

PAT'S PERSPECTIVE



helps leaders get people very different from the leader and one another to pull together for a common purpose. Failure to build shared vision is the biggest mistake that gifted leaders can make." I have always loved the slogan, "Snowflakes are one of nature's most fragile things, but just look what they do when they stick together." A God-given vision has the capacity to bring people together by forming a team. A vision is the glue that holds a team together.

Teamwork is the ability to work together towards a common goal or vision. It's the fuel that allows common people to obtain uncommon results. United we stand and divided we fall. A vision gives a team the ability to stick together through thick and thin. It helps you hang tough when the going gets rough. There are many times in pursuing a vision that you will want to quit. You will get discouraged, disappointed, and feel defeated. But the one thing that will keep you going will be your God-given vision. The vision makes all the difference in the world between those who persevere and those who quit. There is a major difference between a dreamer and a person who makes his dreams become reality. Dreamers do a lot of talking but not much doing. A person with a God-given dream talks little but does much.

Our church has just completed a ten year Master Plan which was primarily focused on staffing and buildings. We have just begun working on a new strategic plan called Vision 2022, which will have as its major focus ministry and mission. Please pray for those who will be working on this major undertaking. This new strategic plan will be presented to our church in October 2012. Pray that God will give us His vision and our own.

God will give this church a great vision. A vision so big that it is going to take each of us doing whatever we can, giving whatever we can, and serving however we can in order to make it become reality. There are very few times in a person's life when you have the opportunity that you do today - an opportunity that God has ordained, an opportunity that truly is from the heart of God that challenges and stretches each of us to the limit. May we be obedient to the vision that God has given us.

See you Sunday in church!

People, churches, and organizations never grow beyond their vision. Dr. Burt Nanus in his classic book, Visionary Leadership, writes, "There is no more powerful energy driving an organization toward excellence in long range success than an attractive, worthwhile, obtainable vision of the future widely shared." No church organization will ever be any more effective or any stronger than its vision. A vision is a clear, precise, mental picture of a preferred picture. A vision is a clear picture of what God wants us to do for him in the future. Without a vision, people perish. (Proverbs 29:19) People without a vision cannot survive much less thrive in life.

Vision has incredible power to energize and inspire us. Without a vision, individuals and churches tend to develop several problems. They become complacent, stagnate, and bored. Thousands of churches simply exist, without any real purpose or reason for being in business. Without a vision, congregations tend to stoop, droop, and shuffle through endless days of monotony and boredom. Many visionless churches bore people literally to death, leaving them lukewarm and apathetic.

When there is a powerful and compelling vision people look to the future with hope. A powerful vision can lift people out of their ordinary and conventional ways of thinking and working. A vision gives a powerful boost to morale and lifts the spirits of everyone involved in the organization. A vision adds excitement and enthusiasm to the life of the people who are involved in the organization or the church. People with a vision are inspired to do great things for God.

Visions also have the incredible power to unite us. A vision has an unbelievable unifying quality. A vision brings people together for a common purpose, cause, or plan of action. Bill Easum writes, "Vision



The mission of the
First United Methodist Church
is to embrace and extend
God's grace while passionately
growing servant leaders.

Office: 424-7771
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First Beginnings
Child Development
Center: 429-6890
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Lenten Season

Shrove Tuesday - "Pancake Supper"

February 21st
6:00 - 7:30 p.m.
Bain Hall, Hunter Building
Families with children through Grade 6

The evening will begin with a yummy pancake dinner followed by a special time with guest speaker, Dr. Carl Rhoads. The families will then rotate among various stations which teach about the events of Holy Week and the meaning of Shrove Tuesday. A nursery will be provided for the very young children. This event is a great way to prepare for the season of Lent.

Ash Wednesday

Join us Wednesday, February 22 at
12:00pm in the Multi-Media Room or 6:00pm
in the Sanctuary

A moving service to begin Lent in preparation for the Easter celebration. If you have never experienced Ash Wednesday before, make it a point this year to draw closer to God through this ancient rite.

Lenten Devotional

The 2012 Lenten Devotional books will be available on **Sunday, February 19.**

Children

WEE Lunch and Play

February 19th immediately following the
11:00 services in Storer Activity Center.
Grab a bite before going to the parade!
Gumbo lunch with all the trimmings!

Early Christian Awareness (ECA) Open House

Parents of children ages 6-24 months are invited to join us for a special ECA open house. This event is for parents whose children already attend or have been wanting to learn more about the program. There will be a question and answer time with Ms. Billie following the lesson and a Valentine snack to add to the fun. This class will also be valuable to the parent who is wanting to teach or volunteer in ECA, but needs to see how teacher-friendly the curriculum is. Please join us February 12th at 9:45am in the Children's Ministry Building.



Parent's Night Out

February 10th
5:30 - 9:00 p.m.
Birth-Grade 4

Dine Out and Bowling :Nothing but strikes and spares! **Grades K5-2nd** will eat and then enjoy an evening of bowling. Children will need to wear socks. The cost of \$15 will include dinner, bowling, and a snack. Please do not send extra money for the arcades, because it is too difficult to watch children in two different areas.

3rd and 4th grade will stay at the church and enjoy a special Valentine program on what it means to love others. Cost is \$10. **Ages 3, 4, and 5** will jump and bowl in the Storer Activity Room. **Birth - age 2** will have fun in the Children's Ministry Bldg. The cost for age birth-5 years is \$10.



- **First United Methodist Church**
500 Common Street
P. O. Box 1567
Shreveport, LA 71165-1567
- **Sunday Worship Services**
Traditional 8:30am & 11:00am
Sanctuary (A deaf interpreter is available at the 11:00 service)
- **FAITHLink Contemporary**
9:30am & 11:00am
Emmett Hook Center
- **Wednesday Business Luncheon**
Wednesdays at Noon
Multimedia Room, Education & Administration Bldg., 3rd Floor
- **Wesleyan Communion Service**
9:45-10:30am
Couch Chapel
(1st Sunday of month)
- **Sunday School**
9:45am
- **Televised Sunday Services**
11:00am (live)
ABC KTBS-TV Ch. 3

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WHAT IS LENT?

Did You Know...?

Historically Lent was a time of preparation for new believers before they were baptized on Easter. They would go through a time of focus using prayer, fasting, and catechism where they would learn more about what it meant to live a life in Christ. After the 40 days of preparation (representing Jesus' 40 days of prayer and fasting before his ministry), they would be baptized in Christ's death and resurrection and become part of the New Creation. Latter, Lent became a time for all Christians to seek the Holy Spirit's conviction through prayer and fasting so that they could both repent of revealed sin and find new direction to live differently. On a side note, every Sunday is a resurrection celebration so there is no fasting on Sundays. Lent follows the age old rhythm of 6 days of work followed by a day of rest.

So why do we start with Ash Wednesday? The ashes remind us that we are made out of the dust of the earth. Basically, God is God and we are not. It is a sign that judgment will come and that anything not of God will perish. The ashes call us to account – no more wiggle room or self-justification. The Good News is that 'if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.' (1 John 1:9) The forty days that follow are the opportunity to allow God to guide you to rid yourself of particular sinful actions and attitudes. This is done both by setting up intentional new ways to avoid the temptation and new ways to embrace the healthy, life-giving alternative that God wants for you. The best way to rid yourself of a negative is to fill it with the power of goodness – God's goodness.

If you have never observed Ash Wednesday and the days of Lent, I personally invite you to do so. I know that God wants to take this opportunity to give you new life by His resurrection power.

May the Holy Spirit do a sweet work in your life.

Jonathan

COUNCIL

Church Council

The next Church Council meeting will be on **February 26th in Hunter 101** immediately following the 11 o'clock worship services. Lunch reservations MUST be made by Thursday, February 9. Cost is \$6.00. Your reservation can be made on the attendance pad in worship or by calling the church office at 424-7771. Spouses are always invited to attend. A nursery and meal for children will be provided with a reservation made by February 9.

DONATIONS

Clothes Collection:

Be a sweetheart. Do a loving deed by finding items you can donate to the church's monthly Goodwill clothing and accessory drive. The youth will be collecting and bagging your gently used items on Feb. 5 in the Hunter Motor Lobby. For every five bags collected, the Serving Ministry receives a \$10 voucher to give to those with needs; the vouchers are redeemable at Goodwill stores. The clothing collection takes place on the first Sunday morning of every month.

START HERE

As our guests begin to ask questions about their next step at FUMC Shreveport we want to be there to join in the conversation. February 26th, we will offer Starting Point, a conversational environment where guests can find their next step in the journey. Any guest who has frequently attended Worship services and anyone interested in joining the church will be invited to attend. For more information please email Pam at pcrews@fumcshreveport.org or call the church offices at 424-7771.

SENIORS

Silver Screenings:

"Twelve Angry Men" will be the Silver Screenings feature on **Tuesday, February 21**. For reservations call Brenda at 424-7771 by Friday, February 17 and mail a check for \$14. This includes the movie and lunch. Meet at the church at 9:45am to be transported by church bus to the Robinson Center.

Treasure's Lunch:

Dr. Carl Rhoads will share the history of FUMC's stained glass windows at the Treasure's Luncheon on **Thursday, February 9 at 12:00pm in Hunter Room 101**. For reservations call Brenda or Susan at 424-7771. Lunch will be served at a cost of \$6.

WOMEN STEPHEN MINISTRY

Stephen Ministry

A comment from a Stephen Ministry Care Receiver

"My problem didn't seem so big, yet it bothered me. Also, I quickly learned that my best friend could not even see my problem. When I heard about Stephen Ministries, I questioned if that would be something for me. Asking for a Stephen Minister was the smartest decision I ever made. She listened to me and put me at ease. She didn't try to solve my problem, or give advice, but was thoughtful, kind and understanding as she helped me through a rough spot in my life. We concluded each meeting with a prayer as God blessed both of us."

UMW

UMW General Meeting February 7 at 11:00am in Hunter 101. The program will be "A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial," given by Deana Mitchell. Lunch will be provided for \$5. Please RSVP for lunch to the church office, 424-7771.

UMW Cookie Stroll, February 12, 9:30am-12:15pm.

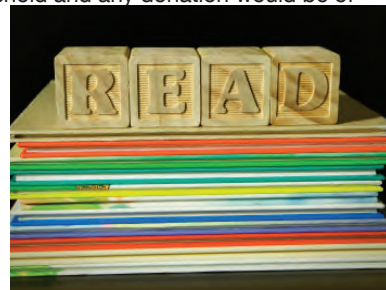
Locations for the sale will be on the Bridge, under the Sanctuary, and the Emmett Hook Center. Buy your cookies, etc. for the special Valentine and help support UMW missions.

BOOK COLLECTION

February is "Children's Book Collection Month"

Please join the Methodist Men in providing children's books to our church neighbors. Our neighborhood children have very few books per household and any donation would be of considerable help. These can be new or gently used. Please take a moment to clean off your bookshelves and donate. There will be tubs placed throughout the church facility for deposit throughout the month of February.

Thank you and God Bless.
Brian Custer



WILD GAME DINNER

Men's Wild Game Dinner is Wednesday, February 1 at 6 PM in Bain Hall.

Everyone is invited to prepare their best wild game dinner and enter it into the competition. We will have prizes for best of the bunch, runner up and most exotic. So grill, sauté, roast and bake your way to the top. First prize is a beautiful edition of John Folse's gourmet cookbook After

the Hunt. 'After the Hunt is a compilation of countless historical images, dazzling color and tantalizing food photography that pays proper homage to Louisiana as Sportsman's Paradise and to the hunter of yesterday, today and tomorrow.' This is a great event to bring your kids to. Cost is \$10/adult, \$5/child 12 >. Bring a dish for the competition and you get in free. So bring your bear, possum, raccoon, deer and duck for a great time.

PRAYER

Business Community Prayer Breakfast will be February 9, 7:00-7:45am at the Regions Tower, Wheless Room. Our guest speaker Laurie Boswell, CEO for Holy Angels Residential Facility, will address Faith in the Workplace. Additional prayers will be offered by: Bernard Johnson, Liz Swaine and Chuck Meehan. Breakfast is Free.

EAKIN CONCERT

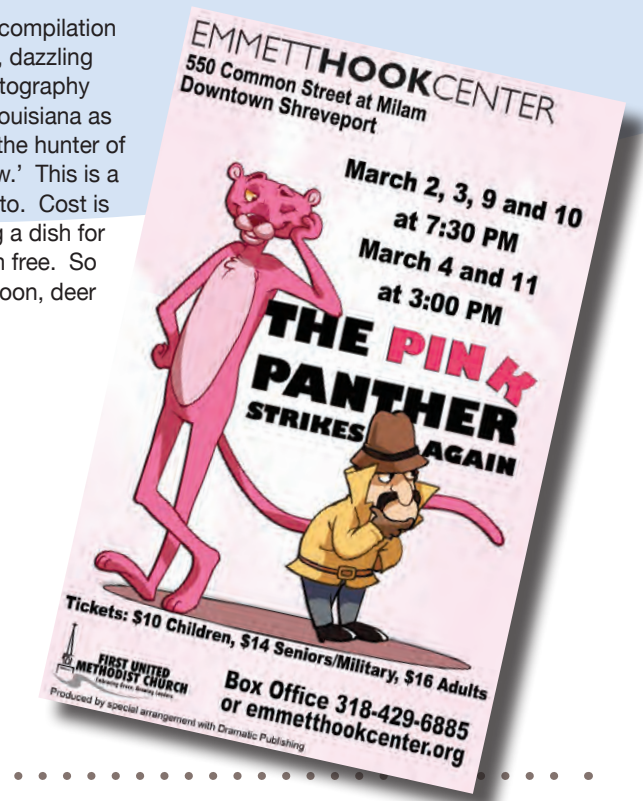


Eakin Concert

First Methodist and Centenary Choir to premier new work by Shreveport native James Eakin

On February 12, 2012, at 4 pm in the Sanctuary, the Chamber Choir of First Methodist will join forces with the Centenary College Choir to premier Flowers Over the Graves of War by James Eakin. **This is the first of two performances that comprise the world premier of the work, the second taking**

place at Carnegie Hall in New York later in February. Combining the words of traditional Latin Requiem Mass with new poetry by Michael Dennis Browne, Eakin creates a stirring vision and prayer for peace through his music. James was a member of the youth and music programs at First Methodist and is also an alum of the Centenary Choir, creating a truly unique and personal connection for this performance. The work will be accompanied by full orchestra and is free and open to the public.



Renew & Review Book Club:



We can always anticipate a fascinating review when our own Pat Aura is the reviewer. Let's celebrate Valentine's Day, **Tuesday, February 14, 2012,** with Pat as she presents The Music of Silence, by Andrea Bocelli, 2011 update. Few singers have touched as many hearts as has this golden-voiced tenor. In The Music of Silence, Bocelli tells his own story in the form of an autobiographical novel.

This newly revised and updated edition provides a deep and intimate analysis of his life, loves, and losses. Join Renew and Review Book Club members and guests at **10:00 a.m. in Hunter 101** for coffee, light refreshments, and conversation preceding the review. Annual dues are \$25.00. Cost for non-members is \$4.00. All are welcome!

Married Life

The Best Valentine's Gift Ever!

What does your spouse really want on Valentine's Day? Flowers die, chocolates are quickly eaten but a loving, growing relationship lasts forever. MarriedLife is a small group designed to help you know, love and enjoy your spouse more. MarriedLife will be led again by our wonderful Larry and Puddy LaBorde starting the week after Valentine's Day. MarriedLife is engaging, enlightening and will put a new spark in your marriage. Couples will fall in love again – for all the right reasons! To find out more or register for the group call Misty, 424-7771.