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Spotting God's Blessings in the Challenges of Life

“Blessed are those whose strength is in you, whose hearts are set on pilgrimage.” (Psalm 84:5)

Lately, I’ve been learning what it truly means to live a blessed life. And I’m discovering that it doesn’t always mean constant comfort, contentment, or happiness. In fact, it often means the opposite. Life in this world is hard, and the more we experience it, the more we feel its weight and struggle.

Yet, there’s something I’ve seen over and over again: the burdens we carry, the tragedies we endure, and the traumas we face have the potential to crush us—unless we have eyes that are fixed on Jesus. It’s an awareness that allows us to see the blessings hidden within the burdens, the beauty that shines through the darkest moments.

Take a moment to reflect with me. Think about the tough times you’ve been through or are facing right now. **Can you spot any blessings in those difficulties?** Perhaps an unexpected detour led you to something good that you would have missed otherwise. Maybe a relationship was formed or deepened through the trial. Or did those hard times draw you closer to the Lord, building a stronger bond with Him?

Maybe you found yourself offering or receiving acts of kindness, bringing purpose and connection into your life. These blessings are gifts that the world simply can’t give—this is what a blessed life with Jesus looks like.

God did warn us that our time on earth would be filled with troubles and trials, but He also promised that there would be goodness in the midst of it all.

So, the next time you find yourself questioning how a loving God could allow such sorrow, I encourage you to look for the blessings that are present, **even in the midst of the storm**. Notice how these divine gifts—the touches of joy, the doses of love, the moments of peace—make you feel as you weather life’s challenges. If you look for Him, you’ll find His faithfulness and abundant grace in every situation. That is the blessed life, a life lived close to Him.

In Christ’s love,
Rev. Kerry Foote

Choir News

Choir practice is on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. Now is the time to join if you would like to be a part of the music during Advent and Christmastide. For more info, contact:

Gerry Nielson (321-652-5361; gerryniel@gmail.com)

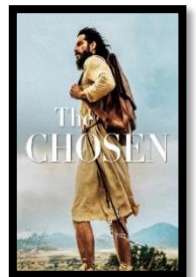
New Sermon Series

For the next three Sunday’s we will be taking on a new sermon series. In this 3-week Sermon Series, based on Mark Batterson’s newly released book *Double Blessing: How to Get It - How to Give It*, our congregation will learn about the joy found in the Double Blessing. From the original blessing from God to flipping the blessing to others. This series will challenge you to reconsider giving and how it relates to your divine relationship with God and others. As Pastor Louie Giglio says, *“Double Blessing challenges us to reframe our perception of blessing, seeing God’s gifts as opportunities for increased generosity.”*

If you would like Pastor Kerry to call or visit, please let Susan, the secretary, or Pastor Kerry know.

Movies Under the Oaks

It is coming back! Get your field blankets ready and dust off your folding chairs. Watching movies under the Oaks at Chaires Methodist Church will start back up on Friday, October 4th @ 7:30 p.m. *There is a complete schedule through April 11th on the information table.* This event will be free to the community and food and refreshments will be provided: Hotdogs, soft pretzels, popcorn, lemonade, tea and hot chocolate on chilly nights.



Movies will be projected on our 14ft outdoor screen unless weather conditions do not allow for this and in that case, movies will be shown in multi-purpose sanctuary.

Adult Sunday School

This class meets each Sunday at 9 AM.

October Potluck

Don’t forget, October 6th is the first Sunday of the month and that we will be having our first of the month pot-luck meal. Bring a dish to share and be ready for some wonderful food and fellowship.

Save the Date: Chicken Pilau on Nov. 14th!
Plan now to sign up on the volunteer sheets that will be on the information table in October.



This year Chaires will again be sponsoring a vehicle at the annual Texas Roadhouse Trunk or Treat. That means we need a lot of candy.

So, for the month of October, we will be collecting candy donations every Sunday (information table). We will also have a special "stuffing" day on **Sunday, October 27th** following the Sunday worship service in the Sunday School classroom. We need to stuff special gift bags with candy and various "Christian themed" Halloween trinkets and prizes.

Church services will be posted after 1 pm each Sunday through the church website at chairesmethodist.church



Nov. 2nd from 8 am-noonish
We need YOU to help spruce up the grounds for the pilau! Bring tools and we'll enjoy the reward of a special lunch.



Mark your calendars and save the date for our annual **Church Conference / Love Feast on November 3, 2024 @ 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

We will not only be affirming the business of the church, but we will be celebrating all our accomplishments over the past year and turning our attention to what the future holds for Chaires Methodist. We will kick off this event with a Love Feast / Potluck meal in which Chaires will provide BBQ that is prepared on our open pit grill, and we are asking members of the congregation to bring a side dish to share. This Love Feast will start in the multi-purpose sanctuary and after the meal, we will head over to the historic sanctuary for a time of conference and celebration.



Members

- Gail & Don Dampier
- Martha Fletcher
- Nancy Hardison
- Michael & Mary Alice Linzy

Friends and Family

- The Linzy Family
- Christine Stephens
- Eileen Peters
- Chad Craig
- Brian Matthews
- Family of Donnie Dampier (son of Gail & Don Dampier)
- Todd Hair (cousin of Marty Holland)
- Deana McCorvey – (David & Diane Matthews)
- Ginny R.
- Family of Roy Lollie (brother-in-law of Marion Lollie)
- Robbie Brunger (Friend of Mary Alice & Michael Linzy)

A Celebration of Life Service for Donnie Dampier will be held in the historical sanctuary on October 26th at 11:00 AM. Following the service, lunch will be served. If you can, please bring a dessert to share.

Giving Through Our Website
Go to <https://chairesmethodist.church> and just click the blue GIVE button and you will be taken to the church REALM site. The church secretary can help you set up your account.

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| <p>October Birthdays</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amy Clarke 4 Dale Thompson 7 Jeff Messer 31 | <p>October Anniversaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wes & Ashley Leggett 4 Virgil & Maggie Hall 11 |
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Blessed Assurance Backstory

Fanny Crosby was a prolific Christian songwriter who wrote over 8,000 hymns during her lifetime. She was born in New York on March 24, 1820, into a family with a strong Puritan heritage. As an infant, she suffered an eye infection. The treatment she received from a quack doctor caused scarring that led to her blindness. Her mother, Mercy Crosby, was left widowed at the young age of 21 and was forced to hire herself out as a maid. Fanny's grandmother, Eunice Crosby, became her primary caregiver and teacher. Fanny's grandmother was determined to provide her granddaughter with a quality education. She took it upon herself to teach Fanny about the physical world, illustrating it in vivid detail. She also read and explained the Bible to Fanny, instilling in her a deep faith and a love for God. When Fanny became discouraged because she could not learn like other children, her grandmother encouraged her to pray for knowledge and understanding. In 1834, Fanny learned about the New York Institute for the Blind and enrolled in the school when she was twelve. Later, she became a teacher and served at the same school for an incredible twenty-three years. On March 5, 1858, Fanny married Alexander van Alstine, a former student at the Institute. He was a talented musician who collaborated on several gospel hymns that resonated with audiences across the country. In the summer of 1873, Crosby visited her friend, Phoebe Knapp, who was a gifted musician and composer. One day, Knapp played a melody on her piano and asked Crosby what she thought of it. As soon as Crosby heard the tune, she exclaimed, "Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!" and began to compose the lyrics on the spot. Within an hour, the hymn was complete, and *Blessed Assurance* was born. The lyrics of *Blessed Assurance* are a powerful testimony to Crosby's faith in Christ and her unwavering confidence in His salvation.

| Chaires Staff | |
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| Pastor | Rev. Kerry Foote |
| Secretary | Susan Capelouto (chairesmc.office@gmail.com) |
| Music Director | Gerry Nielsen |
| Custodian | Janet Cayson |
| Audio/Visual | Marty Holland |