on the ball!” I often heard those words as a young boy, usually after a swing and a miss. Hitting the ball does become easier with much practice. Nevertheless, even the most experienced batters will miss the ball with regularity. If you think about it, hitting a fair ball is a remarkable feat. The ball and bat are small, and the angle at which contact is made must fall within fairly restricted parameters. For that reason, any player stepping to the plate would naturally be laser-focused on the ball about to head her/his way. With eyes fixed on the crowd, the scoreboard, or anything else, a hit is almost certain not to happen.

The writer of Hebrews exhorts the reader to keep eyes on the ball. For the Christian, the “ball” is Jesus. He IS the target. He IS the goal. Ultimately we pursue nothing other than him. Pursuit of the Kingdom is simply a corollary of pursuing the person of Jesus. The same is true of pursuit of righteousness, pursuit of spiritual fruit, pursuit of anything related to discipleship or evangelism. We will pursue all of these things—IF we are pursuing Jesus. When Jesus taught to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matthew 6:33), we must understand that seeking a kingdom begins with seeking a king.

It would take much space in this article to list the encumbrances we carry—not even to mention the sins that so easily entangle us. Things that cause us to come short of kingdom goals are often not bad things, but simply less than kingdom worthy in nature. Why does it sometimes feel like we “swing and miss” in church life? Probably because we don’t have our eye on the ball. Comforts, preferences, worldly agendas, even traditions for tradition’s sake cause us to swing hard and swing often. But if Jesus isn’t the goal, it’s still a miss. As the season of Lent begins, I pray that God will show us things that need to be laid aside, the grace to lay them down willingly, and the passion for pursuing Jesus with our whole hearts.

Pastor Dave



Rummage Sale Coming Soon

Save your rummage please! The youth will hold a rummage sale in April to collect money to help send kids to church camp this summer. We need all your rummage to help defray the costs for church camp. We will also need volunteers. More details to follow. Questions should be directed to Mary Keller or Shane McBride.



On Saturday, February 17 the Discovery Institute will host the 2024 Conference on Science and Faith called *Privileged Planet*. The event will feature several renowned scientists, including Dr. Stephen C. Meyer, speaking on issues of design in our planet. Detailed session information can be found at <https://www.discovery.org/e/dallas2024>. Russell Memorial can simulcast the event at no charge to the participant for those who would like to attend. If you are interested in attending at the church, please contact Pastor Dave no later than Sunday, February 11 so we can determine if there is enough interest.



Snack and Coffee Pod Donations Needed

We continue to collect supplies to stock our teacher's lounge at the junior high. Things like coffee pods, crackers, and snack bars are great items. The staff have been very appreciative of the

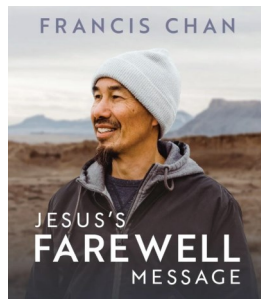
kindness we have shown them. Anything provided can be brought to the church office, and we will deliver to the school.

Shrove Tuesday

The Methodist Men will be serving a pancake meal on Shrove Tuesday, which is February 13. We will serve that evening from 6:30 to 7:00. Come enjoy table fellowship

with friends. Invite someone to join you as we "get the leaven out" in preparation for the season of Lent. The meal is a fundraiser for the men's ministry; donations will be appreciated.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner



Lenten Lunches

The church will host soup and salad lunches on Wednesdays during the season of Lent, beginning on February 21. The lunches are free and open to the public. Meals will be ready to eat at 12:00, and will be followed by a time of study and prayer. Our study will follow the video series by Francis Chan *Jesus's Farewell Message*. All participants will be given a link to view the videos at home. RSVPs will be welcome through the church office, but not required.



Souper Bowl

The Souper Bowl is upon us! While it is possible that your favorite team isn't involved, you can still find joy in helping our community. Bring your cans of "chunky" soup (any brand) and place them in the bins marked "Chiefs" or "Forty Niners" in the church narthex. We will see which league is favored by the people. Donations will be used for our Community Angel Tree ministry.



Sanctuary Open for Prayer Time

Our church sanctuary will be open on Tuesday evenings from 6:00 until 8:00 during the season of Lent for prayer and meditation. Come and go as the Lord leads you. Prayer guides will be provided as an optional resource. The pastor will be present and available for anyone who requests prayer or support. You may want to plan a prayer time with your discipleship band, class, or circle of friends. It is all as the Spirit leads.

Calendar of Events for February

Dates to Remember for February



Saturday, February 10, 10:00 a.m. Safety Team Meeting
 11:00 a.m. Methodist Women Valentine Luncheon
 Sunday, February 11, 8:00 a.m. Methodist Men B.Y.O.Breakfast Meeting
 Tuesday, February 13, 6:30-7:00 p.m. Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner
 Thursday, February 15, 9:00 a.m. Game Day in Deen Building
 Saturday, February 17, 9:00 a.m. Crafting with Christ
 Privileged Planet Conference
 Tuesday, February 20 & 27, 6:00-8:00 p.m. Sanctuary Open for Prayer
 Wednesday, February 21 & 27, 12:00 p.m. Lenten Lunches

Happy Birthday!

		Debby Roberts	2-22
		Diane Sandifer	2-27
Gerda David	2-4	Linda Dennis	2-28
Steven Collins	2-7	Leilanie Galope	2-29
Dana Hullum	2-8	Marigrace Lang	2-29
Brad Malone	2-11		
Peggy Kinney	2-13		
Holly Malone	2-14		
Justin Galope	2-15		
Bernadette Kolb	2-18		
Linda Malone	2-21		



Right Now Media



Don't forget about the amazing offer of rightnow media offered through the church. Text RMUMC to 49775 for an invitation to set up your account, or contact the church office to request help.

Our Presence and Our Gifts

	Jan 7	Jan 14	Jan 21	Jan 28
Worship	115	67	95	107
Giving	\$8,536.50	\$15,248.00	\$3,059.50	\$7,001.00

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship Service	5 6:00 pm Trustees Meeting	6	7 5:30 pm Youth Group 6:00 pm Ladies Hand Bells	8	9	10 10:00 am Safety Team 11:00 Methodist Women Valentine Luncheon
11 8:00 am Methodist Men Bring Your Own Breakfast Meeting 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship Service	12	13 6:30 pm Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner, fundraiser for Methodist Men	14 5:30 pm Youth Group 6:00 pm Ladies Hand Bells 7:00 pm Ash Wednesday Service	15 9:00 am Games in the Deen Building	16	17 9:00 am Crafting with Christ
18 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship Service	19	20 6-8 pm Sanctuary open for Prayer	21 12:00 pm Lenten Lunches 5:30 pm Youth Group 6:00 pm Ladies Hand Bells 7:00 pm Choir Practice	22	23	24
25 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship Service	26	27 6-8 pm Sanctuary open for Prayer	28 5:30 pm Youth Group 6:00 pm Ladies Hand Bells 7:00 pm Choir Practice	29		

Coat/Shoe Shopping

When you are out and about shopping, keep a look out for clearance sales on coats and shoes. The Angel Tree is stocking up on these items for next Christmas. We will take any sizes and styles! Thank you for your help. Bring your items to the church and we will store them.



Sound Booth Upgrade

We are in the process of giving our audio and video equipment a complete upgrade. The project will be quite comprehensive, enhancing the worship experience for people in the sanctuary and those watching remotely. The bid for the largest part of the work comes to around \$24,000. Some additional components will need to be purchased as well. If you would be so moved, we would encourage you give directly to the project. Donations should be marked "sound booth fund".

Connect

Connect with us through our church app. Scan the QR code to access our home page where you can leave contact info, access videos, and find general information about the church. You can bookmark the page to your



Home Screen and use it as a web app on your device.

COME VISIT THE CHURCH LIBRARY



We have a small church library started in the Choir Room of the church building. We have a limited selection of books at this time, but are looking to grow our catalog. If you are interested in checking out a book, please come in and take a look!

Remember in Prayer:

Read Family
Family of Dianna Perry
Family of Kell Clapton
Family of Jody McPherson
Family of Helen Liston
Family of Cindy Manion
Alice Kolb
Anita Hullum
Arthur Galope, Jr.
Beth Rudolph
Betty (Cochran) Howe
Betty Manning
Billie Cade
Bobbi Smith
Bruce & Margie Eysers
Bruce Lacy
Carol McDermott
Charles & Wynona James
Cheryl Bradley
College Students

Craig Griffith
Crestwood Nursing &
Assisted Living
Darian Richardson
Denny McCormick
Donna Neely
Eric Johns
Fausto Sanchez
Frances, Frank, Marguerite &
Robby Groover
Jack & Margaret Fleming
Frances Bryant
Gail & Shane McBride
Grace
Harrison Mayone
Herschel LyBrand
Isaac Bullard
Jared McDonald
Jeff D'Amico
Jill
Joan Peck
Linda Greenwald

Marigrace & Mike Lang
Mark Brown
Marty & Barb Mitchell
Mary Bullard
Randy Scott
RMMC Staff
Richard Moore
Robin & Lorelai
Sandy Doty
Scrub
Shari Smith
Students, Teachers, Admin &
Staff
Sunday School & Church
Tom Prock



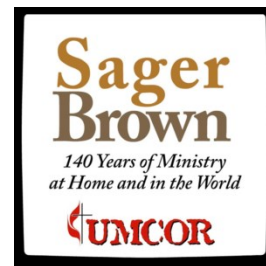
Memorials

In memory of
Tommy Malone
Given by
Jim & Carolyn Hawkins, and
Fritz Gilbreth.



Mission Trip Opportunity

Our mission trip to UMCOR Sager Brown in Baldwin, LA is July 15-19. This trip is a great way to give back. If you haven't been, GO!, you won't regret it. Please contact Shane McBride for more information (903-275-4462). You can also visit the website at www.umcmmission.org/umcor/. There are spaces available for any in the congregation that would like to go.



Russell Memorial Methodist Church

Rev. David Cartwright, Pastor
John Ross, Minister of Music
Vanna Duda, Pianist
Jackie Cockerham, Financial Administrator

Nancy McDonald, Office Administrator
Fritz Gilbreth, Organist
Theresa Turner, Ladies Hand Bells Director
Shane McBride, Youth Director

Join us Sunday Morning!

Sunday School 9:00 a.m.

Worship Service 10:00 a.m.

Office Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Monday-Thursday

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED