



# The Messenger

January 2024

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**PASTOR:**  
REV. MARI LYN JONES  
**MINISTERS:**  
THE CONGREGATION

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DENICE KEMP -  
Clerk of Session  
JEANETTE WEST -  
Worship  
DEBBY ALDRIDGE  
Personnel/Finance  
MIKE HART -  
Education  
EVELYN MATTHEWS-  
Congregational Care  
MIKE HART -  
Benevolence/Outreach  
CHRIS GENGLER  
Building & Grounds

**TREASURER:**  
PAT HART

**ORGANIST:**  
JEANETTE WEST

**CHOIR DIRECTOR:**  
SHAY VANWINKLE

**COMMUNICATIONS &  
MESSENGER EDITOR**  
#143 PETE STEBBINS

\* ARTICLES NEED TO  
BE SUBMITTED TO  
PETE BY THE LAST  
SUNDAY OF THE  
MONTH - FOR THE  
NEXT MONTH'S  
PUBLICATION.

## On the Journey with Pastor Mari Lyn

When I graduated from high school and went away to college, I wandered away from the church of my childhood as well as from church, in general. In the fall of my sophomore year at UT, a group of young Catholic women—living on the same floor in the same dormitory as I—recognized me as someone who had lost her way, and they began to gently guide me back to the paths that God had been preparing for my journey of faith all my life. They invited me to Folk



Back to the path.

Mass, where I worshipped with them at the Catholic Student Center every Sunday evening. They offered me a community in which I received Communion.

As the weeks and months went by, the pages of the liturgical calendar turned. At supper one evening, my Catholic friends began talking about Lent. They explained, “We give up something for Lent as a way of helping us focus on our faith, a way to prepare for Holy Week when we remember Christ’s journey to the cross, a way to draw us closer to God.” As the others around the table discussed what they would give up, one woman turned to me and said, “Giving up something for Lent has never seemed to draw me closer to God. This year, I’m going to take something on. Would you like to join me—one day a week—for Midday Prayer in the chapel at the Catholic Student Center? I knew nothing about Catholic Midday Prayer services, but since my Wednesday classes were scheduled with a long lunch break and located near the Catholic Student Center, I accepted her invitation.

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## Calendar of Events

- Sunday Worship at 10:00 a.m.
- Communion on First Sunday each mo.
- Sunday School 9:00 a.m.
- Men’s Prayer Breakfast Tues. @ 8 am.
- Chair Yoga 1pm Tues and 10:30am Thurs
- Choir Practice Wednesdays 3:30 to 4:30
- Feb. 14 - Ash Wednesday - Noon
- Feb. 15 - Women’s Monthly Devotional
- Feb. 21 & 28 - Lenten Experience (LE)
- Mar. 28 - Maundy Thursday 6:00 PM
- Mar. 31 - Easter

## FEBRUARY 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14 Ash Wed.	15 Devotion	16	17
18	19	20	21 LE	22	23	24
25	26	27	28 LE	29	1	2

## The Journey Continued

For 6 weeks that spring, each Wednesday I met with 10 – 15 other people in a small chapel built from central Texas stone. The sun—shining through beautiful stained-glass windows—provided all the light we needed to pray the printed prayers and read the assigned scriptures together, to gaze on the carved Crucifix, to sit in silent contemplation, and to be blessed by the priest as the service ended. That spring I took on something new for Lent. The simple, quiet, intimate Midday Prayer service provided a balance to the buzz of Sunday evening



A chapel similar to one at UT.

Mass in a crowd of students, a balance to the movement of many people down the aisle to receive Communion, a balance to the sounds of folk hymns reverberating off the walls of a large multi-purpose room. That spring I took on something new for Lent and I traveled the next leg of my journey of my faith with a friend who helped me see signs of Christ, to hear His voice, and to know His presence with us along the way.

This Lent, I invite you to take on something new ... with me. Five Wednesdays in Lent (February 21, Febru-

ary 28, March 6, March 13, and March 20) will you join me at our church building to try out a few different Christian practices? Practices of gratitude and forgiveness, of pilgrimage and prayer, of table fellowship and remembrance. Here's how I plan to structure our time together: 1) a brief introduction to that day's practice; 2) an exercise to try that practice; 3) some time to reflect on what we just tried; 4) an opportunity to share with the group your experience, your understanding, and/or your hope with regards to the Christian practice we just tried. We'll plan to do this in 60 minutes, but we'll be flexible and schedule accordingly for upcoming Wednesdays if we find 60 minutes is too short ... or too long. During this Lenten experience, we'll use all of our physical senses; we'll engage multiple methods of learning; we'll even take a field trip. We'll meet early afternoons from 1:30 – 2:30 to accommodate late lunches, afternoon naps, and choir practice. As the Wednesdays progress, we'll decide whether and what time changes we want to make to enhance our time together.

I hope you'll join me for this —another leg of our journey of faith together.

Grace and Peace, *MariLyn*

## Feb. Birthdays



Robert Harper	1
Jerry Matthews	3
Barclay McCort	4
Cindy Pennington	8
Pat Rehm	9
Nate Kerr	9
Randy Kemp	9
Chris Gengler	12
Betsy Tyson	13
Laquita Arner	19
Claire Hartman	26

## About Our Members (and Prayer Requests)

We continue to pray for healing and wholeness for **Susan Carroll** as she deals with cancer and cancer treatment.

**Bob Todd's** bone cancer is progressing. We pray for him to continue to enjoy the visits with various members of his family, traveling here from other parts of Texas and beyond. We pray for relief from his pain. We pray for strength and for peace for both Bob and Gidget.

**Rip VanWinkle** is having both good and bad days. **Richard VanWinkle** is recovering well from his back surgery in December.

We continue to pray for healing, comfort, and peace for **Joan Ray's** sister **Jean** and her brother **Bob**.

**Renita Menyhert's** recovery from her double knee surgery continues to improve.

**Carl Menyhert's** hip surgery was successful, and he got a good report at his post-operative doctor's appointment last week.

**Jerry Matthews' sister, Donna Kramer,** has a small cancer, however the prognosis is good—the tumor is very small, and she is scheduled for surgery on Wednesday (Jan. 31). Chemo and radiation will likely not be needed. The family appreciates our prayers and will update us in church.

We pray for healing for **Ralph Castor's brother Eddie,** who is at MD Anderson—hoping to be included in a new drug trial.

**Missie Lanham** still comes to Salado a couple of Saturdays a month. If you would like to visit with her here, please call her daughter, Claire, at 254-931-0596 to schedule the visit.

## Church Notes

**January** offerings are \$8842  
**January** expenses totaled \$8966  
 These expenses included a quarterly insurance payment, a 7-month lawn care bill from 2023 we just received, and an expected but high electric bill. Also keep in mind that a few members pay a large portion of their pledge in January so the offerings total is more than for a normal month.

Pastor Mari Lyn will lead the Women's Devotional on February 15th.

**Sunday School Update:** We are currently studying Max Lucado's work about Jacob, God Never Gives Up On You. Mike Hart is leading us and will finish the five lessons on February 3rd. The books for Lent will be passed out that day since there will be no class on February 11. On February 18, we will begin our 6 week Lenten study of Adam Hamilton's Luke: Jesus and the Outsiders, Outcasts, and Outlaws led by Pat Hart. Come join us before worship at 9:00 in the Sunday School room.

## Favorite Bible Verses or Hymns

In the coming months we will solicit other members to provide stories around their favorite Bible Verses or Hymns. We hope this is a restart in a series of stories from our congregation. (This was included in the Messenger some 10 years ago.)

### My Favorite Bible Verse (and why) – Linda Lloyd

My favorite Bible verse is **Philippians 4:13. "I can do all things through him who gives me strength."** I've heard different interpretations of the verse. But here's what it means to me. I am confident that I can meet whatever challenges life throws my way. And I can overcome all my fears and anxiety if I only rely on Christ. My daughter says that when I had cancer surgery and had a kidney removed, I went into the operating room and came out of the recovery room saying that verse.



### My Favorite Bible Verse (and why) - Pete Stebbins



Several years ago, after several hip surgeries and while being "confined" in a rehab facility: I felt poorly, couldn't walk, was alone, depressed, away from friends, removed from my home, and developed an opioid addiction. I was however, dedicated to a "read the Bible in a year" program. I came across this verse: **Isaiah 41:10 "Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand."** This meant a great deal to me during those long sleepless nights.

## ♪ Not Just Musical Notes ♪

"The word of Christ must live in you richly. Teach and warn each other with all wisdom by singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Sing to God with gratitude in your hearts." Colossians 3:16

It is always interesting to me when two important things occur on the same day. For this year, Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day intertwine on February 14. Valentine's Day encourages us to remember the family and friends we have around us who we love and who love us.

The Lenten Season encourages us to examine our lives in the in light of the great love God has for us. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This is from the King James Bible, a version many of us learned as children. Reading this verse from Eugene Peterson in *The Message*, reads as follows: "This is how much God loved the world: He gave his Son, his one and only Son. And this is why: so that no one need to be destroyed; by believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life."

As Lent begins, many of the hymns are very thought provoking. The Lenten section of hymns in our blue Presbyterian Hymnal, from pages 76-87, are quite thought provoking. I encourage you to read through the words of some of these hymns' verses to see what God can reveal to you as you meditate on them.

Some of the hymns you may be hearing and singing with the choir are from our "*Sing the Faith*," the blue soft cover supplemental hymnal. "Change My Heart oh God," (#2152) was written by Eddie Espinosa upon reflecting on Isaiah 64:8 (Common English Bible), "But now, Lord, you are our father. We are the clay, and you are our potter. All of us are the work of your hand." Another is "What Does the Lord Require of You?" (# 2174) with the words coming from Micah 6:8 (English Standard Version), "He has told you, O man, what is good; but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

Sharing in Christ's Service,  
*Jeanette West*





**Ordination and Installation of Elders**  
January 7th - Evelyn Matthews, Denice Kemp, and Chris Gengler

## Some January Pictures

The signup sheets are in the foyer for flowers, greeters, or liturgists between now and the end of the year.



**“The Reverends Jones”**

\* The Session Meeting notes from 1/21 and Congregational Meeting notes from 1/28 were not available for this publication.



Some folks feel as if they have “assigned seating” in the sanctuary, but Rip has reserved this chair in the Narthex.

**THEY SAY 40 IS THE NEW 30  
AND 50 IS THE NEW 40, BUT ALL I  
KNOW IS THE OLDER I GET, THE  
MORE 9PM IS THE NEW  
MIDNIGHT.**



The Pinkstons can be counted on as strong members of our church.



Carl & Renita are improving from hip and knee replacement surgery so were able to attend services on Jan. 28th.