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Taking the Cross Home With Us

Scripture: *"But God proves His love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us."* — Romans 5:8

By the time you read this, Sunday worship may be over. The hymns have been sung, the sermon preached, and we have returned to ordinary life. In many ways, that is when Sunday's message really begins.

This week in **Alpha 101**, we asked, **"Why Did Jesus Die?"** We were reminded that the cross shows God's extraordinary love through Jesus Christ. But the cross is not only something to admire on Sunday; it is grace meant to shape how we live each day.

One danger in the Christian life is becoming so familiar with the cross that we stop letting it change us. Each time we see a cross, we might ask: **"If Jesus loved me this much, how should that change the way I live today?"**

Maybe the cross needs to change how you see **yourself**. Grace reminds us that our failures do not have to define us. If Christ has forgiven us, we do not need to keep carrying what He has already carried to the cross.

Maybe the cross needs to change how you see **someone else**. Is there someone to forgive, an apology to offer, or a first step toward peace? Forgiveness does not erase hurt, but it refuses to let hurt control the future.

Maybe the cross needs to change how you see **your relationship with God**. God's love is not something we earn; it is grace we receive. We obey not to make God love us, but because in Christ we already know we are loved.

So, I invite you to carry three questions into this week:

What do I need to receive from Christ?

What do I need to release because of Christ?

What do I need to surrender to Christ?

Do not rush through those questions. Take them into prayer and ask the Holy Spirit where the message of the cross needs to become more than something you believe in—something you live.

Sunday's sermon may end with an **Amen**, but our response to the cross continues long after we leave church.

This week, may we live as people who know we are loved, walk as people who have been forgiven, and offer others the grace God has freely given us.

The cross is not simply something to look at. It is an invitation to live differently because of what Jesus has done for us.

God Bless and Keep You,
Pastor Kerry

Pastor Visit

If you or someone you know is going through a difficult time, facing illness, feeling lonely, or simply in need of prayer and encouragement, please do not hesitate to reach out. Pastor Kerry would be glad to visit, pray with you and offer support. To arrange a pastor visit, please contact Susan Capelouto (Administrative Assistant) or Rev. Kerry Foote.

Operation Christmas Child

Beginning this Sunday, we will be handing out **Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes!**

Operation Christmas Child shares the love of Jesus with children around the world through shoeboxes filled with toys, school supplies, and personal-care items. We invite you to pick up a box, fill it with gifts, pray for the child who will receive it, and return it to the church.

One small box can be a big expression of God's love!

For more information, talk with or text our Operation Christmas Child Coordinator, **Diane Matthews, at (850) 284-4890.**



Pack a box. Pray for a child. Share the love of Jesus!



September Birthdays

Davies, Rick 2
Tiffany Foote 2
Leggett, Ashley 13
Peters, Edie 13
Fletcher, Martha 14
Stallings, Amber 26
Hatcher, Mike 28

September Anniversaries

Gordon & Lucia Lightfoot 13



Find us on
Facebook



Have you heard the good news? Chaires Methodist Church is now going live on Facebook every Sunday morning! We would love to see you in worship in person, but if you are traveling, homebound, under the weather, or simply unable to make it to church that week, you can still join us online and be part of our worshiping family.

Tune in for the Sunday message, sing along from home, share the service with a friend, and stay connected to what God is doing in our church community.

Please give our Facebook page a like and follow so you can receive updates about upcoming events, special announcements, live worship services, and sermon archives you can watch or share anytime. Whether you join us in the pew or online, there is a place for you at Chaires Methodist Church.

<https://www.facebook.com/p/Chaires-Methodist-Church-61561720372576/>



The flower calendar through October has been posted in the hallway near the nursery.



Church Members

Milan Novak / Rene Grubb / Lance Harrison / Mary Alice Linzy / Gail Dampier

Friends and Family

Tucky Hunter (Margaret Boyette) / Donna Hunter (Margaret Boyette) / Carolyn Boyd (Unknown) / Terry West (Unknown) / Mark Strickland (Pat Alley) / Jean’s eye surgery (Jean)

New Choir Director

Welcome Dr. Yin Lin, Our New Music Director!

We are delighted to welcome **Dr. Yin Lin** as Music Director of Chaires Methodist Church. She brings over twenty years of experience as a pianist, accompanist, educator, and artistic director.

Dr. Lin holds a Doctor of Musical Arts in Collaborative Piano from the University of Southern Mississippi and has taught and performed in the U.S. and China.

We are grateful God has brought Dr. Lin to Chaires and warmly welcome her gifts and joyful spirit.

All who enjoy singing are invited to join the choir. Rehearsal is on **Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.**

Welcome Back, Yuchen!

We are glad to welcome pianist **Yuchen Lin** back after his summer in China. He studies at Florida State University and brings experience accompanying choirs, soloists, opera productions, and church music.

Thank you to **Lujie Wang** for sharing her talents while Yuchen was away. We look forward to her public piano recital at our church.

God has blessed our music ministry with wonderful talent—now we need more voices! Join us Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. and make a joyful noise unto the Lord!

Alpha Small Group

Our new **Alpha 101 sermon series** began Sunday, **September 6**, and will continue for 11 weeks. Each week, we will explore foundational questions about life and the Christian faith.



The conversation will continue through our **Alpha 101 Small Group Studies**. These relaxed gatherings will build upon the weekly sermon through food, fellowship, a short video, and honest conversation.

Two Thursday gatherings are available:
Morning Alpha — 9:00 a.m.
Church Sunday School Room
Evening Alpha — 6:30 p.m.

Pastor’s House

Food and refreshments will be provided. The group will use a video curriculum, so no student books are needed. Whether you are a longtime follower of Jesus, still exploring, or simply curious, there is a place for you at Alpha. Sign up at the back table in the Multi-Purpose Sanctuary.

Come hungry for food, fellowship, and meaningful conversation—and bring your questions!

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